

## **APPENDIX D**

### **ExCELS Center Manager Survey Respondent Materials**

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## **ExCELS Frequently Asked Questions for Center Managers**

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## The Early Care and Education Leadership Study Frequently Asked Questions for Center Managers

### **What is ExCELS about?**

ExCELS is a study of leadership in early care and education centers. We want to learn about the structure of leadership in your center. We also want to learn about who makes decisions at your center. This will help us learn how leadership might improve the quality of care and education a center provides and outcomes for staff, children, and families.

### **Who is conducting the study?**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation sponsors the study. Mathematica, an independent research firm, is conducting the study with the Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Mathematica's studies of early childhood have informed national policymakers for more than 50 years.

### **When will the study take place?**

The study will take place this spring 2022.

### **What are you asking me to do?**

We are asking center managers to complete a 25-minute survey. It will ask about the people who make decisions in your center. It will cover how your center operates, how staff work together in the center, and how your center works with families and the community. We will also ask about your background, work experience, and your job satisfaction and stress. **We will offer you a \$25 electronic gift card as a thank you.**

### **How do I complete the survey?**

You can complete the survey on the web. You will have the option to save your answers and finish the survey later if you need to. We also have paper versions of the survey if you prefer.

### **Will taking part in the study affect employment at my center?**

No. Taking part in ExCELS will not affect your job. Your supervisor and other staff at your center or program will not see your responses.

### **Is there a phone number I can call with questions?**

You can call [STUDY PHONE], toll-free, or email [STUDY EMAIL] and tell them the call is about ExCELS.

### How will the study protect my privacy?

Mathematica agrees to protect the privacy of all study participants to the extent permitted by law. All staff working on the study must sign a confidentiality agreement. We will not share the information we collect with anyone outside of Mathematica's study team. We will destroy your personal information, including your email address, as soon as the study ends. We will also remove any identifying information from your survey responses.

At the end of the study, we intend to prepare files containing the data we collected. Then, we will make those files available to qualified researchers. We will protect your privacy when we share study findings or data files with qualified researchers. The files we share with them will not include your name or the names of any centers or center staff.

### Findings

We plan to write a report and short briefs to learn more about early care and education leadership in centers. They will be available to center leaders and staff. We will also have a new survey on leadership that can be used for program improvement, research, and evaluation.

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## **ExCELS Advance Email/Letter to Center Managers**

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Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

[DATE]

TO: [RESPONDENT EMAIL ADDRESS]

**RE: Invitation to participate in a survey for the Early Care and Education Leadership Study (ExCELS)**

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME]:

Welcome to the Early Care and Education Leadership Study, known as ExCELS! We are excited about your center's participation and hope you are too. You have been selected to complete a survey as part of the study. **As a thank you, we will offer you a \$25 electronic gift card for completing the survey!**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation sponsors the study. Mathematica, an independent research firm, is conducting the study with the Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The study is about how leadership works in early care and education centers. It will help us learn who participates in leadership. We view leadership in a broad way—not focusing on just a couple people. As part of the study, we ask that you complete a 25-minute survey. The survey will ask about several topics:

- The people in your center who make decisions about what happens there
- Center operations
- How staff work together in the center
- How your center works with families and the community
- Your background, work experience, and your job satisfaction and stress.

Taking part in ExCELS is voluntary. The purpose of this study is to learn about leadership in early care and education centers. There are no risks or direct benefits from taking part in the study. We will use the information the study collects only for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are or identify your center or its staff. We have a certificate of confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health. It helps us protect your privacy. This means no one can force the study team to give out information that identifies you, even in court. However, in some cases federal or state laws might require us to show information to government officials or sponsors who monitor the safety of the study. Publications about the study will not identify anyone from the center. Nor will they identify the center itself. We will share some of the data the study collects with qualified individuals for research purposes. Nothing we share will identify people or specific centers.

**[FOR EMAIL FORMAT:]**

**Please take the survey online now at:**

**To:** [RESPONDENT NAME]  
**From:** Annalee Kelly, Mathematica  
**Date:** [DATE]  
**Page:** 2

**[URL]**  
**[FOR LETTER FORMAT:]**  
**Please take the survey online now at:**  
**[URL]**  
**Use the log-in ID and password below:**  
**User ID: [USERID]**  
**Password: [PASSWORD]**

We have enclosed a list of frequently asked questions. If you have any questions about the study or would like to take the survey on paper, please contact me, the survey director, at [STUDY PHONE] or by email at [STUDY EMAIL].

