

Qualitative Research on Food Safety Behaviors Among Dual Caregivers

In Depth Interview Research

OMB No. 0583-NEW

Supporting Statement

A. Justification

A.1. Circumstances Making Collection of Information Necessary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety Inspection Service, Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education (USDA, FSIS, OPACE) ensures that members of the American public are equipped with the tools they need to reduce their risk of foodborne illness by teaching others how to safely handle, prepare, and store food. OPACE staff are responsible for designing and implementing education efforts to promote safe food handling procedures and reduce the likelihood of foodborne illness.

OPACE strives to continuously increase consumer awareness of recommended food safety practices with the intent to improve food handling behaviors at home. OPACE has already carried out this mission through many campaign and public education efforts including the Fight BAC! campaign, social media content, the FSIS website, FoodSafety.gov, research publications and events. Now, OPACE seeks to create a new consumer education effort to promote food safety behaviors among populations that have not previously benefited from direct and culturally tailored USDA consumer food safety outreach in the past.

Specifically, to extend their longstanding dedication to educating the public about food safety and reducing the risk of foodborne illness, FSIS is seeking to focus on “dual caregivers” (those who are caring for both children and older adults) as a priority audience for this new food safety campaign. This project will focus on African American and Hispanic/Latino dual

caregivers to design and implement outreach with audiences who have not directly benefitted from these approaches in the past. USDA is taking this approach to carry out their commitment to reaching a broader range of audiences, including those who speak Spanish with culturally appropriate messaging. There is a critical need to reach all communities, especially those who have had the least amount of exposure to food safety messages, potentially due to language barriers, limited literacy, or other reasons.

This planned campaign supports the FSIS 2023-2026 Strategic Plan which focuses on the need to continue to expand consumer education about food safety while also reaching out to larger and more diverse audiences. Specifically, this plan notes, “FSIS’ outreach and educational activities extend to consumers. The Agency will continue to extend and expand its food safety messaging to larger and more diverse audiences. FSIS will continue to use public service announcements, media outreach, events, partnerships, and campaigns that include social media channels to convey food safety to consumers. Additionally, the Agency will tailor safe food handling messages to consumers...”

Preliminary research must be undertaken to learn more about audience members’ knowledge, attitudes, and current behaviors regarding food safety prior to being able to appropriately develop and tailor appropriate consumer messages. Further, audience perspectives regarding proposed messaging approaches are vital to make sure that campaign messages will resonate with audiences rather than have no impact at all.

Therefore, the proposed effort seeks to undertake two rounds of interviews with members of target audiences to gain a greater understanding of those who have the potential to benefit from this campaign. These research activities will also involve collecting qualitative information pertaining to consumer food safety knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and preferred methods of

finding out more information on food safety topics. A final goal will be to collect responses to draft FSIS food safety messages and gauge their possible influence on future food safety behaviors among consumers.

Findings from the interviews will provide FSIS with the information needed to develop an effective messaging campaign to try to enhance food safety in home/personal food preparation. Findings from the interviews will provide information on how to best inform consumers of recommended safe food handling practices.

Qualitative interviews have been selected as the research method of choice for this activity. Interviews are often used to develop and test health communication messages. Qualitative research is particularly useful in studies that are exploratory in nature. These findings help provide insight and direction into the topics of interest and provide an understanding of the “why” behind the audience’s attitudes, behaviors, and reactions to draft messages and materials.

FSIS has contracted with Fors Marsh to conduct two series of interviews with adults from the populations of focus. Each series will include 15 interviews. Both series of interviews will take place in FY 2024. The supporting statement describes the topics and methods for the first and second series of interviews. The recruitment materials and interview guides are also provided in the appendices.

In FY 2024, two sets of interviews will be conducted, with 15 individuals per set, for a total of 30 interviews. Each set of interviews is described below.

