

Appendix D: Housing Constituent Protocol (PHA staff Interview Protocol)

Introductory Script

I am _____ and this is _____ from Child Trends. Child Trends is a non-profit research organization. We have been contracted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct a research study to understand the child care needs and preferences of families living in public housing developments. As the executive director of [name of PHA development], we'd like to talk to you about any services or programs available at your development that may support families in accessing child care, and any barriers the development faces in providing those supports, as well as barriers families face in accessing care. We expect that our conversation today will last about an hour.

All of your responses and comments today will be kept confidential and will not be connected to your name in the products that we create as part of this project. If we include any quotes from interviews, we will make sure that any potentially identifiable information is removed. **There is one exception to confidentiality we need to make you aware of. In research studies, it is our ethical responsibility to ensure everyone is safe. This means we are responsible for reporting current or previous situations where a child might have been seriously harmed by an adult; specifically: of child physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, child neglect, or any life-threatening situation to appropriate authorities. Also, if we are concerned that anyone is at risk of harming themselves, we will want to connect you to supports to keep everyone safe. However, we are not seeking this type of information in our study nor will you be asked questions about these issues directly.**

To keep track of everything that is being discussed today, we would like to record the conversation. The purpose of recording is to make sure that we are correctly capturing your responses in our notes. The recording and written notes from this interview will be kept on a secure server at Child Trends and no one outside of the research team will be able to access them. We will delete the recording once the notes are complete.

Would like to participate in today's interview?

Yes/No

Are you comfortable with us recording this interview today?

Yes/No

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to any of our questions—we are simply interested in hearing about your experiences. If you feel uncomfortable answering a question, just let me know and we can skip it and move to the next one. **Please note that participating in this interview is completely voluntary. You may request to stop the interview at any time.**

As a reminder, you will receive a gift card to thank you for your time today. We will share more details about the receipt of the gift card at the end of the interview.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Let's begin.

1 Background Information

[3 minutes]

First I'd like to learn a bit more about the families your agency provides services to.

1. Approximately what percent of residents in your development are families with children? If you do not know the exact number, please use your best guess.
 - a. What percent of these families have a child under the age of 13? If you do not know the exact number, please use your best guess.
2. Does your agency track any information about families' formal child care use (e.g., child care centers, Head Start, pre-Kindergarten, home-based child care, or family child care)?
 - a. How is this information collected?
 - b. Do you collect any other formal or informal information (e.g., records of services used or referrals to services) on children birth to age 13 in your housing development?
 - c. If you do collect this information, how do you use it?
 - i. PROBES:
 1. Do you share with other organizations or agencies?
 2. Do you use it to target services or supports to families?

2 Local Child Care Context

[10 minutes]

Next, we'd like to learn more about child care programs that are available in your community.

3. If you're familiar, can you please describe the types of child care programs (e.g., child care centers, Head Start programs, pre-Kindergarten, home-based child care) that are available in your community?
 - a. How close or accessible are these programs for families living in [name of housing development]?
 - a. Do residents in your development enroll their children in these programs?
 - i. How do you know?
4. Does your development have any child care programs or services available on site? This might include child care centers, or residents who offer child care services out of their own home.
 - ii. PROBE:
 1. We learned about [name of provider] located at [address], do you consider this program on site, or co-located with your program?
5. Does your agency have a relationship with any local child care programs?
 - a. What does this relationship look like?
 - i. PROBES:
 1. Is this a strong relationship?
 2. Do you provide referrals to their program and vice versa?
 3. Do any of these programs hold slots for residents in your community?

- b. How do you communicate/collaborate with local child care providers?
- c. How often do you communicate with local child care providers?

3 Families' Child Care Needs

[10 minutes]

Next we'd like to ask you some questions about families' child care needs.

6. How do you learn about the child care needs of children and families in your development?
 - a. How do you use this information?
7. What services do families with young children need that are not available in [name of county]? Please explain why there is a need.
 - a. PROBES:
 - i. Health services (physical and/or mental)
 - ii. Recreation (outdoor play spaces, extracurricular activities for children)
 - iii. Transportation
 - iv. Work supports (training/education, before and/or aftercare school services)
 - v. Emergency assistance (financial, food)
 - vi. Parenting supports (parenting education, home visiting services)
8. Are there factors that help facilitate access to early childhood services in [name of county]?
 - a. Are there initiatives or programs helping support access to early childhood services?
 - b. How do families learn about these services?
9. What are the challenges to providing early childhood services to families in your development?
10. From your perspective, what types of child care programs are families in your development using?
 - a. Does this vary by child age?
 - b. Why are parents using this type of care?
11. What challenges are parents experiencing when trying to access child care for their children?
 - a. Does this vary child age?
12. From your point of view, what are the biggest barriers to meeting the childcare needs of parents/caretakers in your development?
 - a. PROBES:
 - i. Lack of affordable care/costs
 - ii. Lack of childcare slots
 - iii. Lack of high-quality childcare
 - iv. Lack of transportation
 - v. Housing instability/frequent moves
 - vi. Child care characteristics (non-traditional hours—evening or weekend hours; flexible scheduling to accommodate changing work hours; care for children with special needs; summer care; home visiting)
13. Do you have a sense of whether these needs differ from other parents/caretakers who live in [county] but are not residents in your development?
 - a. If yes, in what ways are the needs of parents/caregivers in [name of housing development] different from others in [county]?
14. What aspects of the [name of county] child care system do you think work best?
 - a. PROBES:
 - i. Referrals/childcare identification system

- ii. Subsidy process
 - iii. Quality improvement/technical assistance support services
15. What aspects of the [name of county] child care system do you think are the most challenging and why?

