Choice Neighborhoods Protocol: Education

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. I am <NAME>, a researcher at <ORGANIZATION>, and this is <NAME> from <ORGANIZATION>. Before we begin, I want to tell you a few things about this study and your participation in it. Please feel free to ask me any questions you might have as I move through the introduction.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) contracted the Urban Institute and researchers at Case Western Reserve University to evaluate the Choice Neighborhoods program (Choice). Choice provides resources for local communities to help distressed neighborhoods develop affordable housing, provide access to a range of services for residents, and increase opportunities and safety. The study aims to understand the strategies and outcomes associated with Choice implementation for housing, residents, and neighborhoods in nine communities. We are collecting information and data from several sources, including a resident survey, neighborhood observations, program documents, and interviews.

We are conducting interviews with people such as yourself to understand the process and experience of those who were involved in or affected by Choice in this community. The interviews will provide valuable perspectives on what has been achieved through Choice and what the challenges have been with implementation. Your insights are important for this study. We are not evaluating your [agency/organization] but are focused on implementation and outcomes of Choice activities.

Your participation in this interview is **voluntary** and you are free to skip any questions you do not wish to answer. The questions in the interview have been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated at up to 90 minutes, including preparation and follow-up. The OMB control number is XXXX-XXXX, expiring XX-XX-XXXX. 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.

The interview will last approximately one hour. You may choose to skip any questions you don't want to answer, and you may stop participating at any time. We will not release your name or any other identifying information beyond the research team and will not include your name or identifying information in our report and documentation. If you are in a position that makes it so you are the only person or one of few people who would know certain information, it is possible someone reading the report might infer the source – you should be aware of the possibility. Note that researchers are required to take steps, including reporting to authorities, to address a situation where they believe someone they speak to may

harm themselves or others. [*If conducting the interview via a videoconference platform:* We also recognize that video meetings can be hacked, and though we have taken steps to prevent this from happening, it is a possibility.]

With your permission, we will audio record the interview, which we will have transcribed to ensure we have an accurate account of what is said. [NAME] also will be taking notes. Only members of the research team will be allowed to review the recording, transcript, and notes, and all members of our team have signed a confidentiality agreement. We will destroy the recording, transcript, and notes at the conclusion of the project.

Do you have any questions about the study or today's interview?
Do you consent to participate in the interview?
Do you consent to be recorded?

Introduction

I'll start with a few questions about your position and engagement with the Choice Neighborhood efforts with original residents from [NAME OF TARGET DEVELOPMENT].

1) **What is your current title and role?**

2) **What was your title and role during the Choice implementation?**

3) **When was your last involvement with Choice at [NAME OF SITE]? [or] What is your current involvement?**

Education and Youth Development Services Model

HUD expects grantees to develop a systems approach by building partnerships with community organizations and social service agencies and by creating new or tailored services that respond to resident needs.

We are interested in the big picture of how activities related to the People component of Choice were implemented and your perception of their effectiveness.

[REVIEW INFORMATION FROM BASELINE REPORT, CN INFORM, AND OTHER SOURCES FOR BACKGROUND ON EDUCATION PLANS AND OUTCOMES PRIOR TO INTERVIEWS]

4) **Please give an overview of the vision for the education and youth development component of Choice.**
   a. What early learning and education services and activities were implemented with the Choice grant and other resources?
   b. What youth development services and activities were implemented with the grant and other resources?

5) **Describe the organizations and roles of the people, like yourself, who provided education and youth supports.**
   a. Who were the key providers for early learning and education-related services?
      i. Were the supports delivered through a contracted provider, or directly by the grantee?

ii. Could you describe the staffing model?
   Probe: Number and type of provider positions, Full-time/part-time, Residents working as staff
   b. Who were the key providers for youth development-related services?
      i. What was the staffing model for these services?

6) **What approaches did you / your agency/organization use to engage and provide ongoing services to people of color and people of diverse ethnic, cultural, or experiential backgrounds?**
   Probe: acknowledgements of a person's culture and communication needs, such as preferred languages, literacy levels, norms, and traditions
   a. Can you share some examples?
   b. What about approaches used with grandparents raising grandchildren?
   c. With individuals who were non-English speaking?
   d. With people with disabilities?

