

Formative Data Collection (OMB 0970-0356)

Supporting Statement Part A for OMB Approval

**Measurement Development: Quality of Family-Provider
Relationships in Early Care and Education**

April 19, 2011

A. JUSTIFICATION

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) and the Office of Head Start (OHS), of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), are proposing a data collection activity as part of the development of a measurement tool to assess relationships between families and providers of early care and education for children aged birth to five years. The major goal of this project is to develop a measure of the quality of family-provider relationships that will be (1) applicable across multiple types of early care and education settings and diverse program structures (including Head Start); (2) sensitive across cultures associated with racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic characteristics; (3) reliable in both English and Spanish; and (4) appropriate for program evaluation. As a first step in developing this measure, OPRE and OHS request permission to conduct a series of focus groups with parents of children aged birth through five years and with early care and education providers to help identify and refine constructs common and unique to multiple perspectives on family-provider relationships and guide item development for the measure. ACF is contracting with Child Trends and Westat to carry out the data collection activity.

Permission to recruit participants for this limited data collection activity and to conduct focus groups is requested as a revision under ACF's generic clearance for formative data collection, OMB Control No. 0970-0356. The information collected will be used for internal purposes only and will not be released to the public.

A.1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

The growing literature on early care and education indicates that the family-provider relationship is an important domain in early care and education settings. Specifically, research has highlighted the value of the interactive role that families and programs play in fostering positive developmental outcomes of children in these settings. Positive family-provider interactions are also hypothesized to be associated with improved family and parental well-being. The fact that family-provider relationships have been found to be important in the developmental outcomes of children coupled with the fact that about half of preschool aged children in the United States are enrolled in at least one non-parental care arrangement (NHES, 2005; Iruka & Carver, 2006) highlights the need for valid and reliable measures of family-provider relationships.

While there are a number of federal surveys that collect data on the early care and educational experiences of families and children, such as the National Survey of Early Care and Education and the National Household Education Survey, none include measures that tap into multiple dimensions of family-provider relationship quality, are applicable across diverse populations and care settings, or are appropriate for use in program evaluation. Therefore, the Family-Provider Relationship Quality (FPRQ) project will develop a measure that fills these gaps. The new FPRQ measure will be a tool that federal, state and local government agencies can use to gather valid and reliable information about the quality of family-provider relationships as well as a tool that can be used for program evaluation.

The proposed data collection activity is one step in the process of developing the FPRQ measure. We began with an extensive review of the literature and of extant survey measures. Based on these reviews, we developed a conceptual model of family-provider relationships to

guide our work. Next, the focus groups will be used to assess the extent to which our conceptual model matches the perceptions and experiences of our target populations, and will help guide item development. Once items are developed, we will test them through cognitive interviews, pilot testing and a field test with a large national sample. These steps will result in a sound and reliable measure that will tap into multiple domains of family-provider relationships that can be used across care settings serving families of various backgrounds and for program evaluation.

More specifically, the proposed data collection activity will gather information in a focus group format with parents of children aged birth to five years old participating in a non-parental care arrangement and with early care and education providers from various care settings including Head Start, Preschool, community-based child care centers and family-based care settings. These focus groups will be used to hone in on issues and problems, to generate and share ideas, and to identify key constructs that are critical to high quality family-provider relationships. Focus group respondents will be asked to generate ideas about how families and providers may uniquely influence family-provider relationships, to identify key elements of family-provider relationships, and to assist in refining existing constructs common to multiple perspectives on family-care provider relationships. Moreover, focus groups will be useful in learning how cultural and contextual factors shape family-provider relationships as well as in shedding light on the way family-provider relationships are defined by different groups of people (e.g., family-based vs. center-based providers; fathers vs. mothers) essential to developing these relationships. How key constructs (i.e., components of family-provider relationships) are defined or the importance given to constructs may vary across groups, and the focus groups will help identify if and where these variations occur.

A.2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

Focus groups will be conducted to tap into parents' and providers' perspectives, ideas, and opinions regarding family-provider relationships covering the following general topics:

- Parents' and providers' opinions of the elements/characteristics that make a quality relationship.
- Parents' and providers' perceptions of the importance of establishing relationships with one another.
- Parents' and providers' opinions about the effects of their relationship on families, providers, and children.
- Parents' and providers' perception of the way race/ethnicity and the age of the child shapes family-provider relationships.
- Parents' and providers' rankings (in order of importance) of their perceived elements of a quality relationship.
- Parents' and providers' agreement (or lack their of) with the study's conceptual model and the components that researchers have identified as important to a quality family-provider relationships.

- Parents' and providers' ideas on how to improve family-provider relationships.

Data collected from the focus groups will be used to help design new items and select items from extant instruments for the FPRQ measure. Specifically, focus groups will help identify key factors that parents and caregivers consider essential to establishing quality family-provider relationships. Additionally, focus group participants' reactions to the project's conceptual model will help guide the addition and subtraction of constructs that are important to examine in the development of items for diverse care settings and families. Data from focus groups will also provide an opportunity to identify language and key terms parents and early care and education providers use to define, discuss, and think about family-provider relationships. Identifying common terms across the focus groups will aid in identifying the wording of items that is applicable across care settings and families of diverse backgrounds. Illustrations of the focus group guides for parents and early care and education providers are presented in the instrument provided.

