SAMPLE MODERATOR PANEL QUESTIONS

**Moderator:** Before the event, refer to the *Weight of the Nation* discussion guides at [http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com/](http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com/) for the particular film episode or short you will be screening. Use these guides to help you draft questions that are appropriate for each of your panelists’ area of expertise.

Also, the panel dialogue may reveal several actions, steps, or issues that the community should address. If you are not taping this dialogue, have a staffer take notes or make notes yourself about the key issues raised by the panel and the ideas the community comes up with to address them.

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**Before the screening:** The *Weight of the Nation* documentaries are full of information and emotional content. Before starting the film, ask the panelists and the audience to take notes about the most compelling parts of the film while they are watching. Tell the audience that you would like to get their feedback and participation in a dialogue after the screening.

**After the screening and before starting the panel dialogue:** Tell the audience and the panelists that you will give them a few moments before you begin to digest what they have just seen and ask them to make note of the most important points they might want to raise during the dialogue. Inform the audience that we hope they will stay and participate in the dialogue. Let them know they are free to leave or to just sit and listen, but that their comments and reactions are very much welcomed.

**When the audience and panelists seem ready,** start the dialogue:

“OK, we are about to start the panel dialogue. First let me introduce our panel of community leaders [ACKNOWLEDGE EACH BY NAME AND TITLE].

“Before we ask our esteemed panel here for their thoughts, let’s hear from our audience first. Audience, if you have a comment or questions, please raise your hand.”

**Instruct the audience to go to the mic to make their comment, if one is available.**

**After each audience question or comment, ask a panelist to address it or comment on it.**

**When audience comments have waned or the allotted time limit is reached, turn your attention to your panel:**

“So now, panelists, perhaps you can each share your thoughts about what you have just seen: What are your initial reactions to the film? What resonates for you?”

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Using your prepared custom questions, ask each panelist for his or her unique perspective:

“What are the most important aspects of the obesity problem for your community, do you think?”

Pick a panelist to begin answering the specific question you developed for him/her, and start the dialogue. Throughout the session, refer to your prepared questions and/or the film discussion guide to explore areas of interest based on your panelists’ expertise and community interest.

Again, make sure that each panelist is able to express his/her opinion.

Once the dialogue has waned or reaches its allotted time limit, summarize what you have just heard.

“OK, so we have just heard that these are the areas that are most affecting our community: [LIST THEM]. Panelists and audience, considering all of the perspectives you have heard, which actions do you think are the most important priorities? Which area should we tackle first and how?”

Allow and encourage the panel to share their opinion and discuss the opinions of others. If no one jumps in after each opinion is expressed, ask the other panelists:

“What do you think of what [NAME] just said? Do you agree?”

At the end of the dialogue, thank the audience and the panelists. If appropriate, let everyone know that the video or notes from this session will be made available to the attendees.

Close the session with: “Kaiser Permanente and our partners hope that this event will prompt everyone in attendance to take steps to put the ideas that we came up with today into action. To assist you, we have developed a ‘Take Action’ guide that provides you with some information on what you can do and how you can do it to combat the obesity epidemic in America. Please take one on your way out, and thank you again for your participation.”