Appendix A: Example of a semi-structured interview or discussion guide

Note: This instrument was approved by OMB (OMB Approval No. 0970-0343).

Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency (ISIS)
Intervention Strategy Discussion Guide

ISIS is a new demonstration initiative being designed to rigorously test innovative employment strategies to improve family self-sufficiency—for TANF families or for other low-income families. We are beginning an exploratory phase to obtain feedback from program administrators and staff, researchers, and policymakers about strategies you feel worth studying, in terms of effectiveness and impact on families and individuals. We are interested in getting your opinion on the most important types of strategies that should be tested around the country as we really want this demonstration to test strategies that are of high interest to the field. We want your feedback on types of strategies that should be experimentally tested using random assignment methods. In addition, if you know of specific initiatives that might be appropriate demonstration sites, we'd like to discuss them.

Module A: General Issues and Priorities

A1. When you think about employment problems for the low-income population generally…

a. What groups do you believe have the greatest needs for assistance in terms of employment?
b. For what groups do you think information about promising strategies would be most beneficial? Why this/these groups?

Probe: long-term TANF recipients, people approaching the time limit, former TANF families, families neither working nor receiving welfare assistance, youth in TANF families, low wage workers, two-parent families or couples, non-English speakers, people with multiple barriers, non-custodial fathers

A2. We are interested in identifying employment strategies that are both important today and will make a sustained contribution for years to come. What trends and issues do you think may impact efforts to improve economic self-sufficiency in the next 3-5 years and how they may have an impact?

Probe:
- *Population trends (e.g., immigrant populations; more isolated rural populations)*
- *Economic and employment trends (e.g., changing mix of industries & jobs, needs for certain types of workers)*
- *TANF caseload trends (including both projected growth/decrease as well as caseload composition)*
- *Political trends and areas of interest.*

A3. Given the challenges we've discussed, where do you see the greatest needs for improved information?

Probe:
- *Concerning program effectiveness; that is, what works and doesn't?*
- *Concerning how to implement and operate strong programs and program approaches?*
- *With regard to understanding the target population's needs and experiences better?*

- *Are there any other topics where improved information would be useful?*

Module B: Promising Initiatives

ISIS is assessing a wide range of program strategies as possible bases for this next-generation demonstration. One key requirement is that leaders in the field are excited about the models we choose. The range of strategies we are considering includes [*Hand list to respondent/send in advance*]:

- **Employment-focused strategies** (e.g., job search, subsidized employment, temporary jobs, transitional jobs)
- **Strategies addressing personal and family challenges** that inhibit employment (e.g., counseling, couples-interventions, housing, mental health, substance abuse)
- **Human capital and skill development** (e.g., basic remedial education, employer-based training, post-secondary education or occupational training, apprenticeships)
- **Financial and other work supports** (e.g,. asset-building, wage supplements, tax credits/EITC)
- **Other financial incentives and penalties** (e.g., sanctions, time limits, bonuses, diversion payments)
- **Innovations in service delivery** that will improve employment outcomes (e.g., case management, vouchers, home visits/services, service consolidation/integration)

B1. Do any of the general categories or strategies on this list strike you as especially promising? Which ones? Are there any general categories that you think are missing from this list? Any on the list that should *not* be pursued?

B2. What approaches or programs are you hearing about or involved with that you see as especially worthwhile considering/implementing?

a. For these programs, what do you consider a successful outcome to be? How successful do you think these programs or types of strategies are? Why do you think that?
b. Are you aware of reports or papers about these programs/strategies? How can I obtain reports or studies of these programs?
c. What might you like to know that you don't now know—such as long-term outcomes, or what would have happened without the services, or how to mix or sequence services?

B3. What kinds of programs or policies related to employment seem to be "**hot topics**" now—for you and for others concerned about low-income families (e.g. practitioners, advocates, policymakers, researchers, general public)?

B4. Are there any particular programs or strategies that you think are interesting, but for which there is currently insufficient information about whether they work well to support a decision to implement them?

B5. Can you recommend any people we should talk to or programs that we should see that would provide additional information about employment-focused strategies that may be of interest to program administrators and policy makers?

Module C: Local Practitioners

C1. We want to learn about what localities are doing that's especially innovative and promising to increase employment and economic self-sufficiency among low-income parents. We would like to hear about some of the efforts you have underway right now. We're interested in new policies, services, or service delivery approaches. These could be targeting low-income families receiving or not receiving TANF.

Probe:

- *Strategies for getting TANF participants back to work quickly*
- *Strategies that might avoid the need for cash assistance among families not currently receiving it*
- *Strategies for helping low-income parents sustain and advance in employment*
- *Strategies aimed at families with difficult personal and family challenges affecting employment?*

a. What outcomes are you trying to achieve?

b. What would you regard as "success" for these initiatives?

C2. When you look around, there are a lot of different possible directions for policies and programs to increase employment and economic self-sufficiency among low-income parents. Please think about some of the policies, programs, or service delivery strategies that you have heard may be promising, but haven't yet been implemented. What are they?

Probe:

- *Strategies for getting TANF participants back to work quickly*
- *Strategies that might avoid the need for cash assistance among families not currently receiving it*
- *Strategies for helping low-income parents sustain and advance in employment*
- *Strategies aimed at families with difficult personal and family challenges affecting employment?*

a. How did you learn about them? What interested you about them? What would you hope that they would achieve?

b. What are some of the reasons that you have not yet implemented these approaches? Do you think that they can be surmounted? Is there any information that would be helpful?

Probe:

- *Feasibility issues (too expensive)*
- *Political issues (not enough political support)*
- *Lack of evidence*
- *Too many other high priorities*

C3. Considering the different strategies we have discussed, do you know of any programs that seem especially promising and worthy of evaluation? If "yes:"

a. Please describe the intervention.

Probe:

- *Goals and target outcomes; policies/problems it addresses*
- *Theory of change*
- *Target/relevant populations and population served: size, characteristics, and needs*
- *Major program components: contents, intensity, duration*
- *Approach to identifying and engaging participants, take-up rates*
- *Service delivery system: agencies and organizations, staffing, coordination*
- *Number and variety of sites operating program*
- *Program costs per participant*

b. What strikes you as the major strengths of this program? Weaknesses or shortcomings?

Probe:

- *What kind of information exists for this program: on implementation? on impacts?*
- *On what is your sense of this program's promise based?*
- *What are some of the important questions that this program raises for you?*

c. Are you aware of any plans for substantial changes to this program, either in design or scope?

Probe:

- *To address unmet needs (e.g., size or characteristics of populations needing services)*
- *To respond to administrative challenges? What are some of the administrative and resource challenges involved in expanding this program (organizational capacity, staffing, funding)?*

d. Is this program or approach the only one of its kind being used in the area, or are other services or program approaches also operating within the area that have generally similar goals and approaches?

Probe:

- *Please describe some of these other services or program approaches*
- *What do you see as some of the key similarities and differences across these approaches?*

e. Are you aware of localities beyond this one that are operating, or planning to operate, this intervention or a similar intervention?

