

INSTRUMENT 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CONSUMER EDUCATION SERVICES STAFF

The Consumer Education and Parental Choice in Early Care and Education research team will use this protocol to conduct interviews with staff members in the agency/organization that provides consumer education services to support child care search and selection in the case studies sites. Staff may be employed with a state/county/tribal agency or with an organization contracted to provide these services, such as a local child care resource and referral agency (CCR&R). Interviews may be conducted one-on-one or in small groups.

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.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for a short introduction and completing the interview. This information collection 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. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: NORC at the University of Chicago (Attn: Rupa Datta) 55 E. Monroe St, 30th Floor, Chicago, IL 60603.

Consumer Education and Parental Choice in Early Care and Education Interview Guide for Consumer Education Services Staff

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

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 Child Care and Development Fund (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 consumer education in your [state/territory/tribe]. 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 our interviews will be captured in summary memos that we will share with our federal project officers. We will also write and publish products, such as study reports and research briefs, that capture findings from our study. These products will be made publicly available.
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.
8. *(Risks and benefits)* There are minimal risks to participation in this interview. If you share something about a challenge you experienced that is sensitive, there could be a risk of reputational harm, if someone could identify you. But we will limit the sharing of any potentially sensitive information. 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 others.

- 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 discuss this range of strategies and what you think is working well or not, and then we'll focus specifically on [NAME OR DESCRIBE SELECTED STRATEGY] to learn more about that strategy and any implementation successes and challenges.

A. Interviewee Background

Let's start with a few background questions about you.

1. Please tell us about your current job role and how long you've been in this position.
(Probe on scope of their work on consumer education related to supporting child care and early education search and selection.)

B. Community Context

2. Tell us a little bit about the community you work with. *(Probe if working within a certain county, city, etc.)* What are some of the defining characteristics of this community?
3. How would you describe the people and cultures here?
 - a. Is this an area that attracts many families with young children?
 - b. Is this an area where most residents stay a long time, or is it a more transient area where people come and go?
 - c. What are some of the strengths you see in the community or among the families who live here?
4. How would you describe access to and availability of child care here?
 - a. Is it generally easy for families to find what they need and want, or is it hard?
 - b. If it is hard, why is that?
5. Some areas may be considered more family-friendly than others. Do you think families with young children generally feel well-supported in this community in terms of inclusion and sense of belonging?

- a. What about the level of community resources available to them?
- b. What are some common challenges other than child care that they tend to face?

C. Range of Consumer Education Strategies

6. From your perspective, what is the purpose of child care consumer education in helping families look for and find child care and early education?
7. Tell us about the types of consumer education services your agency provides to help parents looking for a child care provider or early education program. We're interested in the mode of delivery, the content, and who you are targeting or serving. *[Probe on scope and reach of services, i.e., geography covered.]*
8. Great! Thanks for that information. We know there are many types of consumer education resources and services. How well would you say the resources and services in your area support:
 - a. **raising parents' awareness**, such as their awareness of available services you provide?
 - b. **building knowledge**, such as parents' knowledge about child care quality and what types of programs are available in their community?
 - c. **parents looking for child care**, to get them reliable and accessible information when they need it?
9. In your experience, what types of families do these consumer education services work well for or not well work for?
[Probe on whether they have any data or anecdotal evidence of differences based on family race/ethnicity, language, income, education level, child age, child needs, parenting experience, and urban/rural.]
 - a. Can you say more about why that is? Why do some families need different types of supports than others?
10. To what extent do you think your agency is a go-to place for families looking for child care in the community? Why do you think that is?
 - a. How do families in your community typically hear about your agency and its services?

D. Development of Innovative/Promising Strategy

Next, we'd like to talk specifically about [NAME OF SELECTED STRATEGY].

11. 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. 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.]
- c. What makes this strategy innovative or unique from other consumer education strategies?

12. What, if any, role did you have in designing [STRATEGY]?

13. What kind of planning and resources were necessary to develop and launch it?

E. Implementation Details and Challenges

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

15. What key people or groups have been involved in implementation? What are their roles?

- a. Can you describe your relationship with them? Do you collaborate with them or communicate with them in some way?
[Probe on relationship with CCDF lead agency if respondent is not an agency staff member.]

16. What steps did you or others take to make sure that the people implementing [STRATEGY] knew how to do it the way it was intended?

- a. What worked well or didn't work well?
- b. How did you overcome any challenges?

17. What steps did you take to advertise [STRATEGY]?

- a. What worked well or didn't work well?
- b. How did you overcome any challenges?

18. 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?

19. 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?

F. Implementation Successes

Next, let's talk about implementation successes.

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

[Probe depending on goals, such as improving the timing of outreach to families, or raising awareness of child care search resources and care options.]

21. What are the experiences of parents who use [STRATEGY] or that come to you after seeing [STRATEGY]? What have you heard or seen?

a. How much do you think parents are benefiting from this [resource/tool]? How so?

[Probe which types of families are using and not using resource/tool and who is benefiting or not.]

22. What kinds of data is your agency or others collecting to track families' engagement or use of this [STRATEGY]?

a. Are you collecting comments and feedback from families about their experience with [STRATEGY]?

b. How are you measuring "success?"

G. Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Improvement

23. Reflecting back, what would you say were the "key ingredients" to successfully implement the strategy? What factors were necessary to get to where you are?

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

a. What issues or challenges remain?

25. Which types of families or communities are hardest to [reach/support] through [STRATEGY], and why?

a. What resources or changes are necessary to be more effective in reaching these families?

H. Wrap Up

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