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Community Burden Study Caregiver Focus Group Guide

Background

Thank you for agreeing to participate. Today, I'll be asking you about your experiences caring for a family member's children (or foster children) due to their parent's struggles with opioid/substance use. During our discussion, I'd like for you to please focus on your experiences with those children. If you've cared for several children whose parents have struggled with opioid/drug use, please refer to the children you've cared for most recently. Does that sound okay?

1. First, I'd like to learn a little about you. How long have you lived in **[name]** county?
2. Are you currently caring for/fostering any children because of their parent's issues with opioid/drug use?

Trajectories

Now, I'd like to talk to you about how the child(ren) came into your care. Again, I'd like for you to focus on the child or children who most recently came into your care as a result of their parent's issues with opioid/drug use.

3. If you feel comfortable sharing, can you talk about some of the reasons why the child(ren) were placed in **your** care?
4. **[Kinship caregivers ONLY]** How were you identified as the relative who would care for the child(ren)?
 - a. At the time, did you feel prepared to become the child(ren)'s primary caregiver? What were some of the changes you had to make in order to care for the child(ren)? Please explain.
5. What are some of the challenges you've faced with caring for these child(ren)?

Probe on challenges related to impact on other children in the house, impact on the family, impact on mental and physical health, finding support services, finances, etc

Services and Supports

Next, I'd like to talk with you about the services and supports that are available to you as a caregiver/foster parent, as well as your experiences with those services and supports.

6. As a caregiver/foster parent, are you aware of the different services or supports that are available to you to assist you with caring for this child/these children? Please explain *[If needed]*: For example, are there services available through the CW agency like support groups, training classes or respite care?
7. Which services or supports have you accessed?
 - a. How did you learn about these services and supports?
 - b. How easy or difficult was it for you to access these services or supports? Please describe.
 - 1) What kinds of things made using services easier for you?
 - 2) What kinds of things made using services more challenging for you?
Probe for whether working makes accessing services difficult (or easier)
 - c. How satisfied are you with the services and interactions that you received?
 - 1) What has been most helpful?
 - 2) What has been least helpful?
7. If you have not used any of these services, why?
Probe for stigma, time constraints, lack of awareness of services, etc.
8. Were there any services that you needed that you either couldn't access or didn't know about until later?
9. What additional services or supports should be offered in your county?
10. How can agencies and organizations best spread the word about available services and supports to ensure the people who need them hear about them?
11. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?