

CENTER RECRUITMENT CALL SCRIPT FOR PHASE I SITE RECRUITMENT

Goals of the call:

- A. Introduce yourself
- B. Describe the purpose of the study
- C. Provide an overview of the study activities and invite director to participate
- D. If director agrees to participate, collect additional information from the center director
- E. Summarize next steps

A. INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is [RECRUITER'S NAME]. I am calling from Mathematica Policy Research about an early care and education study funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families.

May I please speak with [CENTER DIRECTOR]?

Hello Mr./Ms. [CENTER DIRECTOR'S LAST NAME], my name is [RECRUITER'S NAME] and I am calling from Mathematica Policy Research about an early care and education study funded by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families.

We obtained your contact information from the [STATE AGENCY]. Mathematica has been contracted by OPRE to conduct a project called "Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education," an important study that will create an instrument to measure implementation and costs of providing services at the center level for early care and education programs serving children from birth to age 5. The study focuses on measuring what a program is doing to support quality and how much the program costs to operate. It is an exploratory study, not an evaluation.

I am contacting you about having your center participate in this study. I would like to give you a brief overview of the study, describe what the study includes, and answer any questions you have. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average XX minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected.

I want to mention right up front that all of the information we collect will remain private and will be used only for research purposes. None of the information shared by participating centers will be associated with individual centers. As a token of our appreciation, participating centers will receive \$350.

Would you be interested in hearing more about the study?

IF NO: Are there any questions about what I have said so far that I can answer for you?

IF UNABLE TO CONVERT: Can you tell me why you are not interested in participating?

IF YES: Great, I would like to take about 15 minutes to explain the study in greater detail. Is now a good time to talk?

[IF NOT A GOOD TIME TO TALK, MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO CALL BACK]

B. STUDY PURPOSE

We all agree that every child should have access to high quality care and education that teaches them the skills they will need to excel when they enter school. Such high quality care and education could be instrumental in closing the achievement gap for low-income, disadvantaged children.

This study is interested in learning about how a variety of centers choose to invest their resources to provide high quality care and education. We will be developing measures of activities and their associated costs at the center level. This information will be used to develop a tool to assist centers, administrators, and policy makers with decisions about how to make the most of their resources to support children's healthy development. The only purpose of this study is to develop this tool. As I mentioned before, it is not an evaluation of your center.

C. OVERVIEW OF STUDY ACTIVITIES

This study will include questionnaires and interviews conducted with center staff in person during an on-site visit and by phone. There are no activities involving children or that are conducted within the classroom. We will do our best to schedule these data collection activities at a time that is convenient for you and your staff. The study team will work together with your staff to collect information in a way that is least burdensome.

- This initial discussion aims to introduce the study, learn about some basic characteristics of your center, and discuss the possibility of your participation in the study.
- Next, we will schedule another time soon to conduct a short telephone interview to collect information about the center and community characteristics and schedule an on-site visit.
- Before the on-site visit we would also like to have preliminary telephone interviews with center staff that are most knowledgeable about the center's finances and education programming and request some basic documents.
- During a one day visit to your center, we will collect information on staff; labor, non-labor, and overhead costs; and conduct interviews to understand some key activities within your center.
- Finally, we will conduct follow-up interviews by phone after the visit. These will depend on what we can accomplish during our visit to your center.

[IF THE DIRECTOR ASKS ABOUT THE SITE VISIT, USE THE TEXT BELOW TO DESCRIBE THE SITE VISIT]

- The on-site visit will be conducted by a two-person team and will last approximately one and a half days.
- We will conduct interviews with the center director, and other staff such as an education specialist, and finance manager to gather information as well as input on our data collection tools and methods to ensure they make sense to you.
- During the visit we will also ask three staff members to complete a paper time-use survey for which they will receive a \$10 gift card as a token of our appreciation for their time and assistance.

We greatly value your time and your staff's time and will appreciate any help you can give us to complete this important study. We understand that participation will take up a valuable portion of your day and we will be flexible in working with you and your staff before, during, and after our on-site visit to accommodate your needs. We view this study as an important opportunity to build valuable partnerships with centers and staff. This partnership will help us develop the most effective tools and methods possible, which will result in information that will be relevant and useful for everyone involved.

Do you have any questions about the study purpose or your center's involvement?

Would you be willing to participate in this important study?

IF YES, CONTINUE TO SECTION D (QUESTIONS FOR CENTER DIRECTOR).

IF NEED ADDITIONAL TIME TO CONFIRM PARTICIPATION, CONTINUE BELOW.

