

## DOMAINS OF INTEREST FOR PROCESS STUDY

The discussion guides are divided into program domains and provide a checklist of general topics to cover – not all are applicable to all sites. Depending on the nature and time allotment for each discussion, we will most likely not cover all topics with one individual. For example, we will focus more on staffing structure and management practices in our discussions with program managers and more on client engagement and service delivery in our discussions with program staff. The following are the topic guides that will be adapted to the research for a particular site and program model, and build on the information that has already been obtained during the pilot phase and start-up.

### **1. Local Environment and Linkages**

#### *Subtopics:*

- Existing service mix in the community or communities served by the YTD project.
- Linkages between organization and other organizations in the community.
- Nature of the linkages between organization and local employers.

#### *Discussions with:*

- Executive Director and Administrators
- Project Directors
- Partner organizations and other community service providers

### **2. History and Experience of Sponsoring Organization**

#### *Subtopics:*

- History and mission of the organization.
- Prior experience serving youth and adults with and without disabilities.
- Origins of the YTD program.

#### *Discussions with:*

- Executive Director and Administrators

### **3. Program Structure and Staffing**

#### *Subtopics:*

- Description of the program structure (e.g. role of partner organizations, organizational and management structure, etc.).
- Description of project budget and funding.
- Description of roles and qualifications of program staff.

*Discussions with:*

- Project Directors and Supervisors

#### **4. Program Outreach and Recruitment**

*Subtopics:*

- Description of the strategies or methods used to recruit participants for the program.
- Description of how successful programs were in recruiting participants for the program.
- Description of any major challenges in recruiting participants.
- Description of the level of effort required by staff to recruit participants.
- Reasons youth or their parents gave staff for refusing to participate in the program.

*Discussions with:*

- Project Directors and Supervisors
- Program Staff

#### **5. Participants**

*Subtopics:*

- Description of the characteristics of the youth served (e.g. age, disability, etc.).
- Description of the characteristics of the youths' families if services are provided to them as well.
- Description of the typical transition goals of participants.
- Participant perspective of program services and satisfaction with services.

*Discussions with:*

- Project Directors and Supervisors
- Program Staff
- Participants

#### **6. Program Operations and Services**

*Subtopics:*

- Description of program services and activities offered by program (e.g. one on one services, group activities, etc.).
- Description of role in delivering services and activities.
- Current service delivery compared to intended services as originally conceptualized.

- Detailed description of delivery of specific program components (e.g. employment issues and services, benefits counseling, education, youth empowerment, family support, health and social service needs, asset accumulation, waivers, etc.).

*Discussions with:*

- Executive Director and Administrators
- Project Directors and Supervisors
- Program Staff
- Partner organizations

## **7. Partnerships and Linkages**

*Subtopics:*

- Description of outside organizations that also provide services to YTD participants and the types of services provided.
- Description of the nature of the relationship with outside organizations.

*Discussions with:*

- Project Directors and Supervisors
- Program Staff

## **8. Lessons Learned**

*Subtopics:*

- Experience with ETO, the MIS used by YTD projects to track program services.
- Description of major challenges and successes of the YTD project.
- Recommendations for replicating the YTD project.

*Discussions with:*

- Executive Director and Administrators
- Project Directors and Supervisors
- Program Staff

Youth Transition Demonstration  
Focus Group Interview Guides  
**Youth with Disabilities**  
In-transition youth

Our goal today is to learn about what you are doing now that you are done with high school, what your goals are and what help you will need to achieve them. This may seem a long way away right now, but we are interested in hearing about whatever you have been thinking in terms of your future. Your answers will be an important contribution to our study of programs that help young people as they become adults.

Let me give you a few group rules before we start. Today we will be asking some questions about your thoughts and experiences. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. We want you to talk to each other. You don't always have to talk to me. Whatever you think, feel or have experienced is OK to share but please be courteous and have respect for what other people say in the group. Everyone is encouraged to participate. If someone else is speaking please allow them to finish before answering. I want to remind you that your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. If you are uncomfortable or need to leave for any reason, feel free to excuse yourself.

Today's session will be recorded, but note that each individual's comments will be kept private. Your real name and characteristics will not be used in any report made from this interview. Also, we need you to respect the privacy of other people in the group, so please don't talk about anything people say in here once you leave. Again, please share your honest opinions and thoughts on each of the questions.

