

## Guide to Gathering Input by Leveraging Direct Touches

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*Residents can provide a wealth of information and feedback to guide your efforts, particular residents experiencing your Targeted Problem and/or inequities. Use this guide to develop a plan for gathering input and feedback from residents in your community. This guide includes questions you and your partners should explore as you create your ongoing engagement plan.*

### Step 1. Determine WHAT you want to learn and WHY you want to gather this information.

The first step is to decide what you want to learn from residents, and how it will be used.

- **What do you want to learn from residents?**

Potential learning topics could include:

- **Dreams:** residents' dreams/desires for themselves and their children
- **Needs:** residents' needs/concerns related to your targeted problem
- **Experiences:** residents' experiences and challenges with your targeted problem (e.g., trying to live a healthy life, getting their children ready for school, etc.)
- **Current Services:** residents' feedback about current services offered in the community
- **Future Services:** residents' ideas about how future services should be designed to best meet their needs
- **Engagement:** residents' ideas about how to engage hard to reach residents
- **Data:** data from residents on targeted outcomes

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- **How will this information be used?**

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- **Who will use this information?**

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## Step 2: Determine WHO you want to collect information from.

- **Which residents in your community do you want to learn this information from?** Be as specific as possible. Think about the various forms of diversity within your community such as:

**Economic** (e.g., low-income, middle-income, high-income residents)

**Racial/ethnic**

**Geographic** (e.g., urban, rural, specific neighborhood)

**Level of engagement with services** (e.g., high, moderate, limited engagement)

**Family composition** (e.g., 2 parent, single parent, kinship care)

**Age of parents**

**Age of children**

Use the space below to brainstorm which types of residents you are most interested in gathering information from.

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**Prioritize which of these characteristics you are most interested in and add them to the table on page 7.**

### Step 3: Determine WHERE you are most likely to locate these residents.

**In which current service settings, natural community settings, community organizations, or community events are you likely to find these residents?** Look at the list of examples below to help identify some possible settings where you might reach these residents.

#### Services or Programs with Direct Touches

Home visitation programs  
Pediatricians/Health care  
Pre-school/child care  
Food pantry/donation center  
WIC office  
Police and probation department  
Help or information hotlines  
Mental Health Centers  
Family support/education programs  
Substance Abuse Programs  
Employment coaches

#### Natural Touches

Faith Based Settings  
Hair stylists, barbers, manicurists  
Bank tellers  
Libraries  
Pharmacists

#### Meetings/Community Events

PTA meetings  
Report card pickup  
Kindergarten registration  
Neighborhood association meetings  
School events (talent shows, athletics)  
Community fairs and celebrations  
Sports events  
Religious gatherings

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**Prioritize which of these organizations, settings, or individuals are most likely to reach the residents you prioritized in step 2 and add them to the table on page 7.**

## Step 4. Determine HOW you want to collect information.

Below are several possible ways to gather information from residents.

**Just Ask:** Have individuals who have direct or natural touches with residents (e.g., home visitation workers, preschool teachers, hairdressers) ask one or two questions to each family they touch. Have providers across multiple settings ask the same question(s).

**Intake Forms:** Add one or two questions onto the end of an intake form or questionnaire that is completed when residents enter or exit a service setting.

**Clipboard:** Have a representative ask residents in a waiting room or when they enter or exit a setting one or two brief open-ended questions about desires, needs, or services. The person asking the questions can keep the surveys on a clipboard as they go from family to family.

**Comment Box:** Create a short (5 or fewer questions) closed-ended/multiple choice survey. Leave a stack of these surveys along with pencils and a box for residents to drop off their responses.

**Agenda Item:** Ask for time on the agenda of a formal meeting involving parents to ask one or two open-ended items and allow a short discussion.

**Set Up a Booth:** At local events, set up a booth where residents can get information about your services. While they are there, ask them one or two questions from the conversation guide.

**Family Survey:** Create a survey for residents to complete. Ask several different settings within your community to distribute the survey to residents they touch or provide services/supports to.

Given the residents you want to target, the information you hope to gather, and where you are likely to find these residents, which of the above approaches will work best in your community? Do you need different methods in different settings?

