



at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO

Study of Disabilities Services Coordinators and Inclusion

Attachment C Phase 1 Recruitment

Table 1. List of Recruitment Emails for Phase 1 Director Survey

Initial Email Invitation to Directors from Study Team	
Letter of Support from OHS to Directors	
Follow up email 1 from OHS to Directors	
Follow up email 2 from OHS to Directors	
Follow-up Email 1 to Directors from Study Team	
Follow-up Email 2 to Directors from Study Team	
Follow-up Phone Recruitment to Directors from Study Team	
Follow-up Phone Recruitment FAQ	
Study Advertisement- Project Partners (e.g., stakeholders, other parties (TA centers; regional offices)	
Outreach Letter to Tribal Leadership	
Outreach Letter to Superintendent	

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19th Floor  
Chicago IL 60603  
office (312) 759-4000  
fax (312) 759-4004  
[www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

**INITIAL EMAIL INVITE TO DIRECTORS FROM STUDY TEAM**

Dear [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME],

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start*. The study is designed to provide a national picture of the DSC workforce for Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) programs, including American Indian and Alaska Native (Region XI) and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) (Region XII) grantees and/or delegate agencies.

The study is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, their partners at SRI International, and their consultant, Amanda Schwartz.

The goals of the study are to improve understanding of:

- How DSC roles are implemented across EHS/HS programs;
- Partnerships with agencies and community-based service providers; and
- Practices used to collaborate with families of children with disabilities.

As part of the study, we are asking all EHS/HS program directors to complete a 25-minute online survey. **Who should complete the survey?** The survey should be completed by directors of programs or agencies **that provide direct services to children in EHS/HS programs**. In other words, we are not collecting data from directors of delegate agencies that do not provide direct services in EHS/HS programs.

If you are a director of program(s) providing director services, we will ask you about:

- Names and contact information for your program's DSC(s);
- Details about your program; and
- Your perspective on disability services and inclusion in your program.

We are excited about the study, and we hope you are too! **The success of this study hinges on our ability to obtain DSC contact information from you and other program directors nationwide.** Please help us develop a national picture of how Head Start disability services vary across the country by responding to the survey. Your responses will not be able to be individually identified and will not be used for monitoring purposes. ACF funding for your program will not be impacted by your responses.

**Getting started.** To begin the survey, please click or type your unique below into any computer or mobile device's web browser. The survey does not have to be completed all at once; you can save your responses and return to the survey later.

**SURVEY TIPS:****Want to prepare for the survey?**

- o Preview the survey topics in the attached document [Attach list of Module topics]
- o Preview the full surveys here [LINK]

**Check with others**

- o Please confer with colleagues, as needed, to identify the responses for your program

**SAVE the survey at any time**

- o come back to it later when you are ready

**URL address:** [XXX.norc.org](http://XXX.norc.org)

**Questions?** The research team is happy to answer any questions about the survey and help you in any way you need. You can contact NORC at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

Thank you for your help with this important research!

Sincerely,

Michael López, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator

Shannon TenBroeck, MA  
Co-Principal Investigator

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement**

The described 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 number for the described information collection is **xxxx-xxxx** and the expiration date is **MM/DD/YYYY**. If you have questions about this data collection, please contact [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM OHS TO DIRECTORS**

Dear Head Start/Early Head Start Program Director,

We are pleased to announce the start of the national *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start*. The study is the first opportunity to understand the roles, responsibilities and variations in disability services, nationally and regionally. Your responses, and the responses of your Disability Service Coordinator(s) will provide Head Start with essential details to better understand trainings and supports for inclusion, processes for delivery of disabilities services, and collaborations with local education agencies (LEAs), early intervention (EI) programs, health providers, and other community partners. This information will inform Head Start policy and the design and provision of training and technical assistance at the national and regional level.

**Why do we need your participation? We need your expertise regarding your program's approach to disability services. Further, you are the best link to connect with DSCs.** The study team needs your participation to be able to contact your Disabilities Coordinator(s) to engage in this important study. When you receive an email from the study team [EMAIL ADDRESS], please respond to the survey as soon as possible to provide both your program perspective and the contact information for your staff providing disability services.

