

Instrument 3: Evaluability Assessment Interview Guide for Executive Directors

Activity 3: EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction

Thank you for talking with us today about your program. We are researchers from [Westat, an independent research firm located in Rockville, MD / the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine University of Colorado]. We have been contracted by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to conduct an evaluation of Chafee programs serving youth in or transitioning out of foster care (called the Chafee Strengthening Outcomes for Transition to Adulthood [Chafee SOTA] Project).

During the conversation today, we are interested in collecting more information about how your program works, what its goals and activities are, and how it has evolved over time. At this time, we are still not conducting an evaluation that will make conclusions about whether the program is working or not working. Please note that this interview will focus on your program overall and will not ask for information on individual clients.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and it should take about an hour and half to complete. We will keep your responses private. In addition, please feel free to let me know if you'd like to skip any question I ask by saying, "I'd prefer to skip this question."

We would like to record this interview. It helps us with more accurate note-taking. Recorded interviews will be stored in a secure location and will be destroyed after the recording has been transcribed. *[If permission to record is granted.]* Please let us know if you would like us to turn off the recorder at any point during the interview.

Before we get started, do you have any questions for me?

Program Overview/Background¹

We'd like to begin with a few questions about the organization and your role within it, and then we'd like to learn a bit more about the services you provide. We have some information from the nomination form and other documents on the program, but we would like to ask some more detailed questions to supplement what we already know.

1. Can you please tell us a little about the **history** of your organization?
 - How and when did it start?

¹ Note: Some of these questions will be asked of executive directors as part of Activity 2. For those programs chosen to participate in Activity 3, Evaluability Assessments (EAs), the answers to these questions will be reviewed before the EAs are conducted and revisited with directors during them to ensure nothing has changed since the initial information was gathered.

- Does it have multiple locations? If yes, where are they?
2. What is the **mission or focus of the organization** today?
 3. What is the **size of the organization** now?
 - Number and composition of staff? Volunteers?
 - Annual budget?
 - What are the key sources of funding for the program?
 - How is the organization structured?
 - How large is the [NOMINATED PROGRAM]? That is, how many youth are served in the [NOMINATED PROGRAM]? How long are youth in the program; that is, how long does the program last? [If multiple locations, does any of this vary by location?]
 - 4a. When we first talked, you said that youth are involved in your program's operations in the following ways [confirm what they told us in the initial interview]. Has how they are involved changed? Are you willing to expand the scope of their involvement (see 4b bullets for examples)?
 - 4b. When we first talked, you said that youth are not involved your program's operations but that you and your staff would be amenable to including them. In what ways are you willing to include them? IF NEEDED: Are they involved in:
 - Helping to plan services?
 - Recruiting other youth to services?
 - Participating in Youth Boards or Councils designed to get ongoing input into services and related processes?
 - Helping to evaluate the program, including evaluation design, data collection, and reporting?
 - Participating as a member of The Board of Directors?
 - Other?
 5. What are the plans for the program for the near future? Are any changes to the program model or target population served anticipated?

Services Provided

When we talked on the phone, you told me a little about your program and the services youth receive, including those for youth transitioning from foster care. Now I would like to ask some questions about the services you provide for youth transitioning from foster care, in particular.

6. What other services does your organization/program provide specifically for youth transitioning from foster care?

For each service/activity:

- What services do youth/young adults actually receive? Can you describe them for me?
- How many new youth/young adults receive this service each month?
- How many youth/young adults are receiving this service now?

- Is the number of youth/young adults you serve now typical, and if not, about how many youth participate at any one time?
- How often do youth drop out of the program? What are the primary reasons why they do?
- Are specific subpopulations targeted for the services? Which ones?
- How are youth identified/referred to the program? (Rolling or at particular time periods?)
- Do you turn youth away or maintain a waitlist for service? If so, about how many youth are typically on the waitlist? Are youth referred to other providers?
- Are there specific eligibility criteria for the services? How are youth screened for eligibility?
- How long do you typically work with a youth? Is it on a regular schedule or an as needed basis?
- What outcomes do you hope to achieve through this service/activity? How does this activity/service lead to other services provided?
- Are there particular challenges you experience with this activity/service, such as recruiting youth, maintaining their participation, etc.? Are there strategies you are using to deal with these challenges?

Context

7. Are there other programs in the area that youth/young adults go to if there are no slots in your program? What do youth do who do not get into your program?
8. Are there any other **contextual elements** – community factors, for example - that you think affect the success of this program?
 - 8a. How do these factors affect youth prospects for achieving their goals?

Conclusion

9. Is there any other information about your program that you think would be helpful for us to know?
10. Given our conversation today, is there any other written material about your program (e.g., program descriptions, annual reports, logic models) that you could share with us?

Thank you very much for taking time to speak with us today about your program.