A.3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

Whenever possible, advanced technology will be used to collect and process data to reduce respondent burden and make data processing and reporting more timely and efficient. A digital audio recorder will be used in all focus groups. (Before using the audio recorder, participants will be asked if they agree to be audio recorded. If at least one participant does not wish to be audio recorded, the audio recording will *not* take place.) In addition, we will send participants via email and/or text a reminder with the date, time and location of the focus group, unless they indicate a preference to receive this information via airmail.

A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

Every effort has been made to determine whether similar information exists by searching various databases (e.g., national and scholarly), reviewing existing early care and education quality measures, and consulting with experts in the field. As we reviewed the literature, we did find family-provider relationship measures; however, none measured multiple domains of family-provider relationships nor were they applicable to diverse care settings and groups or appropriate for program evaluation. We have also consulted with experts in the early care and education field and they concur that the field lacks appropriate measures that assess the quality family-provider relationships and are flexible to diverse care settings and family backgrounds and used for program evaluation.

A.5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

It is possible that we will be collecting data from family-based service providers and center-based providers who could be considered small businesses/entities. To reduce the impact on these settings, we will conduct focus groups on days, during times of the day (e.g., evenings and weekends), and in locations convenient to them. This will help to ensure that the participation of service providers from these settings does not conflict with their work responsibilities. Also, the impact, if any, on small businesses or other small entities will be reduced by the voluntary nature of the data collection.

A.6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

To minimize the potential burden, participants in all focus groups will only be asked to volunteer to participate in a single focus group. Less frequent data collection would only be possible by not collecting any data at all.

A.7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5

There are no special circumstances requiring deviation from these guidelines. As such, this request fully complies with regulation 5CFR 1320.5.

A.8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

The agency did not receive any comments in response to the Federal Register notice for the generic clearance.

The FPRQ project has benefited from consultation with many outside experts, including attendees of the “Family-Sensitive Caregiving and Family Engagement Working Meeting: Identifying and Measuring Common Concepts”, a meeting that was sponsored by OPRE in June 2010, and the FPRQ Technical Work Group.

Non-federal attendees of the Family-Sensitive Caregiving and Family Engagement Working Meeting were:

- Gina Adams, Urban Institute
- Don Bailey, RTI International
- Juliet Bromer, Erikson Institute
- Concha Delgado-Gaitan, Consultant
- Carl Dunst, Smoky Mountain Research Institute
- Jay Fagan, Temple University
- Nikki Forry, Child Trends
- Anne Henderson, Consultant, Annenberg Institute for School Reform
- Lee Kreader, National Center for Children in Poverty
- Michel Lahti, University of Southern Maine
- Laurie Linscott, Michigan State University
- Tammy Mann, United Negro College Fund
- Lisa McCabe, Cornell University
- Christy McWayne, Tufts University
- Diane Paulsell, Mathematica Policy Research
- Toni Porter, Bank Street College of Education
- Eva Marie Shivers, Indigo Cultural Center
- Amy Susman-Stillman, University of Minnesota
- Bobbie Weber, Oregon State University

And the FPRQ Technical Work Group is comprised of the following experts in the fields of measurement development, family-provider relationships, and early care and education:

- Carl Dunst, Smoky Mountain Research Institute
- Julia Henly, University of Chicago
- Judith Jerald, Save the Children
- Elena Lopez, Harvard University
- Doug Powell, Purdue University
- Lori Roggman, Utah State University
- Julia Mendez, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Suzanne Randolph, University of Maryland

A.9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

All participants in the focus groups will be given \$50 due to burden and as a token of appreciation for their participation and time spent in the focus groups. Child Trends has used similar incentive amounts in past studies with similar populations of parents and child care providers. For instance, parents who participated in cognitive interviews for the Redesign of the National Household Education Survey (NHES OMB Control No. is 1850-0803) received a \$60 incentive. Child Trends has found that this incentive amount helps to reduce overall recruitment costs and effort as well as facilitate the recruitment of hard-to-reach populations (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities, low-income parents, etc).

A.10. Assurance of Privacy Provided to Respondents

As part of the consent process, we will have participants sign a consent form acknowledging their willingness to participate in the study. On the consent form, individuals will be made aware of the extent to which their privacy will be protected as part of the study. Identifiable information will only be collected prior to the start of the focus group and will not be linked to data collected during the focus group. No individually identifiable information will be collected during the focus group. In order to protect participants' privacy, a study-specific identification code will be assigned to each participant and will be used for all study materials. Focus group participants will be instructed to refer to themselves, family members, or friends either by first name only or initials once the recording begins. No individual identifying information will be used in any report of study findings. Thus, all information collected will be kept private to the fullest extent required by law. More specifically, Child Trends, (the subcontractor collecting data for this research activity), and Eureka Facts (a recruitment firm assisting in participant recruitment) have made provisions to maintain the privacy of data. Participants will be assured, verbally and on consent forms, that their names will not be documented on final reports, that their responses will not be shared with others outside of the study team, and that their personally identifiable information will not be linked to their responses during the focus group session.

