

2024 NSECE

Appendix K 2024 NSECE
General Research Review
Board Materials

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District IRB Main Application Materials: The information in this document will be used to complete applications for approval to collect data from sampled addresses in school districts.

Proposal

Statement of Purpose

The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (2024 NSECE) is a set of four nationally-representative inter-related surveys that collect data from 1) households with children under age 13, 2) home-based early care and education (ECE) providers, 3) center-based ECE providers, and 4) workers within the center-based ECE providers. By reaching out to these four key populations, our goal is to better understand how well ECE providers are able to meet the needs and preferences of families across the country and the constraints they face in delivering care.

The 2012 NSECE assembled the first national portrait of the demand for and supply of ECE in 20 years and the following round in 2019 provided an updated perspective on those topics. As an example, the number of center-based providers serving fell from 129,000 in 2012 to 121,000 by 2019. In same period, the number of children under age 13 enrolled in centers fell by 5.3%.

The 2024 NSECE will build on this important work, and expand into topics like workforce retention, funding streams for ECE providers, and other critical issues that emerged in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the lockdown phases, child care providers often had to close for weeks at a time and large segments of the workforce faced disruptions to their pay and benefits, resulting in vacancies across the sector and a shortage of child care slots. In addition to the pandemic related changes, many states and local communities across the country allocated billions in supplemental funding to expand public pre-kindergarten and improve the quality and diversity of the ECE workforce. Together the four surveys will make it possible to examine patterns of recovery from both the household and the provider/staff perspectives and compare those findings to data from the 2019 and 2012 snapshots to identify longer-term trends in supply and use of ECE.

Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Literature,

By sampling child care providers, classroom staff, and families with children, the 2024 NSECE can accurately capture the ECE marketplace and address key research questions like whether there are enough child care spots to meet the number and needs of families seeking care, who makes up the child care workforce, and to what extent do child care centers rely on public funding to deliver services? These comprehensive surveys provide data that can identify differences across populations of interest like community type, poverty levels, race/ethnicity, worker qualifications, or child age.

Data from the 2019 NSECE revealed that more than a quarter of households with children over five pay more than 10% of their income on child care, and a pressing need for regulated care during non-standard hours, particularly for lower income households.^{1 2} On the provider side, the NSECE found that center-based care relies heavily on public funds and uncovered the complex challenges within centers

¹ Hardy, E. & Park, J. (2022) "2019 NSECE Snapshot: Child Care Cost Burden for U.S. Households with Children Under Age 5." Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available at: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/opre-2019-nsece-cost-of-care-jan2022.pdf>

² Lou, C., Schilder, D., & Wagner, L. (2022). "Who Uses Nontraditional-Hour Child Care?" Urban Institute. Available at: <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/who-uses-nontraditional-hour-child-care>

and state policies that lead to fewer professional development opportunities and lower pay for some child care workers.^{3 4} These findings sparked important conversations among ECE stakeholders to develop multiple access routes to professional development and pay for the ECE classroom staff, especially for those caring for children under five, who are new to the field or who currently lack state and/or national certification.⁵ During this period estimates from both the 2012 and 2019 surveys provided vital evidence to inform these important policy discussions, including counts of ECE workers, their professional qualifications, and their compensation.^{6 7}

The 2024 NSECE will continue to ask many of the questions included in the 2012 and 2019 surveys, which will allow for an examination of the changing landscape of child care and early education programs. Questions added to the 2024 NSECE to capture recent economic and societal changes as well as the policy responses will provide data to answer new research questions, including:

- How have parental schedules, work-from-home arrangements, ECE costs, and parental preferences for types of care changed since 2012?
- Do the ECE services offered meet the needs and preferences of families?
- What constraints do ECE providers face in providing care, and how do challenges differ among home-based and center-based providers?
- What are the characteristics and qualifications of ECE providers and workers in 2024?
- How do providers blend funding from different sources (e.g., pandemic recovery grants, child care subsidies, contracted slots, or Head Start) to cover the costs of serving children from households of different incomes?
- Which providers are willing and able to participate in the child care subsidy program?
- How do parents seek help paying for ECE and what help did they receive?

