INSTRUMENT 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STATE, TRIBAL, AND TERRITORY CCDF ADMINISTRATORS

The Consumer Education and Parental Choice in Early Care and Education research team will use this protocol to conduct interviews with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrators and a key agency staff member in charge of consumer education planning. Interviews may be conducted one-on-one or jointly.

This protocol is a guide, not a script. All respondents may not be asked all questions. Interviewers will tailor questions to the specific programs and add probes to further explore the responses provided.

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Consumer Education and Parental Choice in Early Care and Education
Interview Guide for CCDF Administrators

[Note: The interviewer will not read words in brackets. These are meant to be instructions to guide the interviewer.]

Thank you for agreeing to speak with us today. My name is [NAME], and I'm joined by my colleague, [NAME]. We're from the Urban Institute, a nonprofit social and economic policy research organization in Washington, DC.

1. *(Who is leading the research and funding it)* In partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago, we are leading a research project called Consumer Education and Parental Choice in Early Care and Education under a federal contract with the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
2. As part of the larger project, we are looking into several innovative or promising consumer education strategies being used to help families look for and find child care. Our ultimate goal is to synthesize and share information to other CCDF Lead Agencies, the Office of Child Care, and other interested groups, such as child care resource and referral agencies and technical assistance providers, to support future efforts in this area.
3. *(Requirements)* Over the next hour, we will be asking you a series of questions designed to gather in-depth information regarding a strategy your [state/territory/tribe] is implementing so we can learn more. You may not know the answer to every question, and that is fine. If there are any questions that you don't feel knowledgeable about or don't feel comfortable answering, just let us know and we will move on. You can also let us know names and affiliations of other people who may be more informed on those topics, and we can follow up with them.
4. *(Voluntary)* I'll remind you that this interview is voluntary. There will be no consequences if you decline or stop the interview. If you need to take a break at any time, please let us know.
5. *(Consent to record)* We'll take notes during our discussion, but if it's okay with you, we would also like to record this interview to help fill in our notes. If you would like me to stop recording at any time during the interview, please let me know. We will delete the recording once our analysis is complete.
6. *(What we will do with the data)* The information we gather during your interview will be captured in summary memos and paired with other information gathered in your [state, territory, tribe], such as documents you provide; publicly available information from websites; and interviews or focus groups that we have with parents, people in organizations that you collaborate with, and other people who are connected to the services that we are studying. All of those things together create a case study that profiles a particular service you are providing and how people experience that service. We will share the information that we gather with our federal project officers at the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, which is the research arm of the Administration for Children and Families (we will reference the Administration for

Children and Families as ACF going forward). If we quote something you say, we won't name you and attribute what you said to you, but because this is a case study of a particular program in your [state, territory, tribe], others may be able to identify you. We will also write and publicly publish products, such as study reports and research briefs, that capture what we have learned about the characteristics of your program, how people experienced it, and your perspectives and the perspectives of others on strengths and challenges and lessons learned.

7. *(Privacy)* Importantly, we would like to identify your state in our products to acknowledge the work that you are doing. We will not, however, identify you by name in our products. If we quote you in our study products or describe something you shared, we will never use your name or attribute the quote in any way that someone could identify you. Because the identities of CCDF administrators are public information and you may interact with some ACF staff regularly, they may figure out who you are from the remarks that we report.

8. *(Risks and benefits)* If you share something about a challenge you experienced that is sensitive, there could be a risk of reputational harm because people might be able to identify you as a CCDF administrator. Sharing challenges helps other people learn, but you have to decide how comfortable you are with what you share. You can ask us not to include some parts of the information in publicly available information. Otherwise, there are minimal risks to participation in this interview. You may benefit from knowing your [state's/territory's/tribe's] consumer education strategies are being highlighted as innovative and will be shared with other CCDF lead agencies, and you may learn something new about how people experience or perceive your strategy based on the other information we are collecting.

- Do you have any questions?
- Do we have your consent to proceed with our interview?
- Do we have your permission to record?

[If the interviewee says yes] Thank you. If you are ready, I will start recording now.

[If the interviewee say no, research assistant will be prepared to take close-to-verbatim notes.]

