

2024 NSECE

Appendix A 2024 NSECE Household Survey Respondent Contact Materials

Updated June 2024

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Household Prefield Screener Mailing Series- Initial Invitation (Web): First contact with sampled households inviting them to complete the Household Screener using the self-administered web questionnaire. Because there is a high ineligibility rate among households, the initial contacts with this sample focus on identifying eligible households by encouraging all sampled households to respond to the initial screening questions either by mail or online. If eligible, households will be contacted to complete the main household questionnaire and/or home-based provider questionnaire.

Dear Resident,

We are writing to ask for your help with an important study about how we care for children in the United States. The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We are interested in learning about families and how they care for children, as well as individuals who regularly look after children under the age of 13 who are not their own – such as children of relatives or neighbors. We have enclosed a small token of appreciation to thank you in advance for your cooperation with our study.

Please complete the online questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website. Even if you do not have children, it is important for us to hear from you so that every type of household is represented.



To access your questionnaire, you will need to enter your unique PIN: [PIN]

The results of this study will help inform how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area.

Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study. It takes about six minutes to answer a few questions. You can stop the questionnaire at any point or skip any question. Participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept private.

If you have questions or need assistance, please call [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We need your help to make this study a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Rupa Datta', written in a cursive style.

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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 [PLACEHOLDER] and the expiration date is [PLACEHOLDER - MM/DD/YEAR]. Please send comments regarding the time required for this survey or any other aspect of the described information collection to: NORC at the University of Chicago, 55 E Monroe St, Ste 3000, Chicago, IL, 60603, Attention: A. Rupa Datta

Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Prefield Screener Mailing Series – Initial Invitation (Paper-and-Pencil Questionnaire): First contact with sampled households inviting them to complete the Household Screener using the self-administered paper-and-pencil questionnaire. Because there is a high ineligibility rate among households, the initial contacts with this sample focus on identifying eligible households by encouraging all sampled households to respond to the initial screening questions either by mail or online. If eligible, households will be contacted to complete the main household questionnaire and/or home-based provider questionnaire.

Dear Resident,

We are writing to ask for your help with an important study about how we care for children in the United States. The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We are interested in learning about families and how they care for children, as well as individuals who regularly look after children under the age of 13 who are not their own – such as children of friends, relatives or neighbors. We have enclosed a small token of appreciation to thank you in advance for your cooperation with our study.

Please fill out the enclosed one-page questionnaire and mail it back to us in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Even if you do not have children, it is important for us to hear from you so that every type of household is represented.

The results of this study will help inform how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area.

Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study. It takes about six minutes to answer a few questions. You can stop the questionnaire at any point or skip any question. Participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept private.

If you have questions or need assistance, please call [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We need your help to make this study a success.

Sincerely,



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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Prefield Screener Mailing Series – Thank You/Reminder Postcard: Second contact with sampled households encouraging them to complete the Household Screener before field outreach begins. This mailing occurs about one week after the first contact attempt.

Dear Resident,

Last week, we sent your household a request to complete a short questionnaire to help us understand what options for early care and education services are available to families in your area. This study is sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and your response will help public and local agencies better understand where more support is needed.

If someone at your address has already responded, thank you! If not, we ask you to take about six minutes to answer a few questions.

If you have any questions, please contact us at nsece24survey@norc.org or [PLACEHOLDER].

Thank you!

Thank you for helping [state] kids!

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Complete the survey in three easy steps!

1. Visit our us at: [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website.



2. Enter your pin [Scratch off]

3. Complete the questionnaire

Household Prefield Screener Mailing Series- Non-Response Follow-up Contact: Third contact with sampled households who have not completed the Household Screener before field outreach begins. This mailing occurs approximately two weeks after the second contact attempt.

Dear Resident,

We previously sent a letter to your address asking a member of your household to complete the enclosed questionnaire. We have not yet received your response. We are writing again because we need your help. Your response will provide valuable information for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) to help improve support for the care and education of children in your community.

Complete your short questionnaire using one of the following options:

- Respond online at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website.



You will need to enter your unique PIN to access the questionnaire: [PIN]

- If you are unable to respond online, complete and mail back the enclosed questionnaire in the postage paid envelope provided.

Even if you do not have any children, it is important for us to hear from you so that every type of household is represented. Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please call NORC at [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We need your help to make this study a success. We hope you will take part!

Thank you,

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.

2024 NSECE Project Director

NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Prefield Screener Mailing Series- Email Prompt: Email contact with sampled households prompting them to complete the Household Screener using the self-administered web questionnaire.

Dear Resident,

You recently received a letter in the mail from us writing to ask for your help with an important study about how we care for children in the United States. The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We are interested in learning about families and how they care for children, as well as individuals who regularly look after children under the age of 13 who are not their own – such as children of friends, relatives or neighbors.

Please complete the online questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website. Even if you do not have children, it is important for us to hear from you so that every type of household is represented.



To access your questionnaire, you will need to enter your unique PIN: [PIN]

The results of this study will help inform how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area.

Your household was selected for participation in this study from a list of households in your area based on geographic and U.S. census data criteria. It takes about six minutes to answer a few questions. You can stop the questionnaire at any point or skip any question. Participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept private.

If you have questions or need assistance, please call [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We need your help to make this study a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Rupa Datta', written in a cursive style.