7) **Was there collaboration among public agencies or other organizations, such as the school system and early childhood system?**
   a. If yes, how did staff work together? Please share some examples**.**

8) **Did any of these collaborations or partnerships become more important or strengthen during implementation? In what way? Why do you think that happened?**
   a. Did any of them become less important during implementation? In what way? Why do you think that happened?

9) **Were any of these partnerships established during [FOR 2013 GRANTEES: the Choice planning period]? During preparation of the implementation grant application? During implementation (i.e., did the grant lead to new partnerships)?**
   Prompt: private developers; affordable housing nonprofits; city hall / city agencies; etc. not involved from the beginning
   a. Were any established during the Choice grant application? [FOR 2013 GRANTEES]: or during the planning period?

10) **Did any of the partnerships last beyond the period of the grant? Which ones?**
   a. Why do you think these partnerships lasted?
      Probe: partner had preexisting relationships with respondent or neighborhood; partner was integral to an ongoing program; partner had funding; etc.
   b. Are any partners still active in the Choice neighborhood?
      i. In what ways are they engaged?

11) **Overall, would you say the partnerships affected grant outcomes related to education or youth development?**
   a. Which partnerships were noteworthy? How did these partnerships affect outcomes?

12) **What made some partnerships more effective than others?**
   Prompt: level of engagement, individual staff members, history of work in the neighborhood, connections with a variety of resources, etc.

Childhood and Youth Strategies

We are interested in learning about education for young children through youth.

13) **For original target households who originally lived at [NAME OF SITE PRIOR TO REDEVELOPMENT], where did the majority of children and youth (ages 6-19) attend school?**
  a. Were these schools located in or outside of the neighborhood?
  b. Is there school choice? *If yes*, How do you think it affected where children and youth attended school?
  c. Did children or youth change schools over time as families relocated? How?
      i. Did they tend to move to schools in or outside of their new neighborhood?

14) **We want to learn about education strategies for school-age young people, ages 6 to 19. What were the major strategies for helping youth and families engage in education and positive youth development activities?**
  a. Were any new services or programming developed to meet education and youth development needs?
      i. Please describe the service or program and how it addressed specific needs.
  b. Were any existing services or programming expanded or tailored to meet needs?
      i. Please describe the service and how it was changed to address specific needs.
  c. To what extent did original residents from [name of redevelopment site] engage? What about residents who relocated out of [name of neighborhood]?
  d. Did participation change over time? How?
      i. Why do you think it changed?
      Prompt: access to services after relocation
  e. Which education-focused strategies were most effective for facilitating improved access to education and activities? Why? Which were the least effective? Why?

15) **Were certain strategies more effective for engaging children and youth in education and youth development activities?**
  a. If so, which ones?
  b. Why do you think these strategies were more effective?
      Probe: innovative strategy, tailored approach to meet needs, partner/organization leadership, pre-existing relationships, etc.

16) **Now, we want to learn about early learning and education strategies for young children, from infancy to 5. What were the major strategies for improving original residents' access to early childhood learning and education programs?**
  a. Were any new services or programming developed to meet young children's needs??
      i. Please describe the service or program and how it addressed specific needs.
  b. Were any existing services or programming expanded or tailored to meet children's needs?
      i. Please describe the service and how it was changed to address specific needs?

     c. To what extent did original residents from [name of redevelopment site] engage? What about residents who relocated out of [name of neighborhood]?
     d. Did participation change over time? How?
          i. Why do you think it changed?
     e. Which education-focused strategies were most effective for facilitating improved access to early childhood education?

17)   Were certain strategies more effective for improving access to early learning or education programs?
     a. If so, which ones?
     b. Why do you think these strategies were more effective?
     Probe: innovative strategy, tailored approach to meet needs, partner/organization leadership, pre-existing relationships, etc.

Case Management

We would like to get a sense of the case management services that were offered to residents. According to HUD, case management is "an individual- or family-centered approach to assisting people of all ages with accessing the services they want and need." It includes assessing needs, developing an individualized plan, and providing options and referrals to services. Case management also focuses on resident stabilization, such as helping with paying utilities, managing crises, and adjusting to new apartments.

