

Name:  
Head Start center where coach works:  
Program model:  
Teachers coached:  
Date:

## Head Start CARES: Coach Interview Discussion Guide

### ***Introductory script:***

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and as you know we are conducting the Head Start CARES study and evaluating the implementation of **<program model>**. The purpose of the implementation study is to help inform replication in the field and help interpret the impact of **<program model>**. Your experience and opinions are very important to us, and we want to thank you for taking the time to speak with us.

We would like to understand more about what coaching is all about – how you conduct the coaching sessions, your assessment of what is effective, and the role of coaching in how teachers use **<program model>** in their classrooms. We would also like for you to share your thoughts on the role of organizational structure in implementing **<program model>**, as well as what future coaches need to know in order to be successful.

Your comments will remain confidential, and we will not quote your name in any publications or presentations about this project. Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

**Transition:** *First I'd like to discuss teachers' experiences with <program model>.*

### **I. Program Model**

1. What do you see as the three most important elements of **<program model>**?
2. Are there certain elements of **<program model>** that teachers in general find easier to implement? Please explain.
  - a. Do you find that teachers do these elements more often as a result?
3. Are there elements of **<program model>** that teachers in general find especially challenging to implement? Please explain.
  - a. Do you find that teachers do these elements less often as a result?
4. From your observations, how easily does **<program model>** fit into the core Head Start curriculum of the center where you work?

Name:  
Head Start center where coach works:  
Program model:  
Teachers coached:  
Date:

- a. Are there factors that make it easier or harder to fit *<program model>* into the core Head Start curriculum—e.g., teacher characteristics, student characteristics, program model components? Please explain.
5. Across all teachers you coach, how common were adaptations to *<program model>*?
6. What factors necessitated the need for them to adapt *<program model>* (e.g., time constraints, age appropriateness for the children served)?
  - a. Please give a few examples of common teacher adaptations.
  - b. Overall, what is your assessment of adaptations? Do they enhance or compromise the quality of the program? Please explain.
7. What was your role in helping teachers/assistant teachers adapt the program? Please provide an example.

**Transition:** *Next, I'd like to discuss the coaching sessions that you have with teachers and assistant teachers.*

## II. Coaching

1. What role does coaching play in the implementation of *<program model>*? Please give examples.
2. In what areas do teachers/teaching assistants need the most help or guidance?
3. What accounts for the variation in how often you meet with teachers?
  - a. What factors account for you spending more time with teachers (e.g., teachers need more help implementing, teacher characteristics, other factors)?
  - b. What factors account for you spending less time with teachers (e.g., scheduling conflicts, teacher characteristics, other factors)?
4. What accounts for the variation in coaching methods?

Name:  
Head Start center where coach works:  
Program model:  
Teachers coached:  
Date:

- a. Are there teacher characteristics or other factors that affect the type of coaching per teacher?
5. How frequently do you make adaptations to the way you coach?
  - a. What generally is the impetus for adaptations?
  - b. How do you use teacher/assistant teacher feedback to adapt the coaching sessions?
6. How proactive are teachers/assistant teachers in telling you what they need help with?
  - a. How do you encourage open lines of communication?
7. What characteristics of the coach/teacher relationship affects how teachers implement *<program model>* in the classroom?
  - a. Teacher/teaching assistant comfortable raising questions and concerns about how to use *<program model>*?
  - b. Mutual respect?
  - c. Other?
8. Is there anything about the coaching sessions you think has been more effective in helping teachers implement *<program model>*? Please provide an example.
9. Is there anything about the coaching sessions you think has been less effective in helping teachers implement *<program model>*? Please provide an example.
10. Is there anything you would change about the coaching sessions? Please explain.

**Transition:** *Now let's talk about how your trainer/mentor helps you coach effectively.*

### **III.Trainer Mentoring**

1. Please tell me about the mentoring sessions with your trainer.

Name:  
Head Start center where coach works:  
Program model:  
Teachers coached:  
Date:

- a. What do you discuss during the sessions? Please provide some examples.
  - i. How do you determine what you talk about?
- b. How are these sessions structured?
  - i. Has this changed over time? If so, why?
2. Tell me about the relationship you have with your trainer/mentor in general.
  - a. Are you comfortable raising questions and concerns about how your coaching is going? Please explain.
  - b. Does s/he listen to your questions and concerns? Please explain.
  - c. Is there mutual respect? If not, please explain.
  - d. How open are you to his/her feedback? Please explain.
  - e. Does the quality of your relationship affect how you coach teachers in *<program model>*? If so, how?
3. How has the mentoring you receive from your trainer/mentor helped you coach? Please provide examples.
  - a. Has trainer/mentor feedback changed your understanding of *<program model>*? If so, how?
4. Are there areas or examples of mentoring that have been less effective in helping you coach? Please explain.
5. Is there anything that you would change about the sessions with your trainer/mentor? Please explain.
6. What feedback do you provide to your trainer/mentor about your sessions?
  - a. Is s/he open to your feedback?
7. What feedback do you receive from the trainer's classroom observations of teacher performance?

Name:  
Head Start center where coach works:  
Program model:  
Teachers coached:  
Date:

- a. How do you integrate this feedback into your coaching sessions?

**Transition:** *The next few questions relate to the interaction of staff in the classroom and the effect on <program model> implementation.*

#### **IV. Teaching Dyad and Implementation**

1. How did the teacher/teaching assistant relationships influence delivery of <program model>?
  - a. In what ways has the teacher/teaching assistant relationship enhanced the successful implementation of <program model>?
  - b. In what ways has the teacher/teaching assistant relationship detracted the successful implementation of <program model>?

**Transition:** *Now let's talk about how the center and classrooms are run and the effect that this has on the way that <program model> is implemented.*

#### **V. Organizational Factors**

1. What priority does this center place on teaching social-emotional development to preschoolers? Please explain.
2. In your view, is <program model> a priority at this center? Please explain.
3. Has the center director set clear expectations with regard to teacher implementation of <program model>?
  - a. Please tell me about how supervisors monitor how much time teachers spend implementing <program model>.
4. Does the center director support teachers in their implementation of <program model>? Please explain.
5. Have you received support from Center staff? If so, what kinds of support, and from whom?
6. What organizational supports, if any, do you need in order to be an effective coach?

Name:  
Head Start center where coach works:  
Program model:  
Teachers coached:  
Date:

7. Have you experienced challenges working with Center staff? If so, what sorts of challenges, and with whom?
8. What's your perception of the work climate at this center?
  - a. How well do staff get along?
  - b. How well do they work together?
9. Are there other organizational factors that have influenced the implementation of *<program model>*? If so:
  - a. What were these issues?
  - b. How did they arise?
  - c. How were they addressed?

## **VI. Additional Comments**

1. Is there anything else that you would like to add regarding your experiences as a coach implementing *<program model>*?
2. Do you have any advice or suggestions for coaches that will implement *<program model>* in the future?
3. Do you have any other general comments, concerns, or suggestions?

### ***Closing script:***

On behalf of the Head Start CARES evaluation team, we'd like to thank you for your time and efforts in helping to evaluate the implementation of *<program model>*.