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) sponsors the study, and the design and measures have been developed in close partnership with the Office of Head Start (OHS). The study is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

The study will have three parts. First, surveys will be gathered from Head Start/Early Head Start directors, next the study team will send a survey to your DSC(s), and finally a small sample of DSCs who volunteer to participate will be interviewed. Data collection will begin once OMB approval is received [DATE].

We thank you in advance for your quick response to NORC's request. Should you have any concerns about your organization's participation in the study, please contact the study's Federal Project Officers, Laura Hoard ([laura.hoard@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:laura.hoard@acf.hhs.gov)) and Wendy DeCoursey ([wendy.decoursey@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:wendy.decoursey@acf.hhs.gov)), or from OPRE or Dayana Garcia of OHS ([dayana.garcia@hhs.gov](mailto:dayana.garcia@hhs.gov)) ACF, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Sincerely,

[OHS SIGNATOR; Dr. Bernadine Futrell  
Director, Office of Head Start]

### **FOLLOW UP EMAIL 1 FROM OHS TO DIRECTORS**

Dear [PROGRAM TYPE] Directors,

You should have now received an email request from the study team to participate in the *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start*. This study is the first opportunity for OHS to understand disabilities services and all of the work that you do for [PROGRAM TYPE: national and regional, Head Start, Early Head Start, American Indian and Alaskan Native; Migrant and Seasonal Head Start] programs. [OPTIONAL: Currently, the [NATIONAL or SUBSAMPLE] director response rate for this groundbreaking study is at [X percent]]. Please make sure this national study includes your program and its perspective on disabilities services.

This is a friendly reminder to log in and complete the online survey for [PROGRAM TYPE] directors.

Thank you for your attention to this important national research,

[OHS SIGNATOR]

### **FOLLOW UP EMAIL 2 FROM OHS TO DIRECTORS**

Dear [PROGRAM TYPE] Directors,

The Grantee Directors' survey portion of the *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start* is nearing its conclusion. At the Office of Head Start, we are excited to see the

national and regional picture of the DSC processes, roles and responsibilities, and how this data will inform technical assistance and policy for years to come.

We hope you will take this opportunity to add your program's voice to the study. Without your program, the national picture of Head Start disabilities services will be incomplete. [OPTIONAL: Currently, the [NATIONAL or SUBSAMPLE] director response rate for this groundbreaking study is at [X percentages].]

This is a friendly reminder to log in and complete the online survey for [PROGRAM TYPE] directors.

Thank you for your attention to this important national research,

[OHS SIGNATOR]

## **FOLLOW UP EMAIL FROM STUDY TEAM TO DIRECTORS**

### **FOLLOW UP EMAIL 1 STUDY TEAM TO DIRECTORS**

Hello [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME].

This is a follow-up email reminding you to participate in the Study of Disability Services Coordinators and Inclusion. We need your help to make this study a success!

The research team is happy to answer any questions about the survey and help you in any way you need. You can contact NORC at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

Please take your soonest opportunity to log in and begin the survey! We are very interested in your program approach to disability services.

**Getting started.** To begin the survey, please click or type your unique URL below into any computer or mobile device's web browser. The survey does not have to be completed all at once; you can save your responses and return to the survey later.

**URL address:** [XXX.norc.org](http://XXX.norc.org)

#### **Paperwork Reduction Act Statement**

The described 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 number for the described information collection is **xxxx-xxxx** and the expiration date is **MM/DD/YYYY**. If you have questions about this data collection, please contact [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

### **FOLLOW UP EMAIL 2 STUDY TEAM TO DIRECTORS**

Hello [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME].

The Study of Disability Services Coordinators and Inclusion is soon coming to a close. The study will not be complete without information representing your program. Please take the time to log in and provide details about your program's approach to disabilities services. We need your

help to make this study a success! Remember, your responses will not be able to be individually identified. The information will not be used for monitoring purposes and ACF funding for your program will not be impacted by your responses.

