

Tracking of the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project (EHSREP) Sample

OMB Information Collection Request

0970-0388

Supporting Statement

Part A

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Submitted By:

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A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks approval for a three-year clearance to conduct tracking of children/families who participated in the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project (EHSREP). The purpose of tracking these participants is to maintain up-to-date contact information for the children/families in the event that ACF determines that a future follow-up to the EHSREP will take place.

Study Background

The EHSREP is a longitudinal study designed to meet the requirement in the 1994 reauthorization (continued in the 1998 reauthorization) for a national evaluation of the new infant-toddler program. 3001 children and families in 17 sites were randomly assigned either to the program group (allowed to enroll in EHS), or to the control group (precluded from enrolling in EHS, although they could receive other services in the community). Child and family assessments were conducted when children were 14 months old, 24 months old, 36 months old, in the spring prior to kindergarten entry, and again in the spring of the sixth year of formal schooling (5th grade for most children).

It is important to maintain current contact with the participants so that response rates at follow-up points will be maximized. In 2011, respondent location and contact information for 70% of participants was successfully updated through mail, Internet and telephone surveys, and in-person interviews.

Beginning in the spring of 2013, further efforts using these same methods will be conducted in order to update location and contact information on those respondents as well as to re-establish contact with the 30% that were not reached in 2011. A small set of additional items will collect information on participants' well-being that has been shown to relate to mobility and may help the government plan future follow-ups (e.g., high-school graduation/drop out, involvement in juvenile justice, employment status). This information will be collected annually from parents or guardians until the child's 18th birthday. Contact information updates in the future years will be collected directly from those child participants who have reached 18 years of age. These 18 year olds will also be asked to provide written consent to obtain their school and juvenile justice administrative records if ACF decides to conduct a follow-up.

Legal or Administrative Requirements that Necessitate the Collection

This is a discretionary data collection that falls under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9844, Section 649 of Head Start Act, as amended.

A2. Purpose of Survey and Data Collection Procedures

Overview of Purpose and Approach

The purpose of tracking the participants of the EHSREP is to maintain up-to-date contact information for the children/families to allow future follow-up surveys. Tracking activities will involve an annual survey of participants including items about participants' location and contact information, as well as a small set of items collecting data on participants' well-being. In the year after children turn 18 years of age, child participants will be asked for written consent to obtain school and juvenile justice administrative records. The purpose of collecting these data is to allow a follow-up study to examine the impact of Early Head Start participation on child and family long-term outcomes.

Research Question

The ultimate question motivating this project is *What is the impact of Early Head Start participation on long-term child and family outcomes?*

The goal of this tracking survey is to re-establish and maintain contact with the EHSREP participants.

The EHSREP sample has experienced a moderate rate of attrition since its inception in 1995. Approximately 45% of the sample was lost by the 5th grade follow-up (Carlson, 2009). In 2011, the RAND Survey Research Group (RAND/SRG) located 70% of the original EHSREP sample through a tracking effort funded by ACF (original information collection approved under OMB# 0970-0388). Sample attrition is a critical issue that must be addressed in longitudinal studies. Though not always, non-response can be a significant contributor to the non-sampling error found in surveys, particularly among small sub-groups of the population (Nathan, 1999). A concern with increasing rates of attrition is that the sample will ultimately not represent the population under study.

The proposed data collection will locate and gather contact information from families who participated in the EHSREP to allow future follow-up. In addition, obtaining consent to access administrative records will allow the government to plan for the collection of those data in the future and using them to analyze long-term impacts of EHS. While the parents of these children have been engaged consistently by the project for many years, including during the 2011 RAND/SRG tracking project, interaction with the children has been minimal since the 5th grade. Young adults tend to be highly mobile and are prone to age-specific transitions (e.g., college, leaving home) that make tracking this population difficult. Therefore, gaining interest in the EHSREP and collecting information about these children now may be vital to the success of future efforts involving the child respondents from the EHSREP.

This tracking survey effort is essential for allowing the government to look at patterns of response and analyze attrition to plan future data collection to examine the long-term impact of EHS.

Study Design

RAND/SRG will employ a mixed mode approach for conducting the tracking surveys. Studies have shown the importance of using mixed methods of data collection to increase response rates (Dillman et al., 2009) and that using mixed modes is an affordable approach to data collection in low-income populations (Weiss & Bailar, 2002). Thus, a mixed mode approach addresses key goals of the proposed project.

RAND/SRG's own experience with the 2011 EHSREP tracking effort demonstrated the importance of a mixed mode data collection protocol; 3% of completed cases were collected via internet, 13% by mail, 48% by telephone, and 36% in-person. Earlier efforts have shown the importance of distance and field tracking of this population and the current plan expands upon these efforts. Respondents will again be offered these multiple ways to complete the tracking survey: by internet, mail, or telephone and, for those who do not respond to or cannot be located by those modes, in-person with a field interviewer

Universe of Data Collection Efforts

- Tracking Survey, All Versions (Attachments B, C, and D) – The Tracking Survey (Mail, Telephone, and Internet Versions) is composed of standard questions to collect respondent contact information including parent name, child name, address, home phone, cell phone, employment information (if applicable), name and grade of school attendance, and email address. Respondents are also asked to provide contact information for up to three third-parties. These items were all used during the 2011 EHSREP tracking effort. A small number of items have been added on parent education (2000 EHSREP parent interview), parent employment and future expectations (National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being), health and mental health (SF-12), and contact with the juvenile justice system (newly drafted; see Attachment L).
- Administrative Records Consent Form (Attachment J) – Consent to access administrative records will be collected via mail from child respondents after their 18th birthday. Respondents who complete the survey via internet or phone will be sent a copy of the consent form and business reply envelope and asked to return a signed copy via mail. Respondents who do not complete via internet or phone will be mailed a copy of the consent form at the same time they are mailed the survey.