Methodology

The 2024 NSECE will select ECE providers from all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Administrative lists have been used to build a sample frame for center-based providers appearing on licensing and regulatory lists. Center-based providers are those who are operated by institutions or organizations. Sources include lists of licensed and license-exempt child care providers, and schools that

³ Datta, A. R., Milesi, C., Srivastava, S., & Zapata-Gietl, C. (2021). "Center-Based Early Care and Education Providers in 2012 and 2019: Counts and Characteristics. Chartbook. National Survey of Early Care & Education." OPRE Report 2021-85. Administration for Children & Families.

⁴ Coffee, M. (2022). "Still Underpaid and Unequal Early Childhood Educators Face Low Pay and a Worsening Wage Gap." Center for American Progress. Available at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/still-underpaid-and-unequal/>

⁵ Weiland, C., Greenberg, E., Bassok, D., Markowitz, A., Rosada, P. G., Luetmer, G., & Abenavoli, R. (2022). State Policies Shape the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Prekindergarten Workforce. Available at: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/State%20Policies%20Shape%20the%20Racial%20and%20Ethnic%20Diversity%20of%20the%20Prekindergarten%20Workforce.pdf>

⁶ National Survey of Early Care and Education Team. (2013). Number and characteristics of early care and education (ECE) teachers and caregivers: initial findings from the national survey of early care and education (NSECE). OPRE Report #2013-38, Washington DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/number-and-characteristics-of-early-care-and-education-ece-teachers-and>

⁷ Datta, A. R., Milesi, C., Srivastava, S., & Zapata-Gietl, C. (2021). "Center-Based Early Care and Education Providers in 2012 and 2019: Counts and Characteristics. Chartbook. National Survey of Early Care & Education." OPRE Report 2021-85. Administration for Children & Families.

provide preschool, pre-kindergarten or Head Start programs. We have drawn a random sample from the frame.

Description of target population and sampling frame:

For the center-based provider survey, we will draw approximately 21,170 addresses from the sampling frame built from state- and national-level administrative lists, targeting approximately 8,392 total completed center-based provider interviews. For the workforce (classroom staff) survey, we estimate that about 9,200 potential respondents will be drawn from the completed center-based provider interviews. We are targeting approximately 7,400 completed interviews with center-based classroom staff.

Description of sample selection procedures:

The target population for the survey is all services, schools, centers, programs, facilities, and individuals in the random sample that offer ECE for children birth through five, not yet in kindergarten.

Center-based provider survey: Respondents for this survey are providers or schools offering ECE services to children ages five and younger, not yet in kindergarten. These organizations are sampled from administrative lists compiled before data collection. In most elementary schools, we expect that the director or instructional leader of the pre-kindergarten or Head Start program will be sampled. The selected respondent will be free to delegate responding to the survey to other knowledgeable staff members.

Workforce (classroom staff) survey: Respondents for this survey are drawn from completed center-based provider surveys. One or two classroom staff members will be randomly selected as the classroom study participants. Respondents must be at least 18 years of age, work for a program responding to the center-based provider survey and be associated with the randomly selected classroom in that program.

Description of recruitment process of respondents:

The recruitment process for the center-based provider survey begins by mail and is scheduled to start in winter 2024 (December 2023-January 2024). First, a letter will be mailed to all selected providers informing them of the study and inviting them to complete the web version of the center-based provider survey. The letter will also contain the login information and survey URL along with a toll-free number for those who wish to learn more about the study. An email address will also be provided to reach project staff. In the frequently asked questions (FAQs), contact information for the NORC Institutional Review Board (IRB) will be provided. This will allow, among other things, those who wish to learn more about their rights as a participant to do so.

About a week or so later, a thank you/reminder postcard will be mailed to providers to encourage the completion of the survey. This postcard also will provide the same contact information (project toll-free number and email) found in the survey invitation. If the web survey has not been completed in approximately two weeks, a follow-up letter will be sent to all non-respondents. This letter will explain the purpose of the study, emphasize the importance of the provider's participation, provide the web survey login information, and inform providers that an interviewer will be contacting them shortly. This letter will contain the same project contact information as the survey invitations.

