

Survey of Head Start Directors

Informed Consent for Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Title of Project: Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Principal Investigator: Carolyn Hill, PhD

Our study team is inviting you to take part in *Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services!* This form explains what it means to be a part of this study.

Why is the study being conducted? The study aims to understand:

- What family support services coordination is like in Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) programs
- Experiences of staff members who provide these important services
- Potential opportunities to support Head Start programs and staff

Who is funding this study? The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is sponsoring this study. OPRE is collaborating with the Office of Head Start. A nonprofit research organization called MDRC leads the study. MDRC is collaborating with its partners, NORC at the University of Chicago and MEF Associates.

What are the parts of the Head Start Connects study? The full study includes:

- A web survey of Head Start Directors (or their designees)
- A web survey of Family and Community Partnerships Managers
- A web survey, up to 6 daily snapshot web surveys about workday activities, and focus groups of Family Support Services Staff

How do I participate? The study team invites selected directors of Head Start grantees or delegate agencies (or their designee) to complete a 30-minute web-based survey. If it would be helpful to you, you may request to complete it by phone.

What is involved in my participation? The director survey asks you (or your designee) to

- Answer questions about your HS/EHS program
- Provide contact information for the following staff members in your program:
 - Family and Community partnerships Managers
 - Family support Services Staff Members

[In appreciation of your time, we are happy to offer you a \$25 honorarium.]

How will the study team use the contact information that I provide? We will contact a Family and Community Partnerships Manager, and a subset of Family Support Services Staff. (The number we contact will depend on how many staff are in your program.) We will select family support services staff at random. We will invite these staff members to participate in a survey about coordination processes for family support services. The surveys also have questions about staff members' characteristics, experiences, job characteristics, and well-being. We will invite a subset of family support services staff

members to participate in two additional activities: (1) brief daily snapshot web surveys about their workday, for three days in a week during two different weeks, and/or (2) a focus group about innovative practices. Participation in all these activities is voluntary.

How long will it take for me to participate? It will take about 30 minutes to complete the web-based survey. The survey allows you to stop and save your responses at any time and return to them later for completion.

What are the risks to me of being in the study? There are few risks involved. There is a small risk that your information could be lost, stolen, or misused, even though we try very hard to protect your data.

What are the benefits to me of being in the study? There are no direct benefits to you of being in the study. However, information from the study may inform and improve training and technical assistance offered by the Office of Head Start. It also may help improve the experiences of families who participate in and staff members who work in HS/EHS programs. Information from the study will not be used for monitoring purposes.

How will my information be protected? We follow strict rules to protect your data. We use safety procedures like secure computers and data storage systems to protect data from being seen by anyone other than the researchers. Only selected members of the study team will see your responses. No one from ACF or your Head Start agency will see your responses. Any written reports of the data will combine your responses with others and report them together so that individual information is not identifiable. If any reports use quotes, 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 HSCconnects@norc.org. If you choose to withdraw from the study, we will maintain and analyze the data collected up to the time of withdrawal. If at the time of withdrawal you request that we destroy all of your data and exclude your responses from the study results, we will honor your request unless the data have already been aggregated, at which point we will no longer be able to separate person-level data.

To further protect your identifiable information, we have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This certificate strictly limits when we are compelled to share your identifiable information without your consent. We will use the Certificate to resist any requests for information that would identify you. However, the study team may have to report information about you to the authorities if we learn that you or someone else may be in danger or harm. We must still follow mandatory reporting requirements, which means, for example, that we must report suspicions of child and elder abuse. This Certificate of Confidentiality does not mean that the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services approves of this project.

Will my information be used in the future for other studies? Yes. The study team will securely maintain the data from this study. At the conclusion of the study, our study team will archive the data as a restricted use file with a trusted data repository. A restricted use file means that only qualified researchers will be able to access the data for use in future research projects, without collecting additional consent. The data we share will not include your name or other information that could directly identify you. If you join this study, you are agreeing now to share the information that you provide for other research purposes in the future.

Is this study voluntary? Yes. Taking part in this study is your choice. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You may stop the survey at any time.

Who can I call with questions? If you have questions, concerns, or comments about the study please contact the Project Director, Michelle Maier at MDRC. Her toll-free telephone number is 1-877-311-6372, extension 4517. Her email address is michelle.maier@mdrc.org. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please contact the MDRC IRB Institutional Review Board at IRB@mdrc.org.