Sincerely,

*---insert signature image here---*

Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

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## **ExCELS First Reminder Email to Center Managers**

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TO: [RESPONDENT EMAIL ADDRESS]

**RE: Please complete your ExCELS survey today!**

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME]:

Recently, we invited you to complete a survey about leadership for the Early Care and Education Leadership Study (ExCELS). **As a thank you, we will offer you a \$25 electronic gift card for completing the survey!** The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete.

As a reminder, the study is about how leadership works in early care and education centers. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation sponsors the study. Mathematica, an independent research firm, is conducting the study with the Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

**Please take the survey online now at:**

**[URL]**

Please keep in mind:

- Taking part in this study is voluntary. The purpose of this study is to learn about leadership in early care and education centers. There are no risks or direct benefits from taking part in the study. We will use the information the study collects only for research purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are or identify your center or its staff.
- We have a certificate of confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health. It helps us protect your privacy. This means no one can force the study team to give out information that identifies you, even in court. However, in some cases federal or state laws might require us to show information to government officials or sponsors who monitor the safety of the study.
- Publications about the study will not identify anyone from the center. Nor will they identify the center itself. We will share some of the data the study collects with qualified individuals for research purposes. Nothing we share will identify people or specific centers.

If you have any questions about the study or would like to take the survey on paper, please contact me, the survey director, at [STUDY PHONE] or by email at [STUDY EMAIL]. Thanks again for taking part in ExCELS!

Sincerely,

---insert signature image here---

Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

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## **ExCELS Second Reminder Email to Center Managers**

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TO: [RESPONDENT EMAIL ADDRESS]

**RE: Please complete your ExCELS survey today!**

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME]:

Please don't forget to complete your survey. The Early Care and Education Leadership Study (ExCELS) needs information from center managers like you. Your responses will help the study team learn more about leadership at early care and education centers.

We recently sent you a reminder about an important study about leadership. You still have time to complete your survey! **We will offer you a \$25 electronic gift card as a thank you.** The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete.

**Please take the survey online now at:**

**[URL]**

We hope you will complete the survey as soon as you can.

If you have any questions about the study or would like to take the survey on paper, please contact me, the survey director, at [STUDY PHONE] or by email at [STUDY EMAIL].

Thanks again for taking part in ExCELS!

Sincerely,

*---insert signature image here---*

Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

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## **ExCELS Final Reminder Email to Center Managers**

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TO: [RESPONDENT EMAIL ADDRESS]

**RE: Final Reminder! Complete your ExCELS survey by [ONE WEEK FROM DATE EMAIL SENT]**

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME]:

This is your final reminder to share your thoughts about leadership. Please respond to the survey for the Early Care and Education Leadership Study (ExCELS).

Your feedback is very important to learning about leadership in early care and education centers!

**We will offer you a \$25 electronic gift card as a thank you.** The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete.

**Please take the survey online now at:**

**[URL]**

**Please complete the survey by [ONE WEEK FROM DATE EMAIL SENT].**

If you have any questions about the study or would like to complete the survey on paper, please contact me, the survey director, at [STUDY PHONE] or by email at [STUDY EMAIL].

Thank you again for taking part in ExCELS!

Sincerely,

*---insert signature image here---*

Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

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## **ExCELS Gift Card Email/Letter for Center Managers**

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Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

[DATE]

TO: [RESPONDENT EMAIL ADDRESS]

**RE: Thank you for taking part in ExCELS!**

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME]:

Thank you for completing the Early Care and Education Leadership Study (ExCELS) survey. Your responses will help the study team learn more about leadership at early care and education centers. To thank you for the time it took to complete the survey, here is your electronic gift card for \$25.

Your **\$25** Amazon gift code is **[AMAZON CODE]**.

To redeem your electronic gift card, follow these steps:

***If you have an Amazon account:***

1. Open Amazon.com and click "Gift Cards" in the top banner
2. Click "Redeem Gift Cards" in the banner on the next screen
3. On the next screen, enter the code displayed above where it says "Enter claim code"
4. Click on the yellow "Apply to your balance" button

***If you do not have an Amazon account,*** you can still apply your gift code balance at checkout.

1. After you add an item to your cart and proceed to checkout, under "Payment Method," enter your gift code into the box that says "Add a gift card or promotion code"
2. Click on the gray "Apply" button

If you have questions about redeeming your gift card, please visit Amazon's [Redeem a Gift Card web page](#).

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me, the survey director, at [STUDY PHONE] or by email at [STUDY EMAIL]. Best of luck with the rest of the year.

Sincerely,

---insert signature image here---

Annalee Kelly  
Survey Director

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