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Liaison/Child Welfare Specialist Interview Guide

Introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me about your experiences working as a liaison/child welfare specialist (NOTE: For Center for Tribes, use Child Welfare Specialist throughout the guide).¹

First, I'd like to read an informed consent statement, which you also received by email. It may be helpful for you to follow along with the statement as I read as it includes standard language we are required to state.

You are invited to participate in an interview about your experiences working as a liaison/child welfare specialist with the Center for [States, Tribes, Courts]. The information collected in this interview will be used to help understand the role of liaisons/child welfare specialists and how they function to support service delivery. The study is funded by the Children's Bureau and is being conducted by James Bell Associates and ICF.

This is not a personnel review, rather we are looking for themes across liaisons/child welfare specialists. This collection of information is voluntary. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. You may refuse to take part in this interview or end it at any time without penalty. You can decline to answer any questions for any reason. There are no foreseeable risks involved to your participation in the interview. Although you do not receive any direct benefits from participating in this interview; you will be contributing to the knowledge base of what works and how best to improve Center service delivery. Your name or other personally identifying information will not appear in any report and your responses to this interview will remain private to the extent permitted by law. Your anonymous responses, however, may be included in a report that is shared with the Children's Bureau, the Centers, and disseminated publicly.

I'd like to record our discussion so we can be sure to capture your responses accurately. No one besides our research team will listen to the recording. If you want to say anything you do not want recorded, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the recording. Interview recordings will be transcribed and analyzed. We will destroy the recording once our detailed notes are completed. Your

¹ If Centers use a different term to refer to the main point of contact assigned to jurisdictions, replace "liaison" with that term throughout the interview guide.

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answers will be stored in a password protected electronic database and will only be accessible to the research team.

Do you agree to participate in the interview?

☐ Yes ☐ No

May we record the interview?

☐ Yes ☐ No

[If participant does not want to be recorded, a team member will take notes.]

Great, let's get started.

[If respondent DID work on DEI-related tailored project,]

This interview has two sections. First, I'm going to ask about your background and experience as a liaison/child welfare specialist. Then I'll ask about your Center's approach to addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

[If respondent DID NOT work on DEI-related tailored project,]

During this interview, I'm going to ask about your background and experience as a liaison/child welfare specialist.

Role as a Liaison/Child Welfare Specialist:

First, let's talk about your role as a liaison/child welfare specialist.

1. How long have you worked as a liaison/child welfare specialist for the Center for (States, Tribes, Courts)?
 - a. Probes:
 - i. Have you held any other roles with the Center?
 - ii. If so what and for how long? Please include time spent working on previous rounds of the Capacity Building Collaborative.
2. **[Do not ask Center for States' liaisons]** What percent of your time do you estimate you spend working on the Capacity Building Collaborative?
3. How long have you worked in child welfare?
 - a. Probes:

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- i. Have you provided direct service to families? If so, for how long?
 - ii. **For CBCC Respondents:** Have you worked for the agency, court, and/or parent representation? If so for how long in each role?
4. What is your highest level of education?
 - a. High school/GED
 - b. Associate's degree
 - c. Bachelor's degree
 - d. Master's Degree (What type of Master's degree do you have?)
 - e. Doctoral Degree (What type of Doctoral degree do you have?)
5. How did the Center prepare you for your role as a liaison/child welfare specialist?
 - a. Probes:
 - i. Was there a training? Materials to read? Conversations with managers or peers?
 - ii. How long was the onboarding process?
 - iii. How well did the onboarding process prepare you for your job?
6. Please describe any support you receive from your Center to help you in your role as a liaison/child welfare specialist.
 - a. Probes:
 - i. Is there ongoing training? Or peer-to-peer learning?
 - ii. Are there professional development opportunities to support your work as a liaison/child welfare specialist? Are professional development opportunities initiated by the Center or you?
 - iii. What would help you strengthen your ability to serve in the liaison/child welfare specialist role?
7. Which jurisdictions/tribal programs² do you work with? (Including consultations and tailored projects)
 - a. Probes:
 - i. Are you assigned to specific jurisdictions/tribal programs?
8. How long have you worked with each of these jurisdictions/tribal programs in this role?
 - a. Probes:
 - i. Do you have any past working relationships with these jurisdictions/tribal programs? If so, how long have you worked with them in total?

² Use "jurisdictions" for CBCS and CBCC. Use "tribal programs" for CBCT.

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9. Overall, how would you describe your relationship with the jurisdictions/tribal programs?

a. Probes:

- i. How would you describe the quality of your relationships with the jurisdictions/tribal programs?
- ii. How important do you think established relationships are to your work with jurisdictions/tribal programs?

10. From your perspective, what is the role of a liaison/child welfare specialist?

a. Probes:

- i. What are your main responsibilities? (e.g., coordinating services, advisor, thought partner, facilitator)
- ii. Do you consider yourself the main point of contact between the jurisdictions/tribal program and the Center? Or do you operate as part of a team?
- iii. How do you incorporate your Center's products or other services in your role as a liaison/child welfare specialist?
- iv. How well is the liaison/child welfare specialist role defined in your Center?

