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Youth Court Experience Question Bank

This question bank was developed to assist sites in designing survey and focus group instruments that will gather information for the JCAMP measures. Questions were developed by youth with lived experience serving as expert consultants for JCAMP.

Using the JCAMP Question Bank

For each category of measurement (i.e., family engagement, due process, high-quality legal representation, safety, and permanency) and associated measures, you will find lists of sample questions, question formats, and suggested response categories that can be used to collect data on the JCAMP measures via survey or focus group methods. Items are divided into response categories depending on your needs. Unless otherwise indicated, response options are as follows:

- Binary response options:
 - o 1 = Yes
 - o 2 = No
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - o 1 = Strongly disagree
 - o 2 = Disagree
 - o 3 = Neutral
 - o 4 = Agree
 - o 5 = Strongly agree

Unless otherwise indicated, focus group and open-ended questions do not have response options.

After selecting your JCAMP measures, you can locate your priority measures in the lists below and select among the sample questions to design your survey and focus group data collection instruments.

Family Engagement

1.13 Do children and youth feel judges engaged them in hearings?

- Binary response options:
 - Did you understand what was happening during your court hearings?
 - Were you made aware that you could speak in your court hearings?
 - Did you speak in your court hearings?
 - [If yes to question above] Did you feel that the judge heard and understood what you were saying?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - I understood what was happening during my court hearings.
 - I was made aware that I could speak in my court hearings.
- Focus group and open-response options:
 - What is one thing that would improve the court experience for other children or youth?
 - What top three issues are most important to you in your court hearing? Why?
 - Rate the issues from most important to least.
 - What specific things helped you feel more prepared for court?
 - Would anything have helped you feel more prepared?
 - What are three words to describe your court experience?
 - Would you like us to know anything else?

Due Process

2.9 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALS ensure fair hearings?

- Binary response options:
 - Did your lawyer file paperwork on time for the services you needed?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - My lawyer filed paperwork on time for the services I needed.

2.11 Do children and youth feel they were treated fairly?

- Binary response options:
 - o Were you made aware that you could attend your court hearings?
 - o Did you attend most of your court dates?
 - o Did you feel comfortable and safe at the courthouse?
 - o Did you feel prepared for your court hearings?
 - o Was transportation to court available to you when you needed it?
 - o Were there youth-friendly spaces at the courthouse for you to spend time in outside your hearing?
 - o If someone who had abused you was present at court, were you able to be in a separate waiting room from them before court?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - o I was made aware that I could attend my court hearings.
 - o I attended most of my court dates.
 - o I felt comfortable and safe at the courthouse.
 - o I felt prepared for my court hearings.
 - o Transportation to court was available to me when I needed it.
 - o There were youth-friendly spaces at the courthouse for me to spend time in outside my hearing.
 - o If someone who had abused me was present at court, I was able to be in a separate waiting room from them before court.

High-Quality Legal Representation

3.6 How do child or youth attorneys and/or attorney GALs ensure they provide high-quality legal representation?

- Binary response options:
 - o Did your lawyer explain BEFORE court what would happen in court? [3.6c]
 - o If yes, did they explain it in a way you understood? [3.6c]
 - o Did your lawyer meet with you AFTER court to explain what happened during your court hearing? [3.6c]
 - o If yes, did they explain in a way you understood? [3.6c]
- Agree or disagree scale response options:

- o My lawyer explained BEFORE court what would happen in court in a way I understood. [3.6c]
- o My lawyer met with me AFTER court to explain what happened during my court hearing in a way I understood. [3.6c]
- o Did you want help with any physical health or mental health needs?
 - [If yes] Did your lawyer follow up on health services that you needed?
- o Did you want help with any school needs or after-school activities?
 - [If yes] Did your lawyer bring up your school or after-school needs in court?

3.9 Are children and youth satisfied with their legal representation?

- Binary response options:
 - o Did you have a lawyer or a GAL? (aligns with 3.2)
 - o Did you have a positive relationship with your lawyer or GAL?
 - o Did your lawyer understand and respect your cultural identity?
 - o Did your lawyer understand and respect your gender identity and sexual orientation?
 - o In general, did your lawyer treat you with respect?
 - o Did you feel that your lawyer cared about you?
 - o Did your lawyer explain your rights as a foster youth to you?
 - o Did your lawyer listen to what you had to say?
 - o Did your lawyer make sure that your wishes were heard in court?
 - o Did your lawyer advocate for your needs and wishes (like visitation, services, personal rights)? (also aligns with 5.16)
 - o Did you feel comfortable contacting your lawyer if needed?
 - o Overall, were you satisfied with the legal representation from your lawyer that you received while in foster care?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - o I had a positive relationship with my lawyer or GAL.
 - o My lawyer understood and respected my cultural identity.
 - o My lawyer understood and respected my gender identity and sexual orientation.
 - o In general, my lawyer treated me with respect.

- o I felt that my lawyer cared about me.
- o My lawyer explained my rights as a foster youth to me.
- o My lawyer listened to what I had to say.
- o My lawyer made sure that my wishes were heard in court.
- o My lawyer advocated for my needs and wishes (like visitation, services, personal rights). (also aligns with 5.16)
- o I felt comfortable contacting my lawyer if needed.
- o Overall, I was satisfied with the legal representation from my lawyer that I received while in foster care.



Safety

4.14. Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in safety discussions?

- Binary response options:
 - o Did your attorney or attorney GAL regularly ask you WITHOUT other adults present whether you felt safe at your current placement?
 - o Have you felt unsafe while in foster care?
 - [If yes] Did your lawyer or social worker investigate these safety concerns?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - o My lawyer regularly asked me WITHOUT other adults present whether I felt safe at my current placement.
 - o I have felt unsafe while in foster care.
 - [If agree or strongly agree] My lawyer investigated these safety concerns.



Permanency

General permanency questions

- Binary response options:
 - o Did the court place you with your relatives and/or siblings?
 - o When you entered foster care, did you get to stay in the same school?
 - o Right now, do you have permanent connections to adults who care about you?

5.21 Do parents feel they were able to engage in meaningful family time?

- Binary response options:
 - o Have you been able to have regular visits (at least monthly) with family members, relatives, and siblings you care about?
 - o Have you been able to have regular contact (phone, text, video) with people you care about?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - o I was able to have regular visits (at least monthly) with family members, relatives, and siblings I care about. 5.21 (parents)
 - o I was able to have regular contact (phone, text, video) with people I care about. 5.21 (for parents)

5.22 Do children and youth feel their voices were heard in permanency decisions?

- Binary response options:
 - o Did your lawyer ask you who the important adults (relatives, neighbors, friends, community or tribal members, etc.) are in your life?
 - o Did your lawyer ask you with whom you wanted to live?
 - o Did the court take your wishes into account when making placement decisions (where you live or have lived)?
 - o Did the court take your wishes into account when making your permanency decisions (who your legal parents or guardians are)?
- Agree or disagree scale response options:
 - o My lawyer asked me who the important adults (relatives, neighbors, friends, community or tribal members, etc.) are in my life.
 - o My lawyer asked me with whom I wanted to live.
 - o The court took my wishes into account when making placement decisions (where I live or have lived).
 - o The court took my wishes into account when making permanency decisions (who my legal parents or guardians are).

