

Unaccompanied Children Program Care Providers Survey: Education Services

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 - 0531

Supporting Statement

Part B

MAY 2024

Submitted By:
Office of Refugee Resettlement, Unaccompanied Children Program
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

5th Floor, Mary E. Switzer Building
330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Project Officers: Lindsay Booth, Fanica Young

Overview of Study Objectives

The Unaccompanied Children (UC) Policy Unit is currently evaluating Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) UC Program education policy to assess whether it adequately addresses the unique and individual educational needs of the children under ORR's care. To inform these efforts the UC Policy Team proposes to gather insights from stakeholders actively involved in implementing educational services in ORR through a survey. The survey aims to:

- Gain insights into the current state of educational services provided to children in ORR care including current resources, capacity, staffing, and professional training.
- Identify areas of improvement in education service delivery and ORR provided technical assistance.

1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

Target Population

The study team will collect information from Education Leads, Lead Teachers, and other administrative positions who are the most familiar with their UC Program's educational services and are responsible for making decisions, planning, and assuring compliance with UC Policy requirements. In collaboration with program leads, the research team will use nonprobability, purposive sampling to identify potential respondents who can provide information on the study's key constructs.

The survey will be distributed to all providers (300 recipients) with a goal of at least 169 respondents. (169 = n with 5% margin of error).

Sampling

Nonprobability purposive sampling will be used for this survey effort. The survey will be sent to all ORR UC Program care providers from the UC Policy Resources Box email account. Program leads will be asked to distribute the survey to their Education Lead, Lead Teacher, or other administrative roles well-versed in their program's educational services, with responsibilities in decision-making, planning, and ensuring compliance with UC Policy requirements. Our sample size goal of collecting at least 169 responses aims to ensure that the survey results achieve an accuracy within a 5% margin of error. Achieving this number of responses will minimize errors and biases, capturing a broad and diverse set of perspectives from our target population. The sample size goal will enhance both the quality and credibility of the data and strengthen the overall reliability of the survey findings, making them more representative and actionable for decision-making.

Appropriateness of Study Design and Methods for Planned Uses

This survey is part of a larger project to assess implementation of UC Program policy and care provider capacity to provide high quality education services to unaccompanied children in ORR care. This information alone is not intended to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information. The larger project does not include an impact evaluation

and cannot be used to assess participant outcomes. No publicly available written products will be associated with this study.

The survey will identify existing educational services and delivery methods for providing education programming. Information will be used for internal planning purposes by the UC Policy Team and Child Services Team to inform their efforts to improve guidance and support for grantee and contract care providers.

The appropriateness of this sampling frame stems from its comprehensive inclusion of individuals directly involved in their program's educational services. Nonprobability purposive sampling is statistically justified for this study due to its effectiveness in gathering in-depth, informed perspectives from a select group of individuals who possess critical knowledge and experience related to the educational services for unaccompanied children in ORR care. This method aligns with the study's objectives of understanding complex, specialized constructs within a specific context, where the quality and depth of information are prioritized over generalizability. Further justification reasons are listed below:

- Participants are being selected for their specialized knowledge and experience. Purposive sampling allows for the intentional selection of individuals who have a deep understanding of the educational services, challenges, and policy compliance in these settings.
- Due to the specialized and potentially limited nature of our target population, purposive sampling is a practical and feasible approach that utilizes a comprehensive participant list. Purposive sampling is an accessible method for engaging the desired group of experts.
- UC Program care providers vary in type, and size. These facilities include, but are not limited to, foster care programs, shelters, residential treatment centers, and group homes. The survey will be sent to all providers, allowing for a diverse participation group.
- Purposive sampling is cost-effective. The survey will allow the research team to concentrate limited time and funding on obtaining information from key informants who can provide the most relevant and informed perspectives on the subject matter.
- This survey will examine implementation of educational services within ORR programs, necessitating the collection of accurate and relevant information. Purposive sampling will ensure that participants can provide detailed, context-specific insights that are essential for validating findings and formulating specific, actionable recommendations.

