

Q-CCIIT Study  
Focus Group Guide for Parents, Technical Assistance Providers, and  
Caregivers

**Introduction (read to participants): See Appendix below**

**QCCIIT Focus Group Discussion Topics:**

All focus groups will cover the same main topics. Questions will be structured to be relevant to a particular group, for example, parents will be asked about what they'd like to see in their child's caregiver, caregivers will ask what they do and what they consider best practice, and TA providers will be asked what they see in classrooms.

**General Discussion about Caregiver-Child Interactions**

**Construct Face Validity**

Participants will then be asked to talk about the behaviors associated with each of the constructs of the Q-CCIIT measure:

**1) Support for Emotional Development**

Focus group moderators will ask participants to identify behaviors associated with helping children to feel good about themselves and manage their emotions, such as how a caregiver responds to a child who is crying or frustrated and how caregivers deal with individual differences. We expect discussion of sensitive and responsive caregiving and will probe for descriptions of those behaviors.

**2) Support for Positive Social Development**

Focus group moderators will ask participants to discuss behaviors that are associated with caregivers who support positive peer interactions as well as positive relationships with adults. Moderators will probe for answers related to the physical environment of the classroom as well as the types of interactions that caregivers try to foster at different ages.

**3) Support for Self-Regulation and Behavior Guidance**

Focus group moderators will ask participants how caregivers can best provide support for children's ability to regulate behavior (including sleeping and eating) and positive behavioral development. Participants will also be asked about behaviors that negatively affect behavior.

**4) Support for Language Development**

Focus group moderators will ask participants how caregivers support children's language development. For example, parents will be asked how an ideal caregiver would encourage their child's language use.

### **5) Support for Cognitive Development (Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Learning)**

Focus group moderators will ask participants how caregivers support children's cognitive development. For example, caregivers will be asked what kinds of activities they provide for children of varying cognitive levels to help them to explore and learn about their world.

### **6) Ideal interactions**

Participants will be asked to describe what an ideal caregiver-child interaction looks like. Parents will be asked if there were no constraints in terms of time, money, or location, what would be the ideal interactions that a caregiver for their child would engage in? Caregivers will be asked about what ideal interactions look like in their classroom when there are no constraints (such as schedules, administration, etc.)? TA providers will be asked what an ideal caregiver-child interaction would look like in a classroom they were working with.

### **7) Interpreting Negative Interactions: Harshness**

Along with the positive or ideal interactions that caregivers often have with children, sometimes, there are times when a caregiver can be harsh toward an infant or toddler in their care. Participants will be asked what harshness would mean to them in the context of a caregiver-child interaction. Participants will be asked to discuss interactions they have been a part of or have seen that they think would be considered harsh.

### **ACTIVITY: Ordering of Behavioral Descriptors**

Participants will be provided with a list of the behavioral anchors for Q-CCIIT items and asked to order them from the most desired practices/descriptions to the least acceptable. This will enable us to determine if their perceptions are consistent with our planned ranking of the descriptors. After they complete the task, the group will discuss any items that were difficult to put into an order as well as any additional differences that they have observed in the manifestation of these characteristics at different levels.

### **Wrap Up**

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with me today. Your contribution is very helpful. Is there anything else you would like to add before we end the discussion?

### **Participant SAQ**

Participants will be asked to fill out a short demographic questionnaire. See instruments Parent Focus Group Demographic Questionnaire, Caregiver

Focus Group Demographic Questionnaire, and Training and Technical Assistance Provider Focus Group Demographic Questionnaire.

**APPENDIX**  
**FOCUS GROUP INTRODUCTION SCRIPTS**

## **QUALITY OF CAREGIVER-CHILD INTERACTIONS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS FOCUS GROUP INTRODUCTION FOR PARENTS**

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this discussion. Your participation is very important to the project. I'm (\_\_\_\_\_), and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, an independent policy research organization.

