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National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) Regional Partnership Grant (RPG) Policy Academy Discussions

The following information will be provided to respondents for each discussion.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Public Law 104-13) STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BURDEN: The purpose of this information collection is to gather feedback and experiences from current and past RPG grants, and subject matter experts to explore experiences with RPG. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per respondent, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This is a voluntary collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB # is 0970-0531 and the expiration date is 9/30/2028. If you have any comments on this collection of information, please contact Surina Amin, ACF Child Welfare Program Specialist, Surina.Amin@acf.hhs.gov.

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Attachment 1. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Planning Lessons (Instrument 1)

1. Why did you apply for RPG?
2. At the time you applied, which RPG requirements were clearest? Which were the least clear?
3. How well did you understand expectations related to: Required partners? Evaluation rigor and appropriateness? Evidence-based program selection?
4. Which partners were meaningfully engaged during application development versus later?
5. What were the barriers to applying for RPG? How did you overcome the barriers?
6. How do you think the pool of applicants for RPG can be broadened?
7. How did you assess feasibility (e.g., staffing, cost, training) during the application phase?
8. Looking back, what evaluation-related information would have been helpful during the application phase?
9. If you became involved with the RPG project after the award was made, what was the process for increasing your understanding of the original application's intent?
10. What advice would you give a site preparing an RPG application today?
11. How was it determined which partners were critical to the collaborative during the planning phase? [probes- evaluators, state government, community- based organizations, family/juvenile courts, agencies beyond child welfare and substance use disorder (SUD treatment)]
12. Did you engage previously with these critical partners prior to the planning phase?
13. For your project, how were these partners engaged?
14. Were any partnerships included primarily to meet application requirements? If so, how did those partnerships evolve after award?
15. What was your understanding of the role of mandatory partners in: Referrals? Data Sharing? Overall governance structure?
16. Which partners are essential for program operation?
17. Which partners are essential to improving the outcomes that emerge as priorities from an understanding of clients' needs?
18. Did you consider families or people with lived experience during planning? If so, how?
19. Were there any partners you wish you had involved earlier? Why?
20. What barriers did you experience in engaging partners during the planning phase? [probes- change in leadership or staff at partner agency, staffing capacity, workforce instability, values misalignment, data sharing]

21. Which specific partner engagement strategies were successful for your project? [probes- established SOP for communication processes, onboarding curriculum, cross-system agreements, cross-training, governance structure]
22. Did your grant have a required planning phase? If so, was the planning phase useful?
23. What planning activities were most essential for preparing for implementation?
24. How did grant requirements influence project planning activities?
25. How did your site define/understand your target population of children who are in out-of-home placement or at risk of being placed in out-of-home care placement as a result of a parent's or caretaker's substance abuse?
26. How did you prioritize tasks during the planning phase?
27. Were there any tools or frameworks that helped structure your planning? If so, which ones?
28. How did you use data to inform your planning process?
29. Were there any planning activities that were not useful? Why?
30. What implementation challenges did you anticipate during your planning phase? How did you plan for them? [probes- program enrollment, comparison group identification and recruitment, data sharing]
31. Did your planning process require any modifications to your original plan in your application? If so, what was your process for determining necessary changes?
32. Can you share an example of a contingency plan that worked well?
33. How would you plan differently now?
34. How could active family involvement, perspective, and expertise during planning help mitigate or anticipate challenges?
35. What do you wish you knew/had in place prior to the planning phase?
36. What indicators or conditions told you that your site was ready to move forward from planning to implementation?
37. Would you change or add any information or indicators if you were assessing readiness today?
38. How did you assess staff capacity before implementation?
39. How did you assess partnerships before implementation?
40. How did you prepare referral sources during the planning phase in advance of start-up?
41. Did you feel fully ready when you started implementing? Why or why not?
42. What signals told you planning was incomplete — but implementation had already begun?
43. Did evaluation requirements influence: intervention choice? Target population? Referral or enrollment strategy? Implementation strategy? If so, how?
44. How confident were you in your proposed evaluation design at the time of application?
45. What aspects of evaluation planning were hardest to specify pre-award?

46. How did you incorporate evaluation planning into the overall planning process?
47. What role did your evaluator play during the planning phase?/What role did you play as the evaluator during the planning phase?
48. How do you ensure evaluation planning is aligned with program goals and child and family outcomes, not just compliance requirements?
49. What types of TA or resources were most helpful during planning? What was least helpful?
50. What kinds of supports or resources did you feel were missing during the planning phase?
51. If you could design the ideal TA package for planning, what would it include?
52. How can TA help recipients embed sustainability into planning early?

Attachment 2. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Programs and Service Selection (Instrument 2)

Attachment 3. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Performance Indicators and Evaluation (Instrument 3)

1. What RPG program requirements influenced how the local evaluation was designed? [probes- outcomes identified in legislation, reporting services provided]
2. What shaped how the evaluation was designed? [probes- community context, client needs, program goals, program readiness for evaluation, data collection procedures, consent processes]
3. Did evaluation expectations feel aligned with program realities?
4. Is family voice incorporated into the evaluation design process? If so, how?
5. How did you determine sample size and plan for enrollment changes?
6. Was rapid cycle learning or CQI incorporated (e.g., for improving evaluation enrollment or data collection)? If so, how?
7. Did the evaluation design shift over time? If so, what led to the changes?
8. What specific strategies were helpful for coordination of project and evaluation teams? [probes- processes for gaining consent to participate in the evaluation, data collection]
9. Were family and child well-being measures integrated into the evaluation design? If so, how?
10. Did you experience any challenges integrating family and child well-being and other measures into your evaluation design? If so, what were they and how did you overcome the barriers?
11. What has your experience been with designing and implementing an evaluation for RPG?
12. What aspects of your evaluation process worked well?
13. What barriers did you encounter? How did you overcome them? [probe- obtaining administrative data]
14. What were effective strategies to obtain administrative data from required partners?
15. What lessons from your evaluation experience could help strengthen future evaluations?
16. What advice would you give new RPG recipients about evaluation design?

