



Research and Training Network

Focus Group Script and Questions

10/21/05

Background

Intro:

As part of our efforts to improve child welfare in California, we are gathering information from important people involved in the system. We want to determine what questions that you have about what works and what could be improved in the child welfare system. We hope to use your questions to help us figure out what research can be done to make the child welfare system the best it can be.

Ground rules

First let's go over a few ground rules for today:

- Your participation in this is voluntary, and you can stop at any time.
- We hope to gather a number of questions that you have today. We will not be gathering your names, or associating your name with a particular comment or question. Please also refrain from discussing what particular people said here outside of this group.
- There are no wrong answers today; please let everyone speak and respect everyone's opinion, even if it is different from your own.
- Since we hope to gather questions from you, we may occasionally ask you to restate something you have said as a question, rather than as a statement.

Safety

Intro:

The first area that we want your questions about involves how the child welfare system figures out if children are being abused or neglected. The system does this by responding to a call to the hotline, trying to figure out whether a child is safe in their home, and doing something to protect the child if the child is not safe.

Questions:

What questions do you have about how the child welfare system works to keep children from being abused and neglected?

What questions do you have about how the child welfare system works when they find out a child has been abused or neglected?

Prompts:

Have you ever had questions about how abuse & neglect gets reported?
Gets investigated?

Well-being

Intro:

Another area that we are interested in involves the well-being of children and families involved in the system. When children are involved in the system, either with their families or in a foster home, the system tries to help the family and the child be healthy, do well in school, and enjoy social and family activities.

What questions do you have about how the child welfare system takes care of children involved in it?

How about services? What questions do you have about the services that are offered to children involved in the child welfare system?

Prompts:

What about older children in foster care? What questions do you have about the services that are offered them?

What questions do you have about the services that are offered to birth families?

What questions do you have about the services that are offered care providers, relatives or foster parents?

Permanence

Intro:

One other goal of the child welfare system is to make sure that children grow up in a stable and permanent home. A permanent home might be with the child's parents, with a relative or legal guardian, or with family that has adopted them.

What questions do you have about how the child welfare system provides for a stable home for children in foster care?

What questions do you have about how the child welfare system gives kids a permanent living situation?

Other questions

Do you have any other questions about the child welfare system that were not covered here?

Is there any area of child welfare that you think is the highest priority to study further or do more research about?