Probe:

- *Location of other site/sites (sponsoring organization, number of sites)*
- *Details of intervention*
- *Population served by the intervention, number of participants (current, annual)*
- *Length of time intervention has been operational*

f. Who should I contact for additional information about this program or program approach?

APPENDIX B: Example of a Telephone Interview Guides

Note: This instrument was approved by OMB (OMB Approval No. 0970-0331).

TANF DIVERSION STUDY

STATE AND LOCAL TELEPHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction

In the mail survey you completed last month you indicated that the state targets the following programs or requirements to applicants for TANF assistance: [name programs].

[Local interview: From discussions we have had with the state TANF office, we understand that your local office has implemented the following program(s) targeted to applicants for TANF assistance: [programs] .]

The purpose of this interview is to learn more about each of these programs. First, I would like to discuss each of these programs with you and, then, I will ask you some general questions about the state's [local office's] overall strategy.

We would like to start with [name of program].

Modules

Module 1: Formal Diversion Payments (Lump-Sum Payment)

Module 2: Job Search and Other Work-Related Requirements

Module 3: Alternative Resources

Module 4: Pre-TANF Job Search and Assessment Program with Cash Assistance

Module 5: Solely State-Funded Cash Assistance Program

Concluding Questions

Is the state trying to achieve a broader goal with its mix of applicant requirements and programs? If so, how well is this mix meeting the state's goals?

Are there any approaches you would like to see the state take with respect to diverting TANF applicants and/or preparing them for the work-participation requirements?

How has the state's [local office's] overall approach to diverting applicants been influenced by passage of the DRA?

Are there new programs or approaches being considered by the state [local office] to divert applicants from TANF? Please describe.

Thank you for your time.

MODULE 1: Formal Diversion Payments

I. Program Details

We have obtained information from the Urban Institute on the structure of your formal diversion payment or lump sum payment program. We would like to review this information and then ask you some additional questions: [Review the following information]

Maximum Payment Amount
Form of payment
How often recipient can receive payment
Period of TANF ineligibility without penalty after payment
How the payment is treated with regards to the time limit

II. Program Goals/Scope

1. What is the primary purpose/goal of the lump sum payment program?
2. Was the program created through state legislation or administratively?
3. Do county or local offices have any discretion to offer a formal diversion payment that is different than what we just reviewed? If yes, please describe.

III. Eligibility

1. To whom is the program targeted?
2. Are there explicit criteria that an applicant must meet to be considered for the program? If so, what are the criteria?
3. For those applicants that meet the program criteria, is the program mandatory or voluntary?
4. Are there any circumstances under which an applicant who does not meet the program criteria can receive a diversion payment? Please describe.
5. Are the income and assets criteria for eligibility the same as for the TANF program?
   - If no: How are they different?

IV. Recruitment and Screening

1. What strategies are used to inform and recruit applicants to participate in the program? When is an applicant informed about the program and by whom?
2. How are intake or eligibility workers trained to discuss the option of a lump sum payment with applicants? Who trains them?
3. How consistently do you think these discussions occur between workers and applicants?

4. At what point in the application process do these discussions occur? What event or information triggers the discussion?
5. Which workers screen applicants and manage the payments?

V. Payment

1. How is the amount of the payment determined? What information does the applicant need to provide to demonstrate the need for the payment? How much discretion do workers have in determining the payment amount?
2. Are there restrictions on how the payment can be used? Do workers have discretion on how it is used?
3. Over what time period is the payment received?
4. Is participation in any work activity required to receive the payment? If yes, what is the requirement?

VI. Application Processing

1. How much time do you have to make a decision on an application? Does the clock start ticking at the time the initial application is submitted or after the completion of any pre-application work requirements?
2. What is the disposition of a participant's initial TANF application?
3. How is the participant's application for other supports (Medicaid, food stamps) handled? How does this change if an applicant finds employment?
4. How are participants' payments treated in determining eligibility for Medicaid and food stamps?
5. If a person receives a lump sum payment, are they eligible to receive any other kind of supports either while receiving the lump sum or if they find a job? [child care, transportation, case management, education and training]

VII. Participation and Outcomes

1. What proportion of applicants is considered for the program? Of those considered, what proportion receives a lump sum cash payment? How many applicants enroll in the program during an average month?
2. How do you track participation in the program?
3. To what extent do you maintain data on participation and outcomes (participation rates, employment rates, proportion reapply for assistance)? [request data]
4. Do you have any data or reports that compare the outcomes of lump-sum recipients with families that receive TANF assistance? [If so, request data/reports]

VIII. Successes/Challenges/Advice for Other States

1. To what extent is the program achieving its goals?

2. What challenges have you had to overcome to implement the program? What strategies helped you to overcome those challenges?
3. What lessons have you learned that you would like to pass along to states that are considering implementing a similar program?
4. Have you made or considered making any changes to this requirement since the reauthorization of TANF? Please describe.
5. Which counties or local offices have done an exemplary job implementing the program and/or have had high participation rates? What do they do differently than other offices?

MODULE 2: JOB SEARCH AND OTHER WORK-RELATED REQUIREMENTS

(WORK PROGRAM ORIENTATION, WORK REGISTRATION OR DEVELOPMENT OF AN EMPLOYMENT PLAN)

You indicated that TANF applicants are required to complete [the program requirement] as a condition of eligibility for TANF. We would like to learn more about this requirement, including what is expected of applicants, what assistance is available to them and what happens if they do not complete the requirement.

I. Program Goals/Scope

1. What is the primary purpose/goal of requiring applicants to [insert program requirement] as a part of the TANF application process?
2. Was this requirement created through state legislation or administratively?
3. Is [the program requirement] required statewide or only in selected areas?
4. Do county or local offices have any discretion in defining or altering [the program requirement]? If yes, please describe.

II. Eligibility

1. Who is required to complete the [program requirement]? How do you determine if someone should be exempted from this requirement?
2. Are there any circumstances in which this requirement can be waived? Please describe.
3. How is the participant's application for other supports (Medicaid, food stamps) handled while they are completing the [program requirement]?

III. Recruitment and Screening

1. What strategies are used to inform applicants about this requirement? When is an applicant informed about the requirement and by whom?
2. Who explains this requirement to applicants?

IV. Program Structure

1. How is the [program requirement] structured? What must the applicant do? Over what period of time?
2. What assistance is provided to participants to help them meet this requirement? Who provides this assistance? [the TANF agency; another government agency, such as the One Stop Career Center or the Workforce Development agency; or a contractor]

3. Is child care assistance available for participants? If yes, is there a formal process for linking participants with child care assistance? If so, please describe this process.

4. Where does an applicant have to go to complete the requirement? Is an applicant given an appointment to complete the requirement or are they required to schedule a time on their own? What are the options for rescheduling if an applicant misses an appointment?

5. How long does it take to complete the requirement?

6. For job search requirements, how is participation monitored? Who monitors participation?

V. Consequences for Not Participating

1. What are the consequences for not completing the requirement?

2. If an applicant begins to participate but then stops participating, are any efforts in place to reengage them?

3. How much time do you have to make a decision on an application? Does the clock start ticking at the time the initial application is submitted or after the completion of any pre-application work requirements?

