Office of Refugee Resettlement

Unaccompanied Children Program

Youth Engagement Focus Group Planning Document

In alignment with the UC Program Core Beliefs and Values – children and youth first – ORR established a Youth Engagement Workgroup to strengthen ORR's integration of youth voice in case planning, daily operations, and policy updates. A critical first step is to have information on the innovative methods care providers already accomplish this. ORR invites you to share your best practices, successes, and recommendations for engaging youth as partners.

The UC Youth Engagement Workgroup will lead focus groups with you and nine other ORR care provider programs to better understand how youth engagement is understood and practiced in the field. We request that care providers make the following staff available for a knowledge sharing session:

- Program Director
- Lead Clinician
- Lead Case Manager
- Education Staff Supervisor(s)
- Youth Care Worker Supervisor(s)

The below questions will guide our shared time together, so please review and come prepared with thoughtful responses. Focus groups will be recorded, so best practices and recommendations can be reconciled after the fact. Therefore, you do not need to submit written responses to ORR. If you object to having the focus group session recorded, please email Keith Lussier (Keith.Lussier@acf.hhs.gov), Senior Advisor, Child Services, ORR in advance so that ORR can arrange to have a notetaker present during your session.

If your program employs any tools or templates to guide youth engagement, ORR requests examples be shared with Keith Lussier (Keith.Lussier@acf.hhs.gov), Senior Advisor, Child Services, ORR. Examples should not include personal identifiable information (PII) and can be shared before and/or after the focus group. If you have any questions, you can direct those to Keith Lussier as well.

- What form(s) of youth engagement does your program practice currently or have you practiced within the past year?
- How often? Who is involved? Do you use a tool or template to guide this engagement? Please share examples of any tools or templates you use to facilitate youth engagement.

Examples should not include personal identifiable information (PII). Examples can be shared before and/or after the focus group with Keith Lussier (Keith.Lussier@acf.hhs.gov), Senior Advisor, Child Services, ORR.

- Do you have a Youth Advisory Council established? If so, please share any guiding documents related to its creation and how it intersects with senior leadership of your organization.
- What training and/or guidance do your staff receive ahead of engaging with youth?
- What preparation do youth receive ahead of engaging with ORR staff? What follow-up do the youth receive?
- What actions do your staff take as a result of their conversation with the youth?
- Do youth receive follow-up on their feedback (i.e. they are informed what actions will be taken by ORR or care-provider staff as a result?)
- How is the youth feedback used in decision-making or process improvements?
- How can/does youth engagement help your work?
- What are the challenges with this form of youth engagement?
- What ideas do you have for improving youth engagement in your program or within ORR?