

## Market Research Sub Study Focus Group Guide

### I. *Introduction (5 minutes)*

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I work for the Child Welfare Information Gateway. For those of you who may not know, the Gateway is a service of the Children’s Bureau that provides access to print and electronic resources and tools for improving child welfare practice.

As you probably know, we are conducting research into how child welfare professionals access and use information and resources. The information that we are collecting will be valuable for technical assistance providers and other organizations that distribute child welfare information, to help them ensure that their resources are as visible, relevant, and helpful as possible to their intended audiences. The first phase of this research project was an online survey, which all of you participated in—thank you. We are now following up with these focus groups in order to get more detailed information about some of these questions, and to “drill down” on some of the patterns that we uncovered in the survey results.

Do you have any questions about the purpose of this focus group or what we are going to be talking about?

I’d like to remind you about a few things that were on that document, and to set some “ground rules” for the discussion:

1. I want to make clear that responding to these questions is voluntary, and even if you agree to this focus group you are not obligated to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer.
2. We will be audiotaping this discussion so that we can refer back to it while writing our report.
3. We will not use your names in our report.
4. Everyone’s participation is important—I’d like to hear from as many people as possible.
5. Please feel free to respond to other people’s comments. If you agree or disagree with anything that anyone says, please say so.
6. Please speak honestly—we want to hear what you think, even if you dislike something.
7. As a participant, we ask that you treat all discussions in this focus group as confidential so that everyone may speak freely.

Does anyone have any questions or concerns?

Great—then let’s get started. I expect that this focus group will take about 90 minutes.

## II. *Searching for Information (25 minutes)*

1. In general, how much time do you spend “connected to the internet” on work days? How much of this time do you spend actively online? How do you spend your time online?
  - How does this compare to the time you spend “connected to the internet” on weekends?
2. I’d like to start by asking you about situations in which you are actively searching for child welfare information and resources. How do you most often search for child welfare information and resources?
  - If you search for information online, how do you do so? Do you conduct a search through a search engine, or go to specific websites?
  - (As appropriate) What devices do you typically use to conduct these searches?
  - What kinds of information and resources are you typically searching for?
3. When you search for child welfare information and resources, why are you typically doing so? In what situations do you typically conduct those searches?
  - Do you typically conduct these searches on a regular basis, or at the moment you need the information?
4. Have you experienced any challenges in trying to search for child welfare information and resources? If so, what were those challenges?
  - Were you able to overcome those challenges? If so, how?
5. Over the past five years, how have the ways that you search for child welfare information and resources changed?
6. Compared to three years ago, do you think it has gotten any easier or harder to search for information you need for your job? Why?
7. How many of you have used a device other than a desktop or laptop computer to search for or access child welfare information? What devices have you used? *Probe to get all responses.*
  - For those of you that have not used a device other than a desktop or laptop computer, what are the reasons?
  - Is there anything that would make you more likely to access child welfare information on a device other than a desktop or laptop?
  - Do you anticipate using devices other than a desktop or laptop to access child welfare information more frequently over the next three years than you do now? If so, what devices? *If necessary, probe to see if anyone suggests any devices other than a smartphone or tablet.*
8. *Additional questions will be added to the end of this section based on a preliminary analysis of data from the online survey. Questions will be driven by unexpected response patterns, or responses patterns where additional detailed information would be helpful for interpretation.*

### III. *Receiving Information (25 minutes)*

9. Now I'd like to ask you about situations in which you receive child welfare information or resources that you have not specifically searched for. For example, this might be a situation in which someone emails you a resource, or you receive it from your employer or another organization. From what sources do you receive information that you have not searched for?
  - How do you typically receive this information (e.g., through social media, by email, etc.)?
  - What kinds of information or resources do you typically receive?
  - When you receive electronic publications or documents, how often do you print them out?
10. Do you subscribe to any listservs or newsletters through which you regularly receive information about child welfare policy or practice?
  - What proportion of the time would you say you look at this information carefully when you receive it?
  - Which newsletter or listserv do you value most, and why?
11. What information do you decide to look at carefully, and what information do you typically pay less attention to?
  - What advice do you have for organizations that send out newsletters and want to get recipients to pay attention to their information? What can they do to improve the extent to which people pay attention?
12. How do you typically decide whether a particular resource is high-quality and trustworthy?
13. Are there particular sources of information that you trust more than others? If so, which ones, and why?
14. Have you ever used any of the following types of resources, in a child welfare context? How likely would you be to do so, if these resources existed?
  - *Probe about mobile applications, podcasts, online learning modules, games, and virtual conferences, as well as any other types of resources that have come up in earlier discussions*
15. Over the past five years, how have the ways that you receive child welfare information and resources changed?
16. *Additional questions will be added to the end of this section based on a preliminary analysis of data from the online survey. Questions will be driven by unexpected response patterns, or responses patterns where additional detailed information would be helpful for interpretation.*

#### IV. *Sharing Information (10 minutes)*

17. Now I'd like you to think about situations in which you share child welfare information or resources with peers or other professional contacts. How do you typically share information or resources?
- With whom do you typically share information or resources?
  - (As appropriate) What devices do you typically use to share information or resources?
  - What kinds of information and resources do you typically share?
  - How often would you say you share information?
18. Over the past five years, how have the ways that you share child welfare information and resources changed?
- How does the changes in the way that you search for, receive, and share information compare? Are they the same, or do they differ in some way—and if so, how?
19. Compared to three years ago, do you think it has gotten any easier or harder to share information with your colleagues? Why?
20. *Additional questions will be added to the end of this section based on a preliminary analysis of data from the online survey. Questions will be driven by unexpected response patterns, or responses patterns where additional detailed information would be helpful for interpretation.*

#### V. *Use of Social Media to Access and Share Information (15 minutes)*

21. Do you use social media to access or share child welfare information and resources? If so, how and how often?
- From where do you get information through social media—from individuals, or organizations?
  - What social media platforms do you use for this purpose, and why?
22. If you do not use social media to access and share child welfare information and resources, what are the reasons you do not?
- Is there anything that would make you more likely to use social media for this purpose?
23. *Additional questions will be added to the end of this section based on a preliminary analysis of data from the online survey. Questions will be driven by unexpected response patterns, or responses patterns where additional detailed information would be helpful for interpretation.*

#### VI. *Conclusion (10 minutes)*

24. Is there anything else that we have not discussed that you think child welfare technical assistance providers should know about the way you search for, receive, or share information?