The research team is happy to answer any questions about the survey and help you in any way you need. You can contact NORC at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

#### **SURVEY TIPS:**

##### **Want to prepare for the survey?**

- o Preview the survey topics in the attached document [Attach list of Module topics]
- o Preview the full surveys here [LINK]

##### **Check with others**

- o Please confer with colleagues, as needed, to identify the responses for your program

##### **SAVE the survey at any time**

- o come back to it later when you are ready

**To begin the survey**, please click or type your unique URL below into any computer or mobile device's web browser. The survey does not have to be completed all at once; you can save your responses and return to the survey later.

**URL address:** **XXX.norc.org**

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## **FOLLOW UP PHONE RECRUITMENT STUDY TEAM TO DIRECTORS**

Hello [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME].

My name is [Name] and I am calling from NORC at the University of Chicago to follow-up with you about participating in the *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start*. We are very excited about this study as it will provide the first look at how DSC roles play out across the nation! As a reminder, the Office of Head Start in partnership with Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation have contracted with NORC to conduct this study.

Your input will contribute to a national snapshot of disabilities support within Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) programs, to better understanding of the variations in disability services, and to identification of current program needs for high quality disabilities support for EHS/HS children,

families, and staff. Individual programs will not be identifiable in reports or findings: this will be a national picture.

**Responses from EHS and HS directors are essential for the success of this study. Without your assistance, we cannot reach the DSCs!**

In the survey we ask about:

- Names and contact information for your program's DSC(s);
- Details about your program; and
- Your perspective on disability services and inclusion in your program.

As part of the study, we are asking all EHS/HS program directors to complete a 25-minute online survey. **Who should complete the survey?** The survey should be completed by directors of programs or agencies **that provide direct services to children in EHS/HS programs**. In other words, we are not collecting data from directors of delegate agencies that do not provide direct services in EHS/HS programs. The director's perspective is very important for the study. Have you received the emails from us asking for your participation?

[If no]: Would you mind giving me your email address so I can update our information and send you a link to the survey?

[If yes]: Great, glad to know our emails are making it to you.

Would you like me to give you your unique link right now? (If Yes: *Provide URL*).

Do you have any questions about the study that I can answer for you?

[All:] Thank you for taking my call today! While your participation is voluntary, we do hope you will decide to contribute to this important study. It will take about 25 minutes of your time and would contribute significantly to study success!

Your participation is valuable to this national effort and we greatly appreciate your time. Thank you. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to NORC at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

## **FOLLOW UP PHONE RECRUITMENT FAQ**

**Title of Project:** The Study of Disability Services Coordinators and Inclusion in Head Start, 2019-2024

**Principal Investigator(s):** Michael López and Shannon TenBroeck

**Why are we doing this study?** This study will provide a national picture of the Disability Services Coordinators (DSC) workforce for Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS), including American Indian/Alaska Native (Region XI) and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) (Region XII) grantees and/or delegate agencies. This study will improve Head Start's understanding of how programs implement disability services for children and families.

**Who is funding this study?** The *Study of Disability Services Coordinators and Inclusion in Head Start 2019-2024* is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The study is being conducted by NORC at The University of Chicago, their partners at SRI International, and their consultant, Amanda Schwartz.

**Will my responses impact my program?** Information from the study will not be used for monitoring purposes and ACF funding for your program will not be impacted by your responses. Your responses will be combined with others and reported together so that individual information is not identifiable.

**How do I prepare for the survey?**

- o Preview the survey topics in the attached document [Send list of Module topics]
- o Preview the full surveys here [LINK]

**Check with others**

- o Please confer with colleagues, as needed, to identify the responses for your program

**SAVE the survey at any time**

- o come back to it later when you are ready

**Privacy:** We will protect privacy of your identifiable data to the extent allowed by law. We cannot guarantee complete privacy for data that is sent over the Internet. To minimize risks to loss of privacy, we use a secure system to collect these data. Once the data is collected, we will remove all identifying information and replace it with a study ID. Only the researchers involved in the study will know that someone from your agency participated in the study. In any written reports of the data, your responses will be combined with others and reported together so that individual information is not identifiable. If quotes are used in any reports, they will not be connected to an individual or grantee/delegate agency. If you would like to withdraw from the study, please notify the research team at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org) to request that we destroy all of your data and exclude your responses from the study results. We will honor your request unless the data has already been aggregated, at which point we will no longer be able to separate person-level data. The NORC Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Office for Human Subjects Research Protections in the Department of Health and Human Services may review records related to this research study.

