

ATTACHMENT E  
INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

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## INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

OMB No.: xxxx-xxxx

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Study of Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships will conduct multi-day site visits to 12 partnerships. During those visits, we will conduct semi-structured interviews with the grantee director and three additional partnership staff. The interviews will focus on coordinating activities among partners, monitoring compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, and providing technical assistance and training. We will also conduct four, one-hour semi-structured telephone interviews with state and local stakeholders who provide support to oversee early childhood systems that interact with the partnerships. For example, these could be staff from child care resource and referral agencies or child care subsidy administrators.

At the start of each interview, we will read a consent statement to the participant:

*Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this discussion. Your participation is very important to the study. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for Mathematica Policy Research, an independent social policy research firm.*

*We are conducting a study for the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation at the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to learn about the Early Head Start–child care partnership initiative and how agencies involved in the partnerships work together. We want to talk to [partnership grantee directors/partnership staff/stakeholders from other early childhood education programs and initiatives in the community] about their involvement in the partnerships and their opinions of the progress that has been made in implementing services for families. Being part of this discussion is up to you, and you can choose to not answer a question if you wish. We will not share your comments with other individuals involved in the partnership. Our report will describe the experiences and viewpoints expressed, but comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programs. No individuals will be quoted by name.*

*Participation is voluntary. 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 for this collection is 0970-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX. [Note to interviewer: The box below provides additional information as reference, in case participants have questions.]*

The Paperwork Reduction Act Burden Statement: This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to learn about the characteristics and implementation of Early Head Start–child care partnerships. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average [90 minutes per response for partnership grantee directors/60 minutes per response for partnership staff and stakeholders], 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. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to [Contact Name]; [Contact Address]; Attn: OMB-PRA (0970-[XXXX]).

| Topic                         | Subtopic   | Type of informant                                 |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Experience with collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of prior collaborations and partnerships</li> <li>• Experience developing collaborative agreements</li> <li>• Experience participating in collaborations and partnerships</li> <li>• Communication with collaborators and partners</li> <li>• Benefits and challenges of collaboration and partnerships</li> <li>• Lessons learned from partnerships</li> </ul>   | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |
| Partnership development       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations at the start of the partnership</li> <li>• Information included in partnership agreements</li> <li>• Funding arrangements, including funds allocated to partners for direct care, comprehensive services, quality improvement, and administrative requirements</li> <li>• Process for determining how to allocate funds, including funding per child</li> <li>• Whether agreement addresses rules for vacancy in partnership slots, including waiting periods for slots to be filled and compensation for vacant slots</li> <li>• Experience of working with partners to develop the partnership agreement</li> <li>• Communication during the development period</li> <li>• Process for addressing concerns and making revisions to partnership agreements</li> <li>• Resolving disagreements about the partnership agreement</li> <li>• Extent to which each partner felt included in shaping partnership terms</li> <li>• Successes and challenges of the partnership agreement development process</li> <li>• Lessons learned about developing partnership agreements</li> </ul> | Partnership grantee director                      |
| Assessing strengths and needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process used to assess strengths and needs of each entity</li> <li>• Role of grantees and child care partners in assessing strengths and needs</li> </ul>   | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |

| Topic  | Subtopic  | Type of informant                                 |
|--|---|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent to which each entity/staff member felt included in the process</li> <li>• Process for addressing differences in perceived needs</li> <li>• Types of needs and strengths identified</li> <li>• Successes and challenges of process used to assess needs and strengths; strategies to address challenges</li> <li>• Lessons learned about process used to assess needs and strengths</li> </ul>   |   |
| Developing quality improvement plans                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process of developing quality improvement plans and using needs assessment information</li> <li>• Role of grantees and child care partners in developing quality improvement plans</li> <li>• Extent to which each entity/staff member felt included in the process</li> <li>• Types of information included in quality improvement plans</li> <li>• Challenges of developing quality improvement plans; strategies to address challenges</li> <li>• Lessons learned about developing quality improvement plans</li> </ul>   | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |
| Monitoring implementation of quality improvement plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process used to monitor implementation of quality improvement plans and HSPPS compliance</li> <li>• Role of grantees and child care partners in monitoring quality improvement plans and HSPPS compliance</li> <li>• Extent to which grantees and child care partners felt that monitoring findings reflect needs and strengths</li> <li>• Process for addressing concerns or disagreements about monitoring findings</li> <li>• Findings from monitoring processes</li> <li>• How information from monitoring is used by partnerships</li> <li>• Challenges of monitoring quality improvement plans; strategies to address challenges</li> <li>• Lessons learned about monitoring implementation of quality improvement plans and HSPPS compliance</li> </ul> | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |
| Training and supporting staff working in partnerships  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process used to identify training and support needs among staff working in partnerships</li> </ul>   | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |

| Topic   | Subtopic  | Type of informant                                 |
|---|---|---|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach to delivering training and support, including any variation in approaches for partners with differing characteristics (such as different types of partners or partners with varying quality improvement needs)</li> <li>• Education and experience of staff responsible for delivering training and support, including training and supervision provided to staff delivering training and support</li> <li>• Process for accessing available state and local training and support resources for staff</li> <li>• Costs of providing training and support</li> <li>• Extent to which grantee staff and child care partners were able to participate in training and in providing or accessing support</li> <li>• Barriers to participating in training and support</li> <li>• Extent to which staff felt as though trainings and supports met their needs</li> <li>• Additional training and support needed</li> <li>• Challenges of providing quality improvement support and materials; strategies to address challenges</li> <li>• Lessons learned about providing quality improvement support and materials</li> </ul> |   |
| Networking among infant-toddler service providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach to networking; organizations involved in planning and hosting networking events and opportunities</li> <li>• Extent to which grantee staff and child care partners participated in networking events and opportunities</li> <li>• Barriers to participating in networking events and opportunities</li> <li>• Extent to which grantee staff and child care partners felt that networking events were valuable or beneficial</li> <li>• Challenges of facilitating networking events and opportunities; strategies to address challenges</li> <li>• Lessons learned about facilitating networking events and opportunities</li> </ul>  | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |
| Implementing family partnership agreements        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process used for developing and updating family partnership agreements; staff responsible</li> <li>• Approach to delivering comprehensive services to children and families; staff responsible</li> <li>• Barriers to implementing family partnership agreements and providing</li> </ul>  | Partnership grantee director<br>Partnership staff |

| Topic  | Subtopic   | Type of informant                                      |
|--|--|--|
| Facilitating continuity of care and smooth transitions for children                        | <p>comprehensive services and referrals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessons learned about implementing family partnership agreements and providing comprehensive services</li> </ul> <p>• Approach to regular communication, including staff involved, frequency, and topics discussed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barriers to engaging in regular communication and lessons learned</li> <li>• Process in place to facilitate continuity of care and transitions between settings for children</li> <li>• Organizations/staff responsible for implementing transition processes</li> <li>• Barriers to facilitating continuity of care and transitions between settings; lessons learned</li> </ul> | Partnership grantee director<br>Other ECE stakeholders |
| Identifying rule misalignment with other ECE systems                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process involved in identifying barriers to partnerships resulting from policy misalignment</li> <li>• Individuals/organizations involved in efforts to identify and address barriers</li> <li>• Role of partnerships in efforts to identify and address barriers</li> <li>• Successes and challenges of efforts to address barriers</li> <li>• Lessons learned about efforts to address barriers and policy misalignment</li> </ul>  | Partnership grantee director<br>Other ECE stakeholders |
| Coordinating with partnerships to provide quality improvement and professional development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to coordinate quality improvement and professional development services with other ECE systems</li> <li>• Individuals/organizations involved in coordination efforts</li> <li>• Role of partnerships in coordination efforts</li> <li>• Successes and challenges of coordination efforts</li> <li>• Lessons learned about efforts to coordinate quality improvement and professional development services</li> </ul>  | Partnership grantee director<br>Other ECE stakeholders |
| Partnership benefits and lessons learned   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior experience accessing child care subsidies</li> <li>• Prior experience accessing state and local quality improvement activities</li> <li>• Prior experience accessing state and local professional development systems and supports</li> <li>• Lessons learned about delivering services in partnership with child care providers</li> </ul>   | Partnership grantee director<br>Other ECE stakeholders |

Note: ECE = early care and education; HSPPS = Head Start Program Performance Standards.