4. What is the disposition of the TANF application if an applicant does not complete the requirement?

5. When can the applicant reapply for assistance if their application is denied for failing to meet the requirement?

6. What happens to a participant's applications for food stamps and Medicaid if they do not complete the requirement?

VI. Participation

1. What proportion of applicants is required to complete [the program requirement]?

2. Of those required to complete the requirement, what proportion complete it?

3. How do you track completion of the requirement?

4. To what extent do you maintain data on who completes the requirement and who finds employment? [request data]

VII. Employment (Job search requirements only)

1. What proportion of applicants finds employment before going on to TANF?

2. How is the TANF application handled if an applicant finds employment? How is their eligibility for TANF determined?

3. Is an applicant who finds employment before going on to TANF eligible for the same earnings disregard as a TANF recipient who finds employment? If not, how does the earnings disregard differ for applicants?

4. If they find employment and are not eligible for TANF, are they eligible for the same benefits as a TANF recipient who finds employment and exits TANF? If not, what is different? Do you offer a post-employment TANF program or exit bonus for TANF recipients? Are applicants who find employment eligible for this program or bonus?

5. How is the food stamp and Medicaid application handled if the applicant finds a job?

VIII. TANF Transition (Job search requirements only)

1. If an applicant does not find employment or finds employment and is still eligible, how is the transition to TANF handled?

2. What work activity are they required to participate in?

3. Do they undergo an assessment? If so, when?

IX. Successes/Challenges/Advice for Other States

1. To what extent is the program achieving its goals?

2. What challenges have you had to overcome to implement the requirement? What strategies helped you to overcome those challenges?

3. What lessons have you learned that you would like to pass along to states that are considering implementing a similar requirement?

4. Have you made or considered making any changes to this requirement since the reauthorization of TANF? Please describe.

5. Which counties or local offices have done an exemplary job of implementing [the program requirement]? What makes them exemplary?

MODULE 3: ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES

You indicated that as a part of the application process, eligibility workers are required to explore the availability of alternative resources (such as family or friends or services provided by community organizations) with families applying for assistance. We would like to learn more about this requirement and how it is implemented.

I. Program Goals/Scope

1. What is the primary purpose/goal of this approach?
2. Was this approach created through state legislation or administratively? When?
3. Is this approach implemented statewide or only in selected areas?
4. Do county or local offices have any discretion in defining or altering this requirement? Please describe.
5. Have you made or considered making any changes to this approach since the reauthorization of TANF?
6. What public agency or other organization manages this program?

II. Eligibility

1. To whom is the consideration of alternative resources targeted?
2. Are there any circumstances when an applicant can choose to apply for TANF rather than accessing alternative resources even when identified?

III. Recruitment and Screening

1. What strategies are used to inform applicants that they must consider alternative resources before their TANF application can be approved? When is an applicant informed about the requirement and by whom?
2. Can you describe when this discussion takes place and what instructions workers have been given about how to facilitate this discussion?
3. Is information gathered as a part of the written TANF application that helps to guide this discussion. Or, does the intake worker initiate the discussion during the eligibility interview?
4. Who conducts this discussion with applicants? How are they trained?
5. How consistently do you think these discussions occur between workers and applicants?

6. How does a worker determine whether alternative resources are available and accessible to an applicant?

7. If alternative resources are identified, what is the next step? Is the TANF application placed on hold? If so, for what period of time or until what specific requirement is met?

IV. Outcomes

1. How often are workers able to identify alternative resources that alleviate the need to apply for TANF benefits? How often is a TANF application withdrawn or denied because a family's needs can be met through alternative resources?

2. How do you track which applications are withdrawn or denied because alternative resources have been identified?

V. Successes/Challenges/Advice for Other States

1. To what extent is the program achieving its goals?

2. What challenges have you had to overcome to implement the program? What strategies helped you to overcome those challenges?

3. What lessons have you learned that you would like to pass along to states that are considering implementing a similar program?

4. Have you made or considered making any changes to this requirement since the reauthorization of TANF?

5. Which counties or local offices have done an exemplary job of implementing this approach? What makes them exemplary?

module 4: PRE-TANF JOB SEARCH and ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS WITH CASH ASSISTANCE

You indicated on your survey form that you have implemented a program separate from your TANF programs that provides *short-term* financial assistance to families who apply for TANF assistance while they participate in job search, complete an assessment, or participate in other work-related activities.

I. Program Goals/Scope

1. What is the primary purpose/goal of providing a pre-TANF program that provides financial assistance and requires individuals to participate in work activities?
2. Was this program created through state legislation or administratively?
3. Is the program available statewide or only in selected areas? Please describe.
4. Do county or local offices have any discretion in defining or altering the structure of this program? Please describe.
5. What influence did increased work participation rates as a result of TANF reauthorization have on the implementation of this program?
6. How is the program funded? Is financial assistance claimed as assistance or non-assistance for TANF/MOE reporting purposes?
7. What public agency or other organization manages this program?

II. Eligibility

1. What are the eligibility criteria for the pre-TANF program? Which applicants are exempted from participation in the pre-TANF program? How do you determine if someone should be exempted from this requirement? Is participation in the pre-TANF program mandatory for eligible applicants?
2. For applicants who meet the eligibility criteria, are there any circumstances in which this requirement can be waived and applicants can apply directly to TANF?

III. Recruitment and Screening

1. What strategies are used to inform applicants about this program? When is an applicant informed about the program and by whom?

IV. Financial Assistance

We would like to first learn more about the financial assistance component of the program and then learn about the services and work component.

1. What is the maximum amount of financial assistance a family can receive through this program? How does this compare to the amount of assistance they can receive from TANF?
2. How is the amount of assistance determined? What information does the applicant need to provide to demonstrate the need for the assistance?
3. How is the financial assistance provided to participants? (e.g., cash, voucher, vendor payment)
4. How often is the financial assistance provided?
5. Are there any constraints on how the assistance can be used?
6. What is the maximum amount of time a family can receive assistance through the program?
7. Do the months when a family is receiving financial assistance count toward the time limit?

V. Interaction with Other Programs

1. How is the participant's application for other supports (Medicaid, food stamps) handled?
2. Are families eligible for child care and other work supports while they are participating in the pre-TANF program? If yes, is there a formal process for linking participants with child care assistance? If so, please describe this process.
3. How are earnings treated while a family is in the pre-TANF program?
4. Are child support payments collected on behalf of families in the pre-TANF program retained by the state? How does this differ from the TANF program? Does child support distributed to families in the pre-TANF program reduce the financial assistance they receive through the program? Does the state disregard any of the child support income to determine the amount of financial assistance?

VI. Work Activity Requirement

1. In what type of work activities are program participants required to participate?
2. If all participants do not participate in the same activity, what determines the activity in which they participate?
3. What level of participation is required in the work activity? Over what period of time?

4. What assistance is provided to participants? Who provides this assistance? [the TANF agency; another government agency, such as the One Stop Career Center or the Workforce Development agency; or a contractor]
5. How long does participation in the program last?
6. How is participation monitored? Who monitors participation?