Table A1.1. Estimated Enrollment in Interview Study

African American Adults	First Generation Hispanic/Latino Adults In US 10 or More Years/Prefer English	First Generation Hispanic/Latino Adults In US Fewer Than 10 Years/Prefer Spanish	Total by Round
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Goal Number of Interviews Completed Round 1	5	5	5	15
Goal Number of Interviews Completed Round 2	5	5	5	15

Set 1 Interviews: Food Safety Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviors and Concept Testing

The first set of 15 interviews will take place in FY 2024 and will be conducted with African American/Black adults and first-generation Hispanic/Latino adults. These interviews will be segmented based on ethnicity. The interviews with Hispanic/Latino populations will be further segmented based on time spent within the United States and language preference (e.g., whether participants have spent 10 or more years in the United States and prefer English or fewer than 10 years in the United States and prefer Spanish).

The goals of these interviews will be to (a) gather information about consumers’ knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors surrounding food safety, (b) learn more about preferred communication methods used by consumers when learning about food safety, and (c) gather feedback on consumers’ perspectives relating to possible themes for the campaign. The need for interviews to address these topics is described below.

OPACE is actively planning to create a research-driven campaign effort to promote food safety among dual caregivers. While educational materials exist pertaining to food safety among some populations of focus (such as individuals who are Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino), minimal work explores barriers and drivers of food safety behavior among dual caregivers. Given the substantial and competing responsibilities these individuals face on a daily basis, it is essential to gather in-depth information on consumers’ knowledge, attitudes, and

behaviors surrounding food safety. It is also important to learn more about the specific sources consumers trust when seeking out information about food safety and foodborne illness.

In addition to gathering base-level information on knowledge, attitudes, and information sources used to learn about food safety, this project will collect participant reactions and opinions regarding possible directions for the food safety campaign. A team of creative experts from the contractor Fors Marsh will be working to draft initial ideas for food safety campaign efforts. Prior to developing specific campaign materials, the campaign team would first like to get feedback from audience members on proposed campaign “themes” including suggested directions for messaging content and methods of distribution (e.g., television, radio, social media). This type of preliminary feedback is essential in culturally tailored campaign efforts to make sure that messages will resonate with audience members before more resources are spent on turning the concepts into materials (e.g., social media posts, factsheets).

While valuable previous work has been completed by OPACE, these activities do not provide the same type of information needed to appropriately develop this particular food safety campaign. Specifically, findings from previous focus group research conducted by OPACE such as *Office of Management and Budget [OMB] No. 0583-0166, Professional Services to Support Requirement Gathering Sessions for Safe Food Handling Instructions [SHI]*) and *[OMB] No. 0583-0178, In-Home Food Safety Behaviors and Consumer Education: Web Survey* does not address the specific experiences and perspectives of individuals who are dual caregivers *and* are Black/African American or first generation Hispanic/Latino. Further, this effort seeks to gather feedback on possible themes related to a *new* campaign effort.

Set 2 Interviews: Campaign Strategy and Material Testing

After information is collected from the first set of interviews, this information will be

used to develop a campaign strategy and specific campaign materials. At this point, a second set of 15 interviews will be conducted to further understand audience reactions to proposed materials. These messages will focus on enhancing food safety and reducing cross-contamination; however, the specific message content, form, and structure will be decided based on essential information drawn from the first round of interviews. The purpose of the second set of interviews will be to understand consumer preferences pertaining to food safety messaging.

Once again, these interviews will be completed with African American/Black adults and first-generation Hispanic/Latino adults who are dual caregivers. These interviews will first be organized based on ethnicity. The interviews with first generation Hispanic/Latino populations will be further segmented based on acculturation level (e.g., whether participants have spent 10 or more years in the United States and prefer English or fewer than 10 years in the United States and prefer Spanish).

The need for the second round of interviews builds on information drawn from the first round of interviews. Data collected from the first round of interviews will be used to develop campaign messaging materials. Therefore, the second round of interviews will be essential to gather feedback on the effectiveness of these materials. The second round of interviews will also be essential to ensure the creative approach and images used are culturally appropriate.