17. Do you have enough data to determine whether the RPG program produced better outcomes and cost savings compared to baseline? If not, what data would be needed to make that assessment?
18. What kind of evidence (descriptive or causal) were you attempting to build for the program you were evaluating?
19. What were you able to achieve in the building of evidence?
20. How would the new evidence contribute to any existing evidence for the program?
21. What do you foresee as the next steps for building evidence for the program?
22. What successes and challenges have you faced in moving forward?
23. Did you work with an evaluator (e.g., data collection, analysis) that was outside of the grant requirements?
24. Are you creating (or have you created) evaluation plans with the Clearinghouse standards in mind? Why or why not?
25. What would assist you in submitting an evaluation to the Clearinghouse?
26. What are the barriers to submitting an evaluation to the Clearinghouse?
27. What resources and support would you need to evaluate existing data and conduct analyses for Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse submission?
28. Are there specific components that would allow your project to complete activities needed to support submission to the Clearinghouse? [probe- comparison group data, follow-up data]
29. What support or resources would help you conduct an evaluation at your current stage of evidence development?
30. What resources or support would strengthen your ability to prepare and submit research evidence for Clearinghouse review?
31. What specific tools or guidance would be helpful?
32. What types of TA would be most useful for strengthening evaluation design?

Attachment 4. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Sustainability and Going to Scale (Instrument 4)

1. What types of support have been most helpful for expanding services during or after an RPG round? What was least helpful?
2. Can you share an example of a time when support or resources helped you successfully expand services?
3. How did you approach planning for service expansion during your RPG project?
4. What steps were most critical in your planning process?
5. What challenges did you face when planning for expansion?
6. How did you and your team overcome these challenges?
7. What strategies did you find most successful?
8. How have states' budget challenges affected funding for sustaining and replicating RPG projects?
9. What strategies have you used to sustain services after RPG funding ended?
10. When did you start sustainability planning?
11. Which sustainability strategies worked best for your site? Why? What didn't work?
12. How were funding targets identified?
13. How did tenure of agency leadership contribute to enabling successful interagency negotiations among partners?
14. How do you embed practices to routine workflows (e.g., SOPs, cross-training) to sustain results?
15. To what extent have you been able to use your outcomes to justify increased resources for sustainability?
16. What lessons have you learned about maintaining partnerships beyond the grant period?
17. How was data used to support sustainability of services?
18. Did you receive any sustainability planning TA from the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare? If so, can you share more?
19. What conditions were present that allowed your site to expand or otherwise scale up services?
20. Which partnership most influenced the ability to scale up services?
21. Which general performance measures indicated readiness to scale?
22. How did you know you were ready to scale up?
23. What internal or external factors made scaling possible?
24. What barriers prevented scaling?
25. How was data used to support scaling up?

26. How have you shared lessons from RPG with other systems or partners?
27. What strategies have helped you embed RPG practices into broader system work? Can you share other examples of RPG practices that you were able to institutionalize (continue) after the end of the grant period?
28. What communication tools (e.g., newsletters, TA bulletins), if any, are being used to keep the public and non-profit agencies aware of the progress being made?
29. What opportunities exist to expand RPG knowledge sharing across agencies and communities?

Attachment 5. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Partners in Practice (Instrument 5)

1. How (and when) did you engage with the mandatory partners?
2. How have partners contributed to your RPG project?
3. What roles and responsibilities have they taken on in past or current rounds?
4. How have these roles evolved over time?
5. Did you experience barriers engaging partners? If so, what were they and what strategies did you use to overcome them?
6. Did judicial partners play a role in your RPG project? If so, what role?
7. How have judicial partners influenced service delivery?
8. What is your perception of how judicial partners have influenced family experiences?
9. What benefits have you experienced in working with judicial partners? What challenges?
10. What factors did you consider when engaging judicial partners?
11. What approaches have worked well for building trust with the courts?
12. Are attorneys aware of RPG programming and its benefits?
13. Have attorneys advocated for changes to RPG reflective of their client's needs? If so, how?
14. What approaches didn't work well?
15. What lessons have you learned about maintaining these relationships over time?
16. What advice would you give other RPG recipients to successfully engage judicial partners?
17. What do you and partners need to have a strong, collaborative relationship?
18. What practices have helped you maintain collaboration over time?
19. How has data sharing enhanced collaboration?
20. What agreements for referrals have been made between agencies? How have those agreements been carried out in practice?
21. What challenges have you experienced in engaging partners? How have you overcome these challenges?
22. What strategies would you recommend to others for overcoming these barriers?
23. How has collaboration with partners changed as family needs evolved?
24. How did collaboration with partners change as community needs and context changed?
25. What adjustments did you make to keep your partnerships relevant and effective?
26. How did you maintain continued collaboration over time? What strategies were most successful?
27. What success are you most proud of from your RPG project?
28. What is a lesson learned from your RPG project?

29. What advice would you give new RPG sites?