Instrument 9. Provider Feedback Focus Group

A. Welcome

Thank you for talking with me. We are grateful for your participation in the study and that you're taking the time to meet with us again. As a reminder, the Home-Based Child Care Practices and Experiences (HBCC P&E) Study is being conducted by Mathematica and the Erikson Institute for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to learn more about the strengths of home-based child care. The purpose of this call is to share study findings and themes that emerged from talking to you and all the providers, family members, and people who support you, and then to get your reactions to these preliminary findings and themes.

We want to go over a few things before we begin. As with your earlier participation in the study, your participation in this call is completely up to you and voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. We will keep your participation private. We will only use your responses for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are. We hope you will be open and frank during our discussion. We ask that none of you share what you hear from other providers with others outside the group. Finally, because this is a federally funded study, I want to tell you that 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 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB number for this collection is 0970-xxxx and the expiration date is xx/xx/xxxx.

[*Placeholder for any additional logistical instructions.*]

We think this meeting will take about an hour. With your permission, we would like to record the conversation so we can refer to your responses while writing our reports. It will not be shared outside the study team, and we will delete it at the end of the study, when our reports are complete. Does anyone object to recording this conversation? [*Start recording.*]

Any questions before we begin?

B. Feedback on preliminary findings and themes

1. **Features of quality that family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) providers find important** [*These will emerge from the data*]

    The study team will present summary of findings for each feature of quality that is identified in the data. For example, present the types of home spaces that providers shared through photographs and through their narratives. Then ask focus group participants which they think are most important and why and what may be missing from the list of themes.

    For example:

    a. **Home spaces.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

    b. **Activities and routines.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

c. **Community spaces, community engagement, role in the community.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

d. **Supporting children's social development and prosocial (positive social) behaviors and anti-bias.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

e. **Supporting children's cultural, ethnic, racial, linguistic, gender identity and social-emotional development (social and emotional skills).** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

f. **Supporting children's cognitive (relating to mental activities) and academic development.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

g. **Supporting children's safety, health, and physical development.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

h. **Supporting families.** Which of these are most important to you and why? What else would you add to this list?

2. **Overall, what features of quality are missing?**

3. **Which 3 features of quality do you think are the most important for children and families?**

4. **Sources of resources, supports, and knowledge that are used** [*These will emerge from the data*]

The study team will present summary of findings that emerge from the data. Then ask focus group participants which they think are most important and why and what may be missing from the list of themes.

For example:

- Family members
- Friends and neighbors
- Community members–e.g., church, neighborhood associations

What is missing from this list?

5. **Which sources of support are the most important to you?**

6. **Types of resources, supports, and knowledge that providers receive** [*These will emerge from the data*]

For example:

- Social and emotional support
- Logistical support–help with child care (the means necessary to carry out child care)
- Information about resources for children and families
- Information about children's development and early learning
- Help participating in Child Care and Early Education (CCEE) systems

What is missing from this list?

7. **What other resources, supports, or knowledge have you received?**

8. **What are the top 3 types of resources, supports, or knowledge that are important to you?**

9. **Types of resources, supports, and knowledge that providers would like but have NOT received**
   [*These will emerge from the data*]

   For example:

   - Financial support
   - Help becoming a home owner

   What other resources, supports, or knowledge would you like but have not received?

10. **CCEE systems and supports that are mentioned by providers in the data (e.g., licensing, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), subsidy, Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), early intervention)**

    For example:

    - CACFP visitor
    - Infant/toddler specialist
    - Home visitor
    - Network specialist
    - Subsidy monitor (these are payments to providers that are meant to help families afford child care)
    - Early childhood/infant mental health consultant

    Are there additional types of CCEE systems and supports that you wish you could access?

11. **What are some reasons you think that FFN providers choose to participate in these systems? Choose not to participate?**

12. **Challenges faced**

    For each category of challenges, list themes that emerge from study data.

    a. **Challenges offering care to children.** Are there additional challenges you have faced in offering care to children and families?

    b. **Challenges with families.** Are there additional challenges you have faced in interacting with families?

    c. **Challenges with CCEE systems/supports.** Are there additional challenges you have faced with CCEE systems?

    d. **Challenges doing child care that are related to racism, sexism, oppressive/inequitable systems.**

    What other challenges are missing?

13. **Features of quality that families value** [*These will emerge from the data*]

For example:

- Educational setting
- Home, familiar environment
- Place for relaxation, respite, being a child
- Provider-child relationships
- Provider-family relationships
- Logistical supports (the means necessary to carry out child care) e.g., flexible schedules, payment, support

How do these compare with what you think are important features of quality?

C.   Wrap-up and next steps

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. We greatly appreciate your feedback.

[*Placeholder for discussion of how we plan to present findings, any plans to let them know when reports are published, gift card logistics, etc.*]

Do you have any questions for me right now? [*Answer as needed.*] Thank you again!