

**Alternative/Family Assessment Response
General CPS Office Site Visit Interview Schedule
for Administrators and/or Staff Groups**

1. Respondent Information

Date of Interview:

County Name:

Interviewee(s) Name and Title:

Email:

Years worked in current position:

Years worked in child protection:

2. Description of Staff Composition and Office Structure in County Prior to the Implementation of AR (Alternative Response or Family Assessment Response pathway):

Key information—number of staff, training and credentials of workers, previous experience of workers, organization of positions, types of units, whether there are specialty workers (e.g. eligibility experts, bilingual CW), caseload per worker, decision-making flow and process for supervision.

3. Changes in Office Organization and Staff Composition to Accommodate AR:

- a. Are workers designated as AR or TR (traditional investigative response) workers, or are these duties shared? (specialists vs. generalists)
- b. Were workers allowed to choose their role?
- c. Describe the process when a worker moves from employment as a 'traditional CPS worker' to an 'AR worker'. How are workers adapting to their new responsibilities?
- d. Any differences in training or orientation for *new* AR workers vs. a worker who transferred from traditional?
- e. Do the same workers that complete the AR Assessment also continue as the case-manager if an ongoing case is opened?
- f. What is the education and experience of your intake workers? How are they adapting to their new responsibilities?
- g. Have there been any changes in the required credentials for new employees or for certain positions?
- h. Is there a modification in pay for working in AR position? If so, is the difference in pay associated with: one time incentive, shift in pay scale, existing union agreement, other?

4. Status of AR Pilot Project:

- a. As it is still early in the process of implementing AR, do you feel that the program is fully "up and running" at this point?
- b. Are there any complications or challenges with the process of AR that your county has experienced?
- c. Have there been any particular changes in workload or in staff perception of workload?
- d. Any aspects of your current AR program that you would like to change?
- e. Any decisions made by the Ohio Workgroup that are proving to be especially helpful or an obstacle?
- f. What, if any, parameters or guidelines for this Pilot *should have been set* that were not?
- g. Has your county experienced issues or problems with spending the funds allocated for this project? If so, were these problems related to any of the following: State or county fiscal requirements, timelines for expenditure, local county office administrative decisions, other?

5. Changes in Procedures and Service Delivery:

- a. Are the current intake/screening procedures working here?
- b. Are cases being screened in consistent ways?

- c. What circumstances would cause an intake screener to treat separate cases with the same report and the same kind of history differently? Does the reporter (school, police) matter?
- d. What kinds of cases are the most difficult to screen?
- e. Have there been any challenges with track assignment, including randomization and/or the need to switch tracks after meeting with the family?
- f. Are the procedures for responding to AR cases different from your response to traditional cases? (who responds, when, and what services are offered)
- g. How do field workers practice AR—what is it that AR workers *do* when they meet with a family?
- h. Are AR workers approaching families in a different manner than they used to?
- i. How many contacts do AR workers usually have with the family while conducting the assessment?
- j. How useful is the Family Risk Assessment instrument you use? Do workers believe there are things being missed? When is it completed? Are there any items on the tool that can produce a misleading score for particular families or groups of families? Does it have high inter-rater reliability? To what extent can worker biases affect scores? Is it equally fair, valid and reliable with families of different ethnic communities?
- k. At what point is the Safety Assessment completed? Do the results refer to safety at initial contact, the end of assessment, or something else?
- l. What proportion of cases has been opened for services following the assessment period (more or less than TR)?
- m. In what ways is this county doing things differently than, or going above and beyond, the guidelines for AR set by the Workgroup?

6. Child Safety:

- a. Do workers perceive that there is any threat to child safety as a result of using AR instead of an investigation?
- b. Are AR workers able to get enough information during their visits to adequately judge how safe or unsafe the children are?
- c. What is the protocol for a family that does not want to participate in AR?
- d. Are there instances where the child is being interviewed separately?

