

ATTACHMENT B.1
ADVANCE MASS EMAIL

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TO: [EMAIL]

FROM: EMAIL@mathematica-mpr.com

SUBJECT: Study on the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education

ATTACHMENT: FAQs, Study brochure

[INSERT OPRE LOGO] [INSERT MATHEMATICA LOGO]

Dear [CONTACT_1_FIRST_NAME] [CONTACT_1_LAST_NAME]:

As you know, high quality early care and education (ECE) builds a strong foundation of emotional, social, language, and cognitive skills that are key for children's future success in school. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) has partnered with Mathematica, an independent research organization, to conduct an in-depth study on how centers use their resources to maximize the quality of ECE.

For this study to be successful, it is critical to have the participation of a range of centers—such as big and small centers, and those that receive different types of support. We will be reaching out to centers in your area soon to inform them of their selection for the study. If your center is selected, your input will be extremely helpful in conducting quality research. When the study is complete, we hope the findings will help centers of all types make decisions about using resources to support quality. The findings will also help state and national administrators and policymakers understand how to best invest resources to promote quality ECE. **Selected centers that participate will receive \$500 for taking part in the study.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an especially profound impact on the child care industry. Child care centers like yours have had to make many trade-offs in order to maintain health and safety requirements and continue to offer services to young children and their families. We hope the study will also help us understand how centers have fared through the COVID-19 pandemic and that the findings can inform the types of supports that could help centers like yours in the future.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary, but if your center is selected, we hope you will participate. The purpose of the study is to help identify improvements in early childhood services; there are no risks from taking part in the study. The information in this study will be used only for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are or identify your center. Federal or state laws may require us to show information to government officials (or sponsors) who are responsible for monitoring the safety of this study. Neither you nor your center will be identified in any publication from this study.

I have attached answers to frequently asked questions about the study and a study brochure. If you have any questions prior to our call, or are interested in participating, please contact me, Annalee Kelly, the survey director, toll-free at XXX-XXX-XXXX or by email at EMAIL@mathematica-mpr.com.

Sincerely,
Annalee Kelly
Survey Director

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The referenced collection of information is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 0970-0499 and it expires 11/30/2022.

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ATTACHMENT B.2
ADVANCE MASS LETTER

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[DATE]

Dear [CONTACT_1_FIRST_NAME] [CONTACT_1_LAST_NAME]:

As you know, high quality early care and education (ECE) builds a strong foundation of emotional, social, language, and cognitive skills that are key for children's future success in school. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) has partnered with Mathematica, an independent research organization, to conduct an in-depth study on how centers use their resources to maximize the quality of ECE.

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Sincerely,



Annalee Kelly,
Survey Director

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ATTACHMENT B.3
STUDY BROCHURE

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The ECE-ICHQ study includes centers of various sizes, characteristics, and contexts from various states.

We hope you will be one of the centers helping us understand how to achieve quality in early care and education!

Thank you for your participation!

Your help is valuable to all children and families who participate in early care and education centers across America.

To learn more about ECE-ICHQ, contact us by email at EMAIL@mathematica-mpr.com

Or call us toll free at XXX-XXX-XXXX



Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education



ABOUT THE STUDY

Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education (ECE-ICHQ) is a study about early care and education (ECE) centers. The purpose of this study is to produce tools that can point to activities and investments that are related to quality of early care and education, and learn how ECE centers have fared through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why should my center participate?

You and your center are a valuable part of this study. We invite you to help us develop tools to understand what centers do to support quality ECE and what that costs. Taking part in ECE-ICHQ is voluntary. You may also decline to answer any questions we may ask.



To thank you, we will send your center **\$500** for participating and staff will receive a **[\$AMOUNT] gift card** for completing a web survey.

What will my center be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, we will collect information about your center using telephone interviews, a cost workbook, and a web-based survey. Center directors, staff familiar with the center's finances, and selected teaching staff will be invited to participate.