VII. Consequences for Not Participating

1. What happens if a participant stops participating? Are any efforts required to reengage them?
2. What are the consequences for not participating? What happens to their financial assistance?
3. When can they reapply for the program?

VIII. Transition to TANF

1. Under what circumstances is a family transitioned onto TANF? What happens when a family reaches the maximum amount of time in the pre-TANF program?
2. How does this transition occur?
3. Is the transition automatic or does the family have to complete a separate application for TANF?
4. If participants of this program are working, how are earnings treated when they transition to TANF? Are they eligible for the same benefits as a TANF recipient who finds employment? If not, what is different?
    - Is a participant who finds employment eligible for the same earnings disregard as a TANF recipient? If not, how does the earnings disregard differ for participants?
5. What benefits are available for families who find employment and are not eligible for TANF due to earnings? Are they eligible for the same benefits as a TANF recipient who finds employment? If not, what is different?
6. What work activity are participants required to participate in once on TANF?

IX. Participation and Outcomes

1. How do you track participation in the program?
2. What proportion of applicants is required to participate in the pre-TANF program?
3. Of those required to participate, what proportion do so? What proportion finds employment before transferring to TANF? What proportion does not find

employment, but does not transfer to TANF? What proportion transfers to TANF?

4. What other data do you maintain on program participation and outcomes? [request all data/reports]

X. Successes/Challenges/Advice for Other States

1. To what extent is the program achieving its goals?
2. What challenges have you had to overcome to implement the program? What strategies helped you to overcome those challenges?
3. What lessons have you learned that you would like to pass along to states that are considering implementing a similar program?
4. Which counties or local offices have done any exemplary job of implementing the pre-TANF program? What makes them exemplary?

MODULE 5: SOLELY STATE-FUNDED CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

You indicated on your survey form that you have implemented a financial assistance program funded solely with state or local dollars that provides ongoing financial assistance to families with children and in which families are not considered to be on TANF. We would like to learn more about this program.

I. Program Goals/Scope

1. What is the primary purpose/goal of creating a state program that provides cash assistance to families with children?
2. Was this program created through state legislation or administratively?
3. Is the program available statewide or only in selected areas?
4. Do county or local offices have any discretion in defining or altering the structure of this program? Please describe.
5. What influence did increased work participation rates resulting from TANF reauthorization have on the implementation of this program?

II. Eligibility

1. Which families are eligible for this program?
2. Does this program target new applicants, families that have been receiving TANF assistance or both?
3. Is participation in the solely state-funded program mandatory for any families who meet particular criteria?
4. How is eligibility for the program determined? How does the eligibility criteria differ from your TANF program?
5. Is the application process for this program separate from the application process for TANF? If yes, can you describe the application process?
6. Does the solely state-funded program have the same rules and regulations as the state's TANF program? If no, how does the program differ?

If no, complete subsequent sections of the protocol as needed. If yes, skip to section X of the protocol.

III. Recruitment and Screening

1. What strategies are used to inform families about this program? If participation in the program is optional, how are families informed of the option and of any consequences for not participating?

IV. Financial Assistance

1. What is the maximum amount of financial assistance a family can receive through this program? How does this compare to the amount of assistance they can receive from TANF?
2. How is the amount of assistance determined?
3. How is the financial assistance provided to participants? (e.g., cash, voucher, vendor payment)
4. Are there any restrictions on how this assistance can be used?
5. How often is the financial assistance provided?
6. What is the maximum amount of time a family can receive assistance through the program? Is this time limit for receiving assistance through the solely state-funded program based on the TANF time limit?
7. Does assistance received through the solely state-funded program count towards the TANF time limit?
8. If there is no time limit on participation, are there other events that can cause families to exit the program or transition into another program? Describe.

V. Interaction with Other Programs

1. How is the participant's application for other supports (Medicaid, food stamps) handled?
2. Are families eligible for child care and other work supports while they are participating in this program?
3. Are child support payments collected on behalf of families in the solely state-funded program retained by the state? How does this differ from the TANF program? Does child support distributed to families in the solely state-funded program reduce the financial assistance they receive through the program? Does the state disregard any of the child support income to determine the amount of financial assistance?
4. How is eligibility for Medicaid or Transitional Medical Assistance handled for families that exit the solely state-funded program? If the state offers Transitional Food Stamps, how is eligibility for Transitional Food Stamps handled for families that exit the solely state-funded program?

VI. Work Activity Requirement

1. In what type of work activities are program participants required to participate?
2. If all participants do not participate in the same activity, what determines the activity in which they participate?
3. What level of participation is required in the work activity? Over what period of time?
4. What assistance is provided to participants? Who provides this assistance? [the TANF agency; another government agency, such as the One Stop Career Center or the Workforce Development agency; or a contractor]
5. Who monitors their participation?

VII. Consequences for Not Participating

1. What happens if a participant stops participating? Are any efforts required to reengage them?
2. What are the consequences for not participating? What happens to their financial assistance?
3. When can the applicant reapply for the program?

VIII. Transition to TANF

1. Are families participating in this program ever eligible for TANF? Describe.
2. If so, what is the process for transferring families from this program to TANF? Is the transition automatic or does the family have to complete a separate application for TANF?
3. If a family finds employment, how are earnings treated when families transition to TANF?
4. What benefits are available for families who find employment and are not eligible for TANF due to earnings?

IX. Participation and Outcomes

1. How many families are currently participating in this program?
2. In an average month, how many families apply for or are transferred to the program?
3. Among families applying directly to the program, how many families have been deemed eligible? How many of these families were initially applicants for TANF?
4. How do you track participation in the program?

5. What other data do you maintain on program participation and outcomes? [request all data/reports]

X. Successes/Challenges/Advice for Other States

1. To what extent is the program achieving its goals?
2. What challenges have you had to overcome to implement the program? What strategies helped you to overcome those challenges?
3. What lessons have you learned that you would like to pass along to states that are considering implementing a similar program?

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: STATES WITH NO REQUIREMENTS OR PROGRAMS

TANF DIVERSION STUDY

You indicated on your survey form that you do not currently engage TANF applicants in work or work-related activities before their application is approved, or provide financial and other assistance to applicant families through programs outside of your regular TANF program. We would like to ask you a few questions about whether your state has any *past* experience with these types of programs and/or requirements.

I. Introduction

1. In the past, has your state ever:

   Offered lump sum payments (via cash, vendor payments, or vouchers) to families applying for cash assistance with the intent of alleviating the need for TANF assistance?

   Required all or some TANF applicants to complete any of the following *before* they are approved to receive TANF cash assistance:

   - An orientation focused on work requirements and/or employment-related activities?
   - A plan that outlines what steps they will take to find employment and/or move towards self-sufficiency?
   - Registration for work?
   - Participation in work-related activities, such as job search?

   Required applicants to explore the availability of alternative resources (such as family or friends or services provided by community organizations) as part of your application process?

   Implemented a program separate from your TANF cash assistance program that provides *short-term* financial assistance to families who apply for TANF assistance while they participate in job search, complete an employability assessment, or participate in other work-related activities?

