

Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES 2009)

**Pretesting of Evaluation Surveys
(OMB 0970-0355)**

Supporting Statement Part B

March 2009

B. STATISTICAL METHODS (USED FOR COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS)

B.1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

The sample for the pretest will include a diverse selection of Head Start programs, centers, and children. We will select a purposive sample of 10 programs from the 2007-2008 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR). The programs will be selected to represent a diverse set in terms of size, locale, and children's home language. A total of seven programs will participate. Two programs will be local to Princeton, New Jersey and Washington, DC. Five additional programs will be selected from the 10 programs drawn from the PIR. For each program, on average, we will visit 2 centers per program identifying as part of the pretest sampling procedures 3 classrooms per center and 12 children from each classroom. For the pretest, a total of 430 children will be identified (as the two local programs only have one center) and about 100 children will be assessed.

B.2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

Sampling Procedures

A total of seven programs will be selected in April of 2009 and the pretest will be conducted in two stages. The first stage of the pretest will entail senior project staff visiting two local early childhood programs. One program will be a private New Jersey preschool that serves mainly low-income dual language learner (DLL) children, and the other will be a Head Start program in Washington, DC. The second stage will broaden to five Head Start programs selected to represent the diversity of Head Start including programs of varying size and locale (rural, urban). We will select programs to provide a good distribution of dual language learners (DLL) and non-DLL children.

The classroom and child sampling procedures (described as well in section A.2) entail a field staff member (i.e., the Field Enrollment Specialist or FES) visiting the center to obtain classroom lists and enrollment information (number of children in the classroom who are new to Head Start). The FES will send this information to MPR statisticians who will then sample classrooms within the center using a probability proportional to size (PPS) approach. The expectation is that approximately 3 classrooms or classroom groups will be selected for the study. Once the classrooms are chosen, the FES will work with the on-site coordinator or other center staff to obtain rosters for the selected classrooms and will enter children's names and date of birth into a laptop with a sampling program. Children will then be selected as potential participants. Within each of the sampled classroom, we will select an equal probability sample of 12 newly enrolled children.

Next, the FES will prepare consent materials to distribute to parents. The FES visit will last three days at a single program, with following up with the OSC in subsequent weeks to work on obtaining consents and entering consent status.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection period for the pretest will be approximately 4-6 weeks long, beginning in April 2009. MPR's staff, in conjunction with the OSC, will schedule the data collection week based on the Head Start program's availability. Field staff will conduct only child assessments while onsite at the program.

The child assessment will be administered in its entirety with a focus on how the new sections—the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT), the ECLS-B phonemic awareness/letter sounds items, and the executive functioning task, Pencil Tapping—work in combination with the sections that carry over from FACES 2006. On average, child assessments take approximately 45 minutes. Child assessments will be administered using computer-assisted personal interviewing. We anticipate completing assessments for approximately 100 children.

B.3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Nonresponse

We do not anticipate any problems contacting and gathering information from on-site coordinators and center staff. MPR staff will visit centers during business hours. There is an established, successful record of gaining program cooperation and obtaining high response rates with children and families in research studies of Head Start, Early Head Start, and other preschool programs. Marginal response rates for FACES 2006 ranged from 92 percent to 99 percent across instruments. Head Start program staff and families will be motivated to participate because they are vested in the success of the program. Section A.9 of this submission discusses compensation to be provided to children for participating in the assessments, which we have used in FACES 2006, which will help ensure a high level of participation.

B.4. Test of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken

For FACES 2009 we will pretest new procedures for identifying classrooms and children, a laptop application, and in-field sampling procedures (classroom and child sampling). We will pretest new procedures for obtaining parental consents in a timely manner. We will also evaluate FACES 2009 assessment battery as a whole for administration time and the new assessments components with a larger sample of DLL and non-DLL children (focusing on procedures, timings, administration issues, and training issues). Further details of these procedures are presented in section B.2.

Within four weeks after our last field site visit, we will prepare a detailed internal memo documenting the steps we have taken to test the procedures for identifying classrooms and children, obtaining consents, and administering new direct child assessment measures. Any difficulties we encounter with respect to our procedures, materials, or instruments will be discussed, and suggested revisions to the final protocol will be outlined.

B.5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

The team is led by Maria Woolverton, project officer; Dr. Jerry West, project director; Dr. Louisa Tarullo, principal investigator; Ms. Cassandra Meagher, survey director; and Ms. Annalee Kelly, deputy survey director. Additional staff consulted on statistical issues at MPR include Mr. John Hall and Ms. Barbara Carlson, senior statisticians, and Dr. Don Rock, a consultant to MPR on psychometric issues.