Proceeding with the survey implies that you have read the information in this form and consent to take part in this research study. It also means that you are giving us permission to contact a Family and Community Partnerships Manager and Family Support Services Staff Members at your HS/EHS program to invite them to participate in additional data collection activities for the study.

Please print or save a copy of this form for your records or future reference.

Do you agree to participate in this study?

YES → Proceed to survey

NO → Thank you for your consideration

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 0970-0538 and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

Survey of Head Start Family and Community Partnerships Managers

Informed Consent for Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Title of Project: Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Principal Investigator: Carolyn Hill, PhD

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Why is the study being conducted? The study aims to understand:

- What family support services coordination is like in Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) programs
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What are the parts of the Head Start Connects study? The full study includes:

- A web survey of Head Start Directors (or their designees)
- A web survey of Family and Community Partnerships Managers
- A web survey, up to 6 daily snapshot web surveys about workday activities, and focus groups of Family Support Services Staff

How do I participate? The study team invites selected Family and Community Partnerships Managers of Head Start grantees or delegate agencies to complete a 40-minute web-based survey. If it would be helpful to you, you may request to complete it by phone.

What is involved in my participation? The survey asks questions about the program structures and services for providing supports to parents and families in your HS/EHS program(s). It also asks questions about your background, experiences, job characteristics, and well-being. [In appreciation of your time, we are happy to offer you a \$25 honorarium.]

How long will it take for me to participate? It will take about 40 minutes to complete the web-based survey. The survey allows you to stop and save your responses at any time and return to them later for completion.

What are the risks to me of being in the study? There are few risks involved. There is a small risk that your information could be lost, stolen, or misused, even though we try very hard to protect your data.

What are the benefits to me of being in the study? There are no direct benefits to you by being in the study. However, information from the study may inform and improve training and technical assistance offered by the Office of Head Start. It also may help improve the experiences of families who participate

in and staff members who work in HS/EHS programs. Information from the study will not be used for monitoring purposes.

How will my information be protected? We follow strict rules to protect your data. We use safety procedures like secure computers and data storage systems to protect data from being seen by anyone other than the researchers. Only selected members of the study team will see your responses. No one from ACF or your Head Start agency will see your responses. Any written reports of the data will combine your responses with others and report them together so that individual information is not identifiable. If any reports use quotes, 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 HSConnects@norc.org. If you choose to withdraw from the study, we will maintain and analyze the data collected up to the time of withdrawal. If at the time of withdrawal you request that we destroy all of your data and exclude your responses from the study results, we will honor your request unless the data have already been aggregated, at which point we will no longer be able to separate person-level data.

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Is this study voluntary? Yes. Taking part in this study is your choice. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You may stop the survey at any time.

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Proceeding with the survey implies that you have read the information in this form and consent to take part in this research study.

Please print or save a copy of this form for your records or future reference.

Do you agree to participate in this study?

YES → Proceed to survey

NO → Thank you for your consideration

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Survey of Family Support Services Staff Members

Informed Consent for Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Title of Project: Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Principal Investigator: Carolyn Hill, PhD

Our study team is inviting you to take part in *Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services!* This form explains what it means to be a part of this study.

Why is the study being conducted? The study aims to understand:

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What are the parts of the Head Start Connects study? The full study includes:

- A web survey of Head Start Directors (or their designees)
- A web survey of Family and Community Partnerships Managers
- A web survey, up to 6 daily snapshot web surveys about workday activities, and focus groups of Family Support Services Staff

How do I participate? The study team invites selected Head Start Family Support Service Staff Members to complete a 40-minute web-based survey. If it would be helpful to you, you may request to complete it by phone.

What is involved in my participation? The survey asks questions about how you engage families in family support services; and about your background, experiences, job characteristics, and well-being. [In appreciation of your time, we are happy to offer you a \$25 honorarium.] If you choose to participate in the survey, we may reach out to you at a later time to ask if you would like to take part in additional brief web-based surveys about your daily work activities and well-being. You can choose whether you want to participate in those surveys.

How long will it take for me to participate? It will take about 40 minutes to complete the current web-based survey. The survey allows you to stop and save your responses at any time and return to them later for completion.

