

APPENDIX B

YDD Materials to Be Used in Contacting Sites

OMB Control No.: 0970-0356
Expiration Date: 01/31/2015

Draft initial e-mail

Dear [name],

I'm _____ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research/Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, an independent social policy research center.

We are conducting a study for the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Research at the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Human Services. The study's main goal is to develop a research-based conceptual framework that could be applied to existing or new ACF programs for at-risk youth. The framework focuses on improving the workforce career trajectories of youth to increase their ability to become self-sufficient and avoid public assistance (e.g., through education and work opportunities), and to promote their well-being and adult outcomes. The framework will inform ACF decisions about possible demonstrations and evaluations of innovative approaches to improving youth outcomes. The target population for this project is youth at risk of not becoming self-sufficient as they transition to adulthood. I have attached a description of the project.

We identified your program as one that includes some of the elements or practices included in the conceptual framework we are developing. We would like to talk with you about the possibility of two members of our team visiting your program. The purpose of the visit would be to talk with administrative and front-line staff about the conceptual framework. We are interested in learning whether implementation of programs based on the framework is feasible and makes sense from the perspective of youth program providers.

I would like to speak with you, or someone else in your organization, about our project, your program, and the possibility of our team visiting your program. An initial 30 minute conference call would enable me to describe the project to you in greater detail, learn more about your current program offerings, and address any questions you may have. Your participation in this discussion is voluntary, and if you decide to participate, you can choose not to answer a question if you wish.

Would you please let me know if your organization is interested in speaking with me? If so, what is the easiest way to schedule a 30 minute conference call?

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at [insert e-mail address].

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Project Description [to be attached to initial e-mail and shared in hard copy at start of interview]

ACF YOUTH DEMONSTRATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Youth are a population of interest in many efforts sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The Runaway and Homeless Youth program and the Chafee Independent Living program are examples of ACF's keen interest in promoting the positive development of youth, particularly those at high risk; others include programs for young fathers, youth with an incarcerated parent, pregnant and parenting teens, and youth living in communities with high levels of TANF receipt. The Youth Demonstration Development Project will identify, modify, or develop one or more research-based conceptual frameworks that could be applied to existing or new ACF programs for at-risk youth. These frameworks will focus on improving the workforce career trajectories of youth to increase their ability to become self-sufficient and avoid dependence on public assistance as adults (e.g., through education and work opportunities), and to promote their well-being and adult outcomes. The frameworks will inform ACF decisions about possible demonstrations and evaluations of innovative approaches to improving youth outcomes. The target population for this project is youth at risk of not becoming self-sufficient as they transition to adulthood.

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation at ACF has contracted with Mathematica Policy Research and its subcontractor, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, to carry out the project. Key project tasks include:

- Meetings with federal program staff to identify needs, interests, and opportunities, and to ensure that frameworks can be translated into program logic models and implemented
- Synthesis of the research literature on youth development in at-risk populations, information on interventions, and assessment of programmatic resources
- Development of up to six research-based conceptual frameworks focused on approaches to improving youth career trajectories and well-being
- Consultations with a technical advisory workgroup composed of experts in youth development research, policy, and practice
- Meetings and focus groups with key stakeholders to obtain feedback on draft frameworks
- Recommendations for programmatic interventions and methods for rigorous evaluation

For more information, contact:

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Draft Initial Conference Call

I am [name] from [organization]. Also joining me on this call from our research team is [name] from [organization].

