Tips for Calling to Schedule Conversations and FAQ

Tips

- Pretend you are calling a friend, often times when interviewers call they sound like telemarketers. For example, you probably wouldn’t say “Good afternoon” to your friend when you call. This is supposed to be more like a conversation versus an interview or survey, so establish that attitude from the start. Try something simple like, “Hi, is ______ there?” If not then, just calmly let them know that you are calling to schedule a meeting from the Department of Developmental Disabilities to hear their feedback.

- Get to your point QUICK! Once you reach the person you are trying to (the guardian, the individual, the staff, etc.) state what you need. Here’s an example:
  - “Hopefully you received a letter from the Department of Developmental Disabilities about their feedback project. I’m calling to schedule a time to come talk with you whenever is best for your schedule.”

- If people are hesitant you can say something like:
  - “Why don’t we set-up a time to talk and if you change your mind between now and then you can just call me and let me know”
  - If you are a person with a disability or a family member of someone with a disability sometimes disclosing this can be helpful and put people at ease. (We specifically try to hire individuals with disabilities and family members for that very reason, a peer-to-peer conversation connection.)
  - “I’d be happy to answer any questions you have, only 700 out of over 23,000 people get to participate each year, so I don’t want to skip over you if it’s something I can explain”
  - “I can give you a call in a few days, it sounds like now might not be the best time to talk.”
  - “Would you like the letter resent to you explaining the project? I’d be happy to have DODD do that either via mail or email.”

- Don’t be afraid to call the different phone numbers listed in the pre-survey: the individual, the guardian (when applicable) and the contact.

- “No” then thank them and do not schedule a conversation. Please notify Hillary or Annamarie as soon as possible that the participant declined to participate.
• Make sure to leave your phone number so they can contact you if they need to reschedule.

• When scheduling a time don’t start by asking an abstract question such as “when are you available?” Instead, give the participant options to choose from.

• When scheduling make sure that the location is also accessible for you as the interviewer if you have needs.

• Remember to make a reminder call a few days before the interview to confirm the date, time, location and who will be attending.
FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) you may be asked on the phone:

- Have participants been notified?
  - All participants and when applicable guardians have been notified via a mailed letter.

- The participant selected is non-verbal, can they still participate?
  - Yes, interviewers will attempt the first 4 questions in Section 1 with everyone. If the person is unable to answer questions the interviewer will ask permission to speak with a proxy respondent (this is a person that the participant chooses to answer for them). The proxy will then complete only the Section 2 of the NCI survey.

- Do I need to prepare for the conversation?
  - No. The survey is a standardized set of questions. This is not an extended response survey, it is not timed and there are no ‘wrong answers’.

- What services are you looking to assess? What will you ask about?
  - Services provided by the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), which include the services provided through your County Board of Developmental Disabilities. For example, these services include the things you get to do every day, how you get to different places and where you live.

- Will my services be affected?
  - No, your services will not be affected. Your answers are kept confidential, which means that no one who provides services to you will know your answers.

- What is the purpose of the NCI Project?
  - Many people with developmental disabilities receive services that help them work, socialize, and live in the community. DODD wants to know what those people think about their homes, jobs, friends and family, and the people who help them. By answering the questions in the NCI survey tool, you are helping DODD to make these services better for everyone receiving them.

- Why is the NCI Project important?
  - DODD uses the information collected by the NCI Project to improve the services they provide to Ohioans with developmental disabilities. The NCI Project also allows DODD to compare its services with the services provided by other states. This information can help states to learn from each other.