What are the risks to me of being in the study? There are few risks involved. There is a small risk that your information could be lost, stolen, or misused, even though we try very hard to protect your data.

What are the benefits to me of being in the study? There are no direct benefits to you by being in the study. However, information from the study may inform and improve training and technical assistance offered by the Office of Head Start. It also may help improve the experiences of families who participate in and staff members who work in HS/EHS programs. Information from the study will not be used for monitoring purposes.

How will my information be protected? We follow strict rules to protect your data. We use safety procedures like secure computers and data storage systems to protect data from being seen by anyone other than the researchers. Only selected members of the study team will see your responses. No one from ACF or your Head Start agency will see your responses. Any written reports of the data will combine your responses with others and report them together so that individual information is not identifiable. If any reports use quotes, they will not be connected to an individual or grantee/delegate agency.

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Activities Snapshot Survey of Family Support Services Staff Members

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- A web survey, up to 6 daily snapshot web surveys about workday activities, and focus groups of Family Support Services Staff

How do I participate? The study team invites selected Head Start Family Support Services Staff Members to complete a brief 6-minute web-based snapshot survey.

What is involved in my participation? A brief 6-minute web-based survey asks about your work activities and well-being on a specific work day. The study team will invite you to complete up to six of these brief surveys: three surveys in one week, and three surveys in another week. It is your choice whether to participate in each survey.

[In appreciation of your time, we are happy to offer you an honorarium of \$5 for each brief survey you complete. If you complete surveys about three workdays in the same week, you will receive an extra \$5, for a total of \$20.]

How long will it take for me to participate? It will take about 6 minutes to complete a survey. The survey allows you to stop and save your responses at any time and return to them later for completion.

What are the risks to me of being in the study? There are few risks involved. There is a small risk that your information could be lost, stolen, or misused, even though we try very hard to protect your data.

What are the benefits to me of being in the study? There are no direct benefits to you by being in the study. However, information from the study may inform and improve training and technical assistance offered by the Office of Head Start. It also may help improve the experiences of families who participate in and staff members who work in HS/EHS programs. Information from the study will not be used for monitoring purposes.

How will my information be protected? We follow strict rules to protect your data. We use safety procedures like secure computers and data storage systems to protect data from being seen by anyone other than the researchers. Only selected members of the study team will see your responses. No one from ACF or your Head Start agency will see your responses. Any written reports of the data will combine your responses with others and report them together so that individual information is not identifiable. If any reports use quotes, they will not be connected to an individual or grantee/delegate agency.

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Who can I call with questions?

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Do you agree to participate in this study?

YES → Proceed to survey

NO → Thank you for your consideration

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Focus Groups of Family Support Services Staff Members

**Information Sheet for the Focus Groups in Head Start Connects:
A Study of Family Support Services**

Title of Project: Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Principal Investigator: Carolyn Hill, PhD

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How do I participate? The study team invites selected Head Start family support services staff members to take part in a 1.25-hour focus group via Zoom videoconferencing.

What is involved in my participation? The focus group will include up to nine other family support services staff members. The study team will ask you about innovative practices in your Head Start program(s) and about your ideas for improving the coordination of family support services in Head Start program(s). The focus group will be conducted via Zoom videoconferencing. It will be audio-recorded.

[In appreciation of your time, we are happy to offer you an honorarium of \$25.]

How long will it take for me to participate? It will take about one hour and fifteen minutes to participate in the focus group discussion.

What are the risks to me of being in the study? There are few risks involved. There is a small risk that your information could be lost, stolen, or misused, even though we try very hard to protect your data. We take great care to protect the information you share in the focus group, but in a group setting, we cannot fully guarantee this. We ask that all participants agree not to share any information from the

focus group, including the identities of individuals and of Head Start programs. We also ask participants to not discuss issues raised in the focus group elsewhere.

What are the benefits to me of being in the study? There are no direct benefits to you. However, information from the study may inform and improve training and technical assistance offered by the Office of Head Start. It also may help improve the experiences of families who participate in and staff members who work in HS/EHS programs. Information from the study will not be used for monitoring purposes.

How will my information be protected? We will audio-record the discussion. This is being done because it is difficult for members of the study team to focus on what you are saying and take notes at the same time. The recording will be transcribed, and the transcriptions will be deleted at the end of the project. Only researchers on the study team will ever hear the recording or see the transcripts from our discussion. No one from ACF or your Head Start agency will see your individual responses. Your name or the name of your program will not be identified in study reports.

