Family Focus Groups:
A Great way to Understand the Family Experience of Care

Benefits:
• A rich, credible, source of in-depth information
• Information comes directly from your patients and families
• Generates topics for improvement you would not have thought of
• Exchange of ideas among families creates new ideas/knowledge

Components of a Family Focus Group:
• 8-10 participants is optimal (invite 20 to get this many)
• One and a half to two hours is optimal
• Food is a must
• Contains one person designated as a facilitator and one as a scribe

Focus Groups Step by Step:
• Decide on your aim or purpose of the focus group
• Choose an experienced facilitator and work with him/her to prepare for the group
• Determine type of participants
• Determine logistics: time, place, food, invitations, etc.
• Develop your questions; four to five prepared questions are a good number to start with
• Send the questions out ahead of time
• Hold your focus group:
  o Ask participants to provide only one answer at a time – this helps engage everyone (go around the table and come back to the first person who spoke; keep going until all answers are exhausted)
• Record all participant answers
• Analyze, report on, and use your data for improvement

Suggestions for Questions to Ask During a Focus Groups:
• What are two activities our office does well?
• What are two activities our office could do better?
• What can be improved at the office?
• What is most important to you in your child’s clinician?
• What do you want all office staff to understand about getting care?
• Do you have ideas for improving the office environment?
• Are there areas that the office does not help with that you need them to?

Wrap Up:
• Are there other comments the discussion has prompted in you?
• Has this discussion been helpful?
• What are other topics that would be useful to address in the future?
• Would the group like to meet again?
• Let them know they will be notified of any practice changes in response to their input