

**PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER (PACT) EVALUATION**

**INSTRUMENT (17)**

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**(FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS)**

## **PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER (PACT)**

### **TOPIC GUIDE FOR USE WITH FOCUS GROUPS OF PROGRAM FATHERS IN HISPANIC RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS**

This topic guide will be used for focus group discussions with fathers in responsible fatherhood (RF) programs that serve a predominantly Hispanic population.

Introductory script:

Purpose and use of information: Mathematica Policy Research is conducting an evaluation of fatherhood and relationship strengthening programs. As part of that evaluation, we are seeking to learn more about your perspectives on the program's services. The purpose of the study is to provide information to practitioners and policymakers within multiple levels of government as well as in other sectors. As part of the evaluation, we are seeking to learn whether and how participants' beliefs and practices influence their decisions to participate in fatherhood programs serving Hispanic men, and their perceptions of the program. The information collected will be used to document participants' decisions about, experiences in, and views of the fatherhood program.

Authority of collection: This study is being conducted on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it has a current valid OMB control number. The number for this study is 0970-0403. If you have any questions, please contact [CONTACT NAME], at xxx-xxx-xxxx, regarding OMB-PRA (0970-0403).

Privacy: The information you provide will be combined with information from other participants and discussed among the evaluation team and with federal staff at ACF. Information about participants' views may be included in reports. However, your responses will remain private and no identifying information will be shared publicly.

Voluntary Participation: Providing information for the purposes described is voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any question.

Estimated time: This discussion is expected to take about one and a half hours.

**A. Warm-up/Introductions**

- Introductions of facilitators and purpose of focus group
- Respondents' first names and country of origin
- Length of time in program

**B. Program Enrollment**

- How participants learned about the program. Example probes: advertised in the media? already attend programs or receive services at this location? friends or family?
- Why participants decided to participate? Example probes:
  - Information received about the program/services
  - Cultural background of recruitment staff
  - Ability of recruitment staff to speak Spanish
  - Reputation of organization running the program
  - Language in which services are delivered
- Factors specifically related to being a Hispanic father that influenced decision to participate
- Reservations about program participation, if any
- Expectations regarding participation (what participants were hoping to learn)
  - Whether expectations fulfilled or not. Example probes: Additional program services/information would like to have received, and why

**C. Program**

- Activities/services participated in
- Level of participation/completion
- Positive or negative influences on participation or completion. Example probes:
  - Alignment of fatherhood curriculum and related services with cultural values, beliefs
  - Qualifications or characteristics of staff. Staff's understanding of participants' cultural backgrounds and beliefs/values
  - Program content or presentation did/did not relate to personal experience or situation
  - Length of classes or program

- Specific facilitators and/or barriers to attendance (e.g., transportation, child care, start/end times, location)
- Extent to which program activities/discussion focused on meaning for Hispanic fathers. Part of the program participants liked best, and least, and why.

**D. Impression of Program as serving Hispanics**

- Opinions on extent to which activities offered were grounded in or respectful of Hispanic fathers. How this was reflected; what might have been done better/differently; the importance of this to participants.
- Extent to which program addressed specific needs as a father and as a Hispanic father.
- Key things learned from the program: Examples of changes in interactions with children or ex-spouse/partner, with employer.
- Key ways program helped participants, if any. Example probes: help with parenting, job training; child support order; visitation.
- Whether participants would recommend this program to other fathers, friends or family members, and reasons why or why not.