Additionally, since this effort seeks to gather feedback on materials from a *completely new* campaign effort, there will be no existing datasets that will be able to provide specific responses to the creative materials and proposed messaging approaches that will be drafted by the Fors Marsh team. *Note: All draft campaign materials developed will be submitted to OMB for review via an amendment prior to seeking participant feedback in the second set of interviews.*

A.2. How, by Whom, and Purpose Information Is to Be Used

Set 1 Interviews: Food Safety Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviors and Concept Testing

The first set of interviews in FY 2024 will be conducted with individuals who are simultaneously providing support to children (<18 years) and older adults (>65 years).

Interviews will only take place with individuals who fulfill these criteria and are (a) Black/African American or (b) Hispanic/Latino individuals who are the first generation of their family to live in the United States. To account for geographic diversity, interviews will be held virtually with individuals from various areas of the United States. Interviews will be held in English or Spanish depending on an individuals' preferred language of choice. A screening questionnaire demonstrating all screening criteria can be found in Appendix B.

An interviewer guide (see Appendices D, E, and F) will provide structure for the interview discussions and make sure that topics of interest are addressed. The guide will address the following topics:

- Knowledge, attitudes, and food safety behaviors
- Preferred information sources for food safety information
- Reactions to proposed campaign themes

Set 2 Interviews: Campaign Strategy and Message Testing

The second set of interviews in FY 2024 will be conducted with individuals who are simultaneously providing care to children (<18 years) and older adults (>65 years). Interviews will only take place with individuals who fulfill these criteria and are (a) Black/African American or (b) Hispanic/Latino individuals who are the first generation of their family to live in the United States. To account for geographic diversity, interviews will be held virtually with individuals from various areas of the United States. Interviews will be held in English or Spanish

depending on an individuals' preferred language of choice. A screening questionnaire will be used to screen participants for eligibility (Appendix B).

An interviewer's guide (see Appendices G, H, and I) will provide structure for the interview discussions and ensure that topics of interest are addressed. The guide will address the following topics:

- Reactions to proposed campaign materials.
- Reactions to proposed campaign logo and icons.
- Discussion of alternative campaign materials.

A.3. Use of Improved Information Technology

To provide information to interpret the study findings, the audio of interviews will be digitally recorded. A notetaker will also be present during the interviews to take thorough notes. No electronic copies of the questions will be provided to the participants before the interviews.

A.4. Efforts to Identify and Avoid Duplication

A thorough literature search and environmental scan was completed by Fors Marsh, and no comparable data have been collected by any other entities. This is because no other known comparable data has been collected from African American or first-generation Hispanic/Latino dual caregivers. Also, no data has been collected that can provide insight into audience members' reactions to the yet-to-be-developed campaign educational materials. This data collection will not duplicate any similar study and the existing knowledge base and literature do not meet the informational needs of the investigation.

A.5. Methods to Minimize Burden on Small Business Entities

No small businesses will be involved in this information collection.

A.6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This is a one-time data collection. Without this study, FSIS will not have the required information to effectively communicate with dual caregivers and improve consumers' food safety behaviors. This lack of information would minimize FSIS's ability to provide more useful information to consumers to help reduce foodborne illness in the United States. This study is a part of OPACE's continuing effort to encourage consumers to make informed decisions about food safety when preparing food at home.

A.7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5

The collection fully complies with 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2). There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection. The study will not require participants to: report the information more often than quarterly; provide a written response in less than 30 days; submit more than one original plus two copies of the information; or retain records for more than 3 years. The study will not use statistical data that has not yet been reviewed or approved by OMB.

The study will not include a pledge of confidentiality that is (1) not supported by authority established in statute or regulation; (2) not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge; or (3) which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use. Finally, the study does not involve the submission of trade secrets, proprietary information or other confidential information.

A.8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, USDA FSIS published a 60-day notice for public comment in the Federal Register on July 11, 2023 (88 FR 44103). USDA FSIS received three public comments that were not relevant to the information collection.