We know your state/territory/tribe is implementing various strategies to provide consumer education to families. In our interview today, we'd like to focus specifically on [NAME OF SELECTED STRATEGY].

Before we begin, let me provide you with a brief 'roadmap' of what we'll cover during the interview. We'll start with a few questions about the goals and motivation behind [STRATEGY], then we'll discuss implementation successes and challenges. We will wrap up with any additional thoughts on lessons learned to inform other CCDF Lead Agencies. Sound good?

A. Motivation and Background on Selected Consumer Education Strategies

1. To start, tell me more about what motivated your state/tribe to develop [STRATEGY].
    a. What was going on at the time?
    b. Was there a particular problem or concern you were hoping to address?
    c. What was the goal or outcome you were hoping to achieve?

2. Tell me more about [STRATEGY].
    a. If you had to provide a brief description of what it is and what it is intended to do, what would you say?
    b. Where did the idea for [STRATEGY] come from? *(Probe on whether it was used somewhere else and adapted or was newly developed.)*
    c. Why did you think this strategy would be effective in [NAME OF SITE]?
    d. What types of families or community needs do you intend to [reach/make aware/support in learning]? Has that always been the case or has the focus changed over time?
    [Probe on mode of delivery, content, and focal audiences and locations and their characteristics.]
    e. What makes this strategy innovative or unique from other consumer education strategies?

B. Strategy Development

3. Who were the key people or groups involved in development, and what was their role?

4. What, if any, kinds of data informed your agency's decisions around design, such as where to target efforts?
    a. *[Probe on who owns data, who did the analysis, what the findings were.]*
    b. *[Probe on extent to which parents were involved in design or if data from parents informed design.]*

5. What kind of planning and resources were necessary to develop and launch [STRATEGY]?

C. Implementation Details and Challenges

6. What kind of role have you played in implementing [STRATEGY]?

7. What key people or groups have been involved in implementation? What are their roles?
    a. How did you engage their help or collaboration on this? *(Probe whether lead agency reached out to other parts of system to solicit collaboration or to inform them about the strategy and request assistance with sharing with families.)*

8. What steps did you take to make sure that the people implementing [STRATEGY] knew how to do it the way that you wanted?
    a. What worked well or didn't work well?
    b. How did you overcome any challenges?

9. What steps did you take to advertise [STRATEGY]?
    a. What worked well or didn't work well?
    b. How did you overcome any challenges?

10. What, if any, policies or procedures did you have to change or align to successfully implement [STRATEGY]?
    a. Did you face any challenges making these changes?
    b. How did you overcome any challenges?

11. What technology changes, if any, were needed to implement [STRATEGY]?
    a. Did you face any challenges making these changes?
    b. How did you overcome any challenges?

D. Implementation Successes

Next, let's talk about implementation successes.

12. What has been going well with [STRATEGY]? What has been most successful?

13. *[Tailor question based on strategy]* What are the experiences of parents who use [STRATEGY] or that come to you after seeing [STRATEGY]? What have you heard or seen?

14. What kinds of data is your agency or others collecting to track families' engagement or use of this [STRATEGY]?
    a. Have you achieved any targeted goals?
    [Probe depending on goals, such as improving the timing of outreach to families, or raising awareness of child care search resources and care options.]
    b. How are you measuring "success"?

E. Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Improvement

15. Reflecting back, what would you say were the "key ingredients" that helped you successfully implement the strategy? What things were necessary to get to where you are?

16. What, if anything, would you have done differently?

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    a. What issues or challenges remain?

17. Which types of families or communities are hardest to [reach/support] through [STRATEGY], and why?
    b. What resources or changes are necessary to be more effective in reaching these families?

18. What are your next steps in terms of improving, refining, or expanding your efforts?

19. Under what circumstances would this be a useful strategy in other places?

20. If you were to offer advice to other CCDF Lead Agencies, what would you share?

F. Wrap Up

21. Great! Those were all my questions. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences that we didn't discuss?

22. As we close, I'd like to confirm with you the names and affiliations of people you recommend we interview next for this case study. *(Refer to list of people and groups mentioned in development and implementation, and ask for additional recommendations.)*

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