

# CHAFEE STRENGTHENING OUTCOMES FOR TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD (CHAFEE SOTA)

## Sample Administrator Interview Protocol

**Note: Prior to the interview, this protocol will be tailored for the project or the comparison site and completed as much as possible from existing documents.**

### **Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. We are researchers from [Westat, an independent research firm located in Rockville, MD / the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine University of Colorado]. We have been contracted by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to conduct an evaluation of John H. Chafee programs serving youth in or transitioning out of foster care (called the Chafee Strengthening Outcomes for Transition to Adulthood [Chafee SOTA] Evaluation).

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**[Program sites]** As you know, [PROGRAM] is one of the programs involved in this evaluation. For each program, we are interviewing several people to learn more about the program's efforts to serve youth who are transitioning out of foster care. In the interview today, I am especially interested in learning about your program's goals, development, resources, participants, and plans for sustainability. In preparation for this interview, we have reviewed information about your program and would like to build on that knowledge to learn more about your services for youth transitioning out of foster care.

**[Partner sites]** As part of this evaluation, we are also visiting organizations that partner with [PROGRAM] to learn about how they serve youth transitioning out of foster care. In the interview today, I am especially interested in learning about how your program contributes to [PROGRAM]'s goals, development, resources, and sustainability.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary. It should take about an hour to complete. We will keep your responses private. In addition, please feel free to let me know if you would like to skip any question I ask by saying, "I'd prefer to skip this question."

Before I get into more of the specifics of the interview, do you have any questions for me?

**[See if there are any questions, comments, concerns.]**

We'd like to record the session to make sure we document your answers accurately. Following our visit, the recording will be transcribed and used for analysis. The recording will be stored in a secure location and destroyed after the recording has been transcribed. You can ask us to turn off the recording at any time if you would prefer to talk about something and not have it recorded. Do I have your permission to record the interview?

**[If permission is granted, turn on recorder.]**

## A. Background

I would like to begin with a few questions about your background and service to youth transitioning out of foster care.

- A1. What is your position in [ORGANIZATION NAME]? How long have you been in this position?  
**[Ask of all program directors in interview.]**
- A2. What is your role within your community's network for serving youth transitioning out of foster care?
- A3. What is the mission or focus of this organization?
- A4. What are the characteristics of the youth you serve?
  - o Are there specific subgroups of note (e.g., LGBTQ, pregnant/parenting, exiting homelessness or juvenile justice, youth of color, commercially sexually exploited, other)?
  - o What data support your understanding of the population?
- A5. What services does your organization provide to youth transitioning out of foster care?
- A6. **[If partner site]** What is your organization's professional relationship with [PROGRAM]?

## B. Program Overview, and Implementation

**[Program sites]** As I mentioned earlier, we have reviewed information about your program but would like to know more details about its status, development, and current implementation.

### Overview and Structure

- B2. Can you give us a brief overview of your program's key components? We will go into more detail about each of these later.
- B3. Which organizations are/were involved in your program's development? Can you describe the various roles these organizations played? For organizations that are no longer involved, what were the reasons they stopped being involved?

### Youth Involvement

- B4. Were youth involved in the development of the program? How were they identified and selected? How are/were they engaged? What impact did their involvement have?
- B5. Are youth involved in the current implementation of the program? How are they engaged? Are they the same youth as those involved in its development?
- B6. Does your program have a youth advisory board or other youth committee?
  - o **[If yes]**
    - o When did it start?
    - o How are members selected?
    - o Are there terms?
    - o How many people participate?
    - o What role does the board play in the program?
    - o Does it have decision-making power?
    - o How often does it meet?
    - o Are there workgroups or subcommittees?
    - o How does it interact with other governance and leadership structures?
    - o Does the board reflect the diversity of the youth transitioning out of foster care in your community? In what ways?

### C. Coordination with Other Systems

We'd like to learn about how your program coordinates with other systems.

- D1. Is there any coordination between [PROGRAM] and
- the child welfare system?
  - the juvenile justice system?
  - the education system?
  - the homelessness system?
  - other mainstream service systems (such as health, behavioral health, employment)?
- D2. What challenges have you faced in coordinating with these systems?
- What strategies did you use to try to overcome these challenges?
  - What has resulted?

### D. Funding

My next questions are about funding for your program's services.