We contacted three individuals to complete the screener and interviews so we could estimate respondent burden. The names, phone numbers, and length of time to complete the screener are provided below:

Ashley Anker, 585-738-6254, 15 minutes

Rosie Pluretti, 315-406-2420, 13 minutes

Christopher Hinton, 516-361-3905, 15 minutes

This corroborates our estimated burden of 15 minutes.

The names, phone numbers, and length of time to complete the interview are provided below:

Ashley Anker, 585-738-6254, 60 minutes

Rosie Pluretti, 315-406-2420, 55 minutes

Christopher Hinton, 516-361-3905, 60 minutes

This corroborates our estimated burden of 60 minutes.

A.9. Payments to Respondents

Interviews. Participants in the interviews will be recruited from an online consumer panel from Schlesinger Group, and all interviews will be held online. Each participant will receive a gift card incentive of \$75 to participate in a one-hour interview. The \$75 incentive was identified based on (1) the level of involvement needed to participate in the 60-minute interview, (2) the important nature of discussion regarding food safety behaviors, (3) the possible recruiting difficulties with identifying respondents who fit the inclusion criteria and are willing to share

their personal experiences, and (4) many recruitment firms provide this incentive when looking for participants for 60-minute interviews.

As participants often have competing demands for their time, incentives are used to encourage participation. The use of incentives treats participants justly and with respect by recognizing and acknowledging the effort they expend to participate. In this particular information collection, we will be asking respondents to share experiences and provide a high level of participation. When applied in a reasonable manner, incentives are not an unjust inducement and are an approach that acknowledges respondents for their participation (Halpern, et al., 2004).

Incentives must be high enough to equalize the burden placed on respondents with respect to their time and cost of participation (Russell et al., 2000) as well as provide enough motivation for them to participate in the project. If the incentive is not adequate, participants might agree to participate and then not show up or drop out early. Low participation could result in inadequate information collection or, in the worst cases, loss of Government funds associated with facility rental as well as moderator and observer time (Morgan & Scannell, 1998).

A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The privacy of the interviewed participants will be assured by using an independent recruitment vendor, Schlesinger Group, to collect personally identifiable information, by enacting procedures to prevent unauthorized access to respondent data, and by preventing the public disclosure of the responses of individual participants.

The recruitment vendor has a system of standard operating procedures in place for documenting all processes relating to maintaining confidentiality and privacy of participants.

The only Information in Identifiable Form (IIF) that will be obtained are the participants' names, phone numbers, and email addresses for setting up interview appointments, sending confirmation emails, and making reminder phone calls. This IIF will be maintained in the files of Schlesinger Group and not Fors Marsh or FSIS. These personal identifiers will not be linked to data and will not be shared with FSIS or Fors Marsh. Since Fors Marsh will be holding interviews and taking interview notes independently of Schlesinger Group, identifiable information will not be connected to participant responses at any time. Furthermore, Schlesinger Group will never have access to participant responses and Fors Marsh/FSIS will not be given participant identifiable information by Schlesinger Group.

Participation in the interviews is voluntary, and participants will be advised that their responses will be treated in a secure manner and will not be linked to their names. During the interviews, no personal identifiers will be documented in the interview notes. If a participant shares their name during the interview, it will not be documented in the interview notes. Notes will be taken by the Fors Marsh research team, but only numeric participant identifiers and interview dates will be used to maintain files. Also, names will never be reported out in any of the data or reports stemming from the research. Instead, participants' first names will be replaced with the word "participant." The digital recordings will be stored on a password-protected share drive, accessible only to Fors Marsh project staff.

Assurances of data privacy and security are documented in the informed consent form (see Appendix C). The study protocol and instruments were reviewed by Advarra IRB (see Appendix K).

Fors Marsh and FSIS will not have access to focus group participants' personal information. No personally identifying information will be included in the data files delivered to

the Agency. In accordance with the Privacy Threshold Analysis, a Privacy Impact Analysis was prepared.

