

Alternative Supporting Statement for Information Collections Designed for  
Research, Public Health Surveillance, and Program Evaluation Purposes

# Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970–0531

## Supporting Statement

### Part A

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Submitted by:  
Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation  
Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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**Part A**

**Executive Summary**

- **Type of Request:** This Information Collection Request is for a generic information collection under the umbrella generic, Formative Data Collections for Program Support (0970-0531).
- **Description of Request:** This request is to collect data through an online survey with high school-age youth about changes in parental relationships, sex education, and sexual behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data will be used to help identify areas of need resulting from the pandemic in order to guide future Administration for Children and Families (ACF) programming and research. ACF would use the data to provide evidence-informed technical assistance to the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) and the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program (SRAE) grantees operating programs in the next year. ACF would also share information about findings with grantees that offer programming so that they better understand what greater emphasis may be needed in their programming next year. We do not intend the information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.
- **Time Sensitivity:** This collection of information is directly tied to the current pandemic. As such, it is important to collect the information while respondents can relay what they have recently and are currently experiencing. Additionally, data collected will provide critical and timely information to inform and refine current PREP and SRAE programming in the coming year (beginning September 2021).

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### **A1. Necessity for Collection**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) provides funds for adolescent pregnancy prevention and optimal adolescent development through the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) and the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) Program. ACF is interested in learning how programming for adolescents may need to be adjusted in response to changes in parent-child relationships, sexual behaviors, and sex educational experiences occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from this request is necessary for ACF to provide targeted training and technical assistance (T/TA) to PREP and SRAE grantees, refine current PREP and SRAE programming in the coming year, and assure grantees are meeting the needs of the youth they serve during this time.

Close parent-child relationships and communication are fundamental to youth development and support successful transitions into adulthood for adolescents (Fitzpatrick and Vangelisti 1995). Additionally, research shows the importance of parent-child communication on sexual decision making (Commendador 2010) and that intensive parental components within sex education programs can improve communication and may modify adolescent sexual behaviors (Wight and Fullerton 2013). Family cohesion is seen as a protective factor during stressful circumstances, and has been associated with lower levels of substance abuse and risky sexual behavior (Cano, et al., 2018). Due to quarantine and social distancing measures over the last year during the COVID-19 pandemic, parents and youth may be spending more time together, which has the potential to increase both conflict and cohesion in their relationships. Hearing from youth will allow ACF to have a better understanding of what messaging is needed to connect with youth when discussing parent-child relationships as a part of PREP and SRAE programming.

In Fall 2020, ACF collected feedback from grantees on their needs for T&TA and program guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic through the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) Grantee COVID Survey (OMB Control # 0970-0401). Based on this survey, standard T/TA efforts, and regular grantee reporting, ACF has learned that most grantees had to change their program plans due to the pandemic. While most grantees are still providing some form of programming to youth, closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic have reduced the number of youth that PREP and SRAE grantees plan to serve and the number of sites in which they are offering services, both by about 50 percent. Additionally, for the programming being offered, virtual program delivery is the most common approach used. The results of this survey underscore the significant drop in adolescent pregnancy prevention programming nationwide.

Little is known about whether or not the pandemic has influenced youth sexual risk-taking behaviors. It is important that ACF hear from youth to learn about their sexual behavior in order to inform how to better serve youth through adolescent pregnancy prevention programming (both SRAE and PREP). This data collection will allow ACF and grantees better understand the types of sexual behaviors youth are engaging in, reasons behind youth sexual decision making at this time, the alignment between what programming youth would like compared to what they have received.

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In order to provide adequate training and technical assistance to meet the needs of grantees and the youth they serve, data must be collected directly from the youth to understand the extent to which youth feel their needs are being met in terms of the types of information they want to receive related to sex education during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is necessary to understand how satisfied and engaged youth have been with the sex education received during the COVID-19 pandemic and then tailor T/TA to support grantees to better serve youth related to sex education programming. Additionally, it is necessary to help programs understand how to better target the information delivered to youth.

### **A2. Purpose**

#### *Purpose and Use*

Data collected from the online survey of high school-age youth will provide ACF with descriptive data about parent-child relationships, sexual behaviors, and sex educational experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. This data collection effort offers a unique opportunity to hear from youth so that programming and any further research can be adjusted to align with adolescents' new realities. Additionally, ACF will use the information to provide targeted T/TA to grantees and to update programming as necessary for the next year grant year (beginning September 2021). Summaries of the findings will be shared with grantees so they can adjust, as needed, to meet the needs of the youth they serve.

The proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for program support (0970-0531):

- Delivery of targeted assistance related to program implementation or the development or refinement of program and grantee processes.
- Planning for provision of programmatic or evaluation-related T/TA.
- Development of learning agendas and research priorities.

The information collected through the survey is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision maker and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

#### *Research Questions or Tests*

The data collection effort addresses the following questions:

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1. How has youth communication and relationships with their parents/guardians changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
  - a. Have the frequency and topics discussed with parents changed over the last year?
  - b. Has parental monitoring changed over the past year, from the youth's perspective?
  - c. Have there been more conflicts or more closeness/cohesion over the past year?
2. What type of sex education programming did high school youth receive during the 2020-2021 school year?
  - a. Were they engaged and satisfied with this programming?
  - b. What topics were covered, and what topics do they think will be important in the next year?
3. What types of sexual risk behaviors have youth been engaging in throughout the last year of the COVID-19 pandemic?

### *Study Design*

We will collect data to provide descriptive information on how parent and child relationships have changed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, what type of sexual education youth have received and how engaged they were with such programming during the pandemic/2020–2021 school year, and the types of sexual risk behaviors in which youth have engaged during the pandemic. Data will be collected through a web survey administered to a nonprobability sample of English- and Spanish-speaking high school-age students in the United States who are 14 through 19 years of age and have received parental consent to participate (for those less than 18 years old). The sample will come from an online research nonprobability panel, the KnowledgePanel®, maintained by Ipsos. Ipsos will seek consent from parents who are members of the KnowledgePanel and have youth 14 through 17 years of age. Given that the survey involves a nonprobability sample, the survey data will not be used to generate generalizable statistics for high school-age youth.

While the KnowledgePanel® provides access to a diverse set of parents and guardians to reach out to for consent for a youth sample, there are limitations to this design. The data will not be generalizable to all high-school age youth. We will collect basic demographic items to understand the characteristics of our respondents and who we may be missing. We will include this as a key limitation in all written products. The survey asks questions about parent child communication and relationships. There is a chance that youth whose parents' consent and who also agree to do the survey may be those who already have a stronger relationship and communicate more with their parents, compared to the general population of high school age youth. Additionally, the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior will use a fully web-based method of data collection. Since questions pertaining to sexual behaviors of high school-age youth can be sensitive in nature, it possible that some youth may be completing the survey at home while their parents are at home. To mitigate this bias, we will encourage respondents to take the survey in a quiet spot by themselves and inform parents that we want youth to complete the survey independently.

In Table A2, we provide the data collection activity by respondent and format. The collected data will be analyzed only in the aggregate.

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**Table A2. Data collection activity for the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior**

Instrument	Respondent, content, purpose of collection	Mode and duration
Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior (Instrument 1)	<p><b>Respondents:</b> Youth 14 through 19 years of age.</p> <p><b>Content:</b> Changes in parental relationships and communications, sexual education, and sexual risk behaviors related to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Data collected from the online survey of high school- age youth will provide ACF with descriptive data about how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected youth perceptions of their parent-child relationships, sexual behaviors, and sex educational experiences.</p>	<p><b>Mode:</b> Online survey</p> <p><b>Duration:</b> 25 minutes</p>

*Other Data Sources and Uses of Information*

No other data sources or prior data collections are associated with this request.

**A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden**

Data will be collected by using a web survey. A web-survey offers several advantages for respondents; it enables web respondents to participate on their own time and permits respondents' use of their preferred electronic device (Smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer). The web survey will have mobile formatting that ensures that the display adjusts for device screen size. If needed, respondents can pause and restart the survey, with their responses saved. The programmed web survey will also include tailored skip patterns and text fills. These features allow respondents to move through the questions more easily and automatically skip questions that do not apply to them, thus minimizing respondent burden.

**A4. Use of Existing Data: Efforts to reduce duplication, minimize burden, and increase utility and government efficiency**

ACF has carefully reviewed the information collection requirements to avoid duplication with existing studies or other ongoing federal teen pregnancy prevention evaluations. The information collected by the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior is uniquely poised to provide ACF with adolescents' detailed reflections on their experiences in communicating with their parents, receiving sexual education programming, and participating in sexual risk behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic. ACF is aware of the Centers for Disease Control's Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey that will collect nationally representative data from youth around sexual risk behaviors and relationship with parents during the pandemic. Data from that survey is expected to be released in Fall 2021. However, data collected from that survey does not gather information related to youth's experiences with sex education programming during the pandemic nor information on communication with their parents. Additionally, the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education and Behavior is intended

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to gather data to inform programming and T/TA needs for ACF grantees in the Fall 2021. Therefore, data must be collected and analyzed prior to the Fall, in order to be accessible to grantees by Fall 2021 as needed.