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Advance Letter - Unscreened Households: This letter will be sent to unscreened households just before field interviewers begin outreach in January 2024.

Dear Resident,

We have attempted to contact you several times to ask for your help with a national study about how we care for children in the United States, but we have not received a response from anyone in your household.

We want to hear from you whether you have children in your household or not. It is important for us to hear from every household selected to get a complete picture of the need for early care and education in your area. Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced.

Please complete the online questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website.



To access your questionnaire, you will need to enter your unique PIN: [PIN]

Because this survey is so important, a professional interviewer will be contacting you soon to answer any questions and assist you in completing the questionnaire. You can also call [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We hope that you will choose to take part in this important survey, which is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

We need your help to make this study a success. We look forward to receiving your answers.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Rupa Datta'.

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Advance Letter - Eligible Households: This letter will be sent to households that completed the screener and were identified as eligible for the Household Survey. This letter will be sent just before field interviewers begin outreach in January 2024 or as needed for any newly released Household sample.

Dear Resident/[FNAME] [LNAME],

Recently, your household responded to a few questions for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). Please accept our sincere thanks for your response. We are looking to speak further with parents of young children to help us understand the needs and choices for child care services in your community. A professional NORC interviewer will be contacting you in the future to ask some additional questions.

This study is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The NSECE has been conducted before at two different timepoints, first in 2012 and again in 2019. Across both efforts we have spoken with more than 20,000 households with young children about their needs for early care and education services and the choices they have made for their families. This study has helped policy makers and local agencies better understand families' needs for affordable and flexible early care and education options that work within their budget and schedule constraints. Now five years later we are collecting new information to learn more about what families need today.

To thank you for your participation, we will send you \$25 for completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire will take about 60 minutes and your responses will be kept private. Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced. Participation is voluntary, and you can skip any question or end the questionnaire at any time.

If you would like more information about this study or have any questions, please call NORC at [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

Your participation in this important study makes a difference.

Thank you,



A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Gated Community/Locked Building Letter - Unscreened Households: Letter sent to households that have not completed the Household Screener and are inaccessible. This letter will be sent throughout the field period as needed. A randomly selected 50% of households determined to have barriers preventing access for screener outreach will receive a \$5 token for completing the screener.

Dear Resident/[FNAME] [LNAME],

Recently, an interviewer from NORC at the University of Chicago attempted to reach you about the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), an important study we are conducting on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. I am writing now to ask you take a few minutes to complete a short questionnaire. Your response will help inform how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area. [FOR RANDOMLY SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS: **You will receive a \$5 token of appreciation to thank you for your participation.**]

Please complete the online questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website.



To access your questionnaire, you will need to enter your unique PIN: [PIN]

Even if you do not have children, it is important for us to hear from every household selected to get a complete picture of the need for and availability of early care and education for young children in your community. Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced. We rely on voluntary participation by you and many other public-spirited people to make the study a success. We have enclosed a small token of appreciation to thank you for your cooperation.

Because this survey is so important, a professional interviewer will be contacting you again over the next few weeks to answer any questions you might have and assist you in completing the questionnaire. We can arrange to talk with you by telephone or in person at any time, entirely at your convenience. Our interviewers are not allowed access to your gated community without your permission. Please inform security of your consent to visit with one of our interviewers. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact us at [PLACEHOLDER] or nsece24survey@norc.org.

Thank you,

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Gated Community/Locked Building Letter - Eligible Households: Letter sent to eligible households that are in gated communities or locked buildings inaccessible to interviewers. This letter will be sent throughout the field period as needed.

Dear Resident/[FNAME] [LNAME],

We are trying to reach you because your household responded to a few questions for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). Please accept our sincere thanks for your response. Recently, an interviewer from NORC at the University of Chicago attempted to reach you in person about the NSECE but was unable to gain entry into your building. I am writing now to ask you to contact us or to allow one of our interviewers to call you or visit you in person to ask some additional questions.

This study is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The NSECE has been conducted before at two different timepoints, first in 2012 and again in 2019. Across both efforts we have spoken with more than 20,000 households with young children about their needs for early care and education services and the choices they have made for their families. This study has helped policy makers and local agencies better understand families' needs for affordable and flexible early care and education options that work within their budget and schedule constraints. Now five years later we are collecting new information to learn more about what families need today.

To thank you for your participation, you will receive a \$25 token of appreciation for completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire will take about 60 minutes and your responses will be kept private. Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced. Participation is voluntary, and you can skip any question or end the questionnaire at any time.

Because this survey is so important, a professional interviewer will be contacting you again over the next few weeks to answer any questions you might have and assist you in completing the survey. Our interviewers are not allowed access to your gated community without your permission. Please inform security of your consent to visit with one of our interviewers. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact us at [PLACEHOLDER] or nsece24survey@norc.org.

Your participation in this important study makes a difference.

Thank you,



A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Property Manager letter: Letter sent to property managers to gain entry to eligible households that are in gated communities or locked buildings inaccessible to interviewers. This letter will be sent throughout the field period as needed.

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME]/Property Manager,

NORC at the University of Chicago is conducting an important study on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, called the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). We are writing to inform you that some addresses located within your [community building/facility] have been selected for participation in the study, and one of our interviewers may attempt to visit these locations to explain the study, answer questions, and conduct the interview. The attached letter provides additional details on this effort from the study sponsor.