   Established programs that are funded solely by state or local dollars (not TANF or TANF MOE dollars) that provide *ongoing* financial assistance to families with children and in which families are not considered to be on TANF?

II. States with Prior Experience

If the state has prior experience with any of the above programs/requirements, ask questions 2-8 for each program/requirement.

1. When was the program/requirement first implemented and how long did it exist?
2. Was the program/requirement created through state legislation or administratively?
3. What was the primary purpose or goal of the program/requirement?
4. Did the program/requirement target a specific type of welfare applicant?
5. Did county or local offices have discretion in defining or altering the program/requirement?
6. Did the state collect any data on participation or outcomes for the program/requirement (participation rates, employment rates, proportion who reapply for assistance)? Please describe.
7. Why did the state end/discontinue the program/requirement?
8. What were the main lessons learned from implementing the program/requirement?
9. Does the state have plans to reconsider this type of program in light of TANF reauthorization or the interim final regulations?

   If yes, why? When does the state expect to implement the program/requirement? How will it differ from the state's previous program/requirement (purpose/goal, target population, implications for TANF application)? Is it a statewide program or a program implemented at a county's discretion?

   If no, why not?

III. States with No Prior Experience

If the state does not have prior experience with any of the above programs, ask the following question:

1. Has the state considered implementing these types of programs/requirements for applicants in light of TANF reauthorization or the interim final regulations?

   If yes, what type of program/requirement did the state consider/is the state considering? Is the state planning to implement the program/requirement? Why or why not? If the state is planning to implement the program/requirement, please describe it (projected start date, purpose/goal, target population, implications for TANF application). Is it planned as a statewide program or a program implemented at county discretion?

   If no, why has the state not considered these types of programs/requirements?

Appendix C: Example of a site visit or direct observation protocol

Note: This instrument was approved by OMB (OMB Approval No. 0970-0339). Site visit protocols under this generic clearance will not be nearly as comprehensive, detailed or exhaustive.

SUPPORTING HEALTHY MARRIAGE PROJECT

IMPLEMENTATION STUDY PROTOCOL

I. Guide for observations of SHM marriage education group

Instructions: Although the impact of a single module might be limited in scope, it will be important for the observer to assess whether or not the session is likely to move couples toward strengthening their relationships. With this caveat in mind the researcher should document his or her observations immediately after the Marriage Education Group (MEG). When completing your write-up please provide evidence to support your responses. When possible you should also include examples/quotes to further illustrate your explanations.

LEARNING SPACE

Describe the workshop neighborhood/location

Describe the workshop learning space please note if there was enough room for people to move about freely, if the space organized, clean, comfortable, and free from outside distractions, if the was temperature reasonable, the seats comfortable, the space in good repair etc.

Did the space appear inviting for men, women, and children?
(decorations were gender neutral and/or appealing men and women)

Did the arrangement of the room allow for participant interaction?

Did the arrangement of the room allow for easy viewing and use of curriculum videos and/or other materials relevant to the session?

Where were the facilitators placed during the session? (sitting, standing, do they separate themselves from the group, sit beside each other, across from each other.)

How suitable was the learning space of the workshop?

Not suitable		Somewhat Suitable	Very Suitable	
O	O	O	O	O

WORKSHOP CLIMATE

Did the climate of the session encourage participants to ask questions, generate ideas, and share information?

Did couples appear to feel relaxed and safe?

Did couples interact with one another in respectful ways?

Did the climate of the workshop lend itself to couples feeling comfortable?

Not Comfortable		Somewhat Comfortable	Very Comfortable	
O	O	O	O	O

COUPLE ENGAGEMENT

Did the workshop include opportunities for participants to interact with each other?

Were there opportunities for couples to listen and learn from each other?

Did the couples seem engaged and responsive to the facilitators?

Did the couples appear disinterested?
(isolated, talked in sub-groups, slept, looked bored, read unrelated material)

To what extent did the group appear bonded during the MEG?

Did the workshop begin or end with a meal or other socializing activity?
If so, did couples interact with each other?

Overall, how engaged were the couples during the workshop?

Disengaged		Somewhat Engaged		Very Engaged
O	O	O	O	O

COUPLE LEARNING

What mediums were used to teach the module?

Were there any problems or delays related to setting up the technical equipment and materials? If so, how were these issues resolved?

Did couples have curriculum manuals or other materials as needed? If not how did the facilitators address this need?

Were the materials that were used in the session useful to the couples?

How did facilitators assess whether or not participants understood the key points of the curriculum?

What curriculum connections did couples extrapolate from the curriculum to their lives?

What understandings did couples demonstrate?

Did the couples have any specific questions or challenges in understanding the curriculum material? If so, how did the facilitator respond?

Were there any times during the workshop that participants seemed confused?

Were there any languages spoken during the workshops other than English? If so, please include the frequency of use of any languages spoken in the both the MEG and and/or before or after the group was over. Also include the name of the language and whether or not you notice this causing any challenges with participant learning.

How did the facilitators deal with diverse learning styles?

Overall, how skilled were the workshop leaders in facilitating learning?

Not skilled		Somewhat Skilled		Very Skilled
O	O	O	O	O

CURRICULUM CONTENT

What did the facilitators identify as the core lesson(s) to be learned? At what point during the workshop did this occur?

Did the pacing of the curriculum content seem appropriate?

Did the facilitators present the curriculum content clearly?

What parts of the session did couples seem to like?

Did individuals exhibit any differences in response to the curriculum based on their cultural background?

Did individuals exhibit any differences in response to the curriculum based on their age?

Did individuals exhibit any differences in response to the curriculum based on their gender?

FACILITATION SKILLS

Did the facilitator(s) appear confident in his/her ability to present the curriculum material?

How did the facilitator(s) challenge couples ideas in order to promote understanding?

Were connections made to other lessons and/or to couples' real world life contexts? If so how?

Did the facilitators make an effort to find out whether or not the group understood the information presented? How did this occur?

Did facilitators encourage communication and move discussions toward the goals of the session module?

How did the facilitators encourage and/or facilitate couples' connections with the groups and with each other?

What techniques did the facilitators use to maintain participant engagement?

Describe the interaction between the facilitators (note if they worked as a team, felt camaraderie with each other, if you observed any obvious tensions).

In what ways did facilitators acknowledge cultural differences and/or values?

How effective were the facilitators in covering the curriculum?

Not Effective		Somewhat Effective		Very Effective
O	O	O	O	O

How well did the facilitators work together?

Not Very Well		Somewhat Well		Very Well
O	O	O	O	O

How often did the facilitators engage with the couples?

No Engagement		Some Engagement		Lots of Engagement
O	O	O	O	O

OTHER QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

From your knowledge about the program, do you feel that the workshops are a strength of the program? Please explain?

Do you have any concerns about the workshop you observed? If so, what are they?

If you have observed other workshops, how does this one compare to others? (please list when and where you observed those workshops)

II. Guide for Focus Groups with Married Couples Currently Participating in SHM Programs

The four areas of inquiry below are topics that the research team proposes to use to frame the focus group questions. Do note that the topic areas are flexible and might be changed based on the information that participants provide. Also note that questions will be tailored to suit the contextual circumstances of each site.

