

## **CHARLESTON COUNTY DSS CASE WORKER INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Give a brief update overview of HALOS:**

HALOS (Helping and Lending Outreach Support) is a public/private partnership that provides supplemental resources and services to children and families who are served by Charleston County Department of Social Services. HALOS has an extensive network of partners comprised of faith, civic and business groups. Examples of projects HALOS coordinates include sending children to summer camp, providing birthday cards to children in foster care, and fulfilling special need requests on a case-by-case basis.

### **Explain the interview:**

- This interview is part of a comprehensive needs assessment and strategic planning process commissioned by HALOS and will take about an hour.
- **The purpose of the interview:** Gather insights from DSS caseworkers to help guide HALOS on how the organization can have the greatest positive impact on DSS clients.
- **Confidentiality:** The results of these interviews will be analyzed as a group and NO ONE will be quoted individually. All responses will be held in confidence.

### **Topic One, Community Needs:**

When you develop a case plan for a client/family, what array of services do you consider? (e.g. parenting classes or individual therapy?)

How do you identify community resources for your clients?

Are there any ideal services which you believe would be helpful to your clients, but have a difficult time finding a provider? These ideas can be based on your experiences in other places as well as knowledge of best practices.

In the scope of your job experience here with DSS, which organizations in the community have had a positive impact upon your clients?

Which resources in the Charleston area always seem to have a waiting list?

What is the number one thing you have the hardest time finding for your clients?

What do you think your **clients** would say is their greatest need?

In your opinion, when you think about the full array of support a child and family may need, where are the most significant service gaps for children and families? If you were to prioritize 2 or 3 of these areas for children and families, what would they be? Why?

How much duplication of services have you found for children and families in Charleston County?  
How much of this duplication is unnecessary? Why?

## **Topic Two, Analysis of Participation Level with HALOS:**

Before the interview today, did you know about the existence of HALOS? If yes, how did you hear about the organization?

Are you involved with HALOS?

If you have not been involved, please explain why.

What would have to happen for you to change your mind and become involved?

If you are involved, please describe your level of involvement.

Do you know whom to contact if you believe you have a client who is in need of and would qualify for services from HALOS?

**Topic Three, Partner Representatives:**

Are you paired with a partner representative? If no, please explain why you are not paired.

If yes, on average, **how many hours** per month do you spend in communication with your HALOS representative?

What are the **methods of communication** you utilize?

How worthwhile is the time and effort you take with your HALOS partner rep?

How would you describe your relationship with your partner representative? What is going well? What do you wish you could change?

What do you think it takes to make a good partnership with a HALOS representative? What characteristics or traits are important to the relationship?

How effective are the monthly partner meetings? What do you like about them?

What suggestions would you have to make meetings more effective?

What kind of feedback do you give your partner representative about their contributions to the client? How aware is your partner rep about the client's response to their efforts? (For example, do you share thank you cards with your partner representative?)

#### **Topic Four, HALOS Staff:**

What have you found is the best method of communicating a client's needs with HALOS?

How would you describe your relationship with HALOS staff? What makes it effective? What could staff do differently to be more helpful to you?

Please rate the following characteristics of HALOS staff:

• Responsiveness	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
• Courtesy	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
• Accessibility	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
• Helpfulness	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
• Openness	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
• Appreciativeness	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor

If you have posted a client's needs on the web forum, please describe the experience. How satisfied are you with the results of the posting? How satisfied was your client?

How would you rate the ease of accessing and posting the information?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
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What suggestions would you have to improve the web forum?

#### **Topic Five, HALOS Programming:**

How many times in the past 3 months have you asked HALOS for assistance with a client?

When your client receives a **birthday card and gift certificate** from HALOS as part of the Birthday Salutes program, who does your client think provided the card/certificate?

When the children on your caseload receive **Christmas presents**, whom do they believe the presents to be from?

If HALOS were to offer **tutoring** services, how many clients do you believe would participate in the service?

If HALOS were to offer **mentoring** services, how many clients do you believe would participate in the service?

How often have you used HALOS to provide **emergency assistance** for clients? How many other resources did you try before asking HALOS to help?

Do you know that HALOS has a program called **self esteem enhancement**? Have any of your clients utilized this service? How beneficial was it?

One of HALOS largest programs is the **Angel Tree** project.

- In general, how many children on your caseload received presents this year?
- Of the children receiving presents, how many also got presents from other community agencies?

How has your involvement with HALOS benefited your clients aside from receiving needed services or goods?

How has your involvement with HALOS benefited you as a caseworker?

What else could HALOS do to increase the benefit to you or your clients?