Be assured that participation in this research study is completely voluntary and that our interviewers always adhere to the strictest professional standards. NORC has a variety of resources for individuals to **verify the legitimacy of the study**. Interviewers visiting in-person will have an NORC badge with a hologram on the back. Anyone may visit the web page below where the option 'How to Identify NORC Interviewers' allows them to type in the NORC interviewer's ID number to see a photograph of the interviewer:

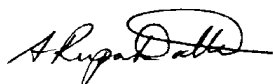
<http://www.norc.org/WorkingWithNORC/Pages/survey-participants.aspx>

All NORC staff have signed legally binding pledges of privacy and must abide by a strict code of professional conduct. They will provide a phone number or email for project contact if anyone would like to contact the research study directly.

Even if no children reside in your [community/building/facility], it is important for us to hear from every selected household to get a complete picture of the need for and availability of early care and education for young children in your community. Each household has been scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced. We rely on voluntary participation and many other public-spirited people to make the study a success.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact us at [PLACEHOLDER] or nsece24survey@norc.org. You can learn more about NORC and the NSECE on our website at www.nsece.norc.org.

Sincerely,



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2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Community Authority letter: Letter sent to key members of a community to inform them about the study and that we are reaching out to households in their community. This letter will be sent throughout the field period as needed.

Dear Community Authority:

NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) is an objective, non-partisan research institution that collects reliable data to help public agencies, policy makers and community leaders answer critical questions across a number of key areas. NORC's research studies are sponsored by a wide range of organizations, including federal, state, or local agencies as well as foundations, universities, and research institutes. These studies can span a variety of topics from health care to education, and we are undertaking an important study in your area—the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). The attached letter provides additional details on this effort.

As part of this work, NORC field interviewers may visit selected households, schools, or businesses in your community to request participation in a study. Interviewers will visit pre-selected locations explain the study to an adult and, after informed consent has been obtained, interview selected individuals. Since residents and business owners are frequently concerned about security and safety, we wanted to inform you about our organization and alert you that our interviewers may be present in your community. On other research projects we have found that some people selected to be interviewed have called organizations such as yours for information about our presence.

Be assured that participation in any of our research studies by individuals and/or businesses is completely voluntary and that our interviewers always adhere to the strictest professional standards. Our interviewers wear photo identification badges which state that they are NORC representatives. The interviewers are trained professionals who have signed legally binding pledges of privacy. They will provide a phone number or email for project contact if anyone would like to contact the research study directly.

NORC is one of the oldest and most prestigious social survey research organizations in the nation. We have been conducting nationwide surveys for more than 75 years, during which we have earned a reputation for research that is scientifically sound and in the public interest.

You can learn more about NORC at www.norc.org.

Sincerely,

[F_NAME] [L_NAME]
Senior Vice President
Education and Child Development

Household Text Messages: Cell phone text for prompts to households who have consented to receive messages.

Initial Invite (Screening): 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education: Thanks for agreeing to receive text reminders. Please complete today! Visit [LINK] and enter [PIN]. Questions? Contact NORC at [PLACEHOLDER] or [PLACEHOLDER]. Reply STOP to opt-out of texts.

Initial Invite (Questionnaire): 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education: Thanks for agreeing to receive text reminders. Please complete and receive a [PLACEHOLDER] token of appreciation! Learn more at <http://nsece.norc.org>. Contact NORC at the at [PLACEHOLDER] or [PLACEHOLDER] to schedule a time to complete your questionnaire. Reply STOP to opt-out of texts.

Follow up (Screening): Make a difference! Answer a few questions for the National Survey of Early Care and Education today. Visit [LINK] and enter [PIN]. Questions? Contact NORC at the University of Chicago at [PLACEHOLDER] or [PLACEHOLDER]. Reply STOP to opt-out of texts.

Follow Up (Questionnaire): Don't miss out on [PLACEHOLDER] token of appreciation! Complete the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education today. Learn more at <http://nsece.norc.org>. Contact NORC at the at [PLACEHOLDER] or [PLACEHOLDER] to schedule a time to complete your questionnaire. Reply STOP to opt-out of texts.

Follow up (Questionnaire): Make a difference and receive [PLACEHOLDER]! Complete the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education today. Learn more at <http://nsece.norc.org>. Contact NORC at the at [PLACEHOLDER] or [PLACEHOLDER] to schedule a time to complete your questionnaire. Reply STOP to opt-out of texts.

Household Last Chance Contact: This is the final contact that respondents will receive. The purpose of this mailing is to inform respondents of the importance of the NSECE and convince them to participate.

This is the last chance to respond to the NSECE!

If your household qualifies, you will receive [PLACEHOLDER] for participating.

Call or Email us Today!

[PLACERHOLDER] | nsece24survey@norc.org

Why is the 2024 NSECE important?

The NSECE is the only study aimed at better understanding the relationship between families' needs for early care and education what child care services are available to them. The study was first conducted in 2012 and then again in 2019. Now, five years later, we are collecting new information to learn how recent changes in programs and policies have affected families across the country. The study will help answer questions such as:

- How do parents balance work and school with child care?
- What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
- How do parents at different income levels pay for their children's care? What kind of help do they need?
- Which families use care provided by family, friends, and neighbors most often and why?

Why are you so important to the NSECE?

Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study. It is important for us to hear from every household selected to get a complete picture of the need for and availability of early care and education for young children in your area.