18)   How would you describe the relationship between the education/youth partner and the case management provider?
     Probe: communication strategies and collaboration between education specialist; different roles and responsibilities of providers, data sharing, family-centered approaches

19)   From your vantage point, how effective were case management services in helping to address education and youth development needs?
     Probe: outreach strategy, intensity/frequency, accessibility, consistency of services, communication among partners/providers, caseloads, ability to manage complex resident needs, frequency of contact with residents
     a. What factors made case management more or less effective?
     b. Did the quality of case management services change over time? How so?
          i. Why do you think it changed?

20)   Were there any specific case management activities that were especially helpful for supporting young people and their families?
     a. In what ways were they helpful?
     b. What about the case management activities or their delivery do you think made them helpful?

Supportive Services Coordination

HUD defines supportive service coordination as "a systems-centered approach to coordinating multiple services across agencies within a community, based on the needs of the target resident population, to increase accessibility, utilization, and quality of services and to reduce fragmentation in service delivery systems." We are interested in understanding how Choice grantees established and maintained collaborations with partners

to tailor services, expand and focus existing services to target housing residents, and create new services to meet resident needs.

21)   How would you describe the relationship between the education/youth partner and the providers of supportive services, such as [name of non-profit organizations, community services, etc.] that were involved in Choice?
Probe: Choice partners established relationships with local providers

22)   How would you describe the quality of supportive services coordination?
Probe: in terms of range, intensity/frequency, accessibility, consistency of services, communication among partners/providers, caseloads, ability to manage complex resident needs, frequency of contact with residents, outreach strategy
   a. Did the services meet the needs people had or were there needs that were not met?
   b. Can you give a couple of examples of met needs? Of unmet needs?

Resident Outcomes

An important goal of this evaluation is to examine changes in quality of life for assisted residents. We are interested in resident outcomes related to early childhood and school-age education. We are most interested in the outcomes for original residents from the target development.

23)   Were the goals of improved early childhood education achieved for the majority of original residents with young children who lived at [NAME OF SITE PRIOR TO REDEVELOPMENT]?
   a. If so, which goals were achieved?
        i. Why do you think there were positive outcomes?
        ii. Did case management and coordinated supportive services contribute to the positive outcomes? If so, how?
   b. If not, why do you think the outcomes were difficult to achieve?

24)   Were the goals of improved school-age education achieved for the majority of original residents with school-aged youth who lived at [NAME OF SITE PRIOR TO REDEVELOPMENT]?
   c. If so, which goals were achieved?
        i. Why do you think there were positive outcomes?
        ii. Did case management and coordinated supportive services contribute to the positive outcomes? If so, how?
   d. If not, why do you think the outcomes were difficult to achieve?

25)   What about goals for youth development, were they achieved?
   a. If so, which goals were achieved?
        i. Why do you think there were positive outcomes?
        ii. Did case management and coordinated supportive services contribute to the positive outcomes? If so, how?

26)   Did educational policy or practices of the local school district affect the outcomes of the Choice educational strategies?
   a. If so, what effects did they have?

    b.   What factors, if any, made the Choice educational strategies challenging to implement?

    c.   Were there factors that made Choice educational strategies easier to implement?

27)   What factors, if any, related to the neighborhood contributed to the success of the Choice educational strategies?

    a.   What neighborhood factors made the Choice educational strategies challenging to implement?

Wrap-Up

28)   Thinking about Choice Neighborhoods and the [INSERT NAME] neighborhood, would you say Choice has been a success? [*Probe*: in terms of housing, residents, neighborhood]

29)   What difference do you think the education efforts have made for residents of the target development?

    a.   For the neighborhood?

30)   Do you think the neighborhood has benefited from the education-related efforts?

                If yes: In what ways? / *If no:* Why not?

31)   Overall, what recommendations would you offer other Choice grantees or HUD about the Choice Neighborhoods program and efforts to improve housing, resident outcomes including education, and neighborhoods?

32)   Is there anything we haven't discussed about the Choice Neighborhoods program (and the education component) that is important for us to understand?