11. How often do you communicate with your jurisdictions/tribal programs? How do you typically communicate with the jurisdictions/tribal programs (email, phone, video call)?

a. Probes:

- i. How many people from the project teams are you typically in contact with?
- ii. Is there a main point of contact, or are you involved with the full project team?
- iii. Who initiates communication?
- iv. Do you think the frequency of communication is not enough, too much, or just right? Please explain.
- v. Is the frequency or type of communication set by the Center?

12. Please describe your role in service delivery.

a. Probes:

- i. Are you involved in actual service delivery? Or do you help facilitate and manage service delivery?

13. What key factors help or hinder your work with your jurisdictions/tribal programs on tailored service projects?

a. Probes:

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- i. What facilitates good working relationships with your jurisdictions/tribal programs?
 - ii. What facilitates engagement in service delivery?
 - iii. What makes it challenging to work with your jurisdictions/tribal programs?
- 14. What are the roles and responsibilities of consultants (e.g., subject matter experts) that are involved in tailored service projects?
 - a. Probes:
 - i. How is your role different or the same as consultants?
- 15. When other Centers are involved in a tailored service project, how do you establish roles and responsibilities among staff?
 - a. Probes:
 - i. How often do you communicate with other Centers when working on a project?
- 16. When other service providers (e.g., other TA providers) are working with jurisdictions/tribal programs, how do you establish roles and responsibilities?
 - a. Probes:
 - i. How often do you communicate with other service providers when working on a project?
- 17. Please describe how you work with federal staff (e.g., Regional Office staff and CFSR Team) on tailored service projects.
 - a. Probes:
 - i. How do you establish roles and responsibilities with Regional Office Staff?
 - ii. How often do you communicate with Regional Office staff?
 - iii. How do you establish roles and responsibilities with the CFSR Team?
 - iv. How often do you communicate with the CFSR Team?
 - v. Who initiates communication with each of these groups?
 - vi. Is the frequency of communication with federal staff not enough, too much, or just right? Please explain.
 - vii. Is the frequency or type of communication with federal staff set by the Center?
- 18. Overall, how would you describe your relationship with federal staff (e.g., Regional Office and CFSR Team)?
 - a. Probes:

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- i. What factors facilitate your work with Regional Office Staff?
- ii. What makes it challenging to work with Regional Office Staff?
- iii. What factors facilitate your work with the CFSR Team?
- iv. What makes it challenging to work with the CFSR Team?

19. What advice do you have for others starting to work as a liaison/child welfare specialist?

20. Is there anything else that would be important for me to understand about your experiences working as a liaison/child welfare specialist?

Interviewer: If respondent did not work on DEI-related tailored services project, skip to Conclusion section.

If respondent worked on DEI-related tailored services project, ask all remaining questions. Instead of using the “DEI” when asking the questions, you can use a relevant related term from CapTRACK narrative with respect to the project’s DEI focus/component.

Center’s Approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):

In addition to the topics discussed, we are interested in understanding how the Centers’ capacity building services address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and help support jurisdictions’ capacity on issues related to DEI. During this interview we are using the term DEI to refer to minimizing bias and recognizing and addressing systemic inequities, which, if unaddressed, create disadvantages for certain individuals or groups.

21. First, let’s talk about the Center *[for States’/Tribes’/Courts’]* general approach to addressing DEI in provision of capacity building services to *[states/tribes/CIPs]*.

- a. Has the Center developed capacity building approaches/strategies that address DEI or modified its existing approaches? If so, how?

[if respondent answers yes to a, then ask b.]

- b. What is your Center doing to address DEI in its work with *[states/tribes/CIPs]*?
- c. From your perspective, how would you describe your Center’s capacity to provide services that address DEI?

Probe: staff capacity, subject matter experts, cultural competence, training

22. In your opinion, what types of technical assistance (i.e., capacity building services) are most needed to support *[state child welfare systems, court systems, tribal child welfare systems]* in advancing equity for families involved in child welfare systems? From your perspective, is your Center able to provide these types of services?

23. Based on information in CapTRACK, it looks like you have been involved in providing

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capacity building support on *[name of the project]* that included addressing DEI. Is that correct?

If No, skip to question 27

24. Please describe your role in *[name of the project]*.

- a. What services and supports did you provide on this project to build the *[state's/court's/tribe's]* capacity to address DEI in *[child welfare/court]* practice?
- b. Is there any other work on this project that you would have liked to do around DEI?
 - i. If yes to b: What would you have needed to do that?
- c. Do you have any suggestions for how the DEI-related services provided in support of this project might have been improved?

25. Is there anything else that would be important for me to understand regarding the DEI topics we talked about?

Conclusion:

Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you very much for your time. The information you have given me will be valuable to our evaluation