Public policy decisions should be based on accurate information. The most effective way to get accurate information to inform decisions about early care and education is by going directly to the people who have young children. We need you to answer these questions so public policy will not be based on wrong information and guesswork.

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Contact for Households Selected to Receive the Sample Representativeness Token: Contact sent to households selected to receive the additional token. Contact may be sent by mail and/or email.

Dear Resident,

We need your help! We have been trying to reach you about participating in an important study about early care and education in your community. The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) has been collecting information from households across the nation since the start of 2024. To get an accurate picture of whether child care options in your area meet families' needs, we would like to talk with you. Your household was selected for this study based on geographic criteria and cannot be replaced.

Because it is critical that we hear from your household, we are able to offer you an additional token of appreciation of \$15 on top of the \$25 thank you token of appreciation for participating in the 2024 NSECE.

Please participate in this important study. A professional interviewer will be contacting you soon to answer any questions you might have and assist you in completing the survey. You can also call us at [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

The 2024 NSECE is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. You can stop the questionnaire at any point or skip any question. Participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept private.

Your participation makes a difference. We hope you will choose to participate in the study.

Thank you,



A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

A 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 [PLACEHOLDER] and the expiration date is [PLACEHOLDER - MM/DD/YEAR]. Please send comments regarding the time required for this survey or any other aspect of the described information collection to: NORC at the University of Chicago, 55 E Monroe St, Ste 3000, Chicago, IL, 60603, Attention: A. Rupa Datta

Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Screener Access Email - Email text included in the NSECE Case Management System. Field interviewers will send email to sample members as needed to share survey access information.

Dear Respondent/[FNAME] [LNAME],

Thank you for your assistance with the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). We are interested in learning about families and how they care for children, as well as individuals who regularly look after children under the age of 13 who are not their own – such as children of friends, relatives or neighbors.

Please complete the short online questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website.



To access your questionnaire, you will need to enter your unique PIN: [PIN]

We need to hear from you whether you have children or not. The results of this study will help inform how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area.

NORC at the University of Chicago is conducting this study on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The questionnaire will take about 60 minutes to complete, and your responses will be kept private. Participation is voluntary and you can skip any question or end the questionnaire at any time. If you have questions or need help to get to the questionnaire, please call [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We need your help to make this study a success.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Rupa Datta', written in a cursive style.

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Contact for Households – Invitation to Complete Web Questionnaire: Contact sent to households inviting them to complete the self-administered web questionnaire. Contact may be sent by mail and/or email.

Dear Resident,

We need your help! We know that summer/fall/the beginning of the new school year is a busy time for families, but it is important that we hear from you. To make participation in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) easier for you, we are now able to offer the questionnaire online.

Please complete the questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code to access the website.



To access your questionnaire, you will need to enter your unique PIN: [PIN]

Because it is critical that we hear from your household, we are able to offer you a \$25/\$40 token of appreciation for participating in the 2024 NSECE. A professional interviewer will be contacting you soon to answer any questions you might have and assist you in completing the survey. You can also call us at [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

The 2024 NSECE is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. You can stop the questionnaire at any point or skip any question. Participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept private.

Your participation makes a difference. We hope you will choose to participate in the study.

Thank you,

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Survey Prompting Contact Summer/Fall Transition: Contact sent to eligible households as needed to encourage participation. This may be sent by mail or email.

Dear Resident,

Summer is coming to an end. Please take some time to complete your 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) questionnaire before the new school year begins.

[ALTERNATE 1: Fall brings new beginnings with the start of the school year. We are interested in learning what changes the new school year is bringing for your family. Please complete your questionnaire for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) today.]

[ALTERNATE 2: We have been trying to reach you about participating in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). We know that summer [fall/the start of the school year] is a busy time for families. Please take some time to complete your questionnaire today.]

To access your online questionnaire, navigate to the URL [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code.



There, you will need to enter your unique PIN to get started: [PIN]

A professional interviewer will be contacting you soon to answer any questions you might have and assist you in completing the survey. You can also call us at [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org.

We hope you will decide to take part!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Rupa Datta', written in a cursive style.

A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

Contact Sharing Publications/Information Related to the Study: Contact sent to eligible sampled providers (or eligible individuals from other samples) to connect sample experiences with study findings . This kind of contact will be sent by mail or email and used to gain cooperation with non-respondents as needed.

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME],

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us. We are glad to know that you are thinking about participating in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). The NSECE and the information we collect serve as a valuable resource for organizations like the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and other public agencies.

We are asking you to complete the questionnaire today. We do not want you to miss the opportunity to share your family's experiences finding child care arrangements that work with your schedule and budget.

We know that [PLACEHOLDER for sample description] have concerns about/face challenges with [PLACEHOLDER TOPIC DESCRIPTION]/[PLACEHOLDER - DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIENCE]. The NSECE has produced a report on this topic with information collected from [PLACEHOLDER for sample description] in 2019/during the pandemic. You can access this here: [PLACEHOLDER - link to publication]

To complete your survey, click [here](#). You will receive \$25/\$40 as a token of appreciation for participating.

There are only a few weeks left to participate. We hope you will be able to take some time to share your experiences today.

Thank you,



A. Rupa Datta
2024 NSECE Project Director
NORC at the University of Chicago

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Survey Thank You Contact - Sent to household respondents after completion of the interview to thank them for participation and provide a token of appreciation. This may be sent by mail or email as needed.