A.11. Justification for Questions of Sensitive Nature

During the interviews, participants will not be asked any questions that are personal or sensitive in nature.

A.12. Estimates of Respondent Burden

The burden estimate is based on prior experience with interview studies similar to the plan presented in this document. For both series of interviews combined, it is expected that 3050 individuals will be sent an invitation screen, 1440 individuals will complete the screening questionnaire, and it is assumed that 30 will be eligible (15 per series) and subsequently participate in the interview study. Each screening questionnaire is expected to take 15 minutes. Taking part in the interview discussion will take a total of 60 minutes. See tables A12.1 and A12.2 for details about the estimated annual reporting burden. For each series of 15 interviews, the estimated reporting burden is 273.35 hours. Therefore, the total burden would be 546.7 hours across both series of interviews.

Table A12.1. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Both Series of Interviews

Portion of Study	Description	No. of People Involved	Annual Frequency per Response	Hours per Response	Total Hours
Screening Invitation	Number of individuals invited to screen in series 1 & 2 combined	3050	1	.05 (3 minutes)	152.5
Screening Questionnaire	Number of individuals who accept individuals to screen in series 1 & 2 combined	1440	1	.25 (15 minutes)	360
Interview	Number of individuals	36	1	.12 (7	4.2

Invitation	who pass screener and invited to interview in series 1 & 2 combined					minutes)
Interview discussion	Number of individuals to attend interview in series 1 & 2 combined	30	1	1 (60 min.)	30	
Total						546.7

Note: Estimates can be split in half to account for the burden for each individual series of interviews.

Table A12.2. Estimated Annual Reporting Burden with Responses and Non-Responses Included

Estimated Annual Reporting Burden for Screener and Interviews											Total Hours
Study Component	Sample Size	Freq	Count	Responses			Non-Responses				
				Freq X Count	Min/Resp	Burden Hours	Count	Freq X Count	Min/Resp	Burden Hours	
Screener											
Email Invitation	3050	1	1440	1440	3	72	1610	1610	3	80.5	152.5
Screener	1440	1	36	36	15	9	1404	1404	15	351	360
In Depth Interview											
Email Invitation	36	1	30	30	7	3.5	6	6	7	0.7	4.2
Interview	36	1	30	30	60	30	6	6	0	0	30
Subtotal											
Total Burden											546.7

The annualized cost to all respondents for the collection of information is \$24,448.42 (US median hourly wage rate of \$34.40 hour x 546.7 hours x 30% fringe). To compute the total estimated annual cost, the total burden hours were multiplied by the average hourly earnings across all sectors in September 2023, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>).

A.13. Capital and Start-Up Cost and Subsequent Maintenance

There are no capital, start-up, operating, or maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

A.14. Annual Cost to Federal Government

The estimated cost to the federal government for one series of interviews is \$79,090.78. The costs arise from the time spent by the contractor to develop and conduct the study, analyze the data, and prepare and deliver a final report.

A.15. Reasons for Changes in Burden

This is a new information collection.

A.16. Tabulation, Analysis, and Publication

The planned schedule for this information collection is shown in Table A 16.1 for the first series of interviews. Once OMB approval is received, it will take up to 30 days to recruit individuals and conduct the first round of 15 interviews. The contractor will provide FSIS a draft report of findings within 30 days of the last interview. No statistical analyses will be conducted, and there are no plans to publish the data for statistical use. Circulation of the study results may include internal briefings, presentations, and reports and posting on FSIS’s Web site.

Table A-16.1 Project Schedule for First Series of Focus Groups

Date	Activity
Within 30 days following OMB approval	Conduct first 15 interviews
Within 30 days following last interview	Completion of draft summary report

A.17. OMB Approval Number Display

The OMB approval and expiration date will be displayed on all materials associated with

the study. No exemption is requested.

A.18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification.

References

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