2. Procedures for Collection of Information

Data Collection Processes

The survey will be sent to the UC Program care providers through the UC Policy Resource Box email account and promoted via monthly ACF Care Provider calls. The survey will be voluntary and targeted to care provider Education Leads, or equivalent, with a goal of at least 169 respondents. (169 = n with 5% margin of error)

The UC Policy and Data teams will utilize a web based survey to create the survey for distribution. The survey can only be completed in one sitting. Respondents will receive a message (e.g., Your response has been successfully recorded.) when the form is submitted. The respondents will not receive their responses in an email. Responses to the form will be compiled automatically with each submission. Once the survey completion period is over the UC Data Team will provide an initial data analysis and provide the results to the UC Policy Team and Child Services Team.

Data Handling

To secure the survey data's reliability, privacy, and accessibility for thorough analysis and making informed decisions, the research team will utilize their HHS Microsoft accounts for collection and storage. Access to this data will be restricted solely to individuals who possess the survey link, ensuring that only authorized persons can view or interact with the information. Participants may choose to provide contact information, but it is not required.

The research team will establish guidelines to ensure the collected data is of high quality, maintains individuals' privacy, and adheres to legal standards. During the data processing phase, efforts will include data cleaning to eliminate errors and aggregating information from various sources to enhance its value and applicability. The team will then apply statistical methods and analytical techniques to analyze the data to identify valuable insights, trends, and patterns.

To clearly communicate the findings, visualization tools such as charts and dashboards will be utilized, making complex data understandable at a glance. Security measures will be implemented to protect the data from unauthorized access and potential security breaches, ensuring its confidentiality and integrity. In the event of technological failures, backup and recovery plans will be in place to prevent data loss and facilitate its restoration.

Advanced technological tools may be used to manage the data. The research team will use database management systems and big data analytics platforms to efficiently handle, analyze, and store data to enhance the reliability and utility of the research outcomes.

Data Analysis

Once we have gathered all the responses, our analysis will begin with descriptive statistics. This involves summarizing the data using measures like averages, percentages, and trends to provide an overall picture of the findings. We will utilize the analytics features on the web based survey software for real-time data to provide us with response summary information and individual results for our survey.

Following this, we will employ a cluster analysis to compare responses by program types and/or states. Once we have compiled the data, we will use statistical software to perform cluster analysis techniques, with the goal of grouping programs or states into clusters based on the similarities among the selected variables (e.g., demographic characteristics). We will then interpret the resulting clusters to identify patterns, similarities, or differences that can guide program improvement or inform policy guidelines or technical assistance.

Lastly, for the open-ended questions where respondents provide qualitative feedback, we will conduct a thematic analysis to identify recurring themes or patterns in their responses. The themes will focus on improvements for educational services in ORR programs and policy guidelines.

Data Use

We plan to disseminate the information obtained from the survey through methods such as presentations, project specific reports, or the creation of other relevant documents that may be valuable to leadership and staff within the ORR UC Program. The information will be used for internal planning purposes by the UC Policy Team and Child Services Team to inform their efforts to improve guidance and support for grantee and contract care providers.

In sharing findings, we will describe the study methods and limitations regarding generalizability and as a basis for policy. This data will not be published in any external facing documents.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Nonresponse

Response Rates

To maximize response rates for the survey, several key strategies will be implemented. Firstly, potential participants will be notified in advance about the survey using UC Program Provider monthly meetings and UC Policy Resource Box emails to share its purpose. The survey itself is designed to be as concise and user-friendly as possible, with each question crafted to be clear, straightforward, and free of jargon. To encourage complete participation, follow-up reminders will be sent using a variety of communication methods, including emails and monthly meetings. Furthermore, participants will be assured of the anonymity of their responses and will be guided to exclude any personal information, such as names of facilities or staff related to their UC Program, in their survey responses. However, if participants choose to provide their contact information at the end of the survey, they will be directed to a separate link to submit their details. The survey responses will not be associated with their contact details. Accessibility is also a priority; the survey will feature an easy-to-use link and will be thoroughly checked to prevent technical issues that might hinder completion. Lastly, the timing of the survey distribution is carefully planned to avoid holidays and busy periods, ensuring that surveys are not sent too frequently to the same group within a short timeframe.