Dear [FNAME] [LNAME],

We are writing to thank you for your recent participation in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education. The questionnaire you completed will provide critical information about the need for and availability of early care and education for children under age 13 in your area.

In appreciation for the time and effort spent answering our questions, we have enclosed a [\$25/\$40] token of appreciation.

If you have any additional questions, you may contact us toll-free at [PLACEHOLDER] or by email at nsece24prov@norc.org.

Thank you again for your help with this important research.

The NSECE Study Team

Household Brochure: As needed – Available for any sampled households to provide a general study overview, explain benefits of participation, answer questions, and serve as a refusal conversion tool.

BROCHURE EXTERIOR

LEFT PANEL

Why was I selected for this survey?

Your household was scientifically selected from all of the household addresses in the U.S. to participate in this study. It is important for us to hear from every selected household to get a complete picture of the availability and use of early care and education (ECE) in your area. You represent many other households like yours across the nation and cannot be replaced.

Your participation will help policy makers, local agencies, and other key decision makers better understand the need for child care and ways to more effectively support working families that rely on it.

Will my responses be private?

Anything you tell us will be used for statistical purposes **only**; identities of individuals and the programs that you discuss will not be disclosed except as required by law. All project staff who handle information collected for the study must sign a privacy agreement that provides for criminal and civil penalties if privacy is not kept.

The NSECE has also obtained a federal Certificate of Confidentiality from the Department of Health and Human Services in order to further protect your privacy. With this Certificate, NORC cannot be forced (for example by court order or subpoena) to disclose information that may identify you in any federal, state, local, civil, criminal, legislative, administrative, or other proceedings.

BROCHURE EXTERIOR**CENTER PANEL**

How can I participate?

Participating in the NSECE is easy. NORC interviewers will work with your schedule to find a convenient time to reach you in person or by phone. Contact us at [EMAIL] or at [PHONE] and we can help you set up an appointment.

Questions about NSECE?

[PHONE]

Participation 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 this information collection is [PLACEHOLDER] and the expiration date is MM/DD/YEAR. Please send comments regarding the time required for this survey or any other aspect of the described information collection to: NORC at the University of Chicago, 55 E Monroe St, Ste 3000, Chicago, IL, 60603, Attention: A. Rupa Datta

BROCHURE EXTERIOR**RIGHT PANEL**



NATIONAL SURVEY OF **EARLY CARE & EDUCATION** | 2024

[IMAGE]

[Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families LOGO]

BROCHURE INTERIOR

LEFT PANEL

What is the NSECE?

The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is funded by the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

When the NSECE was last conducted in 2019 we heard from over 8,500 households with young children across the U.S. who told us about their needs and choices for child care services. We also heard from over 1,500 caregivers who looked after young children in a home setting. The information they shared helped provide policy makers and public agencies with a fuller picture of the need families have for affordable, flexible child care. It also helped families understand what child care services were available to them. A lot has happened since 2019, including the COVID-19 pandemic, so we are now collecting new information to capture how child care needs and services may have changed since that time. This new information will help inform policies and programs that support both families in need of ECE and the individuals who provide these important services.

What is the Administration for Children and Families?

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that administers Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund (which funds child care subsidy) programs, and sponsors ECE research. ACF helps children in low-income families access high-quality care and helps coordinate efforts across Head Start, child care, pre-K, home visiting, and other early childhood development programs throughout the federal government. The NSECE will assist ACF in its mission to improve the availability of high-quality ECE programs.

BROCHURE INTERIOR

CENTER PANEL

Why is the NSECE so important?

The 2012 NSECE painted the first national picture of the supply of and demand for ECE in over 20 years. The 2019 NSECE updated that picture, enabling policy makers, government officials, and local agencies to better understand how parents managed complex work and family schedules with child care arrangements, and whether households with young children had access to high quality and affordable child care.

We know that nearby family, friends, and neighbors also play a critical role in helping families meet their child care needs, so we are interviewing them as well to get a complete picture of who is looking after children and how parents manage to fill in gaps in care.

Since 2019 new laws and programs have been implemented to further support the needs of families and caregivers and help improve the quality of care provided. The COVID-19 pandemic also impacted the availability and provision of child care. Due to these factors, it is critically important that we collect updated information so we can examine the changing child care needs of families with young children and the caregivers who support them.

Who are you surveying?

The NSECE will be interviewing both households and caregivers in selected communities so we can measure how well families' child care needs match ECE resources that are available to them. Within households, the study will collect information from:

- **Families with children.** Parents or guardians of children under age 13 will be interviewed to learn more about their ECE use and needs. The survey will take about an hour. Questions will cover:
 - ❑ Child care usage and schedule
 - ❑ Parental employment and school schedule
 - ❑ What parents look for as they search for care
 - ❑ Types of care parents prefer to use
 - ❑ How parents pay for their children's care
- **Individuals who regularly look after other people's children under age 13 in a home-based setting.** This group includes:
 - 1) Individuals like grandparents, other relatives, friends, neighbors, or baby-sitters who may not consider themselves as child care providers. This survey will take about 20 minutes.
 - 2) Regulated, licensed, or registered home-based providers. This survey will take about 40 minutes.