The de-identified data from this study, including survey responses and interview notes, will be maintained for use in future research projects by other researchers. The data will be linked at the program-level to administrative data such as the Program Information Report (PIR) and national reports of disability policies.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

**Benefits:** The study will provide a national understanding of how HS provides disability services. HS is a national early childhood leader, and the variety of ways that HS programs implement the Head Start Program Performance Standards for disability services will inform practice, policy, guidance and technical assistance. Your participation in this study will also help HS to improve disability services and to design supports for programs to enhance their disability coordination programming.



**Risks:** There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

**Right to Ask Questions:** If you have any questions, concerns, or comments about the study, please contact the research team at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org). If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please call the NORC Institutional Review Board toll free at 1-866-309-0542.

### **Phase 1 – Survey of EHS/HS Directors**

**How do I participate?** As part of this study, we are asking all grantee or delegate agency directors to complete a brief 25-minute web-based survey that will provide us with information about your program. If you are unable to complete the survey online, you can request to complete it by phone.

Your responses to this survey will provide important information about:

- Names and contact information for your program's DSC(s);
- Details about your program; and
- Your perspective on disability services and inclusion in your program.

**How long will it take?** It will take about 25 minutes to complete the online survey. The survey allows you to stop and save your responses at any time and return to them later for completion.

**Am I the right person to complete the survey?** The survey should be completed by directors of programs **that are responsible for the provision of direct services in EHS/HS centers**. In other words, we are not collecting data from directors of delegate agencies that do not provide direct services in EHS/HS programs. If you are the director of a program or agency that provides direct services to children, then you are the right person to complete the survey.

### **Phase 2 – Survey of EHS/HS DSCs**

**How do I participate?** As part of this study, we will ask all DSCs within EHS and HS programs to complete a 45-minute online survey. If you are unable to complete the survey online, you can request to complete it by phone. You are able to confer with other staff to improve the accuracy of your answers, if needed.

Your participation will help the study capture current practices, strengths, and challenges related to disability services in EHS and HS programs.

Your responses to this survey will provide important information about:

- The characteristics and responsibilities of DSCs;
- The processes and approaches to partnering with agencies and community partners to offer services to children with disabilities and their families;
- Collaboration with families of children with disabilities; and

- Challenges to inclusion and providing disability services, support, and education to children, families, and staff.

**How long will it take?** It will take about 45 minutes to complete the online survey. The survey allows you to stop and save your responses at any time and return to them later for completion.

### **Phase 3 – DSC Interviews**

**How long will it take?** The interview will take about 45 minutes.

**How do I participate?** If you are willing to participate, please let us know, and we will schedule a time for the interview over the next several weeks. Your participation in this interview will provide important details about key aspects of the DSC role and processes. Your responses will help HS improve understanding and supports for disability services.

## **STUDY ADVERTISEMENT: PROJECT PARTNERS**

We are excited to report that the Study of Disability Services Coordinator and Inclusion had begun. This study is funded by Administration for Children and Families and data is being collected by NORC, a national research organization. HS and EHS program directors and DSCs will complete surveys about disabilities service administration, roles and responsibilities, and processes. The resulting information will be a powerful resource for Office of Head Start, inform TA guidance, and highlight best practices. Please participate in the study! [CONTACT INFO FOR STUDY TEAM]

## **OUTREACH LETTER TO TRIBAL LEADERSHIP**

DATE

TRIBE

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

Dear Tribal Leader,

NORC at the University of Chicago is pleased to announce the Study of Disability Services Coordinators and Inclusion in Head Start. (OMB Number XXXXX). It is the

first-of-its-kind, national study of Head Start (HS) disability services coordinators' roles and responsibilities.

We hope that the American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Region XI Head Start program in your community ((PROGRAM NAME)) will participate in the study. We want to respect [NAME OF TRIBE(S)] Tribal sovereignty and address all research review requirements that the Tribe may have in place. [Please contact us at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org) if the [NAME OF TRIBE] has any research review requirements that NORC should observe.] [This language would be removed if research requirements already known by study team] This letter is to introduce the study and answer any questions you may have.

