

Child Welfare Information Gateway Focus Group: Family Engagement Inventory

Purpose of Focus Groups:

Learn more about users and potential users of the Family Engagement Inventory (FEI) website, including how they are using the website, overall satisfaction with the products and services, and experience with the website, so that Child Welfare Information Gateway can better design and implement knowledge dissemination and transfer activities that will inform future modifications and improvements to the FEI.

How the information will be used:

- *Inform Product Development regarding the content (topics, level of detail) of new and updated products to meet the information needs of these customer groups*
- *Inform Website Services about the content, organization, and presentation of information to meet the needs of these customers around a specific topic, tool, or product*

Participants:

- *Public child welfare agency administrators, supervisors, managers and direct service staff*
- *Community agency (including child welfare and related professionals) administrators, supervisors, managers and direct service staff*
- *Other related professionals that work in areas that overlap with child welfare such as mental health, domestic violence and substance abuse*
- *Educators (e.g. social work, K-12, early childhood) and students*

Introduction (10 minutes)

Introduce leaders of the focus group and roles of each in supporting the meeting. Then explain the following to participants:

Have you heard of the Family Engagement Inventory? [SHOW OF HANDS]

- *If yes, how did you hear about it? (e.g. website, colleague)*

Briefly provide a foundation and parameters for what the Family Engagement Inventory can do to help them improve their services and improve outcomes for the children and families they serve.

- *Describe our mission to serve as the connection to the best information that protects children and strengthens families. Explain we are a service of the Children's Bureau, ACF, US. DHHS.*
- *Briefly describe the purpose of the FEI and how it is related to Information Gateway.*

- *Emphasize that FEI provides information services (not direct services; not a diagnostic or assessment tool), and that our information is generally at the national or state level. Mention that almost all services and products are free.*

[Don't provide too much detail here; it may limit their thinking too much.]

We are conducting this focus group to better understand your experiences with the *Family Engagement Inventory* of the Child Welfare Information Gateway website. This focus group involves having you answer a few questions to learn about how the *Family Engagement Inventory* has impacted your work. Specifically, we want learn more about what you thought was particularly useful/helpful and how we can make it more relevant to the work you do. There are no wrong answers—we want your honesty and we expect differences of opinion. And there are no bad questions so please feel free to speak up. The only limitation is to help us stay on time so we can cover all our questions.

Your participation with the focus group is voluntary and confidential. Any input gathered will not be attributed to you individually, but will be combined with others for a fuller picture of the issues. We are recording the session to be sure our notes are accurate, but again, we will not connect any names to any comments. Please let me know if there are any concerns about this process.

Let's do brief introductions—please tell us your name, organization, and what you do.

We will use your input to make decisions about revising the website, including what revisions need to be made to content and format as well as about what new products and services need to be developed to better support you in your work with children and families.

Any questions before we begin?

(Spend some time (e.g. 5-10 minutes) inviting participants to direct the exploration of FEI and noting how they navigate through the website. If needed, provide some prompting by showing them the FEI sections and how they work. Please encourage them to ask questions and make comments about what they see and do not see as you are showing them the tool)

Explain the note cards we are using so they won't be influenced by colleagues in the focus group and how the information on the note cards will be used to help generate discussion regarding the website. Then read the instructions to participants below and let them start.

Instructions to Participants: Think about your previous experience using the Family Engagement Inventory of the Child Welfare Information Gateway website. If you don't have previous experience with the Family Engagement Inventory, think about what we just showed you and how it could be used in your work. Write your answers on the note card. Then we'll discuss them and write some notes on the flipchart. **(5 minutes writing; 15 minutes discussing)**

Note card says:

*Please indicate your organization/affiliation and position/title:
Please specify the location of your organization/affiliation:
Please briefly describe your role.*

Think about your experience with the Family Engagement Inventory....

1. *How would you use the information in the Family Engagement Inventory? How would it impact your work?*
2. *How do you feel about the way the information is organized and displayed on the Family Engagement Inventory? What do you like about it? What do you dislike?*
3. *What would you change about the Family Engagement Inventory? Is there any information that is missing?*

When participants have responded to all questions on the note card, go through each question individually and ask participants to share what they've written. As they are talking, write their answers on a flipchart. If participants don't speak up, feel free to call on someone and go around the room. During the conversation about each of the questions/responses on the note card, you can probe for detail using the specific questions below. If participants create lists without conversations, you can use the questions below to extend the conversation. So as people are providing their thoughts, use the questions below to get them to expand upon their thoughts.

1. Website usefulness – How would the information in this web section impact your work? How would it be helpful?
 - *How is the information or web section not helpful?*
 - *How is the information applicable to your work?*
 - *(If participants are familiar with the web section) How have you previously used information from this web section to inform your work or the work of others?*
 - *If they won't need to use it, why?*
 - *What do you need that is not here?*
 - *Will the information be useful in training and education?*
2. Website organization, format, & layout – *How do you feel about the way the information is organized and displayed in this web section? What do you like about it? What do you dislike?*
 - *Level of detail. Too much or too little content/information overall?*
 - *Is the web section easy to navigate? If not, what could improve the web section's navigability?*
 - *Web page or section layout, length, format, readability*

Please have participants focus specifically on each of the following website sections:

- Definitions/Themes/Benefits
- Practice, Program, and System Strategies
- What Works
- Resources

- FEI Synthesis Summary (pdf)
- Commonalities documents (pdfs)

For each of these website sections, explore the following questions:

- What information in this website section would you be most likely to use?
- What information are you least likely to use?
- Was this the type of information that you expected to see or were looking for? What was missing?

3. Website content - *What would you change about the web content? Is there any information that is missing?*
 - *Was this the type of information that you expected to see or were looking for? What was missing?*
 - *Was the information too advanced/detailed or too basic?*
 - *Are there other places that you already go to get this information? What do you like about them and dislike?*
 - *What are your thoughts about these potential updates for the website?*
 - *Adding information to support engagement with incarcerated parents*
 - *Adding information to support engagement with youth*
 - *Adding information to support cultural competence in engagement*
 - *Adding information to support engagement in delivery of economic support services (e.g. TANF, Child Support, SNAP)*
 - *Adding information to include other disciplines beyond child welfare, behavioral health, early education, education, and juvenile justice*

Closing (2 minutes)

We're done! Thank you very much for your time. Your input and comments are very helpful. Do you have any questions for us?