1. Why did you choose to enroll in the program and what kept you participating?
2. How did the program change your expectations and ideals about marriage, family and parenting?
3. How did the program affect your marriage, family, and parenting?
4. What worked and didn't work well about the services the program provided?

INTRODUCTION

- Welcome and thank you for coming today.
- My name is ________ and I have with me ________. We are from MDRC, a research company studying programs like ________________. We are not part of any government agency although we are conducting this research for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- We are doing a study on marriage education programs and would like to hear your opinions about them. We like to hear about how this marriage education program affected you and what you liked and didn't like about the program. The information gathered in these discussions might help us come up with ways to improve these programs and help more married couples participate.
- We're interested in knowing what made you enroll and attend the program, how you feel the program has affected your relationship and family, what has been good about your experience, and what can be improved.
- Everything said here is confidential. No one will be quoted by name. We also ask that you keep confidential what others say during this conversation.
- Your participation is voluntary, and if you decide not to participate, it won't affect your participation in this program or any other service or benefit you may be eligible for. The estimated time for this discussion is two hours. At the end, each of you will receive a gift card as a way to thank you for your time.
- We will be recording the discussion so that we can remember your comments and opinions. It will help us if you speak one at a time, loudly and clearly. Again, you will never be identified individually and no one outside the research team will have access to the tape.
- There are no right or wrong answers. People may disagree, and that's OK. We welcome the opportunity to hear everyone's thoughts. We also want to hear both positive and negative comments —whatever you want to share.

To start, please introduce yourself, with just your first name, and tell us a little bit about yourself, like how long you've been married, and how many children you have.

1. The following questions ask participants about why they chose to enroll in the program and what kept them participating. We will ask what initially attracted them to the program (e.g. marketing material; incentives; referral partners; program benefits) and what kept them interested once enrolled in the program. The answers to these questions will help us understand how best to reach out to potential couples and what participants think is most valuable about attending.

A. *Why did you come to the program?* These questions will ask participants how they heard about the program and what made them come to an intake session and enroll. We will ask about how they found out about the program and what about the marketing material they saw, program recruiter they spoke with, or referral partner who told them about the program peaked their interest. We also want to ask what initial concerns and questions they had about the program and how these were addressed.

Sample questions:

How did you hear about the program? Can you remember some of your first thoughts or questions about the program?

What "hook" or message about the program made you want to attend?

Did you know the program would provide support and small "gifts" to your family before enrolling? If so, did this influence your decision to participate?

B. *Why did you keep coming to the program?* These questions will ask participants what made them show up for the groups, meetings with family support workers, and other program activities. We will ask which program activities were most helpful, what challenges they had to overcome to attend the program, and what the program could have done to help them attend even more.

Sample questions:

What about the program was the most interesting and important to you? (Think about the ME workshops, meetings with your family support coordinator, booster sessions, and social activities) What did you find useful about that kind of activity?

Did you attend the social activities such as date nights or other events offered by the program? Were these events an important part of the program to you?

What challenges did you face in trying to attend the program? (probes: childcare, transportation, job obligations, illness, family responsibilities, other events) How did you overcome these obstacles? What did the program do if anything, to help?

How did the supports the program offered for childcare and transportation contribute to your attendance in the program?

How important were the “gifts”, such as games for your kids in your coming to the program?

2. The following questions ask participants how their expectations, ideals, and standards about marriage, family, and parenting have changed since participating in the program. The answers to these questions will help inform topics for future surveys and help us understand how couples think the program has changed the way they think about marriage and family in general.

Couples will be asked about how their opinions have changed since participating in the program. Topic areas might include: the role of a wife or husband in the household; ideas about commitment to marriage and divorce; how household and parenting decisions are made; what is important in a marriage; and the likelihood of improving problems in a marriage.

Sample questions: How has your opinion on whether or not and how couples can resolve problems in a marriage changed as a result of the program?

Have your expectations for what parenting responsibilities you and your spouse should have changed since participating in the program?

3. The following questions ask participants about how their marriage and family have changed since participating in the programs and how they are using some of the skills the curricula teach. The topics below are examples of areas we may want to cover with couples during focus groups. The answers to these questions will help inform topics for future survey development and help us understand how couples think the program has impacted them.

A. Communication: We will ask participants whether or not the program has changed the way they communicate with their spouse. We also want to know if the program has affected the way they communicate with their children, families, and others in their lives. We will ask how their communication has changed and how the program contributed to this. We will also ask if there is anything else the program could have done to support them on improving their communication.

Sample questions: Has the program helped you listen differently to your spouse? If so, how did the program help?

Are you talking about important things in your life more often with your spouse? If so, what did the program do to help you do this?

B. Disagreement and Conflict Resolution: We will ask participants if there has been any change in how they handle their problems and disagreements since attending the program. We want to know if there has been a change in how often they argue, how they argue, and what they argue about, and how the arguments get resolved. We also want to know if the program has impacted how they handle conflict with their children, families, and others in their lives.

Sample questions: Do you think the program changed the way you and your spouse disagree? Has the program helped your spouse respect your perspective, even with he/she disagrees?

Did the program help you change the way you resolve arguments with your spouse? If so, how did the program help?

C. Fun, Friendship, and Intimacy in Marriage: We will ask participants if the program affected how much time they spend together; how they spend that time; and how much they enjoy the time they have together. We will also ask whether or not there has been a change in how they express appreciation and affection toward their spouse and if they now feel more appreciated or valued by their partner.

Sample questions: Have you been enjoying time spent with your spouse more since participating in the program? In what ways if any did the program change with this?

Did the program affect the ways and how often you express to your spouse that you value him/her? If so, how?

D. Parenting and Family Relationships: This section of questions will ask participants about whether or not the program has affected the way they parent and relate to the rest of their family.

Sample questions: Have there been any changes in the way you parent? Think about:

How much time you spend with your kids.

How you make decisions together about your kids.

Each of your parenting responsibilities.

How else has the program impacted your marriage and family? Are there things we did not ask about that have changed in your life since attending?

4. The following questions ask participants what they think worked well and what did not at the program. We will ask about participants' experiences with each of the three SHM program components and what they liked or did not like about the way each was offered. We would like to know what qualities in the program activities and program staff are important to participants and what the program could do to improve their services.

A. *Marriage Education Groups*

Sample questions: Have you found that the skills that were taught in the workshop have been useful at home? Which ones, and why? How have you been using them? Are there some skill or techniques that have been less useful? Which ones, and why?

Did you feel your workshop facilitator was someone you could relate to? Why or why not?

What workshop topics did you like best or find most useful?

How did you feel about the way topics were presented in workshops? Did you like the videos, handouts, couple workbooks etc that were used?

B. *Family Support Coordination*

Sample questions: Did you like meeting with your family support coordinator? Why or why not? How helpful was he/she in working with you on issues you brought up?

Did you usually meet with your family support coordinator with your spouse or alone? How often did you meet with him/her as a couple?

Did you talk about the skills you learned in groups with your family support coordinator?

Did you feel you could relate to your family support coordinator? Did you feel respected and supported?

