

Abstract:

The purpose of the current submission is to request OMB approval of the couple-reported survey and the observational study protocol that are being proposed for the SHM 12-month follow-up effort with study participants, and the plans for the qualitative data collection efforts that are part of the implementation research for this project. Justification for the remaining data collection activities will be provided in later submissions. The data collection components of the implementation and impact studies for the full-scale, multi-year SHM evaluation consist of the following:

- **Baseline data.** Throughout the pilot and full-scale phases of the SHM evaluation, the research team will collect baseline information from couples in the program and control groups (OMB No. 0970-0299) to help describe the population being served, to assess the validity of random assignment, and to define key subgroups for later analyses. All eight pilot sites have begun collecting baseline data.
- **Control services survey.** As part of each site's six-month pilot, the research team will conduct a brief survey (OMB Control No: 0970-0330) to examine the differential between services received by the control group and the program group. The survey will be fielded as SHM sites end their pilot studies, beginning in late 2007.
- **Interviewer-administered surveys at 12- and 36-month follow-ups.** Follow-up surveys at 12 and 36 months after random assignment will be used to evaluate program impacts. These surveys will include all sample members in the program and control groups, and will measure several outcomes, including marital relationship outcomes, parental psychological well-being and health, parental employment and economic outcomes, material and financial hardship, social support and networks, co-parenting relationship, parenting, family functioning and routines, father involvement, and child well-being and adjustment.
- **12-month videotaped observations of couple and parent-child interactions.** As part of the current submission, ACF is also requesting OMB clearance to conduct an observational study of couple interactions and parent-child interactions at the 12-month follow-up.
- **Qualitative interviews and small group discussions with program staff and study participants.** As part of the implementation research for the full-scale evaluation of SHM services, the research team proposes conducting field visits to program sites to conduct one-on-one interviews, small group discussions with program staff, naturalistic observations of program activities, and focus groups with some couples in the program group. ACF seeks OMB approval for these qualitative data collection efforts with the current submission.
- **Direct child assessments.** At the 36-month follow-up, the SHM team proposes to conduct direct assessments of children's emotional and behavioral adjustment, cognitive development, and academic skills. We will seek OMB clearance for these data collection activities at the appropriate time.

- Adolescent survey. At the 36-month follow-up, the research plan calls for a short survey with pre-adolescent- and adolescent-aged children (between the ages of 9 and 15 at the time of follow-up). This brief interview will be conducted in connection with the direct child assessments of one child per couple. We will seek OMB clearance for this data collection activity at the appropriate time.