

Bridging Systems Community Engagement

Karin Malm; Berenice Rushovich, Kenya Downing

Child Trends

ABOUT US

Child Trends promotes the well-being of all children and youth through applied research that informs public policies, builds the evidence base for what works, and mines data to identify young people who are overlooked or ill served by public systems. Our research is known for its rigor and objectivity, making Child Trends a uniquely powerful and respected voice for children and youth.

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Agenda

1. Purpose of the group discussions
2. Preparing to conduct the group discussions
3. Strategies for group discussion facilitators
4. Tips for notetakers
5. After the group discussion
6. Group discussion question development

01 Purpose of Bridging Systems group discussions

Purpose of group discussions

- Engage community members in action planning
- Gather feedback on how to determine order of priorities of goals
- Opportunity for community input into best strategies and approaches to achieving goals
- Set the stage for future community member engagement
- Ensure that the Bridging Systems work is responsive to community you seek to serve

02 Preparing to conduct the group discussions

Preparing to conduct the group discussions

- Know your questions
  - Understand why you are asking each question and whether probing is mandatory
  - Understand what an adequate response to a question is
- Know your priorities
  - Understand priorities given the length of the interview
- Know your respondents
  - Understand your respondent's role in relation to the program or service you're implementing

What makes a good facilitator?

- Knowledgeable
- Structuring
- Clear
- Gentle
- Sensitive
- Open
- Steering
- Critical
- Remembering
- Interpreting

General practices/things to remember

- Two people per group discussion preferred (one facilitates the discussion, one takes detailed notes)
  - If you do not have two people, then make sure that your recorder is set up to accurately capture the conversation
- Bring extra batteries for the recorder, incentives, and receipts for incentives in addition to consent forms and the protocol/discussion guide
- It helps to have a checklist for remembering to take all of these things
- To maintain confidentiality, make sure that your group discussion takes place in a closed-off room or space.

03 Strategies for group discussion facilitators

Starting the group discussion

- Introductions
- Ensure confidentiality
- Request consent
- Set a positive tone
- Treat the respondents as the experts

Building Rapport

- Building rapport consists of establishing a connection with a respondent that facilitates comfortable and open communication
- What can help build rapport?
  - Your familiarity with the respondent's job/role and community and your understanding of sensitive topics
  - How you present yourself as a facilitator
  - Your ability to balance rapport and professionalism
  - How you set the tone
  - Treating the respondent like an expert
  - Thankfulness
  - Maintain rapport for future contact

Being a good listener

- Being a “good listener” means actively listening to what the respondent is saying
- Active listening includes
  - Expressing interest in what the participate in saying
  - Indicating with body language that what the participant is saying is important and interesting
  - Making eye contact
- Making sure to stay neutral
- Practice appropriate silence

Managing time

- Know your priorities
- Structure the group discussion in such a way that you elicit complete responses and have time to get through your questions
- Move the interview along
  - Think about how long you will spend on each question
  - At the beginning of the discussion talk about your role as a facilitator
  - Look for segues to move to the next topic
  - Synthesize major themes and then move to the next question
  - Utilize transparent transition
  - Consider moving things along when participant is not providing information or is providing too much information

Conducting the group discussion

- Setting the tone
  - Get everyone to introduce themselves before you get into questions
  - Use a friendly tone
- Asking questions
  - Try to get everyone involved
- Facilitation Skills
  - If you have one or two people dominating the conversation you can “name it”
- Common problems and strategies to cope
  - People showing up late, people leaving and coming back, unwanted guests
- Common mistakes
  - Not letting the group tell you what’s important
  - Letting the group get sidetracked from agenda
  - Giving up on people

Other tips for facilitating

- Repeat questions if needed
- Probe to find out more information about respondents' answers
  - Ex. Can you tell me more about that?
- Don’t finish the interviewee’s thought
- Don’t offer your own opinion
- Don’t agree
- Examine your own biases
- Be comfortable with silence; listen more and talk less
- Thank your respondents

Other tips for facilitating, cont.

- You will most likely experience some “trouble spots” when conducting an interview. Here are some common examples
  - Respondent is a non-talker
  - Respondent is a rambler
  - Respondent is confused
  - Respondent is inquisitive
  - Respondent is uncomfortable answering questions
  - Respondent wishes to discontinue interview

04 Tips for notetakers

How to take notes

- A note taker should accompany the group discussion facilitator
  - Digital recordings are also important to fill in the notes later
- Note takers can also
  - Be observant
  - Take notes on content and observation
  - Be comprehensive, but not word for word
  - Maintain a neutral composure
  - Act as an observer, not a participant
  - Take notes in a discrete way
  - Do not get rid of any notes until the project is complete
- Note takers can also help distribute/collect consent forms and incentives, and answer questions

05 After the group discussion

Group discussion debrief

- Facilitator and note taker review the discussion and compare impressions
  - Make notes of any interesting or particularly pertinent themes

- Send your notes via email to Child Trends
  - Please make sure names are removed before sending

06 Group discussion question development

What questions do you want to ask?

Possible topics

- Reaction to action plan and goals
- Arrange goals in order of priority
- Ideas for strategies and approaches to achieve goals
- How you will know if you have been successful

Proposed Revisions

Goal #1:



Single - Point Support

Create **Pilot** Kinship Support Hubs that Leverage Existing Kinship Navigator Program – **imbed kinship mentors as part of program**

Goal #2:



Education

Educate all involved in kinship (Systems, Providers, Kinship Families, and Community) on **ACEs, housing needs, public benefits,** and other resources, services, and support available.

Goal #3:



Ensure Continuity

Create 3-year plan that will begin at conclusion of year 2

Convert this group into an ongoing County Kinship Task Force.

What questions do you want to ask?

Goal #1:



Single - Point Support

Create **Pilot** Kinship Support Hubs that Leverage Existing Kinship Navigator Program – **imbed kinship mentors as part of program**

Potential Questions for Caregivers

- What are your thoughts about partnering with the LiveWoW bus to provide support hubs?
  - Have any of you or your fellow caregivers interacted with the bus? Why or why not?
- What are your thoughts about mentoring?
  - Would you or your fellow caregivers have an interest in being mentors for new caregivers? Why or why not?

What questions do you want to ask?

Goal #2:



Education

Educate all involved in kinship (Systems, Providers, Kinship Families, and Community) on **ACEs, housing needs, public benefits,** and other resources, services, and support available.

Potential Questions for Caregivers

- What makes a good "informational packet"?
  - Paper copy? Online version? Video?
  - Detailed information or phone/email address to contact for more detail?
- Have the caregivers brainstorm what community events have been most helpful to them? Most enjoyable for them or their children?
  - What's best location for the events? What's worst location?

What questions do you want to ask?

Goal #3:



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Thank You!

For more information contact Berenice Rushovich brushovich@childtrends.org

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