

INSTRUMENT 3: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

The Consumer Education and Parental Choice in Early Care and Education research team will use this protocol to conduct interviews with key informants. This protocol is a guide, not a script. All respondents may not be asked all questions. Interviewers will tailor questions to the specific respondents and add probes to further explore the responses provided. Respondents will include community members, including organizations that offer outreach and coordination of family support services, local child care subsidy program manager or staff, and other key informants who interact with families and would be able to provide a perspective on the strengths and challenges of child care and early education in the selected site. Interviews may be conducted one-on-one or jointly.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 45 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 Key Informants

[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 45 minutes, 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 to help them look for and select child care. 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 OF 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.
2. What role do you play in helping families meet their child care needs?
(Probe on what their organization/agency does, its location and reach, and families they target or serve. Probe on scope of their work, and how it relates to child care and early education and consumer education specifically.)

B. Community Context

Tell us a little bit about the community you work with.

3. 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?
4. 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?

5. 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?

6. 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. Perceived Need for Consumer Education

9. From your perspective, what is the purpose of child care consumer education in helping families look for and find child care and early education?

10. From your perspective, do families need the same types of supports looking for and finding child care, or do they need different supports, and why?
[Probe on differences based on family race/ethnicity, language, income, education level, child age, child needs, parenting experience, and urban/rural.]

11. 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?

12. In your experience, what types of families do these consumer education services work well for or not well work for? Can you say more about why that is?
[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.]

13. Do you think families with young children trust community and government agencies to find information about child care? Why or why not?

14. Do you have any thoughts or suggestions for how to better reach certain types of families who may benefit from child care information but are harder to reach?
 - a. What resources or changes are necessary to be more effective in reaching these families?

D. Design and Implementation of Innovative Strategy

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

15. Did you have any role in designing or implementing [STRATEGY]? Or do you communicate about [STRATEGY] in your work?
16. From your perspective, what seems to be going well with [STRATEGY]? What has been most successful?
 - a. What are the experiences of parents who use [STRATEGY] or that come to you after seeing [STRATEGY]?
 - b. How much do you think parents are benefiting from this [resource/tool]? What have you seen or heard? Why do you think that is the case?
[Probe which types of families are using and not using resource/tool and who is benefiting or not.]
17. Do you have any recommendations for improving [STRATEGY]?

E. Wrap Up

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