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Add these approaches to the table on page 7.

## Step 5: WHAT specific questions do you want to ask residents?

**Given what you want to learn from residents (See Step 1) and the data collection method you selected (see Step 4), what should you ask residents?**

Look at the below list of possible open-ended questions to help you identify some types of questions to ask residents. Refer to our ABLe Family Survey to see some example closed-ended questions.

### **Example Questions to Ask Residents:**

#### **DREAMS/DESIRES**

1. What are your dreams or desires for yourself? Your family? For your children?
2. What are your hopes for the future?

#### **NEEDS OR CONCERNS**

3. What needs do you, your family, or your children currently have? What's getting in the way of meeting those needs?
4. What are some unmet needs in the community?
5. What concerns do you have about raising your children in this community?
6. What do you think are some of the biggest challenges facing residents in our community?

#### **EXPERIENCE WITH YOUR TARGETED PROBLEM**

7. Why do you think residents are experiencing or struggling with....[targeted problem] in our community?

#### **HEALTH**

8. What it is like to try to keep your family healthy. What does it mean to you – as a parent – to try to keep your family healthy? What are you most focused on?
9. What is it like to get your family to eat healthy?
  - Is it easy for you to find and buy healthy food? If no, what gets in the way?
  - Is it easy for you to cook healthy meals at home? If no, what gets in the way?
  - Is it easy for you to get your family to eat healthy foods? If no, what gets in the way?
10. Let's now talk about what it is like to have your family be physically active? Overall, how active would you say your family is?
  - How active would you like your family to be?
11. What challenges do you face trying to get your family to be active?

### **SCHOOL READINESS**

12. In your opinion, what does it mean for a child to be ready for school?
13. What is it like to try to get your child ready for school in this community?
  - What challenges or barriers have you experienced?
  - What programs, supports, or services did you want that were not available?

### **FEEDBACK ON CURRENT SERVICES/SUPPORTS**

14. What can be done to make our services better for residents? Easier for residents to access?
15. To what extent do the local organizations and service providers take the time to listen to your concerns and needs?
16. Are there ways you would like to be involved in helping to improve the local community or local services? If yes, how?

### **HOW FUTURE SERVICES/SUPPORTS SHOULD BE DESIGNED**

17. What services or supports would you like to see in this community?
  - What services or supports do you feel you need to help you \_\_\_\_\_(insert your problem/goal here)?
18. What needs to change in the community to prevent residents from experiencing [targeted problem]?
19. We've talked about your desires or hopes (or needs) for your family.
  - What are some ideas you have for how this community could best help you meet those dreams (or needs)?
  - What are some programs or supports the community could provide to help you reach those dreams (or needs)?

### **HOW TO REACH RESIDENTS**

20. How can we best get the word out to residents about the services and supports available to them in this community?
21. What are some reasons why residents might choose to not participate in the programs and supports available in this community?

### **SPECIFIC DATA QUESTIONS**

Include questions about any relevant outcomes for your efforts

**Add these questions to the table on page 7.**

## A PLAN FOR SEEKING FAMILY INPUT

Use the information from Steps 1-5 in the Guide to Gathering Input from Residents to complete this plan.

| WHERE to collect input from residents<br>(see list of settings from step 3) | WHICH RESIDENTS to collect input from<br>(see list in step 2, check off which residents are touched by each setting) |                   |                   |                   |                   | HOW AND WHEN TO COLLECT the input<br>(See list in Step 4) | WHAT TO ASK<br>(See list in Step 5) |
|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
|   | Characteristic 1:  | Characteristic 2: | Characteristic 3: | Characteristic 4: | Characteristic 5: |   |                                     |
|   |  |                   |                   |                   |                   |   |                                     |
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|   |  |                   |                   |                   |                   |   |                                     |
| <b>Total Residents to Date</b>  | <b>N =</b>   | <b>N =</b>        | <b>N =</b>        | <b>N =</b>        | <b>N =</b>        |   |                                     |
| <b>Total Targeted Residents</b>   | <b>N =</b>   | <b>N =</b>        | <b>N =</b>        | <b>N =</b>        | <b>N =</b>        |   |                                     |