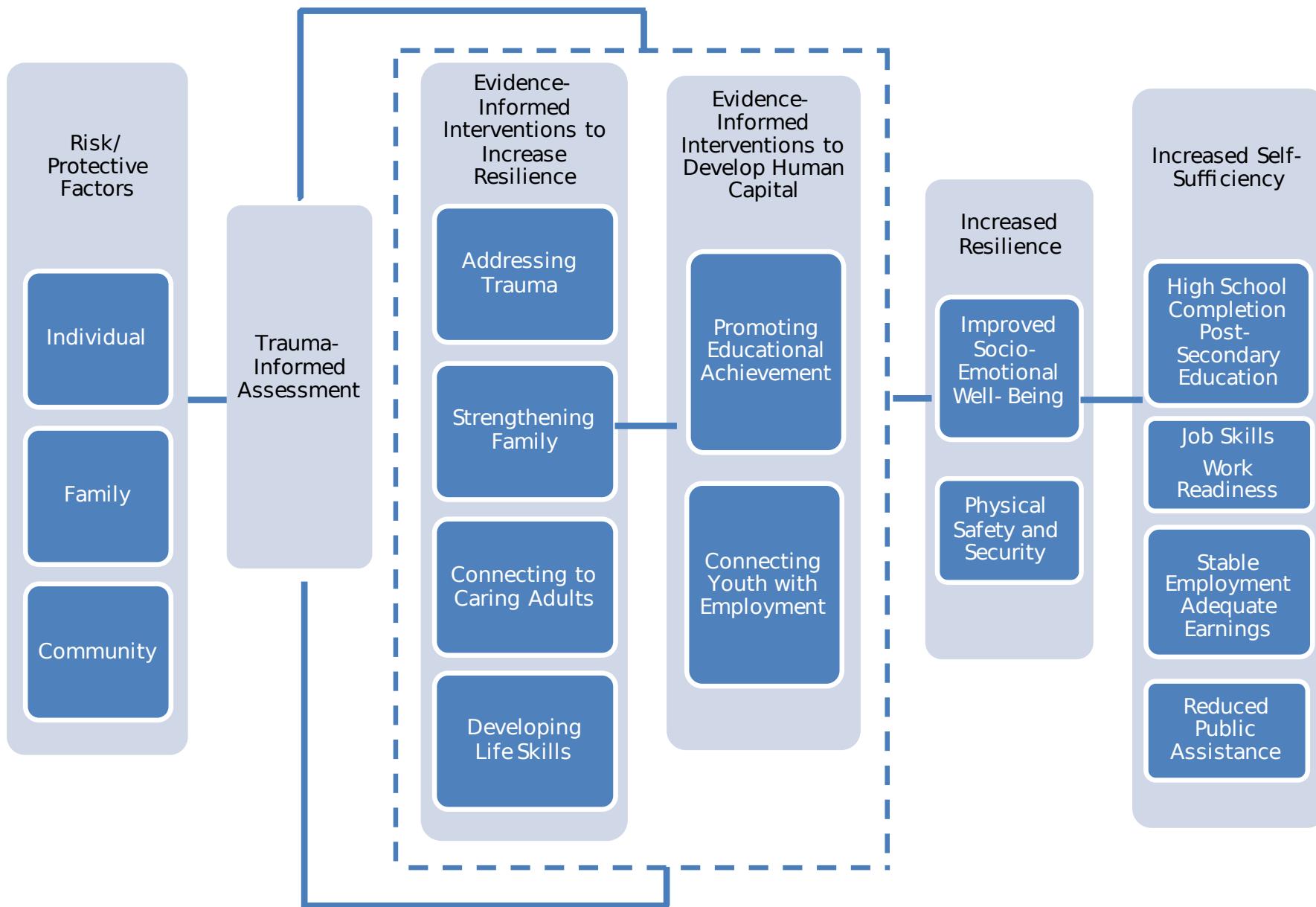
Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. Is this still a good time to talk with you about ACF's Youth Demonstration Development project? As mentioned earlier, the conversation should be about 30 minutes.

As I mentioned in the e-mail sent on [date], we are conducting a study sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families within the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation has contracted with us to develop a conceptual framework that could be applied to existing or new ACF programs for at-risk youth. This framework will focus on improving the workforce career trajectories of youth to increase their ability to become self-sufficient and avoid public assistance (e.g., through education and work opportunities), and to promote their well-being and adult outcomes. The framework will inform ACF decisions about possible demonstrations and evaluations of innovative approaches to improving youth outcomes. The target population for this project is youth at risk of not becoming self-sufficient as they transition to adulthood.

Your program was identified by our research team as serving at-risk youth and as incorporating some of the elements and practices in our conceptual framework. We'd like to learn more about your program, and if you are interested, visit your program. Before we finalize the conceptual framework, we want to learn whether the implementation of programs based on the framework is feasible and makes sense from the perspective of youth program providers.

Topics for Discussion:

1. Addressing questions about the project, including a brief discussion on the draft conceptual framework.
2. Learning more about current program operations. We will review available information prior to the call to facilitate this discussion. The program will be asked to describe the key components as the program is currently operating and currently participating youth.
3. Describing the site visit
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Duration and Staff Visiting
 - c. What is needed from the program
4. Arranging next steps – an additional conference call to determine timing of site visit



DRAFT CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

ACF Youth Development Demonstration Project