Questions will cover:

- Number of children individuals look after and how often
- Reasons why they look after children
- Activities they do with children in their care
- Support and other resources for providers

- General attitudes toward caring for children

To round out the picture in each community, the NSECE will also interview **center-based providers, schools, and other programs as well as staff who work in these classrooms.**

BROCHURE INTERIOR

RIGHT PANEL

Why should I participate?

By collecting information from both parents and caregivers in selected areas across the nation, the NSECE will be able to describe community by community how well the supply of early care and education meets the needs of families. This description can help national, state, and local governments, as well as other organizations to identify areas where families and providers may be mismatched. Some questions the NSECE will address are:

- How do parents balance work and school with child care?
- How do parents choose providers, people, or organizations to care for their children? What decisions do parents make as they seek this care?
- What types of ECE do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
- How do parents at different income levels pay for their children's care? What kind of help do they need?
- Which families use care provided by family, friends, and neighbors most often and why?
- How can we better support these types of caregivers and offer opportunities to help them improve the care they offer children?

Household Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): This document provides responses to the most frequently asked questions from household participants. These FAQs are used by field interviewers to answer questions and are included in mail and email contacts.

What is the NSECE?

The National Survey of Early Care and Education is the only study aimed at better understanding the people and programs throughout the country that take care of America's children and the services that they provide. The study was first conducted in 2012 and again in 2019. We are now collecting new information to inform policies and practices to support early care and education providers.

Who is NORC at the University of Chicago?

NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) is conducting this study. NORC is an independent, non-partisan research institution that helps federal agencies, decision-makers, and nonprofits make better decisions through data and analysis. For more information about us, please visit www.norc.org.

Why was I selected for this?

Your household was scientifically selected from all household addresses in the U.S. to participate in this study. It is important for us to hear from every selected household to get a complete picture of the availability and use of early care and education in your area. You represent many other households like yours across the nation and cannot be replaced.

Your participation will help the nation's policy makers and local agencies get a clearer picture of families' needs for child care and how to better support working families that rely on these services.

Questions this study will help to answer:

- How do parents balance work and school with child care?
- What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
- How do parents at different income levels pay for their children's care? What kind of help do they need?
- Which families use care provided by family, friends, and neighbors most often and why?

How do I know my information will be kept safe and private?

Answers that could identify you or your program in any way are separated from your other responses. Survey findings are put into summary reports that contain no names or other identifying information. Your name or any identifying information will never be released to the public. This study also has a Federal Certificate of Confidentiality from the government which protects researchers and other staff from being forced to release information that could be used to identify participants in court proceedings.

How do you protect my answers?

We use computing systems, staff training, and strict data access requirements to protect your identity and keep your responses private.

- Questionnaire responses and respondent identifying information are stored on a secure server with restricted access.

- Only authorized personnel associated with the study will have access to questionnaire responses and respondent identifying information. This access is granted on a need-to-know basis. When this information is no longer needed, then access is shut off.
- NORC computing systems use two factor authentication. NORC staff must change their passwords on a regular basis to comply with security requirements.
- All NORC staff must pass annual trainings on data security and privacy.
- All NORC staff, including interviewers, must sign a pledge to protect your information. If this pledge is broken an employee can lose his/her job and face legal action.

All information that you provide will be kept private to the fullest extent provided by the law. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you may call the NORC Institutional Review Board Administrator at 1-877-309-0542.

How do I know this is legitimate?

NSECE has a variety of resources available to verify the legitimacy of the study.

1. Visit us online at <http://nsece.norc.org> or at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/national-survey-early-care-and-education-2024>.
2. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved this survey ([PLACEHOLDER]). Without this number we could not conduct this survey.
3. Interviewers visiting in-person will have an NORC badge with a hologram on the back.
4. Anyone may visit the web page below where the option 'How to Identify NORC Interviewers' allows them to type in the NORC interviewer's ID number to see a photograph of the interviewer: <http://www.norc.org/WorkingWithNORC/Pages/survey-participants.aspx>.

If you have any other questions, call us toll-free at [PLACEHOLDER] or email us at nsece24survey@norc.org.

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Household Talking Points: We expect that some participants will require several contacts before they complete the survey. The talking points below allow us to provide respondents with additional information about the study and communicate the importance of their participation. We may use a selection of these items depending on the context of the refusal.

The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education will be used to:

- Help shed light on whether recent initiatives and other policy changes have led to increased access to affordable care for families, improved the quality of care across home- and center-based-providers, and better pay and support structures for individuals who work closely with children.
- Better understand questions like:
 - How parents balance work and school with child care?
 - How parents choose providers, people, or organizations to care for their children? What decisions do parents make as they seek this care?
 - What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
 - How parents at different income levels pay for their children's care? What kind of help do they need?
 - Which families use care provided by family, friends, and neighbors most often and why?
 - How we can better support these types of caregivers and offer opportunities to help them improve the care they offer children?

Text explaining why NSECE is important to the early care and education in general and households in particular

- By collecting information from both parents and caregivers in selected areas across the nation, the NSECE will be able to describe community by community how well child care options meet the needs of families.
- The NSECE is talking with households with young children across the nation to learn what options you have for child care, does it fit your schedule, and is it quality, affordable care?
- The NSECE has been used to inform important policy decisions since 2012 when we first talked with families. The results of this study will inform licensing regulations, health and safety guidelines, and the way funding is allotted for child care programs and public schools.
- Even if you do not use child care services, the results of this study will affect your community and the public on a broad scale by informing decisions about public education and health and safety regulations in child care centers and schools.
- The NSECE serves as a valuable resource for organizations like the **Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**. They rely on information collected from households like yours to understand how current relief efforts are helping families needing child care and what is needed to strengthen support for early care and education across the nation.
- The study will be used by researchers to understand how people find, finance, and maintain child care arrangements.
- The NSECE helps show how well families' needs are being served by the available child care resources in the community.
- The study will give researchers unique information on family structure, employment, and child development.

