Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies Study: Nominations for Programs Protocol

I.   INTRODUCTION AND REACHING THE PROPER PERSON

[Use contact listed from X as the first point of contact.]

Hello, may I speak with [NAME OF CONTACT]?

IF YOU REACH THE GATEKEEPER:

Hello, my name is _____from Mathematica, an independent research organization. We are conducting a study called the Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies Study for the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This study aims to learn how competency frameworks for teachers and caregivers of infants and toddlers can be used to help build the capacity of the infant/toddler care and education workforce and support quality improvement. May I speak with [NAME OF CONTACT] about this study?

[*Before you are transferred, get the gatekeeper's name. If the contact is not available, ask to leave a voicemail on the contact's direct line*.]

VOICEMAIL:

Hello, my name is _____from Mathematica, an independent research organization. We are conducting a study called the Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies Study for the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. I'm calling because we would like to get your input on early care and education programs—both centers and family child care homes—that use competency frameworks. It would be great to hear from you. Please feel free to give me a call back at [TELEPHONE NUMBER] or to send me an email at [EMAIL] at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

IF YOU REACH THE CONTACT DIRECTLY:

Hello, my name is _____. I am with Mathematica, an independent research organization that does work to inform policy and practice in early care and education. We are conducting a study called the Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies Study for the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This study aims to learn how competency frameworks for teachers and caregivers of infants and toddlers can be used to help build the capacity of the infant/toddler care and education workforce and support quality improvement. I'm calling because we would like to get your input on programs—both centers and family child care homes—that use competency frameworks.

[*If not the correct person, get the name, title, and telephone number of the correct person. Say thank you and goodbye. Contact the proper person and start again with the above*.]

We have taken a close look at [NAME THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] and would like to learn more about how it is being used by a variety of stakeholders. Based on what we have learned about the framework so far, our understanding is [DESCRIBE PERSON'S ROLE/RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FRAMEWORK AND/OR WHY WE THINK THEY WOULD HAVE INPUT ON PROGRAMS THAT MIGHT BE USING THE FRAMEWORK]. This discussion will take about 10 minutes.

II.   BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND STUDY OVERVIEW

As I mentioned, we are conducting a study for the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with approval from the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Management and Budget. This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to support efforts to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. 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 OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: 0970-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX.

Before we go further, I just want to take a minute to be clear on how we are using certain words in this conversation that can sometimes mean different things to different people. We also describe how we use these words in the frequently asked questions document that we sent by email. By "competency" we mean a piece of knowledge, a skill, or an attribute essential to the practice of teaching and caring for infants and toddlers. By "competency framework" we mean a set of competencies that an organization or entity has compiled to convey the range of knowledge, skills, and attributes that a teacher or caregiver should have. As I mentioned, today we want to speak with you about [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK] and learn.

As you know, the early care and education field has in recent years embraced the use of competency frameworks as a tool to improve the quality of care provided to infant and toddlers. This study aims to gather lessons about how competency frameworks have been used in early care and education programs (both centers and family child care homes) and how early care and education systems (such as quality rating and improvement systems, institutes of higher education, credentialing and licensing bodies, training and technical assistance organizations) help support the use of the framework.

Today, I'm calling you to ask for help finding programs that might be using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK(S)] in some way. For example, to make decisions about hiring, promotions, or wages; to plan trainings or broader professional development for teachers and caregivers; to assess teachers' and caregivers' knowledge and skills; or to make decisions about use of a curriculum. During the study, we aim to learn from Head Start programs, community-based child care programs, and family child care programs. We plan to speak with program and

center directors, education or professional development managers, family child care owners, and infant/toddler teachers and caregivers to find out more about how they are using the framework.

Before we go any further, do you have any questions about the study? [IF SO, ANSWER TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY, REFERRING TO THE FAQ DOCUMENT. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE OF THE ANSWER, PLEASE SAY, "THAT IS A GOOD QUESTION. I WILL ASK THE STUDY TEAM AND GET BACK TO YOU AS SOON AS I CAN."]

III. NOMINATIONS FOR PROGRAMS THAT USE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

A. Do you know of any programs that serve infants and toddlers that currently use [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]? [*If yes, use probes. If no, go to B.*]

[IF MORE THAN ONE PROGRAM IS RECOMMENDED, REPEAT PROBES/FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR EACH PROGRAM IDENTIFIED.]

1. What is the name of the program and do you have any information on who we can contact at that program? [FOR EACH PROGRAM IDENTIFIED, ASK FOR: CONTACT NAME, TITLE, TELEPHONE NUMBER, AND EMAIL, AND CONFIRM IF WE CAN USE THE RESPONDENT'S NAME WHEN WE REACH OUT TO THE PROGRAM CONTACT.]

2. Can you confirm, is this a single, independent setting (meaning, a specific center or family child care home), or is this a larger program that includes multiple settings?

    a. [IF MULTIPLE SETTINGS:] Are the settings in this program all centers, all family child care homes, or a mix of centers and family child care homes?

    b. [IF SINGLE SETTING:] Is this a center or family child care home?

    c. [IF SINGLE SETTING:] Is this setting independent, or part of a larger organization with multiple settings?

    d. [IF MULTIPLE SETTINGS BASED ON QUESTION (1) OR (1)(C):] To confirm, does the contact you gave me work at the larger organization or at a specific setting?

3. Is this program supported by a Head Start grant to provide Early Head Start services, or involved in an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership?

B. Do you have any other thoughts about how we might identify programs that are using competency frameworks, including ideas about other people we should contact who might be able to identify programs that are using [SPECIFY COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK]?

1. If not you, who is the best person to speak with about this topic? [FOR EACH PERSON IDENTIFIED, ASK FOR: NAME, ORGANIZATION, TITLE,

        TELEPHONE NUMBER, AND EMAIL. CONFIRM IF WE CAN USE THE
        CURRENT RESPONDENT'S NAME WHEN WE REACH OUT TO THE
        PERSON.]

CLOSING SCRIPT

Thank you for this extremely helpful information.

Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you so much for your time.