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

The survey vendor will collect data via a mixed-mode data collection strategy that includes an Internet survey, then a mailed survey, followed by a telephone survey and in person interviews. Email invitations with a link to the survey will be sent to participants for whom we have email addresses (See Attachment F). Computer-Assisted-Telephone-Interviewing (CATI) will be used for participants who do not respond to requests to complete the mail survey or the Internet survey.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

Participants' contact information was last updated in 2011 for 70% of the sample, and earlier for the remaining 30% of the sample. There is no other effort to update this information at this time.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

The participants are children and their parents or guardians. The data collection will not impact small businesses or any other small entities.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

In order to follow the EHSREP sample through high school, it is important to maintain contact with the participants so that response rates at follow-up points will be maximized. Less frequent collection of updated contact information may result in sample attrition and lower response rates.

A7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

A8. Federal Register Notice and Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of this information collection activity. This notice was published on October 1, 2012, Volume #77, Number #190, page 59925, and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. A copy of this notice is attached as Attachment A. During the notice and comment period, no comments were received.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

The project does not involve consultation with experts outside of the study.

A9. Incentives for Respondents

In appreciation of participation, respondents to the survey will receive a \$10 gift. The purpose is to ensure data quality by improving response rates to the survey with a population that has had a high rate of attrition in previous data collection rounds (Carlson, 2009.). The amount (\$10) was shown to have a positive effect on response rates in the 2011 tracking effort (OMB# 0970-0388) funded by ACF, which resulted in a 70% response rate. In future years, 18-year-old child-respondents will be offered an additional \$5 gift in appreciation for returning the administrative records consent form (Attachment J) (whether authorization is granted or refused). The purpose of this additional amount is to improve the rate of return of the additional form and improve the quality of the data.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. All initial contacts including the email invitation (Attachment F), the mail cover letter (Attachment E), and telephone scripts

included in the Tracking Survey, Telephone Version (Attachment C) include this privacy language.

As specified in the contract, the Contractor shall protect respondent privacy to the extent permitted by law and will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information. The Contractor has developed a Data Safety and Monitoring Plan that assesses all protections of respondents' personally identifiable information. The Contractor shall ensure that all of its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor, who perform work under this contract/subcontract, are trained on data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements. All data collection staff including telephone interviewers and field trackers as well as data reduction staff will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement pledging to keep respondent information private and to follow procedures for data safeguarding at all times.

As specified in the evaluator's contract, the Contractor shall use Federal Information Processing Standard (currently, FIPS 140-2) compliant encryption (Security Requirements for Cryptographic Module, as amended) to protect all instances of sensitive information during storage and transmission. The Contractor shall securely generate and manage encryption keys to prevent unauthorized decryption of information, in accordance with the Federal Processing Standard. The Contractor shall: ensure that this standard is incorporated into the Contractor's property management/control system; establish a procedure to account for all laptop computers, desktop computers, and other mobile devices and portable media that store or process sensitive information. Any data stored electronically will be secured in accordance with the most current National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) requirements and other applicable Federal and Departmental regulations. In addition, the Contractor submitted a plan for minimizing to the extent possible the inclusion of sensitive information on paper records and for the protection of any paper records, field notes, or other documents that contain sensitive or personally identifiable information that ensures secure storage and limits on access.

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

The table below shows the estimated annual burden hours for the respondents' time to participate in this data collection. The estimated response time of .25 hours for a respondent to complete the survey is based on the length of the survey and the survey vendor's experience with surveys of a similar length. When the respondent children are 18 years old, they will also be asked to sign an administrative records consent form estimated at .08 hours (5 minutes) to read and sign the form. As indicted below, the annual burden hours are estimated to be 678 hours. This is a three-year information collection request.

Total Burden Requested Under this Information Collection

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Total Burden Hours	Annual Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage	Total Annual Cost
Tracking Survey	2533	3	.25	1899	633	\$22.85	\$14,464
Administrative Records Consent Form	1700	1	.08	136	45	\$22.85	\$1,028
Estimated Annual Burden Sub-total					678	\$22.85	\$15,492

Total Annual Cost

The average hourly wage is based upon mean hourly wages, “National Compensation Survey: All United States: January 2009 – December 2012,” U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is calculated as the average hourly wage during this period. (<http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.us.htm>)

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost for the data collection activities under this current request will be \$2,090,295 Annual costs to the Federal government will be \$696,765 for the proposed data collection.

A15. Change in Burden

This request is for additional information collection under the EHSREP data collection activities.

A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication

Analysis Plan

The data collection contractor will prepare for the government a summary of results, including basic descriptive statistics on the final response rate and tracking outcomes, and frequency distributions of the child well-being items.

Time Schedule and Publication

Wave 1	
Planning and Start-up Activities	January 2013-May 2013
Data Collection – Tracking Survey	May 2013-November 2013
Data Analysis and Data Delivery	December 2013-January 2014
Wave 2	
Planning and Start-up Activities	January 2014-May 2014
Data Collection – Tracking Survey	May 2014-November 2014
Data Analysis and Data Delivery	December 2014-January 2015
Wave 3	
Planning and Start-up Activities	January 2015-May 2015
Data Collection – Tracking Survey	May 2015-November 2015
Data Analysis and Data Delivery	December 2015-January 2016

A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.