4 Child Care Supports

[10 minutes]

Next we'd like to understand the types of supports your development offers to families in order to locate or enroll in child care.

16. Do you provide families with young children with supports that help them access child care? This might include helping families find local child care providers, apply for financial assistance for child care providers, offering transportation supports, etc.
- a. *[If answered yes to 16 – indicating they do offer supports]* Can you describe a time recently when you supported a family in accessing child care?
 - i. Did you draw on any particular resources to help you in supporting this family?
 - ii. Did you experience any barriers in supporting this family in accessing child care?
 - iii. Is this support formal, or a routine part of the way your program provides supports to families, or is this more informal?
 - b. Does your program offer any supports to families in determining whether families are eligible for the child care deduction on their taxes?
 - i. Can you describe a time when you offered this support?
 - ii. Is this support formal, or a routine part of the way your program provides supports to families, or is this more informal?
 - iii. Do your staff or any families face any challenges in applying for this deduction?
17. Do staff in your program receive any training or professional development in how to support families' in accessing child care?
- a. Can you describe what this training consists of?

5 Co-located Child Care

[25 min]

[The following questions are only asked to those who answered 'yes' to question 4 – indicating they have co-located care on site]

The next set of questions will ask you about the child care programs that are available on site at your program.

18. You mentioned earlier that your development has a child care program on site. Does your agency operate this child care?
- a. PROBE:
 - i. Do you receive funding to provide care to children through this program or is it independently operated?

[Questions If the site does not operate the program]

19. Who operates the program?
 - a. Are there any other partners involved in the operation of the program?
 - b. Did [name of public housing development] consider operating the program?
 - i. Why or why not?
20. How would you describe the relationship between your development and this child care program?
 - a. Does the program conduct any outreach with families in your development?
 - b. Does the program hold any seats for families in your development?
 - c. Does your program offer any supports or services to families enrolled in the child care [center or home] who are not residents in your development?
21. How does this child program meet the child care needs of residents in your development?
 - a. Is there anything you would change about how the program operates that you think would better meet the child care needs of families in [name of public housing development]?
22. Have you supported any residents with enrolling their children in this program?
 - a. Can you describe what that process looked like?
 - i. What went well with this process?
 - ii. Were there any barriers in your ability to support families through this process?
23. How often do you communicate with staff at this child care program?
 - a. How do you communicate with staff in this child care program?
24. Does this child care program offer financial assistance to offset the cost of care for families either through Head Start funding, or through accepting child care subsidies?
25. What do you see as the biggest benefits of having co-located or onsite child care?
26. What factors or resources are critical for the successful operation of a co-located or onsite child care program?
27. What do you see as the biggest challenges of having co-located or onsite child care?
 - a. Are there any local policies, regulations, or guidelines that make it more or less challenging to operate co-located housing and child care programs?

[Questions if the site does operate the program]

28. Are there any partners involved in the operation of the child care program at [name of public housing development]?
29. How does this child program meet the child care needs of residents in your development?
 - a. Is there anything you would change about how the program operates that you think would better meet the child care needs of families in [name of public housing development]?
30. Have you supported any residents with enrolling their children in this program?
 - a. Can you describe what that process looked like?
 - i. What went well with this process?
 - ii. Were there any barriers in your ability to support families through this process?
31. What funding or revenue sources does your development use in order to operate this program?
 - a. PROBES:
 - i. Parent pay, Head Start, child care subsidy, state or local funds
 - ii. Have these revenue sources changed at all since the outset of the pandemic?
 - iii. Does these revenue sources cover all of your operational costs?
32. Does this your child care program offer financial assistance to offset the cost of care for families either through Head Start funding, or through accepting child care subsidies?
33. Is your child care program licensed?

- a. Can you walk us through what steps you had to take in order to receive the license?
 - i. How easy or difficult was this process?
 - ii. Did you need any additional resources or supports to complete this process?
- 34. Is your program quality rated in your local quality rating and improvement system (QRIS)?
 - a. Can you walk us through what steps you had to take in order to receive your rating?
 - i. How easy or difficult was this process?
 - ii. Did you need any additional resources or supports to complete this process?
- 35. What do you see as the biggest benefits of having co-located or onsite child care?
- 36. What factors or resources are critical for the successful operation of a co-located or onsite child care program?
- 37. What do you see as the biggest challenges of having co-located or onsite child care?
 - a. Are there any local policies, regulations, or guidelines that make it more or less challenging to operate co-located housing and child care programs?

Transition: *We have just one more question for you.*

06 Closing Thoughts

[2 min]

- 38. Is there anything else you think it would be helpful for us to know about accessing child care for families living in public housing in your community?

Closing script: Thank you for your time. If for any reason, we need additional clarification about anything that was said is it okay if we follow up with you? You should also feel free to reach out to us if there's anything you remember that you'd like to share.