7. Meeting Family Needs:

- a. Have AR workers noted any modifications in the way they are addressing family needs?
- b. Do workers believe that they are able to get families what they need?
- c. Are workers better able to identify and maximize family strengths?
- d. Are workers able to be more creative with services?
- e. What type of services are being provided and by whom?

8. Effectiveness:

- a. Who is most helped by AR – which types of cases/families?
- b. Are there certain types of cases/families least likely to benefit from AR?
- c. Are there types of cases/families that receive AR that would benefit more from TR?
- d. How has AR most changed what you do with families? What can you do with/for these families that you couldn't do before?
- e. What is the relative importance of:
 - i. The new way of approaching family (supportive, non-coercive...), versus
 - ii. Being able to provide services to meet their needs

9. Family Response:

- a. Has the engagement of families improved?
- b. Are families more likely to cooperate?
- c. Are there any families that have refused AR in favor of TR?
- d. For those workers that have done TR as well as AR: Have you noticed a difference in how families react to AR assessments versus a traditional investigation?
- e. How will you know if and when you are making a difference in a case?

- f. Any direct feedback from specific families that you can report (case examples)?
- g. Any other observations from the field?

10. Level of Awareness and Acceptance of AR among Staff and Director:

- a. Is there any resistance among staff to the implementation of AR (could include difficulties with the change in approach, conflict between AR and TR workers, etc.)?
- b. How are Investigators that are not working directly with AR reacting?
- c. Are there workers that believe that AR is virtually no different from “business as usual”?
- d. How is AR different from “family centered practice”?
- e. How successful do you believe the mandatory training was in achieving its objective of preparing workers for AR?
- f. Has this county done any additional training (beyond required state training) with staff to bolster understanding or acceptance of AR?
- g. Have you seen any change in the general attitude of CPS staff after the start of AR? Are workers more or less satisfied with their work?
- h. Has there been an impact on the ‘traditional’ system? Have you notice any cross over?

11. Relationship Between county and Community Institutions Prior to AR:

- a. What was the general attitude of these institutions towards CPS?
- b. Did this office have any strong partnerships with particular community agencies?

12. Education of Community Concerning AR:

- a. Please describe the steps the county office took to educate mandated reporters, law enforcement, service vendors, and others about AR.
- b. What has been the initial reaction from community groups and institutions regarding AR?
- c. Any particular issues with schools, county prosecutor, courts, CASA, or police? [Those institutions which are more involved with the process of CPS.]
- d. What role do these agencies play in AR? What role would the county like them to play?
- e. How much does the community understand? Do you believe there is still a need for further education in the community?
- f. Has AR had an effect on the types of referrals or reports you receive?
- g. What has worked well in the community education process?
- h. What have been the main challenges?
- i. Any plans to change or seek a change in the working relationship with any community institution in the future?

13. Service Provider Landscape and Resources in County:

- a. Do you feel there are adequate resources to address the needs of families?
- b. Please comment on the level of funding available to purchase services.
- c. Is there any discrepancy between what families need and what they are getting?
- d. What are some services your office would like to have better access to?
- e. Is the current level of funding for AR sufficient for your office to implement the model?
- f. How are community agencies being utilized in AR?
- g. To what extent are families being connected to community services other than therapeutic?

14. Case Examples. I would like to collect examples of AR success stories. I am interested in any such case summaries you may have already. I am also interested in examples of cases in which AR did not work well.

15. Summary:

- a. So far, what are the main benefits/drawbacks you see in the AR approach?
- b. What variables have the most impact on how successful the AR program will be? (for example, staff attitudes, availability of service providers, size of caseload, etc.)
- c. Are there any issues that are particular to your county that you believe would impact how AR is implemented here as compared to other pilot counties?
- d. What are your hopes for your county's work with AR as the demonstration continues?

Flow Charts/Practice Models. Enough information should be gathered from the first site visit for the interviewer to draw a flow chart of case flow from what has been learned about the traditional and AR approaches and role of community agencies.