The survey will be voluntary and targeted to care provider Education Leads, or equivalent, with a goal of at least 169 respondents. (169 = n with 5% margin of error)

Non-Response

We have developed a detailed analysis plan to address potential nonresponse bias to ensure the accuracy and representativeness of our survey. The plan begins with a preliminary examination of our data to identify patterns of nonresponse and collect demographic information about both respondents and nonrespondents. This process will allow us to

identify the types of programs not responding. Since the survey is anonymized, we will not be aware of individual programs' results by name, nor will the responses be linked to an email address, unless the respondent chooses to share it voluntarily. Therefore, to lower the number of programs that do not respond, we will make sure the survey is easy to access and understand and short in length. In addition, outreach efforts will be persistent with follow-ups to specific program types through various means (monthly meetings and emails).

Our analysis has led us to conclude that adjusting for the absence of replies from certain programs is unnecessary for the objectives of this project. The number of non-responding programs will be clearly indicated in our analysis. The objective of our survey outcomes is to provide a comprehensive overview of the educational services within ORR programs.

4. Test of Procedures or Methods to be Taken

Development of Data Collection Instruments

The survey was developed by the research team utilizing information from ORR Unaccompanied Children Program Policy Guide, with a specific focus on Section 3.3, titled "Care Provider Required Services." Survey questions were developed in consultation with members from the UC Policy Unit to ensure accuracy and relevance to the objectives of the study. Additionally, the team consulted with a statistician from the Data Analytics and Management Team within the Unaccompanied Children Program to determine the appropriate measures for data analysis.

The survey consists of 44 questions and two (2) optional questions, covering a wide range of topics related to the education services provided by care providers in UC Programs. The questions were designed to collect detailed information about program demographics, education staff, current educational programming, support for vulnerable populations, and services for children with disabilities (See table below for a breakdown). The questions utilize various formats, including multiple choice, drop-down menus, checkboxes for multiple selections, rating scales, and open-ended responses to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Respondents are encouraged to provide detailed feedback on curriculum development, staff qualifications, challenges faced in delivering educational services, and the adequacy of resources for vulnerable and special needs populations. The optional questions at the end seek consent for future contact, allowing respondents to offer further insights into improving education services for unaccompanied children.

Survey Questions

Survey Section	Questions	Purpose
Program Demographics	1-6	Gathers basic demographic information about the program
Education Staff	7-11	Inquiries about the educational staff's qualifications and experiences at the program site
Current Educational Programming	12-30	Evaluates the existing educational programs, including assessments, program development, the

		role of support staff, and classroom organization
Vulnerable Populations	31-33	Assesses the support provided to vulnerable populations, including the quality of resources, services, and training available
Services for Children with Disabilities	34-43	Focuses on the services and support for children with disabilities within the program
Additional Comments	44	Solicits feedback on potential areas for program improvement
Contact Information	45-46	Seeks consent for future contact (not required)

The survey design identifies and minimizes measurement error as follows:

- The survey questions are structured using simple language to avoid complex questions and prevent confusion and misinterpretation.
- The survey will include validation checks to correct mistakes to improve answer accuracy.
- After collecting data, the study team will systematically check and fix errors or inconsistencies to ensure data accuracy during the data cleaning process.
- The study team will regularly check the survey process and quickly solve any problems to keep data collection on track.

5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

The following individuals can be contacted to answer questions about the statistical aspects of the survey:

Kevin Korous, Ph.D.
kevin.korous@acf.hhs.gov
 Statistician
 ORR Data Analytics and Management Team

Fanica Young
fanica.young@acf.hhs.gov
 Program Support Intern
 ORR Data Analytics and Management Team

The following individual will collect and analyze the data for the agency:

Lindsay Booth
lindsay.booth@acf.hhs.gov
 Senior Education Specialist
 ORR Child Service Team

Attachments

Instrument: UC Program Education Services Survey