

Capacity Building Collaborative

Focus Group - Interview Protocol

Draft: 1/9/15

Purpose of Focus Group: To learn more about the needs of child welfare professionals and jurisdictions.

How the information will be used: To inform and improve the services (products, training opportunities, technical assistance) provided by the Capacity Building Collaborative.

Participants: State and local public and private child welfare agency staff; university faculty; representatives of national child welfare organizations.

Contact Method(s): Initial email to invite participation; follow-up phone call as necessary; interviews and focus group(s) via teleconference or face-to-face.

FOCUS GROUP OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTIONS: (5 minutes)

Introduce the focus group facilitators and their roles. The facilitators <insert name(s)> will provide a brief introduction to the Capacity Building Collaborative and introduce their specific Center and their role within the Center. The facilitator will explain that this focus group is an opportunity to gather information to inform the development of products, peer networks, and learning experiences offered across the Collaborative and within the Center. The facilitator will explain that there are no wrong answers—this is an opportunity to share and learn. The only limitation is to help us to stay on time in order to cover all of the questions.

Facilitator will state: “Your participation in the focus group is voluntary and confidential. Any input gathered will not be attributed to you individually, but will be combined with others’ comments for a fuller picture of the issues. We will use this information to guide and improve our services, not disseminate our findings to the public. Please let me know if there are any concerns about this process.”

The facilitator will conduct introductions with the statement: “Before we get started, let’s see who’s participating and introduce ourselves. We would like everyone to briefly introduce themselves and tell us your name, title, what agency or organization you work for, and State you work in. I’ll start. My name is _____, and I’m with the Capacity-Building Collaborative.”

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS (60 minutes):

1. What are the pressing issues facing <insert name of group/jurisdiction/audience>? Why?
Probe questions:
 - What issues are you dealing with right now that would benefit from resources and development of knowledge and skills?
 - What emerging trends and issues should be addressed?
 - What are some of the gaps in available training and technical assistance?
2. What are the goals and outcomes you would like to see for <insert name of group/jurisdiction/audience>?

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Probe questions:

- *What supports do _____ need to support change?*
- *In order to attain outcomes, what do people need to know and do differently?*
- *What kinds of barriers related to climate and culture impact the ability to attain this outcome?*
- *How can ICWA implementation be supported? (State child welfare managers)*

3. Who are the target audience(s) within this group to help achieve the desired outcomes?

Probe questions:

- *Specifically, what levels of staff?*
- *Are there multiple audiences? What are their needs?*
- *Should the approach be different for different levels of staff? How?*
- *What is the best format to receive training and technical assistance?*
- *Have members of this target audience participated in capacity building efforts in the past? If so, what challenges/barriers did they face in previous efforts?*

4. What are the best methods to reach these audiences?

Probe questions:

- *What methods have been most/least successful in the past?*
- *Are there any technological considerations?*
- *What has been your experience with innovative training and technical assistance events, and what has made them successful or unsuccessful?*

5. How has this group functioned in the past?

Probe questions:

- *What can you tell us about the history of services provided to this group?*
- *What was the original purpose?*
- *How has it changed over time?*
 - *What specific changes in policy, infrastructure, or practice are members interested in?*

6. How does this group [name of group or constituency] currently function (for example, communicate, collaborate, meet)?

Probe questions:

- *Does this group currently meet? How*
- *How often does the group meet?*
- *Should the groups be self-directed or led by an outside facilitator? Is the group self-directed or is there an outside facilitator?*
- *What have you found to be particularly helpful in your communication and collaboration efforts?*
- *What types of topics are covered during meetings?*
- *What are common areas of interest (only asked of IV-E waiver states)*
- *What technology is used during meetings? What else could be used (e.g., Skype, Google Hangouts)?*
- *What types of products would support this group in achieving its desired outcomes?*
- *What other supports do <insert name of group/jurisdiction/audience> need?*
- *What are some of the challenges voiced by stakeholders?*

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7. How could the Collaborative help achieve these desired outcomes?

Probe questions:

- *Through products available for everyone (Universal Services such as white papers, guides, tool kits, resource guides)?*
- *Through peer networks or group-based services (Constituency Services such as peer networks, specialized training for specific groups)?*
- *Through tailored services provided directly to the <insert name>?*

CLOSING

Facilitator concludes the focus group by asking the following questions.

- Is there anything else that we haven't discussed today that you would like to share?
- Do you have any questions for us before we end?

Facilitator(s) thanks everyone for participating in the focus group and tells them: "We greatly value your input and suggestions. As a reminder, your input is confidential and the information will not be attributed to you individually, but will be combined with others' comments for a fuller picture of the issues. We look forward to using the information to improve our services across the Collaborative and within our Center."