

Nominal Group Technique Process

To determine stakeholder priorities in regard to future activity, the research team conducted a nominal group technique (NGT) process at each regional workshop. Stakeholders were pre-assigned to small groups of approximately five members so that equitable weight, in terms of professional and personal knowledge and skills, would be given to each group. For example, an ideal group was composed of a government representative, a pest management professional, a healthcare provider, school-based personnel, and a parent or other adult who had personal or family experience with pesticide exposure.

After dividing into small groups, one research team member oriented the groups to the NGT process. PowerPoint slides were used to review ground rules with the groups and to keep them oriented throughout the process to the question under discussion (See Appendix A of the Regional Workshop 2001 Report). Participants were told that they would be responding to a total of six questions, one at a time. The same six questions were posed to all groups and the same process used, with only minimal variation, at each workshop:

Q1) How do we protect our children from unnecessary exposure to pest control products while also ensuring they are not subjected to the health risks associated with pests?

Q2) Who is in a position to bring this about?

Q3) Where do we go from here?

Q4) When should we begin and how long should we be involved?

Q5) What should happen first? What should happen next?

Q6) How will we know if we've been successful?

A research team facilitator guided the groups through the questions, one at a time. Each question was displayed on a projector screen continuously as the groups worked on that question. Because the first question was the basis for all subsequent questions and responses, the slides showing questions two through six also displayed the first question. Respondents were instructed to think about their responses to questions two through six in terms of how they had responded to the first question.

A representative from the research team facilitated each group. Every group generated responses to the six questions and wrote the responses on color-coded paper. The groups then ranked their responses in order of importance. Following each question, research team facilitators posted all responses for that

question on a wall for all participants to see and to jointly decide which responses duplicated others. Duplicate items were combined into one response.

Upon completing this group process, participants voted individually to prioritize the responses to each of the six questions. Each participant placed a red dot (3 pts.), a blue dot (2 pts.) and a yellow dot (1 pt.) on the answers he or she thought were the most significant. Each participant was allowed one red, one yellow, and one blue vote for each of the six questions.