We are conducting a project for the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to develop a new observational assessment to help practitioners and researchers understand the quality of child care settings. Today we want to talk to parents about what you see as important ways caregivers in child care settings interact with infants and toddlers to help them grow. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Any information we collect is confidential. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed here, but we will not indicate who said something or which specific programs were discussed, and nobody will be quoted by name. We will use the information you provide us with to help improve the observational assessment we are developing. If you have any questions about this project and your participation, please contact Shannon Monahan, the survey director, at (609) 275-2207. If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please call Margo Campbell, a representative of the Institutional Review Board at Public/Private Ventures, toll free at 1-800-757-4778.

I am going to moderate the discussion. It is really important for everyone to speak up so we can have a lively and informative discussion. Here are just a few guidelines we would like to follow to help the session go smoothly.

We ask that you respect each other's point of view. There are no right or wrong answers. You know best what your child needs—we want to learn from you.

It will be helpful if you speak one at a time, so everyone has a chance to talk.

We have many topics to cover during the discussion. At times, I may need to move the conversation along to be sure we cover everything.

We want you to know that being part of this discussion is up to you, and you can choose not to answer a question if you wish. Your participation is voluntary.

I would like to record our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one besides our research team will listen to the recording. We also ask that you not repeat any of the discussion you've heard after you leave today.

If you want to say anything that you don't want recorded, please let me know, and I will be glad to pause the recorder. Does anybody have any objections to being part of this focus group or to my recording our discussion?

The discussion will last about 2 hours, and we will not take any formal breaks. But please feel free to get up at any time if you need to. At the end, we will have a short questionnaire for you to fill out to give us information about yourself (such as your child's age, your race or ethnicity, and the type of child care you use). This information will help us be sure we have a wide variety of views being shared. The questionnaire is voluntary, and you can choose not to answer particular questions on it. As a token of our appreciation for your participation today, you will receive a \$25 gift card.

Once again, thank you for coming today. Are there any questions before we get started?

## **QUALITY OF CAREGIVER-CHILD INTERACTIONS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS FOCUS GROUP INTRODUCTION FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS**

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this discussion. Your participation is very important to the project. I'm (\_\_\_\_\_), and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, an independent policy research organization.

We are conducting a project for the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to develop a new observational assessment to help practitioners and researchers understand the quality of child care settings. Today we want to talk to child care providers about what you see as important ways caregivers in child care settings interact with infants and toddlers to help them grow. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Any information we collect is confidential. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed here, but we will not indicate who said something or which specific programs were discussed, and nobody will be quoted by name. We will use the information you provide us with to help improve the observational assessment we are developing. If you have any questions about this project and your participation, please contact Shannon Monahan, the survey director, at (609) 275-2207. If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please call Margo Campbell, a representative of the Institutional Review Board at Public/Private Ventures, toll free at 1-800-757-4778.

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Once again, thank you for coming today. Are there any questions before we get started?

**QUALITY OF CAREGIVER-CHILD INTERACTIONS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS FOCUS  
GROUP INTRODUCTION FOR TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS**

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this discussion. Your participation is very important to the project. I'm (\_\_\_\_\_), and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, an independent policy research organization.

We are conducting a project for the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to develop a new observational assessment to help practitioners and researchers understand the quality of child care settings. Today we want to talk to training and technical assistance providers about what you see as important ways caregivers in child care settings interact with infants and toddlers to help them grow. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. Any information we collect is confidential. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed here, but we will not indicate who said something or which specific programs were discussed, and nobody will be quoted by name. We will use the information you provide us with to help improve the observational assessment we are developing. If you have any questions about this project and your participation, please contact Shannon Monahan, the survey director, at (609) 275-2207. If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please call Margo Campbell, a representative of the Institutional Review Board at Public/Private Ventures, toll free at 1-800-757-4778.

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We ask that you respect each other's point of view. There are no right or wrong answers. You are the experts working with caregivers—we want to learn from you.

It will be helpful if you speak one at a time, so everyone has a chance to talk.

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