The study is sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in collaboration with Office of Head Start (OHS), in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), in the Department of Health and Human Services. OPRE has contracted with NORC to conduct the study. NORC is a non-partisan, non-profit research organization with 80 years of experience conducting surveys and social science research. You can learn more about NORC at [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org).

Nationally, each HS/EHS Program Director and DSC(s) will be invited to respond to a web-based survey. Please note that the study will not involve any data collection from EHS/HS teachers, children, or families. Surveys will be web-based and interviews will be conducted by phone. NORC will not visit classrooms or centers. Please also be aware that it will not be possible to share the local DSC Study data collected from [Program Name(s)] back to the Tribe. In recruiting each respondent to the study, we will commit to protecting their privacy and since there will be such a small sample for each program (2 to 5 respondents) the individual respondents will be too easily identifiable to provide the data back to the tribe. The archived data sets and any written products from the study will be carefully adjusted so that no individual respondent, EHS/HS program, or tribe/tribal community can be identified

Attached is a **Fact Sheet** providing additional details about the study.

We look forward to learning about any research review requirements from you and the [NAME OF TRIBE] leadership. You may reach me directly at 301-634-9491 or at [hafford-carol@norc.org](mailto:hafford-carol@norc.org) if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carol Hafford, Ph.D.

Principal Research Scientist, NORC  
Economics, Justice and Society Department

## **Fact Sheet**

### **Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start**

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**Who is sponsoring the study? The study is sponsored by** the Office of Research, Planning, and Evaluation (OPRE), in collaboration with the Office of Head Start, of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the Department of Health and Human Services.

**Have questions or concerns about the study?** For general questions about the study, please contact [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org). The study team is headed by Principal Investigator Michael Lopez at NORC ([Lopez-Michael@norc.org](mailto:Lopez-Michael@norc.org)) and Project Director Shannon TenBroeck ([TenBroeck-Shannon@norc.org](mailto:TenBroeck-Shannon@norc.org)). The Federal contacts for the study are Laura Hoard ([laura.hoard@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:laura.hoard@acf.hhs.gov)) and Wendy DeCoursey ([wendy.decoursey@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:wendy.decoursey@acf.hhs.gov)) of OPRE.

**Who is conducting the study?** NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) is conducting the *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start*. NORC is an objective, non-partisan research institution with 80 years of experience conducting surveys and social science research. You can learn more about NORC at [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org).

**What are the study goals?** The study is designed to provide a national picture of the disability services coordinators' workforce and practices for Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) programs, including AIAN (Region XI) and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) (Region XII) grantees.

The study will improve ACF and OHS understanding of:

- Implementation of Disabilities Service Coordinator roles across EHS/HS programs;
- Application of Head Start Performance Standards for disabilities services coordination;
- Partnerships with agencies and community-based service providers;
- Practices for collaboration with families of children with disabilities; and

- Challenges to inclusion and provision of disability services, support, and professional development to staff.

**What are the benefits of the study?** The study is expected to inform the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and OHS regarding DSC best practices, and technical assistance and supports that EHS/HS programs may need. Each program's participation in this study will inform this national picture and contribute to improving EHS/HS supports for families and children with disabilities.

**Was AIAN input sought during study development?** An AIAN workgroup provided feedback and input on the study design, research questions, and surveys for directors and DSCs. The AIAN workgroup actively engaged AIAN Region XI Directors, DSCs and parents. Further, a workgroup of Tribal researchers advised on the timeline and planning activities for collaborating with Tribal Institutional Review Boards (IRBs)/Research Review Boards (RRBs).

**What are the risks of participating in the study?** There are no identified risks to participation in the study. Study questions ask about work practices and program infrastructure, and do not address sensitive issues. Privacy of respondents is protected, and individual respondents, the programs they work for, and the tribes and communities will not be identifiable from the study data or reports.

**Are there any consequences to not participating?** There are no consequences to not participating in the study. A Program Director or DSC may decide to not participate, and there would be no consequences to the EHS/HS grant funding. A Tribal IRB/RRB may similarly decide to not participate without consequences to the EHS/HS grant funding.

