

PDG B-5 Qualitative Research

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Three-Part Process



Early Childhood Services Leader Discussion Roundtables



Discussion Guide



Deliberative Groups

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Discussion Roundtables and Interviews

- Fourteen early childhood services leaders participated in two Discussion Roundtables
- 10 individual in-depth interviews conducted
- Key takeaways identified to inform discussion guide

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10 Key Takeaways

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1. Families need "one-stop shop"

2. Need better data

3. Educate public

4. Eliminate silos

5. Align outcomes and funding among programs and funding streams

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6. Design changes that address geographic and technological limitations of rural areas

7. Learn from the shortcomings of earlier collaboration efforts

8. Power among early childhood entities is not always proportionate to the population they serve

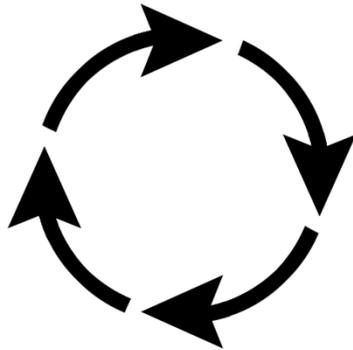
9. Align and centralize without losing human focus, especially in rural areas

10. Ask parents

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Creating A Discussion Guide

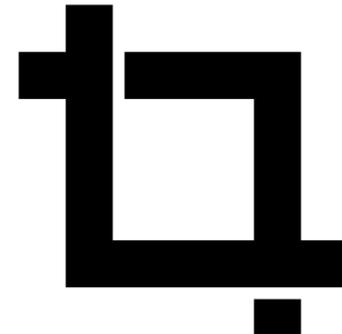
Discussion Roundtables



Interviews



Framing the Discussion



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Understanding Your Experiences with Early Childhood Services (Ages birth-5)

Utah has over 3 million people, and about **300,000** are children between birth and age five.



What is your experience with early childhood services?

Do you feel you have received all the services you need to ensure your children enter kindergarten ready to learn?

There are a wide range of services that children and families may need between the ages of birth and five years old. Each service provides support in various areas to ensure children are safe, healthy, and ready for kindergarten. Here are examples of these services, categorized by support area.

Family Support and Safety

Child Protective Services – to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. Example: Foster care.
 Parenting services – Provide resources for specific circumstances such as having a child with special needs, pregnancy, or services for low-income families. Example: Home Visiting.

Health and Development

Mental health services – Provide mental health services to pregnant moms and children ages birth-five. Examples: The Children's Center in Salt Lake and the Maternal Mental Health Collaborative.
 Disability services – Assessment and intervention for children birth-three who have developmental delays or disabilities. Example: Utah Baby Watch Early Intervention Program (BWEIP).

WIC – Food vouchers, nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, and health care referrals for pregnant women and children up to age five.

Health care services – Primary care providers who offer preventative screenings for health, mental health, dental health and developmental milestones.

Early Learning

Reading and literacy programs – Promote reading and awareness of the importance of word exposure. Example: Ready to Read.
 Early Head Start and Head Start – Promote early learning, conduct development assessments, and provide resources related to health and other services.

Economic Stability

TANF – Provides financial assistance and promotes job preparation, work and marriage.
 SNAP – Federally funded program to provide food to families with low incomes.
 Child care services – Access to safe, affordable high-quality child care. Examples: Head Start, Early Head Start, and financial subsidies for high-quality child care.

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? Information

Parents get information on childhood services in a variety of ways. Many programs provide information on a website but also require an in person visit in order to receive benefits. Some provide contact information on flyers in places like doctors' offices.

- How - and where - have you gotten information about early childhood services?
- What would be the easiest way for you to get information on early childhood services?
- Are there other places information could be displayed or distributed that would be convenient for you and people you know?

🔑 Access

Organizations offering early childhood services include Utah Department of Health, Utah Department of Human Services, Utah Department of Workforce Services, libraries, health clinics, schools, child care providers and more.

- Have you experienced barriers to getting childhood services? Has transportation always been available? Were business hours convenient? Did you have difficulty accessing information or applications on the internet? Was there a cost associated with getting services?
- Have you always used the resources or services recommended to you? If not, why? Have you always gotten the screenings recommended? If not why?
- Background: Utah is working on a plan to coordinate and align early childhood services. One idea is creating a one-time application to direct families to the services they are eligible to receive. The plan would reduce the number of times a parent provides similar information and documentation to different multiple organizations. This would likely require a personal ID number to best coordinate services. Do you think it is a good idea to have services coordinated or is there a downside to that? Are there privacy or other concerns?