1. ICEBREAKER: Let's have everyone introduce themselves and tell us what you're doing now that you're finished with high school.
  - a. If you're in school, tell us what you study and why you're interested in this subject.
    - i. What do you hope to do with this? (take note of a few goals mentioned here)
    - ii. Do you know anyone with a disability like you who studied this?
  - b. If you're working, tell us what kind of work are you doing?
    - i. How did you get this job?
    - ii. Is this the type of career you are ultimately interested in doing? (take note of a few goals mentioned here)
    - iii. Do you know anyone with a disability like you who does this kind of work?
  - c. If you're not going to school or working, what are you up to?
    - i. Are you planning on going to school or working later on?
2. Is school or work what you hoped it would be?
  - a. How is it different from what you expected?
3. Have you received any assistance like an aide, medical care, or adaptive devices, —from any source—that has made your transition to adulthood easier?
  - a. What kind?

Youth Transition Demonstration  
Focus Group Interview Guides  
**Youth with Disabilities**  
In-transition youth

- b. Are there things you used to get help with that you don't any longer? Like what?
  - c. Are there things that you'd like to get help with that you still haven't received?
  - d. If you receive support from the government, can you keep getting this assistance after you go to work and start earning money?
4. So let's take (take a specific educational or work-related goal mentioned above), what do you guys think it would take to reach that goal? (If time: DO THIS TWICE)
- a. What kind of help will he/she need to get there?
    - i. PROBES: financial, emotional, skills training, tutoring, help finding a job
    - ii. Who do you think might help him/her get there? [Get other ideas from the group]
  - b. Do any of you know of any programs or assistance, based on having a disability that could help?
    - i. Can you get help going to or paying for your doctor?
    - ii. Can you get help getting a job or thinking about going to work?
    - iii. Can you get any help in meeting your living expenses? Tell me about that. [Ask what it's called, what the program requirements are, etc.]
5. How hard or easy do you think it will be for you to live independently, work and support yourself someday?
- a. Do your parents help you think about your future?
    - i. How do they help you?
    - ii. Do your parents have goals for you that are different from your own?
      - 1. How do you deal with this?
  - b. Do any other people help you?
    - i. How do they help you achieve your goals?
    - ii. Do they have goals for you that are different from your own?
      - 1. How do you deal with this?

If time:

6. If you had \$1,000 to spend on something that would help you build your future, how would you spend it?
7. Do you want to be in a relationship or be married and have a family someday?
- a. Do you think that's what your parents want for you?
  - b. Can you think of any ways you could get help with these personal goals?

**Youth Transition Demonstration  
Focus Group Interview Guide  
Parents of youth with disabilities**

We will be asking you all in this group setting a few questions about your thoughts and experiences as parents of children with disabilities. We know that parents have a unique – often the best – understanding of their children’s future needs, and therefore your answers will be an important contribution to our study of programs that help young people as they become adults.

We want you to talk to each other. You don’t always have to talk to me. We expect that some of the best ideas will come from you responding to one another. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Whatever you think, feel or have experienced is OK to share.

Everyone is encouraged to participate. If someone else is speaking please allow them to finish before answering. I want to remind you that your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. If you are uncomfortable or need to leave for any reason, feel free to excuse yourself.

Today’s session will be recorded, but note that each individual's comments will be kept confidential. Your real name and characteristics will not be used in any report made from this interview. Again, please share your honest opinions and thoughts on each of the questions.

1. Please introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about the child that brought you to this group today.
  - a. Is your child still in high school or have they finished?
  - b. What is your child’s disability?
2. For those parents with children still at home with them, do you think your child will be able to support him/herself and live independently someday?
  - a. If yes, what will make this possible? Have you had any help from any agency so far? Has it been helpful?
  - b. If not, what prevents this?
  - c. Do you talk about this with your child?
3. For parents with children who are on their own, can you tell us what made that possible?
4. In either case, are you aware of any programs or incentives that encourage youth with disabilities to go to work?
  - a. Do you have any experience with this or where did you hear about this?
  - b. Do you have an opinion about how helpful or needed they are?
5. Do you think your child will need:
  - cash disability benefits as he/she gets older?
  - medical benefits as he/she gets older?
  - a. In either case, are you concerned that working might cause your child to lose or not qualify for cash disability or medical benefits?

**Youth Transition Demonstration  
Focus Group Interview Guide  
Parents of youth with disabilities**

IF time:

6. In an ideal world, what sorts of supports and services would be available to your child to help him or her work and live as independently as possible?
  - a. What is missing from the current system?
  - b. What could fill the service gaps?
  
7. If you currently receive cash or medical benefits for your child, are you concerned about the age 18 re-determination?
  - a. Will you have to adjust if your child begins to work and becomes more independent?
  - b. How will this affect your household?