**Who will participate?** The Program Director and DSC(s) from each EHS/HS program will be invited to complete a web-based survey. A small group of DSCs will volunteer to participate in qualitative interviews. Please note that the study will not involve any data collection from EHS/HS teachers, children, or families.

**What is the plan for data collection?** The study is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, their partners at SRI International, and their consultant, Amanda Schwartz.

Surveys will be web-based and interviews will be conducted by phone. NORC will not visit classrooms or centers.

The study will be conducted in three phases, including two web-based surveys and a set of qualitative interviews:

- **Director Survey.** ((OMB/IRB and Tribal approval date) to approximately August 2022). During the first phase, NORC will survey EHS/HS Program Directors. As part of this 25-minute survey, Directors will be asked to identify DSCs in their program and to share their perspective on disability services and inclusion in their program. It is only through this survey that contact information for DSCs will be available.
- **DSC Survey.** (February 2022 to approximately December 2022). During the second phase, NORC will reach out to all DSCs identified by the Directors to complete a 45-minute survey to capture current roles, responsibilities, practices, strengths, and challenges related to disability services in EHS and HS program.
- **DSC interviews.** (July 2022 to approximately December 2022). During the third phase, NORC will contact a small subset of 35 DSCs who volunteer to participate in interviews to help us learn more about the DSC role and the services DSCs provide to children with disabilities and their families.

**What is the study start time?** We began the data collection for Region I-Region X upon receiving approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and NORC's Institutional Review Board (IRB)., Prior to data collection with each AIAN Region XI HS program, all research review requirements of the relevant Tribe(s) will be addressed.

**Is Office of Head Start supporting this study?** Throughout the study development, OHS staff participated in regular study team meetings to provide insights on research questions of interest and relevant program language regarding DSC roles and responsibility. The surveys and interviews were closely reviewed by OHS staff. Further, the OHS Director and OHS leaders will provide email reminders to participate throughout the data collection year.

**Is this study approved by Office of Management and Budget and an Institutional Review Board?** The study was approved by the Office of Management and Budget in [Month Year], as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, under control number [control number], which expires on [Date]. Measures and plans for the study can be found on the OMB website. The survey was approved by NORC's Institutional Review Board in [Date] and determined to be [exempt or not human subjects research].

**What protections are in place for respondent privacy?** Participation in the survey is voluntary. The study poses minimal risk, as the respondents will be focusing on work practices and no sensitive information will be collected. When they agree to participate, respondents will be told:

NORC will follow strict rules to protect privacy and secure all information. Only the researchers involved in the study will know that someone from your program participated in the study. The only program identifying information that will be retained is the

state, territory, or district where the program is located. In any written reports of the data, responses will be combined with others and reported together so that individual information is not identifiable. If quotes are used in any reports, they will not be connected to an individual or HS/EHS program.

**How will the information be disseminated?** National results will be presented in a descriptive report of the DSC workforce and practices, and five briefs will be developed based on key topics of interest to OHS. No individual program, individual respondent, or tribe/community will be identifiable from the DSC Study products. Some products will report on the DSC roles and responsibilities in AIAN/Region XI, Multiple other Federal products may be developed after completion of datasets, including webinars, brief reports, powerpoint presentations and topical infographics.

[Any products from the study that report information specific to AIAN Region XI HS programs will be reviewed by an expert board, consisting of three members (e.g., AIAN HS directors, AIAN HS DSCs, Tribal researchers, Federal staff with knowledge of the study and the AIAN HS programs). The review board will advise on appropriateness of analyses, interpretation, language and presentation clarity.]  
[This language may be adjusted as review plan refined]

**Will the data be used for monitoring?** The study is not designed to capture individual program-level data or evaluate compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS). Data will not be used for monitoring purposes. Responses will not impact ACF funding for EHS/HS programs.

**How will the data be shared?** At the conclusion of the study, the de-identified data will be archived as restricted-use data files. Individual respondents, programs, or tribes/communities will not be able to be identified from these datasets. OPRE will consult with experts (e.g., AIAN Region XI HS directors and HS DSCs, Tribal researchers, Federal staff with knowledge of the study and AIAN HS programs) to establish a decision process for granting qualified researchers access to the archived AIAN Region XI data from the DSC Study.