- Your participation allows you to share your experience and concerns. This information may be used for important policy decisions that could affect the needs of your family and many others.
- Public policy decisions about early care and education should be based on accurate information. The most effective way to get this information is by going directly to families who have young children. We need you to answer these questions so public policy will not be based on wrong information and guesswork.
- The NSECE will provide urgently needed information about the provision of early care and education and school-age care across the country. Many changes in child care systems and policies have occurred since we last conducted this study. We need updated information to understand how well these changes are serving families.
- This study is unique. The NSECE collects information from families, early care and education providers, and classroom staff in the same community so that we can understand what early care and education options are available to families in particular areas and who is providing that care. While the NSECE is able to look at communities one by one, it also allows us to situate communities within a larger national context.
- This study will help policy makers and public agencies understand the extent to which public and private programs are meeting the needs of families needing child care.
- This study will help policy makers and public agencies understand how well the options for child care in your community are meeting families' needs.
- The COVID-19 pandemic brought about changes work conditions for a number of people and this in turn has changed what kinds of care families use for their children and when that care is needed. We are collecting information to help understand what kinds of care options are most useful and needed for today's families.
- The study was first conducted in 2012 and again in 2019; now we are collecting new information to learn how recent changes in programs and policies affected families across the country. The study will help answer questions such as:
 - How do parents balance work and school with child care?
 - What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable? What kind of help do parents need to pay for care?
 - Which families use care provided by family, friends, and neighbors most often and why?
- This study focuses on what is without a doubt an extremely important part of your life --your children and their care and education. Your participation will allow public and local agencies, researchers, and policy makers to better understand the challenges American families face trying to provide high-quality care for their children.
- By sharing your experiences, you will play an important role in improving early care and education for your children as well as for others' children. The results of this study will ultimately help to make schools and daycare facilities in your area safer and better equipped to prepare children for the future.

Participation in the study brings many benefits for early care and education, families, communities, etc.” study for many reasons:

- The NSECE has the potential to benefit federal, state, and local or community-level child care policies. These new data from households such as your own will enable policymakers to make

more informed decisions about how to improve the fit between what is needed and desired and what is available for child care.

- Results of the NSECE will be used to help inform initiatives and policies to improve families' access to quality care.
- The success of the NSECE depends on your help. It is very important that households selected for the survey agree to participate because they represent many others across the nation.
- You have been selected for participation in this study based on geographic criteria. It is important for us to interview every selected household to get a complete picture of the availability and use of early and school-age care in your area.
- Your participation will help to ensure that the nation's policy makers, practitioners and parents have an accurate understanding of our nation's early care and education landscape.
- We can only speak to a small number of households across the US, so you represent other households and cannot be replaced.
- The federal government is particularly interested in making sure that child care funding and subsidies are designed properly and meet families' needs. They need to hear from families order to learn more about the challenges parents have finding and paying for care for their children.
- It has been five years since this study of early care and education has been conducted and a lot has happened since that time that affects parents' use of child care (inflation, pandemic, economic downturn). We are talking with families now to learn what kinds of care options families need and how well those needs are being met by the child care options available to them.

Reasons why we need to hear the sampled households (and not someone else): Sometimes sampled household respondents say they are too busy to participate. The items below may be used as a response to these kinds of refusals.

- Public policy decisions should be based on accurate information. The most effective way to get accurate information to inform decisions about early care and education is by going directly to the people who have young children. We need you to answer these questions so public policy will not be based on wrong information and guesswork.
- A member of your household recently participated in this study, and you were identified as a parent/guardian of a young child/children. We are interested in talking with parents further to learn more about how they manage their child care needs. Because you represent so many others, you cannot be replaced.
- It is very important for us to hear from every household selected so that we may get a complete picture of who is looking after children when they cannot be with their parents. Your voice represents many others like you across the nation.
- Your participation is critical. We need to hear from as many households selected for this study as possible to ensure that the results of the study are accurate and reliable.
- We know you are busy, but the best way to understand what kinds of care families need is by talking with parents. Access to child care is an essential ingredient for healthy communities and supporting families. We need your help to learn what is needed most as we work to provide reliable data for policy makers trying to improve resources for early care and education.
- We understand that you are busy, and our interviewers are willing to do whatever is necessary to reduce the burden of this interview on you. We are able to conduct the interview over the

phone and can do it in several shorter sessions instead of all at once if this suits your schedule better.

- We know that it can be hard for parents to spare time to sit with an interviewer. This study is vital for understanding the challenges families face in finding quality child care at a price they can afford. Your time can help us better understand the affordability of resources in your area.
- We ask a wide range of questions about the cost, availability, and quality of the child care that you use. Sharing your perspective with us helps illuminate how well local resources meet the needs of local families.
- We know that many families have difficulties finding child care in their community that suits their needs. There are very few opportunities to share these problems with policymakers. Talking with our field interviewer is an opportunity for you to have your voice heard.
- There are many reasons that families may seek non-parental child care for their children. You represent many other families in your area. Completing our survey helps capture these experiences so that administrators can better develop programs that address the needs of local families.