- E1. What are the key sources of funding for your program. **[Review sources and amounts.]**
- How those funds are being used?
  - Are there any restrictions on how specific funds can be used?
- E2. Besides the amount of funding, what funding challenges do you face? **[Probe for restrictiveness, process for accessing and using, etc.]**

**[ASK QUESTIONS IN SECTIONS E—G IF APPROPRIATE TO THE PROGRAM]**

### E. Employment Services

Now I would like to ask a few questions your program's efforts to secure employment for youth transitioning out of foster care. Again, I'd like to confirm and expand on what we learned from your program documents. Currently your efforts in place to connect youth with employment services or help them find jobs include **[list activities..]**

- F1. For each effort:
- What are its short and long-term goals?
  - What is the nature of the assistance? Please describe.
  - When did it start?
  - What organizations are involved?
  - How are youth identified?
  - What resources, if any, are provided to youth?
  - Is this effort targeted to all youth you serve or to specific subpopulations?
- F2. Are you planning any changes to current employment services for youth transitioning out of foster care? If so, please describe. **[Probe: Changes in who is involved? The engagement process? Resources to be provided? Organizations involved? Role of other systems? How and when the program will operate? Where it operates? Its capacity? The nature and number of staff involved?]**
- F3. What challenges have you faced connecting youth with employment services?  
What strategies did you use to try to overcome these challenges? What has resulted?

### F. Education Services

Currently your efforts in place to connect youth with education services or school supports include **[list activities.]**

- G1. For each effort:
- What are its short and long-term goals?
  - What is the nature of the assistance? Please describe.
  - When did it start?
  - What organizations are involved?

- o How are youth identified?
  - o What resources, if any, are provided to youth?
  - o Is this effort targeted to all youth you serve or to specific subpopulations?
- G2. Are you planning any changes to current education services for youth transitioning out of foster care? If so, please describe. **[Probe: Changes in who is involved? The engagement process? Resources to be provided? Organizations involved? Role of other systems? How and when the program will operate? Where it operates? Its capacity? The nature and number of staff involved.]**
- G3. What challenges have you faced connecting youth with education services? What strategies did you use to try to overcome these challenges? What has resulted?

## G. Housing Services

Currently your efforts in place to connect youth with housing supports include **[list activities]**.

H1. For each effort:

- o What are its short and long-term goals?
- o What is the nature of the assistance? Please describe.
- o When did it start?
- o What organizations are involved?
- o How are youth identified?
- o What resources, if any, are provided to youth?
- o Is this effort targeted to all youth you serve or to specific subpopulations?

H2. Are you planning any changes to current housing services for youth transitioning out of foster care? If so, please describe. **[Probe: Changes in who is involved? The engagement process? Resources to be provided? Organizations involved? Role of other systems? How and when the program will operate? Where it operates? Its capacity? The nature and number of staff involved?]**

H3. What challenges have you faced connecting youth with housing services?

What strategies did you use to try to overcome these challenges? What has resulted?

## H. Other Services

Currently your other efforts to support youth transitioning out of foster care include **[list activities]**. **[Prompt separately for case management, behavioral health, other services.]**

I1. For each effort:

- o What are its short and long-term goals?
- o What is the nature of the effort? Please describe.
- o When did it start?
- o What organizations are involved?
- o How are youth identified?
- o What resources, if any, are provided to youth?
- o Is this effort targeted to all youth transitioning out of foster care or to specific subpopulations?

I2. Are you planning any changes to these services for youth you serve? If so, please describe. **[Probe: Changes in who is involved? The engagement process? Resources to be provided? Organizations involved? Role of other systems? How and when the program will operate? Where it operates? Its capacity? The nature and number of staff involved.]**

I3. What challenges have you faced connecting youth with other services?

What strategies did you use to try to overcome these challenges? What has resulted?

## I. Data

Now moving on to a few data questions.

- J1. How do you use data for program monitoring/evaluation? What metrics are monitored and are they used to set and measure progress toward goals?
- o What data do you use?
  - o Who enters data?
  - o Who manages data?
  - o Is it easily accessible? In what format?
  - o How often?
- J2. Are there data that the program needs but that are not currently being collected? Why are they not being collected?
- J3. Are you part of any other studies right now besides the Chafee SOTA evaluation? With whom? In what population/topics?
- J6. What challenges have you faced in using data?
- o What strategies did you use to try to overcome these challenges? What has resulted?

**J. Context**

- K1. Is there any other way that your organization is involved with serving youth transitioning out of foster care?
- K2. Are there any other factors that are important for us to understand in characterizing the context of the program? Economic factors? State or local political factors? Anything else (such as geography, transportation, culture, growth of the population)?