

# Appendix B: Discussion Guide to Develop an Evaluation Plan for Public Child Welfare Agency FUP Management (Phone Interview, Prior to Implementation)

This information is being collected to inform the evaluation of the Family Unification Program (FUP) being conducted by a research team at the Urban Institute, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and Child Trends. This information will be used to inform the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (HHS ACF) and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to improve the administration of the FUP program. All the information you provide will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

If you have questions or concerns about the study, please contact:

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If you agree to participate in this study and feel that your rights have been violated or that you have not been treated fairly, contact:

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*The Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Family Unification Program. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: 0970-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including*

# **Discussion Guide to Develop an Evaluation Plan for Public Child Welfare Agency FUP Management (Phone Interview, Prior to Implementation)**

*Pre-Implementation Phone Interview (within 1 month of FUP grant award)*

## **Agency Background**

Please tell me about you and your agency.

- What is your position at the agency?
- Is the FUP program handled at the state, county, or office level?
- Is there a staff person who is responsible for overseeing the FUP program?  
Is FUP the only program they work on?
- Who else at this agency is involved in the FUP program in any way? What are their roles?

## **Partnerships**

- What is the role of the Continuum of Care?
  - *Probe: provide referrals, provide services to families?*
- What other agencies or organizations are involved in the FUP Program?
- What are their roles?

## **FUP Voucher Allocation**

- Is this your agency's first time participating in the FUP program?
- What is your plan for use of the new FUP vouchers? Will you serve both families and youth?
  - o If youth: have you chosen to set aside a certain number of vouchers for youth? How many?
- Will you serve both intact families to prevent removal and families trying to reunify with children in out-of-home care?

- o If both: have you chosen to set aside a certain number of vouchers for each type of family? How many for intact families? How many for reunification families?
- How did you decide to set aside vouchers to different groups?
- Are your plans for the current vouchers different from how you have run the program in the past?
- Is there a waiting list for FUP vouchers?
  - o What happens when a family reaches the top of the waiting list?
- How many FUP vouchers used for families typically turn over per year?

### **Eligibility, Referral Process, and Screening**

- What are the eligibility guidelines for FUP?
  - o Is there a subjective component beyond the eligibility guidelines, such as caseworkers assessing whether they think the family is appropriate for the program?
- How are FUP eligible families identified?
  - o Who identifies eligible families?
    - Is there a review of all child welfare cases to identify eligible families?
  - o For “preservation families” how is housing need identified?
  - o For “reunification families” how is housing need identified?
    - Is there a timeline for reunification (e.g., 90 days from reunification) before the family is referred?
  - o Does someone review the referral (e.g. caseworker supervisor)?

- o Are there different “doors” of program entry, e.g. referrals from other organizations? If so, do they represent different types of families (for example, children in intact families or children in foster care)?
- o Is there screening done by the public child welfare agency to account for PHA voucher eligibility requirements?

*(Probe: income, criminal background, substance use, rental history, other PHA eligibility requirements)*

- o Who certifies that a family qualifies as FUP-eligible?
- o Is there a waiting list in your current FUP program? How long is the list?
  - Are families referred on a first-come, first-served basis, or can a family be placed higher on the waitlist?
- Is there a referral form? If so, what is included?
  - o Would you be willing to modify your form so that we can collect consistent information across evaluation sites?
- How many eligible preservation families are projected over the course of a year? How many eligible reunification families are projected over the same time period?
  - o How was this determined?
- If has an existing program:
  - o What proportion of families are not certified as FUP-eligible? What are the most common reasons a family is not certified as FUP- eligible?
  - o What proportion of families referred to the PHA receive a voucher? For those that are denied, what are the most common reasons they are denied?

- What proportion of families who receive a voucher sign a lease for housing? For those that receive a voucher but do not sign a lease, what are the most common reasons they do not sign a lease?
- What proportion of families who sign a lease stay in housing for at least one year? For those that exit housing, what are the most common reasons they exit housing? Does this differ for preservation and reunification families?

### **Data Systems**

- What type of data system do you use to record client data? What about for the FUP program?
- What types of information do you track?
  - How does this differ (if at all) for families referred to or in the FUP program?
- How do you use the information you collect?
- Who is responsible for entering/tracking information about families in the FUP program?
- What is the process for an external organization to get data for research? (e.g. an Institutional Review Board or a Research Review Board, Data Sharing Agreement)

### **Closing**

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today.

Is there anything that I did not ask about that you think I should know about the FUP program or your experience with FUP families?

Do you have any final questions for me about the study, or about the research team?