**A5. Impact on Small Businesses**

No small businesses will be involved with the information collection.

**A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection**

This is a one-time data collection.

**A7. Now subsumed under 2(b) above and 10 (below)**

**A8. 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 the overarching generic clearance for formative information collection. This notice was published on October 13, 2020, Volume 85, Number 198, page 64480, and provided a 60-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment period, no substantive comments were received.

*Consultation with Experts Outside the Study*

Several items on the current survey were informed by ACF work with subject matter experts in adolescent health, sexual education, and instrument development.

**A9. Tokens of Appreciation**

Ipsos provides general tokens of appreciation to KnowledgePanel® members to maintain a high degree of panel loyalty and to prevent panel attrition. Table A9 provides details for the general tokens of appreciation. These tokens of appreciation apply to any survey that is completed by KnowledgePanel® panelists and are not specific to panelists' participation in the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior. For longer surveys and surveys fielded with groups with higher nonresponse rates, KnowledgePanel® members also receive 10,000 points (\$10 equivalent) upon completion. Ipsos will provide both the general token of appreciation and the \$10 equivalent to respondents completing the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior. ACF does not propose any additional token of appreciation beyond what Ipsos provides.

Ipsos sends tokens of appreciation to the parent KnowledgePanel® member, notifying the youth that their parent will receive the token of appreciation and the incentive amount.

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**Table A9. General and study-specific incentives by Ipsos research panel**

<b>Panel</b>	<b>General tokens of appreciation</b>	<b>Study-specific tokens of appreciation</b>
KnowledgePanel® Member who does not own a personal device or have Internet access	Equipment (e.g., laptop)-Internet access	\$10 (equivalent in points = 10,000)
KnowledgePanel® Member who owns a personal device and has Internet access	1,000 points	\$10 (equivalent in points = 10,000)

**A10. Privacy: Procedures to protect privacy of information while maximizing data sharing**

*Personally Identifiable Information*

The Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior will collect no personally identifiable information (PII). During recruitment of the research panel (i.e., unrelated to this study), Ipsos collects individual respondent’s PII (e.g., name, address, email address, and the names and ages of household members) solely for purposes of conducting its research business, which includes prequalifying members or households for surveys, communicating with panel members, and ensuring a nationally representative panel. Ipsos maintains a separate PII database– distinct from completed questionnaires and computerized data files– collected for its research business. The survey response data are identifiable only by an incremented ID number. Ipsos will provide the data analysis contractor (Mathematica) and funding agency (ACF) with a data file with no PII (de-identified).

*Assurances of Privacy*

All collected information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, told that their participation is voluntary, and assured that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. As specified in the contract, the contractor will comply with all federal and departmental regulations governing private information. In Appendix A, we provide the consent form, containing assurances of privacy, that all participants read and acknowledge before participating in the data collection.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, the evaluation will obtain a Certificate of Confidentiality, which helps assure participants that their information will be kept private to the fullest extent permitted by law. The consent form provides information about the Certificate of Confidentiality.

*Data Security and Monitoring*

The contractor has developed a Data Safety and Monitoring Plan that assesses all protections of respondents’ information. The contractor will ensure that all of its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor who perform work under this contract or subcontract are trained in data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements. All study team staff involved in the project will receive training in (1) limitations of disclosure, (2) safeguarding the physical work environment, and (3) storing, transmitting, and destroying data securely. All Mathematica staff sign the Mathematica Confidentiality Agreement, complete online security awareness training when they are hired, and receive annual refresher training thereafter.



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As specified in its contract, the contractor will use Federal Information Processing Standard-compliant encryption (Security Requirements for Cryptographic Module, as amended) to protect all instances of sensitive information during storage and transmission. The contractor will securely generate and manage encryption keys to prevent unauthorized decryption of information in accordance with the Federal Processing Standard. Any data stored electronically will be secured in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology requirements and other applicable federal and departmental regulations. In addition, the contractor has a plan for minimizing to the extent possible the inclusion of sensitive information on paper records as well as for protecting any paper records, field notes, or other documents that contain sensitive information to ensure secure storage and limits on access.

### **A11. Sensitive Information**<sup>1</sup>

Questions pertaining to sexual behaviors of high school-age youth can be sensitive in nature, but the questions need to be asked to achieve the main study objectives. In Table A11, we indicate the survey topics and questions deemed sensitive on the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior. A review of the data collection protocol, consent, and assent forms by an Institutional Review Board will be initiated upon OMB approval of the study.