Data for this project will be stored in a variety of formats including electronic computer files, audio electronic files, and hard copies (e.g., notes from the focus groups). For each of these mediums, Child Trends and Eureka Facts will institute procedures to ensure the security of the data and privacy of participants. To ensure the security of electronic data (including the audio-recordings), data will be stored in a restricted access drive. Following the completion of each focus group, Child Trends project staff will transfer the audio recording over to the secure

drive and delete it from the portable recorder. Hard copies of completed recruitment materials or screener interviews will be stored in locked files in locked offices at Child Trends and Eureka Facts separate from focus group data files (such as transcriptions). Eureka Facts and Child Trends will also institute procedures to ensure the security of data transfer. For example, all files containing contact information of recruited participants will be sent in a password protected file via e-mail from Eureka Facts to a Child Trends' study member. Child Trends will then immediately transfer the data onto the secure drive and delete it from the e-mail files. If appropriate, we will use an email encryption software program to send recruited participants' information between Eureka Facts and Child Trends.

A.11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

No sensitive questions will be asked as part of this data collection.

A.12. Estimates of Annualized Burden Hours and Costs

This is a proposed revision to a generic clearance. Although most surveys are expected to be conducted within the first few months of receipt of approval, this generic clearance is for three years; thus, the total annualized burden for this information gathering activity is expected to be 61.33 hours.

TABLE A.1

ESTIMATED ANNUAL RESPONSE BURDEN AND ANNUAL COST						
Respondent	Total to be Screened	Number of responses per respondent	Average burden hours per response	Total burden hours	Average Hourly Rate	Total Annual Cost
Parents						
Ineligible	8	1	0.08	0.64	\$15.55	\$9.95
Eligible	15	1	2.23	33.45	\$15.55	\$520.15
Estimated Total	23			34.09		\$530.10
Early Care and Education Provider						
Ineligible	6	1	0.08	0.48	\$10.07	\$4.83
Eligible	12	1	2.23	26.76	\$10.07	\$269.47
Estimated Total	18			27.24		\$274.31
Estimated Grand Total	41*			61.33		\$804.41

*Note: We will use a recruitment matrix that includes quotas (the maximum number of participants with particular characteristics that we will accept into the sample). Once quotas are filled, no more volunteers with characteristics of the filled quota will be accepted. This strategy will ensure sample diversity and will help us narrow the field of volunteers.

Estimates of Annualized Costs. There is an estimated annualized burden to respondents of \$804.41.

For parent respondents, an average hourly salary of approximately \$15.55 is assumed based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates for median hourly wages for high school graduates. With a maximum annual respondent burden of 34.09 hours, the overall annual cost of parents' time for the proposed focus groups is estimated to be a maximum of \$530.10 (34.09 x \$15.55).

For early care and education provider participants, the average hourly wage is assumed to be \$10.07 based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) occupational employment and wages statistics for this labor category. With a maximum annual respondent burden of 27.24 hours, the

overall annual cost of respondents' time for the proposed focus groups is estimated to be a maximum of \$274.31 (27.24 x \$10.07).

There will be no direct cost to the respondents other than their time to participate in the study.

A.13. Estimates of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents and Record Keepers

There will be no capital, operating, or maintenance costs to the respondents.

A.14. Annualized Cost to Federal Government

The total cost to the federal government for this data collection activity under the terms of the contract to develop a measure to assess family-provider relationships is estimated to be \$115,327.55. This figure includes direct and indirect costs and fees. Although data collection for this revision will likely occur within the first few months of clearance, the generic clearance is for three years: thus, the annualized cost to the federal government is \$38,442.52.

A.15. Explanations for Program Changes or Adjustments

Generic clearance was approved under OMB Control No. 0970-0356. This revision is a one-time, new data collection activity. As stated above, we are proposing a data collection activity in the form of focus groups as part of the development of a measurement tool to assess family-provider relationships of children aged birth to five years. The major goal of this project is to develop a measure of the quality of family-provider relationships that will be (1) applicable across multiple types of early care and education settings and diverse program structures (including Head Start); (2) sensitive across cultures associated with racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic characteristics; and (3) used as a program evaluation tool.

A.16. Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule

Given the nature of the data collected, the analysis will not be conducted using descriptive statistics. Instead, a summary document will be prepared for the agency's internal use. The information that is collected is for internal use only and will solely be used to inform the development of the new measure of family-provider relationship quality.

All contacts with potential participants for the purpose of collecting data will likely occur in 2011. Eureka Facts, a marketing research firm with extensive experience recruiting study participants, will assist in the recruitment process of focus group participants. Child Trends and Eureka Facts will recruit participants from different communities, programs and care centers in the Washington, DC, and Chicago, Illinois, metro areas. Participants will be recruited and focus groups will likely be conducted in Spring and Summer of 2011.

A.17. Display of Expiration Date for OMB Approval

The OMB number and expiration date will be displayed at the top of the first page of the consent form that will be given to each participant. We will read the consent form along with the OMB number and expiration date at the start of each focus group.

A.18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this data collection.