SCHEDULE CALLBACK DAY AND TIME TO CHECK IN ABOUT POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION: Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. When would be a good time for us to check in about your program's participation in the study? [SCHEDULE DAY/TIME]. [DEPENDING ON THEIR PREFERRED METHOD OF RECEIPT, OBTAIN MAILING/EMAIL ADDRESS OR CONFIRM IF ALREADY ON FILE]. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [PROVIDE PHONE NUMBER AND/OR EMAIL ADDRESS].

THANK THE DIRECTOR, END CALL, AND DOCUMENT DISCUSSION. IF THE CENTER AGREES DURING CALLBACK, CONTINUE.

IF NO, USE THE FOLLOWING PROBES TO UNDERSTAND THEIR HESITATION.

- Is the time involved or number of activities one of your concerns?
 - IF YES: Reiterate the study's flexibility in scheduling a convenient time for all data collection activities.

- Do you have concerns about the study's purpose? Do you have any additional questions about the study?
 - IF YES: Provide additional explanation about the study's purpose, that it is not a monitoring or evaluation study, it is developmental and relies on a partnership with centers to ensure that what is developed will benefit them, and answer any questions they might have.
- Do you have any other concerns that I haven't yet addressed?

THANK THE CENTER DIRECTOR FOR HIS/HER TIME.

D. QUESTIONS FOR CENTER DIRECTOR

Next, I want to collect some basic information about your center and the names and contact information of people in various positions who would help in the data collection. This should take about 5-10 more minutes of your time. Right now we are gathering information on the same basic characteristics of centers. From there we'll choose centers based on these characteristics to ensure we are capturing a variety of different centers in terms of size, ages of children served, funding streams, and other characteristics.

- CONFIRM CENTER DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION: Would you mind confirming the following information about you and your center? I want to be sure I have the correct information and spelling for everything:
 - Center name, physical address, mailing address, phone number, fax number
 - Center director name, mailing address (if different than center's), phone number, fax number, email address
- CONFIRM CENTER CHARACTERISTICS: Now I would like to confirm some additional information about your center. This will help us as we move forward into the next steps of the study.
 - How long has your center been in operation?
 - Does your center currently participate in a QRIS (quality rating and improvement system)?
 - IF YES: What is the name of the QRIS and your current QRIS rating?
 - What are the ages of children served at your center?
 - Do you currently serve infants and toddlers?
 - What is your center's licensed capacity?
 - How many classrooms serving children ages 0-5 do you have at the center?
 - What days of the week do you operate?

- o What time does your program start and end each day?
 - Are the hours the same every day or does it vary? *[Specify hours per day if it varies]*
- o Is your center part of a multi-site organization? *[Multi-site means that the center is part of a group of centers in other physical locations that are all owned/operated by the same entity]*
- o Is your center part of a larger organization? *[Part of a larger organization means the center is part of and shares resources/staff with a larger organization, such as a YMCA, university, or other social service agency]*
- o Does your center receive Head Start funds?
 - Approximately what percentage of children in your center are funded by Head Start? *[Probe: More than 50%?]*
- o Does your center receive state PreK funding?
 - Approximately what percentage of children in your center are funded with state PreK funds? *[Probe: More than 50%?]*
- o Does your center serve children who are supported with subsidies for child care, such as through *[insert state-specific term for CCDF or TANF subsidies]*?
 - Approximately what percentage of children in your center receive subsidies to pay for their care? *[Probe: More than 50%?]*
- o Does your center receive other types of public funding? If so, what kind?
- Have there been any major changes to your center's operations in the last two years? *[examples: added classrooms, adapted a new curriculum]*

E. NEXT STEPS

- I will be in touch in the next few days to confirm whether your center has been selected for the study.
- If your center is selected for the study, I'd like to conduct a brief interview to collect some preliminary information about your center and to discuss details about a site visit with you or your designated contact person.
 - o Could we go ahead and schedule a time now?
 - o When would you have 60 minutes in the next few days?
- I would like to identify a contact person for your center. We would like that person to work with the study team to plan our visit to your center. What is the name and information for a **contact person if other than yourself?**
- The staff who we expect to be most involved with us for the study would be the person in charge of maintaining the financial records of the center and yourself and/or a program director (if applicable). We will not contact anyone before we have our next call and we will work through you or your designated contact, but I wanted to go ahead and get their names and contact information now if you don't mind.

- o What is the name, title, and contact information for your finance manager or person most knowledgeable about center finances?
- o What is the name, title, and contact information for the person who oversees the educational program at your center?

In case I need to follow up with you for any reason, what is the easiest way to contact you—by phone or email? [CONFIRM THAT THIS PERSON IS THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE YOUR REGULAR CONTACT].

Do you have any questions at this point? If questions or concerns come up, please feel free to contact me at [PHONE or E-MAIL ADDRESS].

Thank you for participating in this important study. We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working with your center.