+ Improving Quality through Useful, Respectful, and Timely Information and Convenient Services

Part of the goal for coordinating and aligning early childhood services is to improve parents' experiences.

- Have you ever thought of getting services but then decided not to? Why did you decide not to get the services?
- Was there information you wished you had received earlier?
- Has an early childhood service ever referred you to another? If so, did they provide you with adequate information? Did they personally contact the other service for you? Did anyone follow up to see if you received the other service?
- Did you ever have difficulty coordinating requirements for multiple early childhood services?
- Do you feel there are adequate services available to ensure that kids 0-5 enter kindergarten ready-to-learn?
- If you could change one thing, what would it be?
- Are certain problems especially difficult depending upon whether you live in a city or in a rural area?

Ten Deliberative Sessions (May and June)

Blanding

Cedar City

Honeyville

Ogden

Salt Lake City (2)

Price (2)

Provo

Tooele

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Deliberation Characteristics

- Local partners
- 1-4 groups per location
- 6-14 people per group
- One and a half hour sessions
- Translators at half of locations
- Snacks and \$10 gift cards for participants

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Local Partners

- 3 Head Start Programs
- The San Juan Foundation
- Parents as Teachers Program
- University Neighborhood Partners
- United Way
- Local County Health Office

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Five Key Themes

- Many Unknowns for Parents
- Variable Income Challenges Eligibility
- Word of Mouth Likely First Contact
- Stigma Affects Willingness to Seek Services
- Barriers Vary by Community and Background

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Information

- Word of mouth likely first contact
- Families often receive their first childhood services after a birth or diagnosis.
- Like idea of one-stop website. Help and security needed.
- Suggest flyers at doctor's offices, community fairs, local Facebook pages, radio, and billboards.

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Information

- Provide at pregnancy classes
- Train preschool teachers to be knowledgeable about developmental milestones and resources
- Create local guides for distribution
- Send flyers home with elementary students
- Set up booths at parent-teacher conferences
- Post on Facebook community pages, parent pages, or the Lighthouse Foster Care page – either flyer information or simply “We are going to do free screenings, everyone is welcome”
- Replicate Upstart Program’s social media efforts
- Set up booths at public fairs such as the UNHS health fair in Blanding or the Helper art fair
- Include in UNHS free monthly newsletter
- Create information booths at the grocery store by the free snack table
- Broadcast radio PSAs or commercials
- Go door-to-door in trailer courts and low income neighborhoods
- Post message on a well-positioned local billboard (such as the one in Price)
- Run newspaper ads in local papers like the Tooele Transcript
- Purchase an ad in the local Provo magazine
- Provide at Ready to Learn classes

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Access

- Transportation problems include lack of public transit, expense associated with cars, lack of driver's licenses, and long distance.
- English language learners struggle with paperwork, public transportation, websites, and in-person casework assistance.

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Quality

- Head Start praised for kindergarten readiness.
- Difficulties included school referral lag time and rude caseworker interactions.
- Parents wished they had known about services for their older children.

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Website

- Support idea of one-stop website.
- Most comfortable with a universal ID but don't want it to be a Social Security number.
- Concerns include lack of phone, laptop or internet, discomfort with internet, and language barriers.
- Official logo and pervasive and consistent marketing important.

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Design systems and services around real people recognizing unique needs

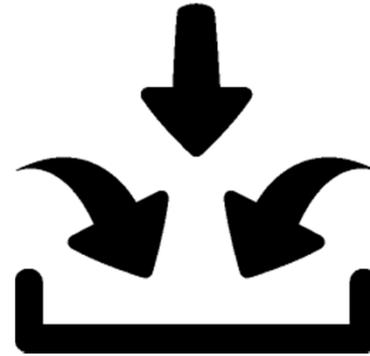
- Address geographic and technological limitations for rural areas and tribal lands
"...you're dealing with a lot of people that don't have money or don't have the access to get vehicles [or] learn how to drive ... so transportation is really hard." Price Participant
- Don't lose human focus
"When I went (to apply for Medicaid and food assistance), I was treated with such disrespect that I just left. I felt like I was begging them for the help - and it may be just one button that I forgot to push that made the difference. It was the way they acted - eye rolls and stuff like that - I wouldn't go back unless it was the last resort I took the bus with 5 kids to meet with them. That was hard. I just left."
Salt Lake UNP Participant

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Keys to Success



Attendance



Making Input Matter

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Contact

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