Name:
Center:
Program Model:
Date:

Head Start CARES: Center Staff Interview Discussion Guide
(Education Coordinator, Mental Health Consultant, Disabilities Coordinator)

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 your experiences with **<*program model*>**. 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?

I.   Please tell me about yourself

1. How long have you been working for this Grantee/Delegate Agency?

2. What are your specific job duties?

3. Have you always worked in the same role/capacity? If not, what other roles have you had?

4. How many centers do you work across? How many of these centers are currently participating in the Head Start CARES study?

Transition: *Now, let's talk more specifically about the centers where you work that are participating in the Head Start CARES study.*

II.   Organizational Structure

1. What is your interaction with the staff at these centers?

   a. How often do you collaborate with or work closely with teachers? What is the nature of collaboration?

   b. How often to you collaborate with or work with other staff?

   c. What's your perception of the organizational climate at this center? By organizational climate we mean how engaged staff

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are in their jobs and the degree of cooperation among co-workers and administrators.

   i. How well do staff get along?

   ii. How well do they work together?

   d. (**For staff who work across centers**): Does this vary across centers?

2. In your view, how open is the Center Director to staff's ideas about new procedures or changes in center operations? Please explain.

3. How much autonomy do staff have in carrying out their job responsibilities?

   a. Do staff decisions typically have to be reviewed by someone else?

Transition: *Now I'd like for us to talk about social-emotional development and the program models implemented as part of the Head Start CARES study.*

III.   Social Emotional Development and Head Start CARES

1. How much emphasis do you think should be placed on social-emotional development? Would you say "more than academic preparedness," "as much as academic preparedness," or "less than academic preparedness?" Please explain.

2. How does enhancing social emotional development in preschoolers align with your job duties?

3. What do you know about the Head Start CARES study? That is, what has been your exposure to the study to date?

4. What role do you play in the implementation of the program model(s)?

5. What are the program model(s) that are being implemented at the center(s) where you work?

6. How often do you hear about the program or receive updates (formal or informal)? How is information communicated to you?

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7. How does Head Start CARES fit in with the priorities at the center(s) where you work?

8. Relative to the other requirements of your Head Start program, what priority does the Center director place on using *<program model>*? Please explain.

Transition: *Now, let's discuss the centers that are participating in the Head Start CARES study.*

IV.   Effect of Implementing Program Models

1. What role have you played in implementing the program models?

2. How has implementation of the program models changed your day-to-day work?

    a. Does this vary by center? By program model? If so, how?

3. One a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being "Much Easier" and 1 being "Much More Difficult", what effect has the program models had on your day-to-day job?

4. Have any adjustments been made to organizational structure and roles specifically to promote the implementation of the program models, such as alignment of internal organizational systems to facilitate and support the work of teachers, coordinators?

    a. Does this vary by center? By program model? Please explain.

Transition: *Now I'd like for us to talk about each program model.*

V.   Assessment of Program Models

For each program model that you work with:

1. What is your overall opinion of the program model? What aspects of the model do you particularly like? Are there any aspects that you dislike?

2. How would you rate the program model in terms of:

    a. Fostering children's social emotional development? Please explain.

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      b. Appropriateness for the children you work with (e.g., special needs, disabilities, cultural appropriateness)? Please explain.

      c. The effect on the classroom environment in which it is implemented (e.g., children's social behavior, teacher classroom management)? Please explain.

      d. The number of children referred to you? Please explain.

3. Has anything happened this year in your community that may have affected the implementation of Head Start CARES? If so, please explain.

4. Are there other issues 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?

      d. How, if at all, are volunteers involved in the delivery of *<program model>*?

VI.   Additional Comments

1. Do you have any other general comments, concerns, or suggestions?

Closing script:

On behalf of the Head Start CARES evaluation team, I'd like to thank you for your time and efforts.