We follow strict rules to protect your data. We use safety procedures like secure computers and data storage systems to protect data from being seen by anyone other than the researchers. Any written reports of the data will combine your responses with others and report them together so that individual information is not identifiable. If any reports use quotes, they will not be connected to an individual or grantee/delegate agency.

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Is this study voluntary? Yes. Taking part in the focus group is your choice. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You can stop participating in the focus group at any time.

Who can I call with questions?

<mailto:michelle.maier@mdrc.org> If you have questions, concerns, or comments about the study please contact the Project Director, Michelle Maier at MDRC. Her toll-free telephone number is 1-877-311-6372, extension 4517. Her email address is michelle.maier@mdrc.org. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, please contact the MDRC IRB Institutional Review Board at IRB@mdrc.org.

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Focus Groups of Family Support Services Staff Members

Introductory Script for the Focus Groups in Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Hi, I am ____ and this is ____ and we are from [organization]. Thank you for taking time out of your day to participate in this discussion. As part of Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services, we are talking to family support services staff members because we are interested in how Head Start and Early Head Start programs coordinate family support services in ways that are responsive to families' specific needs and foster family well-being. We want to learn about what innovative or new practices you are already using in your work, and how you think Head Start and Early Head Start programs could improve the provision and coordination of family support services. Information from the study may help inform and improve training and technical assistance offered by the Office of Head Start; it is not for monitoring purposes.

[In appreciation of your time, we are happy to offer you an honorarium of \$25 via email.]

Before we start, we want to set a few group rules for this conversation: Please know there are no right or wrong answers to the questions we ask. Whatever you would like to share is ok, but please be courteous and have respect for what other people say in the group. Everyone is encouraged to participate; however, since we're on video or on the phone, let's make sure not to speak over or interrupt someone when they are talking. If someone else is speaking, please allow them to finish before answering [or raise your hand via the chat] to show you'd like to speak next [facilitator can demonstrate how to use chat function on Zoom]. We'll also make sure participants on the phone have a chance to respond to each of the questions. We want you to talk to each other; you don't need to direct your comments just to me. [For your privacy, please keep your video off.]

I emailed you an information sheet about the study for you to keep for your records. I'll now give you an overview of what it says.

This focus group won't take more than an hour and fifteen minutes, and your participation is voluntary. If you are uncomfortable or need to leave the discussion for any reason, please let us know when no one else is speaking or send us a message using the chat function. You can choose to not respond to any questions.

We take great care to protect the information you share here, but in a group setting, we cannot fully guarantee this. We ask that all participants agree not to share any information from the focus group, including the identities of individuals and of Head Start programs. Issues discussed in the focus group should not be discussed elsewhere.

I will audio-record this discussion. I am recording our discussion because it is hard for me to focus on what you are saying and take notes at the same time. The recording will be transcribed, and the recordings and transcriptions will be deleted at the end of the project. Only selected members of the research team will ever hear the recording or see the transcript. No one from ACF or your Head Start agency will see the recording or transcript. However, we ask you to respect the privacy of your fellow Head Start colleagues by not recording this discussion for yourself. Neither your name nor your program will be identified in study reports. If you want to say something that you don't want to be taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the recording.

The study team follows strict rules to protect your data. We use safety procedures like secure computers and data storage systems to protect data from being seen by anyone other than the researchers.

This study has a Certificate of Confidentiality from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services which strictly limits when we are compelled to share your identifiable information without your consent. We will use the Certificate to resist any requests for information that would identify you. However, the study team may have to report information about you to the authorities if we learn that you or someone else may be in danger or harm. We must still follow mandatory reporting requirements, which means, for example, that we must report suspicions of child and elder abuse.

Finally, 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 this information collection is 0970-0538 and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

Does anyone have any questions or concerns before we start our discussion?

Post-Focus Group Script for the Focus Groups in Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services

Thank you so much for your time participating in a focus group for Head Start Connects: A Study of Family Support Services! As I mentioned at the start, the information you provided has the potential to inform program improvement and technical assistance in Head Start programs.

[We would like to offer you a \$25 honorarium. After this focus group, I will send you an email. Please respond to indicate whether you would like to receive the honorarium via email (online gift code) or via the mail.]