

Appendix A. Outreach Email – for staff connected to via program/agency

OUTREACH EMAIL

Dear [NAME],

My name is [insert name] and I am a [insert position] at the Urban Institute, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington, DC that conducts research on social policy and practice with the goal of expanding opportunities for all people. Along with the University of Chicago, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, and Child Trends, we are part of a research team working with the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to conduct an evaluation of the Project Connect program. The study will provide rich information about how Project Connect operates and helps families involved in the child welfare system, as well as the service context that Project Connect is a part of. As part of this study, we are aiming to talk with [different health providers in the state to understand other substance use services]/[judicial stakeholders to understand the legal context and court system/other staff as applicable – fill in based on role of person we are contacting]. We were connected to you via [insert name and agency] as someone we might be able to interview for our study due to your role as [insert role].

We would like to set up a time to talk with you during the week of [INSERT DATES HERE] in person.

[if interview] We expect the interview to last no longer than an hour. Participation is voluntary, and responses will be kept private (in that we will not attribute responses to a specific name). If it is okay with you, we would also like to record the interview. The information we learn from the interviews will be combined and quantified and will be archived with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect at Cornell University. These files as part of the archive will not include any names or quote anyone personally and will only be able to be available under password protected secure access. The research team will take proper precautions to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infection but cannot eliminate all risk of exposure. All research team members are fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19 and they will take COVID-19 tests prior to the interview. We would like your help to identify a space for interviews that allows for as much social distancing and proper ventilation as possible such as a conference room or office large enough to accommodate at least 3 or 4 people. We ask that if you are feeling ill in any way (e.g., having fever-like symptom) prior to the interview, that you do not participate in person. The research team can setup a virtual session for those who are not comfortable or are unable to meet in person.

[if discussion group] If possible, we would like to speak with you together, as a group. This discussion would last no longer than 90 minutes. The longer discussion time ensures we have enough time to hear from all of you. Participation is voluntary, and responses will be kept private (in that we will not

attribute responses to a specific name). If it is okay with you, we would also like to record the interview. The information we learn from the interviews will be combined and quantified and will be archived with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect at Cornell University. These files as part of the archive will not include any names or quote anyone personally and will only be able to be available under password protected secure access. The research team will take proper precautions to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infection but cannot eliminate all risk of exposure. All research team members are fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19 and they will take COVID-19 tests prior to the interview. We will work with [DCYF/Project Connect] staff to identify a space for the interviews that allows for as much social distancing and proper ventilation as possible such as a conference room or office large enough to accommodate the group and interview team members. Masks are optional and some participants may choose to wear masks while some might not, and both options are welcome. We ask that if you are feeling ill in any way (e.g., having fever-like symptom) prior to the interview, that you do not participate in person. The research team can setup a virtual session for those who are not comfortable or are unable to meet in-person.

If there are others you think we should speak with instead, we would appreciate it if you would give us their name and contact information.

Please let me know if you are interested or if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

[Researcher Name and contact info]