Responses for households that refuse because they have only school-age children.

- We collect information from a wide range of families, not just households with very young children. Information from our survey helps local agencies and providers better understand how people in your community patch together child care arrangements.
- As children get older, their care and education needs become more complex. By sparing some of your time, you can help illuminate the considerations that parents take in finding care once their children graduate from early child care and education services.
- Finding quality schools in their area is an issue for many families. This can especially be a problem for low-income households and families in rural areas. We are collecting information to help better understand barriers that many families face while offering providers the information they need to develop solutions.

Responses to concerns about privacy: We expect that some household respondents may have privacy concerns about participation. The following talking points will be used by field interviewers to communicate with respondents to address those concerns. The talking points will also be included in ad hoc refusal conversion or prompting contacts.

We understand that you may have concerns about sharing information about yourself. We want to reassure you that all information you provide is kept private, and your answers and identity are protected. Here are just a few of the many steps we take to protect your information:

- Your name is never kept with your survey answers so no one can know how you responded. Survey findings are put into summary reports that contain no names or other information that identifies you.
- All NSECE staff who handle the information collected for the study must sign an agreement that provides for criminal and civil penalties if privacy is breached.
- The NSECE has a federal Certificate of Confidentiality that helps us further protect the privacy of our participants. With this Certificate, we cannot be forced (for example by court order or

subpoena) to disclose information that may identify you in any federal, state, local, civil, criminal, legislative, administrative, or other proceedings.

- The U.S Department of Health and Human Services that funds the study does not have any way to identify you from your answers.
- We do not sell or provide your name to any mailing lists, organizations, or public agencies.
- The tablets used by the field interviewers have several levels of security. Once you give us your information, it is encrypted and then sent by a secure connection to our data bank, which is also protected by multiple layers of security.

Responses for households that express concerns about government spending.

- You expressed concerns about government spending, especially in this time of financial challenges. As fellow citizens, we share your concern and work to ensure the cost effectiveness of the survey while preserving the high-quality research that is vital to our country.
- You may not realize the impact you have. None of us wants the government to waste money and make arbitrary decisions about what it thinks is best for all of us. Rather, we all want government decisions to be based on the true needs, circumstances, and desires of the U.S. population. That understanding can only come from us, the citizens, otherwise it is pure guesswork.
- Specifically, your participation in the NSECE helps researchers across the country understand the early care and education services currently available to and used by families in all types of communities.
- By taking the time to participate in this survey, you will allow the government, researchers, and policy makers to better understand the needs of American families and the challenges they face trying to provide high quality care for their children. This research informs government policy makers on a variety of topics, such as:
 - Understanding how families find, finance, and maintain child care arrangements and to see how well people's needs are being served by the available resources in the community.
 - Current trends in family structure, employment, and child development.
- It would cost far too much money and take too much time to interview every person in the United States. It is much more cost-effective to select a representative sample of the population, and you are part of that sample. We don't want research based on the survey to get skewed because only the people content with the government chose to be interviewed. That is why we keep asking you to participate. Without your help, our country loses an important voice, a voice that speaks for you and for many others just like you.

What we know about parents' needs from the NSECE:

- By collecting detailed information from real families, the NSECE will help policy makers and government and local agencies better understand how parents manage childcare arrangements to support complex work schedules. Often families put together a patch work of care arrangements to meet their needs because options are limited especially during evenings and weekends.

- The NSECE helps us get a clearer picture of how well providers' offerings match families' needs. From talking with parents in the past, we have learned that when parents search for care, they reported finding a suitable only half the time. Having providers nearby can be challenge especially for families in rural areas. But, more often, there are providers nearby but their schedules, prices, or the quality of their care do not work for families.
- The NSECE also collects information to help understand whether families have access to high quality affordable care. According to information we collected in the past, lower income households often rely on publicly funded pre-kindergarten or Head Start or other programs for their children. Wealthy households, on the other hand, have few financial barriers to high quality care. It is the families with incomes in between who have the hardest time. These families use center-based care at lower rates; they are not eligible for public assistance and also do not make enough money to pay for high cost options.
- A majority of working parents work evenings and weekends, but only a small proportion of centers offer any weekend or evening care. Parents often fill this gap by relying on home-based care from providers or family, friends, and neighbors.

Text for sharing letters of support and other communications

- ACF has funded the NSECE since 2012. The NSECE study data has been a critical resource for ACF as they have worked to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities. They asked the NSECE to collect updated information in 2024 to help them understand how the early care and education landscape has changed in the past five years.
- ACF is one of the largest sources of public support for early and school age care in our country. You ***can access the letter from ACF through [PLACEHOLDER]***.
- The NSECE is so important that [PLACEHOLDER ORG NAME] has written a letter of support that we would like to share with you.
- We wanted to take a minute to share some exciting news with you about the National Survey of Early Care and Education. This month the NSECE released a publication about families from the [2019 survey]: [include title]. (Click the link to view the publication) This [PLACEHOLDER] provides an overview of [DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT]. Before the NSECE began in 2012, there had been no national source of information on early care and education in more than 20 years. Thank you for making this important effort a success!