C. Extended Activities

Sample questions:

Which activities (other than workshops) offered by the program did you like or find useful? What did you like about them? Are there any activities you did not enjoy or did not find valuable? Why not?

What did the program do (group social activities, etc) to encourage you to spend time with other couples in the program?

D. General Comments and Additional Feedback

Sample questions:

One of the goals of SHM is to make all participants feel welcome and comfortable. Did you feel that your program did enough to make you feel that way? Did you think that the program environment was comfortable for both men and women, people of different races and ethnicities, people of varying ages? How so? If not, what could the program have done to make you or others comfortable?

Is there anything that we didn't ask about that you would like to share? Do you have any additional comments about your experience or feedback about the program?

III. Guide for One-on-one Interviews with SHM Site Supervisory Staff

Instructions: *Interview should be conducted in private with the Program Director and should take approximately 2 hours to complete.*

Site	
Location/Agency	
Interviewer name	
Staff name(s) and title(s)	
Date of interview	

Introductory Statement. *[Before beginning the interview, please convey the following information to the respondent]*: **I am conducting this interview as part of a study of the Supporting Healthy Marriages (SHM) Demonstration for the Administration on Children and Families of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Our goal is to understand how SHM operates and how it has changed since its implementation. Your participation in the study is totally voluntary and all your responses will be kept confidential. Also, if you have any questions about the study, I would be happy to answer them.**

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1. Background information

    a. How long have you been the Program Director of the SHM Program
    b. What are your overall management responsibilities?
    c. What other programs or services does your agency provide? How does SHM fit into your agency's overall mission?

2. Program development and start-up

    a. What was the major rationale behind developing a SHM program?
    b. Had your agency operated a similar program before SHM? If so, which program?
    c. Who were the major actors in program development?
    d. Which SHM curriculum did you choose and why?
    e. What were some of the major challenges in program development and implementation? How did you meet those challenges?
    f. Please summarize your program start-up and pilot experiences in the following areas:
        a. Staffing
        b. Training
        c. Curriculum development
        d. MIS issues
        e. Outreach and recruitment
        f. Intake, screening, and eligibility determination
        g. Baseline data collection
        h. Developing extended activities
        i. Developing adjunct services, such as child care or transportation?
        j. Program attendance and retention

5. Intake and eligibility determination

3. Program organization and staffing

a. Do you have an organization chart? If so, may I have a copy?
b. How many staff are engaged in SHM work, by worker category? For example:
    a. Outreach and recruitment worker
    b. Intake worker
    c. Family support worker
    d. Group facilitator
    e. MIS specialist
    f. Activities coordinator
    g. Other
c. What is the typical background of your staff, by worker category?
d. How were workers trained?
e. How much turnover have you had since SHM operations began? Has worker turnover been a problem?

4. Outreach and recruitment

a. Please give me an overview your strategies for outreach and marketing as they are currently playing out in the field. How and why have your strategies changed over time?
b. Which recruitment method has been most successful? Least successful?
c. Who are your major recruitment/referral sources to date?
d. Have you developed (or are there pre-existing) special relationships with referral sources? If so, which sources?
e. What materials are you using to explain the project to applicants? (***Note to interviewer:*** *Bring back copies of all current marketing/referral materials*).
f. Are you using SHM program staff for outreach and recruitment? If so, on average, how much time are your outreach/recruitment workers spending out in the field? If not, who has major responsibility for outreach and recruitment? How has this changed over time?
g. Is your sense that sufficient numbers of potentially eligible couples are learning about SHM to meet your recruitment targets? Are sufficient numbers of potentially eligible couples signing up for the program to make your recruitment targets? If not, why? What do you think can be done to improve the flow of interested couples?

a. Please summarize your program intake procedures, including, for example:
    a. How interested individuals or couples may contact your program;
    b. What times and days are available for intake;
    c. Which and how many staff conduct intake and eligibility;
    d. How you deal with baseline data collection requirements;
    e. Whether and how intake and eligibility determination have changed since program startup;
    f. How are your staff checking to verify that SHM applicants have not already been randomly assigned?
    g. About how often do individuals or couples fail to make appointments for intake? Has this changed over time? What strategies have you adopted to decrease “no-shows” or to follow-up with couples or individuals that fail to appear for a scheduled intake?

6. Domestic violence screening and protocols

a. Have all relevant staff been trained in using the program's screening tool and DV protocol (not the same as the DV 101 that was provided by the local DV partner)?
b. Have you had either ad hoc or regular meetings with your local DV partner since the program began? If so, what is discussed at these meetings?
c. Are intake staff regularly administering the Relationship Screener during intake?
d. Have there been any concerns/problems related to administering the DV screening tool during intake?
e. How have staff screened women for DV after intake?
f. Have there been any concerns/problems related to screening for DV after intake? How have these problems normally been handled?
g. Have any couples been found ineligible for the program because of DV concerns? If so, were the concerns identified during intake or after? What steps were taken? Do you have any concerns about how the situation was handled? If so, what steps have been taken to improve the program's response to a similar situation in the future?
h. Do you feel you and your staff have sufficient support to screen for and respond to DV concerns among the couples you serve? If not, what additional services/technical assistance would be helpful to you?

7. Marriage Education Workshops

a. How many workshops have you conducted since the program started? How many are active now?
b. Have you had much turnover of workshop facilitators? If so, why?
c. What changes have you made to the workshop curriculum since the since the program began, if any? If so, why have you made those changes?
d. What is the typical size of your workshops?
e. What has been the attendance history for your program? For example, approximately how many couples have completed the workshops? Have any workshops had to close down before completion due to poor attendance?
f. What steps are you taking to keep couples engaged in SHM from the time they are informed of their research group status and the beginning of marriage education courses?
    a. Have those strategies been effective?
    b. What proportion of treatment group couples have not appeared at their assigned marriage education classes?
    c. What are your procedures for contacting those couples and involving them in the program?
g. How are make-up sessions being conducted (e.g., one-on-one or small group; at center or in the home)?
h. What are the main concerns and challenges in implementing the marriage education workshops?
i. What technical assistance needs, if any, does the program have with regard to marriage education workshops? Are these being met through ongoing TA from the curriculum developers?

8. Family Support Coordination
    a. Please describe your program's overall approach to Family Support Coordination, for example:
        i. Do Family Support Workers (FSWs) have assigned caseloads, or do they serve couples and families on an availability basis? If they have caseloads, what size?
        ii. How many FSWs do you employ?
        iii. Do FSWs have regularly scheduled meetings with couples? If so, how often? For individuals? If so, how often?
        iv. If FSWs have regularly schedule meetings, do they address a standard set of issues? If so, what are the issues?
        v. On what schedule are FSWs available to SHM participants?
        vi. Do FSWs regularly follow-up on referrals to other programs por services?
    b. What is the professional background of your Family Support Workers?

c. Do you have a sufficient number of family support workers to meet the needs of the couples in the program?
d. Is the family support component working out as you had expected? If not, how and why? How could this component be strengthened?
e. Are there any couple-related events (other than absence at a marriage education workshop) that trigger follow up by the family support worker?
f. What sort of supervision is provided to the family support workers? How is this working out? Is their work monitored or assessed in any way? If so, how?
g. How do the family support workers and the marriage education facilitators keep in touch? Are you satisfied with the degree of collaboration that exists now between the family support staff and marriage education facilitators? If not, what steps are you taking to improve collaboration?
h. What strategies are family support workers using to encourage couples to attend the marriage education workshops regularly? Which strategies are most successful?
i. What are some of the concerns/challenges family support workers express about their work and/or about the couples with whom they work?
j. How do you think the role of the FSW can be improved?

