

Response to OMB Questions Healthy Marriage and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Performance Measurement Data Collection

Below please find our responses to your inquiries regarding the Healthy Marriage and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood grant program performance measurement data collection. Responses are organized by document.

Supporting Statement

Comment: Does this mean there is no overlap between the semi-annual reports and the individually-reported information?

The Healthy Marriage performance measures will collect output data on served and completed in addition to outcome measures. The Semi-Annual reports ask grantees to provide information about program participation and activities and offer grantees guidelines for reporting this information. Standardized measures are not required, however. The performance measurement data collection will allow OFA/ACF to collect standard, quantified measures so that “served” and “completed” data may be compared and aggregated across grantees. It will also allow the calculation of improvement rates. In effect, the data collected will not be duplicative of the Semi-Annual report data grantees report.

Comment: Why not mandate that grantees report evaluation findings? Do we know which programs have been evaluated and the level of rigor of the evaluations?

Most grantees are conducting evaluations of their individual program models. The evaluations vary by grantee in terms of rigor, design, and types of data collected. Therefore, the evaluation data will not be reported in a manner amenable to making broad statements about the Healthy Marriage Initiative’s performance as a program. The performance measures were developed in order to provide OFA/ACF with standardized and consistent data across the grant program. The grant solicitations issued by ACF requires grantees to participate in data collection, stating, “[a]ll grantees will participate fully in quantitative or monitoring activities that capture measurable indicators and outcomes. ACF will require consistent measuring across all funded programs.”

Comment: Could we discuss what “little overlap” [between OFA Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood grantees and the participants in the three national evaluations] means? Also, could the national evaluations inform the development of outcome measures for current grantees?

One grantee is participating in the Building Strong Families (BSF) evaluation, four grantees are participating Supporting Healthy Marriage (SHM) evaluation and ten grantees are participating in the Community Healthy Marriage Initiative (CHMI) evaluation. In total, 15 grantees are participating in these

national evaluations. We reviewed the national evaluations and used their constructs as well as outcome measures to inform the development of the performance measures, but it was not realistic that OFA/ACF would be able to implement the same level of rigor or impose the same level of burden on grantees that the evaluation measures would require.

Comment: Less than 10 groups or grantees [referring to the consultations on the development of the performance measurements]?

Ten refers to the number of grants participating in the Healthy Marriage and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood focus groups (e.g., less than ten grantees).

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Measures

Comment: How does ACF plan to prevent this measure from encouraging grantees to serve higher income people? [Refers to Allowable Activity 3; number of people showing improvement in earnings.]

Grantees are unable to alter their target populations approved in their initial grant application without prior clearance from their Federal Project Officer. In addition, like the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, the Healthy Marriage and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood grants were authorized under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and were created by Congress to encourage the goals of family formation and the maintenance of two parent families, key components in the welfare reform legislation. However, there is no requirement in the legislation that these grants be restricted to the low-income or needy populations served by the TANF program, though many grantees do serve low-income and at-risk populations. Because grantees are unable to change their target population without approval and the grant program is not restricted to serving low-income populations, we do not anticipate that asking grantees to report the number of people improving earnings under Allowable Activity 3 (activities to foster economic stability by helping fathers improve their economic status) will encourage them to serve higher income populations or a different target population than the one approved in their initial grant application.

Healthy Marriage and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Glossaries

Comment: Shouldn't this be to "prevent and eliminate existing domestic violence"? [asked with regard to the definition of abuse prevention skills].

We agree to modify the definition to say "skills to prevent and eliminate domestic violence..."