Please be aware that it is not possible to return the local survey data to the Tribe. In recruiting each respondent to the study, we will commit to protecting their privacy and since there will be such a small sample for each program (2 to 5 respondents) the individual respondents will be too easily identifiable to provide the data back to the tribe.

**Questions.** Please contact NORC at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

**[Thank you for your support of the study.](#)**

**OUTREACH LETTER TO DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT**

January 2022

[Superintendent First Last Name]

[District]

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City, State Zip

Dear [Superintendent Last Name],

NORC at the University of Chicago is pleased to announce that a Head Start program associated with your school district is eligible to participate in a first of its kind, federally-funded national *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start* (OMB Control Number). The study, will provide a national picture of the DSC workforce roles and responsibilities for Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) programs, including American Indian and Alaska Native and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) grantees.

The goals of the study are to improve Office of Head Start's understanding of:

- Implementation of Disabilities Service Coordinator roles across EHS/HS programs;
- Application of Head Start Performance Standards for disabilities services coordination;
- Partnerships with agencies and community-based service providers;
- Practices for collaboration with families of children with disabilities; and
- Challenges to inclusion and provision of disability services, support, and professional development to staff.

We plan to reach out to EHS and HS Program Directors to complete a 25-minute web-based survey. We will then reach out to the DSC(s) to complete a web-based survey about their roles and responsibilities. A set of qualitative interviews will be completed with 35 DSCs. The study does not involve any data collection with teachers, children, or families. We will not enter any centers or classrooms.

We have included more detailed information about the study on the Fact Sheet enclosed. If your district has any research review requirements that we need to



observe prior to us collecting data from the Head Start/EHS Program Directors in your district, please contact us immediately at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).

Thank you for your district's participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

Michael López, Ph.D.

Principal Investigator

Shannon TenBroeck, MA

Co-Principal Investigator



## **Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start**

### **Fact Sheet**

**Who is sponsoring the study?** The study is sponsored by the Office of Research, Planning, and Evaluation (OPRE), in collaboration with the Office of Head Start, of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the Department of Health and Human Services.

**Have questions or concerns about the study?** For general questions about the study, please contact [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org). The study team is headed by Principal Investigator Michael Lopez at NORC ([Lopez-Michael@norc.org](mailto:Lopez-Michael@norc.org)) and Project Director Shannon TenBroeck ([TenBroeck-Shannon@norc.org](mailto:TenBroeck-Shannon@norc.org)). The Federal contacts for the study are Laura Hoard ([laura.hoard@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:laura.hoard@acf.hhs.gov)) and Wendy DeCoursey ([wendy.decoursey@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:wendy.decoursey@acf.hhs.gov)) of OPRE.

**Who is conducting the study?** NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) is conducting the *Study of Disability Services Coordinators (DSCs) and Inclusion in Head Start*. NORC is an objective, non-partisan research institution with 80 years of experience conducting surveys and social science research. You can learn more about NORC at [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org).

**What are the goals of the study?** The study is designed to provide a national picture of the DSC workforce for Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS), including American Indian/Alaska Native (Region XI) and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (Region XII) grantees..

The goals of the study are to improve understanding of:

- Implementation of Disabilities Service Coordinator roles across EHS/HS programs;
- Application of Head Start Performance Standards for disabilities services coordination;
- Partnerships with agencies and community-based service providers;
- Practices for collaboration with families of children with disabilities; and
- Challenges to inclusion and provision of disability services, support, and professional development to staff.

**Is the study approved by Office of Management and Budget and an Institutional Review Board?** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved the survey on [DATE]. The OMB control number is [XXXX-XXXX] and the expiration date is [DATE]. NORC's IRB reviewed the study plan and [Decision: XXXX/on Decision Date].

**What are the benefits of the study for your district?** The study is expected to inform ACF and OHS regarding DSC best practices, and technical assistance and

supports that EHS/HS programs may need. Each program's participation in this study will inform this national picture and contribute to improving EHS/HS supports for families and children with disabilities in your district.

