16 - Participant Focus Groups

BUILDING BRIDGES AND BONDS (B3) STUDY

INSTRUMENT (16)

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

(FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS)

BUILDING BRIDGES AND BONDS (B3)

**TOPIC GUIDE FOR USE WITH FOCUS GROUPS
OF PROGRAM FATHERS**

This topic guide will be used for focus group discussions with fathers in responsible fatherhood programs testing program enhancements to explore their perspectives on the availability, quality, and value of program services.

Introductory script:

Purpose and use of information: MDRC is conducting an evaluation of fatherhood programs. As part of that evaluation, we are seeking to learn more about your perspectives on the availability, quality, and value of the [B3] 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.

Authority of collection: This evaluation 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 xxxx-xxxx.

Privacy: The information you provide will be combined with information from other program participants and discussed among the evaluation team and federal staff at the Administration for Children and Families. Information regarding participants' perspectives may be included in reports, but your identifying information will be kept private and not shared publicly to the extent permitted by law.

Voluntary Participation: Providing information for the purposes described is voluntary.

Estimated time: This discussion is expected to take about two hours.

A. Introductions

B. Interest in Program
- Understanding interest in the [B3 PROGRAM]
- Discussion of program and personal goals (e.g., employment, parenting), how they were determined, if they have changed and how.
- Discussion of plans to achieve goals.

C. Intake and maintaining engagement with program
- Discussion of challenges and barriers associated with enrollment and maintaining program engagement. Barriers could include physical barrier or crises (lacking transportation, supplies), complexity of the program or messages, lack of self-confidence/sense that he could succeed in the program, lack of planning/no back up plans/unclear of goals for himself, no support or people to help solve a problem.
- Discussion of supports necessary to improve engagement.
- For participants in parenting site in app group: perceptions of the App, usefulness of the content, perceptions and usefulness of the follow-up content after the sessions are over, concerns about redundancy with sessions
- For participants in parenting site in non-app group: supports needed to stay more engaged.

D. Program Services
- Discussion of what services or program features are most useful and why.
- Discussion of unmet needs and suggestions for program improvements.
- Discussion about the quality of program services and how they compare to other programs or services participants have experienced in the past.
- Discussion about relationships participants formed with others in their workshops.

E. Perceptions of Staff
- Discussion about what program staff has done to help participants and what they could improve.
- Discussion about relationships with program staff and how relationships influence their experience in the program.

F. Community Context
- Discussion of similar programs and services that participants have accessed in the past.
- Discussion about the child support or criminal justice environment.