

**School Readiness Goals and Head Start Program Functioning**  
**Interview Protocol for AIAN Head Start Program Directors**

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing the instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. This information collection is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Reports Clearance Officer (Attn: OMB/PRA 0970-XXXX), Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20447.

## INTRODUCTION

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_, calling from the Urban Institute. May I please speak with [*insert respondent name*]? I am calling to conduct the telephone interview we discussed (*insert yesterday, a few days ago, last week, a few weeks ago, etc.*). Is this still a good time?

*If no.* I understand. When would be a good time to reschedule? (*set new date/time*).

## INFORMED CONSENT

Terrific. As I explained when we spoke before, the Urban Institute has received funding from the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to conduct this study. The purpose of the study is to learn from Head Start and Early Head Start programs about their experiences setting school readiness goals and using information about school readiness to inform program planning. Before I begin my questions, I want to explain our study procedures and your rights as a participant.

The information you share in this telephone interview will be kept private. That means your individual answers will not be shared with anyone outside the research staff working on the study, except as required by child abuse and neglect reporting law. When we report our findings, information from the four AIAN grantees we interview will be put together and presented so that no individual's answers can be identified. Also, we will not use your name, the name of your program, your location or any other identifying information in any of our reports.

We want to make sure that you freely consent to participate in this phone interview and that, except for losing the opportunity to share your views, you understand there won't be any consequences to you or your program if you choose not to participate or not to answer any questions in the interview. Do you consent to participate in the interview?

Because this is a government-sponsored research project that falls under the Paperwork Reduction Act, I have to read the following statement to comply with Act.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing the instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering the data needed, and compiling and reviewing the collection of information. This information collection is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this study is OMB/PRA 0970-XXXX. You can send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to ACF. Would you like that address? [Reports Clearance Officer (Attn: OMB/PRA 0970-XXXX) Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W. Washington, DC 20447.]

The interview will last about an hour, though if something urgent comes up while we are talking please let me know and I can wait or we can continue at another time. Do you have any questions about the Urban Institute or the study before we get started?

## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

1. To start, would you please tell us your job title, how long you've worked in this position, and give a brief description of your primary role and responsibilities in the program?

*Optional probe:* Have you held any other positions in this program or in other Head Start or Early Head Start programs?

2. Tell us a little about your program and the community you serve?

*Probe:* What are the ages of the children you serve?

*Optional probes:* How long has your Head Start program been in operation?

How many children do you currently serve?

What program options do you offer?

## GOAL-SETTING PROCESS

3. I'd like to ask you some questions about your program's process for developing school readiness goals. But first, can you tell me how you first heard about the new requirement to set school readiness goals?
  - a) What did you think of the requirement when you first heard about it?
  - b) Did your program already have school readiness goals or something similar, or was this idea new to your program?
4. Where is your program in the process of establishing school readiness goals? Has your program already established school readiness goals, are you in the process of establishing them, or have you not yet started establishing your school readiness goals?
  - a) (If established) When did you finalize your school readiness goals?
5. Once you learned of the school readiness goals requirement, what steps did you take to establish your program's goals?

*Optional probes:*

- a) How did you or others decide who should lead the goal-setting effort? Why?
- b) What role did you have?
- c) Who else was involved and how?
- d) What kind of input was sought/given?

- e) From your perspective, was everyone involved in the process who needed to be to make it successful? Or was someone missing or not as involved as you would have liked?
  - f) Can you tell me about how you went from setting the larger goals to deciding the objectives and measures you'd use for each goal?
  - g) IF SERVING 0-5: How was the process the same or different for setting goals (and objectives) for preschool children and for infants and toddlers?
    - o What made you decide to have a [single set of goals for 0-5 / different sets of goals for preschoolers and infants and toddlers]?
  - h) Tell me about some of the challenges you faced in the goal setting process?
  - i) Did your tribal government have a role in the process?
6. We want to learn more about the things that shape the actual goals and objectives selected by Head Start programs. As you think about your goals, what kinds of things did you consider when choosing your goals and objectives? Were there any special considerations related to the community you serve?
7. Did you use any information provided by the Office of Head Start, the national Head Start technical assistance centers, or local TA providers during the process of setting your school readiness goals? Tell us about the information you used and how you used it.

*Optional probes*

- a) How did you get the information: through the web, printed materials, conference calls, workshops or conferences?
  - b) What information was most useful? Why?
  - c) What information was not very useful? Why?
  - d) How timely was the information you received?
  - e) Was the information/support relevant to your community and the population of children and families you serve? Please explain.
8. As you were setting your goals, what information or support was most useful? Why?
9. What other kinds of information or support would have been useful to you?

## PLANNING

10. So we've talked a lot about how you set the goals. What did you do with the goals after you set them?
- a) Did you tell people about your goals? Who did you tell?
  - b) Did you provide information to teachers and other direct service staff to help them understand what the goals mean for their work? How did you communicate this information?
  - c) Are there any other steps you plan to take with these goals? (*Probe if goals have been or will be turned into an action plan.*)
  - d) [*If program has or is developing an action plan*] What does your action plan include?
    - i. How did/will you prioritize what should go in the plan?
    - ii. Where are you in the process of implementing the plan?

## MEASURES AND DATA ANALYSIS

11. Next, I'd like to discuss any data you collect to measure progress towards goals.
- a) What kinds of measures or assessment tools do staff use to assess school readiness?
  - b) Were the measures selected before or after you set your goals?
  - c) Why were these measures selected?
  - d) What kind of data system do you use to store this information?
12. Once these data are collected, what do you do with the data?
- a) What types of data analyses or reports do you see/run?
    - i. Do you aggregate the data at the classroom/group level? At the center level? At the program level?
    - ii. Do you aggregate the data to compare different groups of children? What groups?
    - iii. Do you aggregate the data by teacher or home visitor for the purpose of training and supervision?
    - iv. Do you compare school readiness data across different years?
    - v. What types of analyses do you run for each child?
  - b) What kinds of things do you look for as you review the information?

- c) How do you determine whether children are making progress toward the goals you've set? How do you know if there has been "enough" growth?
  - d) Who runs the analyses?
    - i. Does that staff member have any other responsibilities?
    - ii. What kind of training and skills are you looking for in a person with that role in your program?
13. Have you ever had difficulty interpreting the data (or the information in the data reports you received)?
- a) What was challenging about it?
  - b) What would have made it easier for you to understand?
  - c) Is there any information you would like to get from the data but can't get? What information?

#### COMMUNICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

14. What information do you share with others, such as staff, parents, or tribal council, regarding how children are progressing towards school readiness goals?
15. Have the results you've seen from school readiness assessments ever led you to make changes to the program and to the work you (or your staff) do?
- a. Can you provide a few examples of changes you've made?
  - b. Have these changes been helpful?
  - c. Are there other changes you would like to see?

#### CHALLENGES AND NEEDED SUPPORTS

16. What's been the most challenging for you and your program during this whole process of setting goals, measuring progress towards goals, and using goals to inform your planning?
17. What kinds of resources or support would you and your staff need to overcome these challenges? (If no challenges, then what is needed to better measure progress towards goals and use goals for planning?)

CLOSING

18. Overall, do you think that the school readiness goals requirement has been useful for your program? Why or why not?

19. Those are all of our questions. Is there anything else you would like to tell us or that you think we should have asked?