At the start of the survey, all survey participants will be informed about the sensitive nature of the questions and advised that they may skip or refuse to answer any questions for any reason. This information will also be provided on the parent consent form (Appendix A).

Although high levels of nonresponse are not expected on the sensitive survey items, asking sensitive questions can increase item nonresponse. A web-based survey helps mitigate nonresponse because participants are more likely to disclose sensitive information when an interviewer is not present (Tourangeau et al. 2000).

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of sensitive topics include (but are not limited to) Social Security number; sexual behavior and attitudes; illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close relationships, e.g., family, pupil-teacher, employee-supervisor; mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to respondents; religion and indicators of religion; community activities that indicate political affiliation and attitudes; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment; receipt of economic assistance from the government (e.g., unemployment or WIC or SNAP); immigration/citizenship status.

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**Table A11. Summary of sensitive questions and their justification**

Topic and survey questions	Justification
Gender identity (E4-E5) and sexual orientation (E6)	These questions will be used to describe the sample of participants. ACF has a strong interest in allowing youth to accurately describe themselves.
Sexual activity and contraceptive use (All Items in Section D)	The survey is designed to understand what types of sexual behaviors youth are engaging in, and have been, throughout the pandemic. It is important that ACF hears from youth to learn about what they are doing from a sexual behavior standpoint to inform how to better serve and target youth in adolescent pregnancy prevention programming (both SRAE and PREP).

**A12. Burden**

*Explanation of Burden Estimates*

Table A12 summarizes the estimated reporting burden and costs for the survey instrument. We estimate that 500 high school-age youth will complete the survey instrument. We estimate that it will take approximately 25 minutes to complete the survey, for an estimated annual burden of 210 hours.

*Estimated Annualized Cost to Respondents*

We estimate the average hourly wage for high school-age youth at \$12.58. The hourly wage is based on current published estimates of the usual weekly earnings of wage and salary workers (fourth quarter 2020) reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The estimated hourly wage rates are based on median weekly earnings for youth 16 to 19 years, \$503 and the assumption of a 40-hour work week<sup>2</sup>. The results appear in Table A12.

**Table A12. Total burden requested under this information collection**

Instrument	Number of respondents (total over request period)	Number of responses per respondent (total over request period)	Average burden per response (in hours)	Total/annual burden (in hours)	Average hourly wage rate	Total annual respondent cost
Instrument 1. Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior	500	1	0.42	210	\$12.58	\$2,641.80
<b>Total</b>				<b>210</b>		<b>\$2,641.80</b>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/wkyeng\\_01212021.htm](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/wkyeng_01212021.htm)

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**A13. Costs**

There are no additional costs to respondents.

**A14. Estimated Annualized Costs to the Federal Government**

The total and annual costs for the data collection activities under this current request will be \$286,066. This includes direct and indirect costs of data collection. In Table A14, we display the costs by work categories.

**Table A14. Estimated annualized costs by category**

Cost category	Estimated costs
Instrument development and OMB clearance	\$54,695
Field work	\$187,739
Analysis	\$43,632
<b>Total/annual costs over the request period</b>	<b>\$286,066</b>

**A15. Reasons for Changes in Burden**

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-0531).

**A16. Timeline**

The goal is to complete data collection and analysis by late summer 2021 in order to inform programming prior to the new grant year beginning at the end of September 2021. In Table A16, we provide an estimated timeline for the Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior study to meet the September deadline. Actual dates are subject to change dependent on timing of OMB approval.

Survey data collection is expected to take place over a three-week period in early summer 2021 after obtaining OMB approval. A memo that summarizes key themes and lessons will be developed during late summer 2021 for purposes of highlighting the relevant survey findings. The memo will emphasize areas of need resulting during the pandemic in order to help guide and tailor future ACF programming and research. ACF may develop a public facing document, as well, in order to share findings with PREP and SRAE grantees and other stakeholders.

**Table A16. Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior study timeline**

Activity	Number of weeks	Example Dates
Data collection	Three weeks	June 2021
Data processing and cleaning	Two weeks	July 2021
Data analysis	Four weeks	July/August 2021
Memo	Four weeks	August/September 2021

<sup>a</sup> After obtaining OMB approval.

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**A17. Exceptions**

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

**Attachments**

**Appendices**

Appendix A. Parent Consent Form

Appendix B. Youth Assent

Appendix C. Item by Item Source Crosswalk for Survey

**Instrument**

Instrument 1. Youth Survey of Relationships, Education, and Behavior

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