9. Participation Supports
    a. What are the most common types of referrals that family support workers are making?
    b. How are the following participation supports provided:
        i. Child care
        ii. Transportation
        iii. Emergency assistance
        iv. Participation incentives (if used)
    c. Are the supports adequate? What concerns/challenges have come up in administering these supports? Have you changed any administrative processes as a result? Have you changed your approach to supports or changed service providers?
    d. What other supports do you feel might be needed to secure ongoing attendance at workshops and other activities?
    e. If your program includes incentives as participation supports, please provide an overview of the incentives and how they are typically used? Do you feel they have been successful in encouraging participation? If not, why?

10. Extended activities
    a. Please give me an overview of the sorts of Extended Activities your program includes. How have these changed over time?
    b. What Extended Activities has the program sponsored this past month? What do you plan for next month? May I have a copy of your calendar of Extended Activities? (*Please bring back any schedules or calendars of extended activities.)*
    c. Is attendance at the Extended Activities what you expected? If attendance is low, what steps will you take in order to increase attendance?
    d. How are couples most often notified of Extended Activities?
    e. Which sorts of Extended Activities seem most popular with the couples?
    f. What are the main challenges in implementing the Extended Activities component of the program? What strategies do you plan to try to address these challenges?
    g. How important do you feel that Extended Activities are to the goals of the SHM Program?

11. Booster sessions

a. Please give me an overview of the sorts of Extended Activities your program includes. How have these changed over time?
b. What Extended Activities has the program sponsored this past month? What do you plan for next month? May I have a copy of your calendar of Extended Activities? (*Please bring back any schedules or calendars of extended activities.)*
c. Please give me an overview of the Booster Sessions you provide as marriage education course refreshers or to emphasize important lessons. Have these changed over time?
d. What Booster Sessions has the program sponsored this past month? What do you plan for next month? May I have a copy of your calendar of Booster Sessions? (*Please bring back any schedules or calendars of booster sessions.)*
e. Is attendance at the Booster Session what you expected? If attendance is low, what steps will you take in order to increase attendance?
f. How are couples most often notified of Booster Sessions?
g. How important do you feel Booster Sessions are to the success of SHM?

11. Use of MIS

a. Please give me an overview of the sorts of Extended Activities your program includes. How have these changed over time?
b. Are all relevant staff using the MIS appropriately? If not, in what ways are they not using the MIS as planned?
c. Have you had any technical problems with the MIS? If so, what were the problems and how were they solved? What problems remain?
d. Have you and your staff been able to get technical assistance when needed? Has the assistance been adequate?
e. Which MIS reports do you use on a regular basis? Why? Why not others?

13. Overall assessment

a. Which aspects of SHM do you feel are most effective in meeting the program's goals for couples and families?
b. What have been some of the most successful aspects of your program? Least successful?
c. How do you feel SHM should be changed to be more effective?
d. Is there anything else that you would like to share that you think is important for us to know?

SUPPORTING HEALTHY MARRIAGE PROJECT

OMB Control Number: 0970-0299
Expiration Date: 5/31/2009
Research ID: ________________

Agreement to take part in the Supporting Healthy Marriage Study

You are invited to take part in an important project called Supporting Healthy Marriage. This project will study programs to help couples learn how to get along with each other. The programs will also help couples be better parents. They will also help couples get services to improve their employment or health. A research company called MDRC is doing the study. The federal government is paying for the study.

This study is testing ways to help married couples get along.

This study will offer a new program [Local Program] to married couples. [Local program] will not have room for all couples who want to take part. Some couples will get to be part of [Local Program] but some couples will not. We will pick the couples who will get to be part of the [Local program] randomly, like flipping a coin. If we do not pick you, you can still get other services on your own.

If you agree to be in the study, researchers will collect information about you and your children.

The information you share with the study team is important. It could help make these services available to other couples like you. At the start of the study, you and your spouse will be asked to answer some questions in private. These questions will ask you how well you get along with your spouse, how happy or sad you are, and what makes you upset.

If you agree to be in the study, you and your spouse will be interviewed one or more times over the next seven years by a survey company called Abt Associates. Abt Associates is part of the research team for this study. You will be asked about your marriage, how well you are getting along with your spouse, your experiences with [Local program], and your children. You might also be asked to let us do some activities with your children. You do not have to answer any question that you don't want to answer. You will get [gift amount] for each interview.

If you agree to be in the study, [Local Program] program will share information with the research team about the services you get over the next five years as well. We might also collect data from [State] about things like your wages and benefits. We might also collect data from [State] about services your children get, and your children's school test scores.

Taking part in the study is your choice. You may stop being in the study at any time. If you stop being in the study, we will use any information that we have collected before then.

Your Answers Will Be Kept Private

Only the study staff will be able to see information you give them. Your name will never appear in any public document. All the study staff is trained to protect privacy. Information gathered from [State] about you or your children will be marked with a code number, not names. We also have a Confidentiality Certificate (CC) from the US government that adds special protection for the research information about you. It says we do not have to identify you, even under a court order or subpoena.

Still, if keeping your answers private would put you, someone else or your child in serious danger, then we will have to tell government agencies to protect you or the other person. And, the government may see your information if it audits us.

Consent to Take Part in the Supporting Healthy Marriage Study

I understand that:

- [Local Program] will not have room for all couples. A random selection process will decide if I can get [Local Program] services.
- If I cannot get [Local Program] services, I will still be part of the study. I can still get other program services in our community.
- I will be contacted by the study team later for an interview. Some of the questions will be about personal things and my feelings. I can refuse to answer any question.
- The study team might use my name or Social Security number to collect data from government agencies.
- All information will be kept confidential, except as required by law or if I request otherwise in writing. However, if a person on the study team or in the program feels that keeping information confidential would result in danger to me or another person, they will have to tell appropriate agencies to protect me or the other person.

I agree to:

- Allow a random selection process to decide if I can get [Local Program] services.
- Answer some questions now and give the study team information about how to reach me for an interview later.
- Let the study team collect information on [Local Program] services that I receive.
- Let state and local agencies give information about me to the study team.
- Let the study team collect information about my children from me and from sources like state and local agencies.
- Allow schools to release my children's test scores.

I can call [NAME OF PERSON] toll-free at [TELEPHONE NUMBER] at MDRC to ask any questions I may have or to ask about not being part of the study anymore.

Participant

____
Name of Participant (Printed)

________________________________ ______________________
Signature of Participant Date

____
Name of Person Administering this Form (Printed)

________________________________ ______________________
Signature of Person Administering this Form Date