**What are the risks of participating in the study?** There are no identified risks to participation in the study. Study questions ask about work practices and organizational infrastructure, and do not address sensitive issues. Privacy of respondents is protected, and individual respondents and the programs they work for will not be identifiable from the study data or reports.

**Who will participate?** The Program Director and DSC(s) from each EHS/HS program are eligible to complete a web-based survey. A small group of DSCs will participate in qualitative interviews. Please note that the study will not involve any data collection from EHS/HS teachers, children, or families.

**What is the plan for data collection?** The study is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, their partners at SRI International, and their consultant, Amanda Schwartz.

No data will be collected from teachers, children or families. Surveys will be web-based and interviews will be conducted by phone. NORC will not visit classrooms or centers.

The study will be conducted in three phases, including two web-based surveys and a set of qualitative interviews:

- **Director Survey.** (January 2022-August 2022). During the first phase, NORC will survey EHS/HS Program Directors. As part of this 25-minute survey, Directors will be asked to identify DSCs in their program and to share their perspective on disability services and inclusion in their program. It is only through this survey that contact information for DSCs will be available.
- **DSC Survey.** (February 2022-December 2022). During the second phase, NORC will reach out to all DSCs identified by the Directors to complete a 45-minute survey to capture current roles, responsibilities, practices, strengths, and challenges related to disability services in EHS and HS program.
- **DSC interviews.** (July 2022-December 2022). During the third phase, NORC will contact a small subset of 35 DSCs who volunteer to participate in interviews to help us learn more about the DSC role and the services DSCs provide to children with disabilities and their families.

**What is the study timeline?** We began data collection upon receiving approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (date XXX) and NORC's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Date XXX). As needed, NORC will also complete local district review requirements prior to data collection in local Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

- The plan is to collect data for the Survey of EHS/HS Program Directors January through August 2022,
- the Survey of EHS/HS DSCs from February through December 2022, and
- the DSC interviews from July through December 2022.

**What is the plan for recruiting?** Recruitment began once OMB and IRB approval achieved. As needed, we will also complete district review requirements prior to data collection. To start, we will send an email to the Director that describes the study and includes a personalized link to the web-based survey. The initial email will be accompanied by a letter from the OHS Director, supporting the study goals and activities. If there is no response to the initial invite, NORC will follow-up with the Director by email or phone to encourage participation. OHS will also send encouraging reminder emails to HS/EHS program directors. NORC will follow the same recruitment and follow-up protocol with DSCs.

**Is Office of Head Start supporting this study?** Throughout the study development, OHS staff participated in regular study team meetings to provide insights on research questions of interest and relevant program language regarding DSC roles and responsibility. The surveys and interviews were closely reviewed by OHS staff. Further, the OHS Director will provide emails of support and reminders to participate throughout the data collection year.

**Is this study approved by Office of Management and Budget and an Institutional Review Board?** The study was approved by the Office of Management and Budget in [Month Year], as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, under control number [control number], which expires on [Date]. Measures and plans for the study can be found on the OMB website. The survey was approved by NORC's Institutional Review Board in [Date] and determined to be [exempt or not human subjects research]. As needed, NORC will complete local district review requirements prior to data collection in local Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

**How will the information be disseminated?** National results will be presented in a descriptive report of the DSC workforce and practices, and five briefs will be developed based on key topics of interest to OHS. No individual program or individual respondent will be identifiable from the DSC Study products. Multiple additional products may be developed (e.g., Powerpoint presentations, flyers, webinars, etc.)

**Will the data be used for monitoring?** Data will not be used for monitoring purposes. The study is not designed to capture individual program-level data or evaluate compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS). Responses will not impact ACF funding for EHS/HS programs.

**How will the data be shared?** At the conclusion of the study, the de-identified data will be archived as restricted-use data files. Individual respondents or programs will not be able to be identified from these datasets. Under agreement with the archives, the data may be accessed by qualified researchers to address additional questions regarding disability services coordination and inclusion in Head Start.

**Questions?** Please contact NORC at [HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org](mailto:HeadStartDSCStudy@norc.org).