Our study team will schedule telephone interviews at times that are most convenient for you. And the web-based survey can be completed at any time.

How was my center chosen?

Centers were chosen for variety in the numbers and ages of the children served and whether or not they serve children who receive subsidies, are part of Head Start, or rely solely on tuition paid by families.

Who is conducting the project?

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (the government agency that oversees early care and education) is sponsoring the study. OPRE has contracted with Mathematica, a respected, non-partisan organization, to conduct this study.

We look forward to working with you!

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STUDY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND COST OF HIGH QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE-ICHQ)

➤ **Q: WHAT IS ECE-ICHQ ABOUT?**

The purpose of ECE-ICHQ is to produce measures of implementation and costs that can be used with existing observational measures of quality to find out what activities and investments can make a difference in improving early care and education quality. We are asking you to participate because we are interested in understanding how center operations may have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The information we gather will help inform the types of supports that could help centers like yours navigate through challenging times.

➤ **Q: WHO IS CONDUCTING THE PROJECT?**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) sponsors the study. The study is being conducted by Mathematica, a respected, independent research organization whose studies of education and other programs have been used to inform national policymakers for more than 50 years.

➤ **Q: HOW WERE CENTERS CHOSEN FOR THE STUDY?**

Centers were chosen to reflect a range of characteristics, such as whether or not they serve children who receive subsidies for their care, or whether or not they offer a state prekindergarten program or are a part of Head Start program. Centers were also selected based on the number and ages of the children they serve. **Participating centers will receive a \$500 check.**

➤ **Q: WHAT WILL YOU ASK CENTER DIRECTORS TO DO?**

After a brief call to explain the study and answer any questions, we will ask center directors to confirm some aspects of their center's characteristics and staffing structure. In addition, we will ask directors to participate in telephone interviews to help us understand the center's current activities and services.

➤ **Q: WHAT WILL YOU ASK STAFF WHO MANAGE FINANCES TO DO?**

After a brief call to explain the study and answer any questions, staff who are familiar with a center's finances will be asked to provide information about current center costs including salaries, benefits, facilities, and overhead costs. They will be sent an electronic workbook to record this information and clear instructions for completing it.

➤ **Q: WHAT WILL YOU ASK CENTER STAFF TO DO?**

Center staff will be asked to complete a time-use survey online. It asks questions about how much time staff spend on various tasks, including teaching, working with families, staff development, communication activities, management tasks, and COVID-19 health and safety protocols. This should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Each person who completes a survey will receive a \$ [AMOUNT] gift card.

➤ **Q: WHAT OTHER INFORMATION WILL YOU COLLECT ABOUT MY CENTER?**

To supplement the information we will gather from staff we may also obtain state administrative data (for example, QRIS data) about your center.

➤ **Q: WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?**

You and your center are a valuable part of this study. Your input will help us develop tools to understand differences in what centers do to support quality ECE, and what that costs. It will also help us describe the costs associated with implementing quality care.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the child care industry in a profound way. We know child care centers have had to make many trade-offs in order to meet health and safety requirements and continue to offer high-quality services to young children and their families. When the study is complete, we hope the findings will help inform the types of supports that could help centers like yours. Taking part in ECE-ICHQ is voluntary. You may also decline to answer any questions we may ask.

➤ **Q: WILL THE INFORMATION BE KEPT PRIVATE?**

The research team follows strict rules to protect privacy. All study staff are trained to protect privacy. The information in this study will be used only for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are or identify your center. Federal or state laws may require us to show information to government officials (or sponsors) who are responsible for monitoring the safety of this study. Neither you nor your center will be identified in any publication from this study.

➤ **Q: IS THERE A NUMBER TO CALL FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS?**

If you have additional questions about ECE-ICHQ, contact Gretchen Kirby, project director at 202-484-3470 or Annalee Kelly, survey director at 609-275-2885, or email eceichq@mathematica-mpr.com.