Field interviewers (FI) will help recruit providers who have not responded to other methods of interviewing. FIs are NORC personnel that have been specifically trained for the NSECE to strictly abide by confidentiality rules and guidelines and have undergone background checks. We expect all provider cases that FIs work in the field to have been contacted in advance in some manner, most multiple times.

As noted above, the sample for the workforce (classroom staff) survey will be drawn from information collected in the center-based provider questionnaires. Contact for the classroom staff member respondent will be dependent on the mode of response to the center-based provider questionnaire. For web completed center-based questionnaires, the selected staff person will receive a series of mailings similar to what is described above. Field interviewers will be able to complete the survey with classroom staff members in person or over the phone if that is more convenient. For center-based provider questionnaires completed in person, field interviewers will attempt to contact the sampled classroom staff at that time. If the classroom staff is not available, the selected staff member will receive the mailings as outlined above.

Data Security

Each eligible participant will be assigned a unique ID. Full name and contact information will be collected to provide either an emailed gift code or mailed gift card as a 'thank you' for participating in the study as well as for possible future follow-ups for the NSECE.

Information collected in the 2024 NSECE will only be linked to the unique ID. All survey results will only be reported in summary form, individual response will never be shared or linked back to the respondent. The 2024 NSECE data will be kept secure through NORC's secured servers.

Data Analysis Plan

NORC will provide survey data, with uniquely identifying information removed, to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS). USDHHS will then utilize this data in ways as described in section V.

Benefits

The Administration for Children & Families, the major funder of this study, is also the agency that funds Head Start, child care subsidies and the Community Development Block Grants. Most public-school districts are eligible for funding from all of these programs, and receive funds from many. Participation in the study will help to ensure that a school districts' circumstances and needs are reflected in these and other federal programs. The 2024 NSECE will provide a comprehensive sample of providers, it will allow districts to learn how pre-kindergarten interacts with other federally and state subsidized programs and with child care programs that do not participate in government sponsored programs. Household data from the 2024 NSECE will indicate the ways in which pre-kindergarten is used by families of different income levels. In short, the study will help the federal government and state agencies to better set policies regarding the allocation of public money, and standard settings for children's programs outside of K-12 schooling.

On a national scale, the 2024 NSECE will allow the policy and research communities to merge data from families and providers at the local level -- where the two actually meet and provide care for our children. It will provide urgently needed information about the provision of ECE across the country. The survey

will sample all types of center-based providers, including groups often excluded from surveys (e.g., license-exempt providers, pre-kindergarten providers). The study will also dramatically extend the available resources for understanding how families use, seek, and cope with the ECE choices that are available to them. This study is designed so that it can provide guidance to develop more effective ECE policies at the federal, state, and local levels.

For example, the 2019 NSECE provided much needed information about the importance of public funding in supporting existing ECE providers as 76% of centers reported receiving any public funding, whether it be from local, state, or federal sources.⁸ Other important findings were disseminated in reports like the Center for American Progress' 2022 brief "Still Underpaid and Unequal Early Childhood Educators Face Low Pay and a Worsening Wage Gap", which found that despite being a highly skilled workforce, the average child care worker earns about \$11 an hour.⁹

There is also a growing interest in the mental health of ECE workers and its relationship to providing quality care and child outcomes.¹⁰ The 2024 NSECE questionnaire for ECE workers includes a measure of depression and will also provide vital data on employee benefits, retention and mental health supports, topics emphasized by recent federal policies and programs, including the American Rescue Plan.

Informing State & Local Decisions

Before the 2012 NSECE, states and local governments had been trying to improve the current supply of ECE without a clear picture of what was available to families. The 2019 NSECE provided updates on this area of great importance seven years later. With renewed policy interest in the supply and availability of ECE to American families following the COVID-19 pandemic, now is a critical time to collect fresh information.

The 2024 NSECE will provide an updated picture of both ECE supply and demand, that reflects programmatic and policy changes as well as impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because policy makers and administrators seek to maximize parental choice for ECE, it is important to understand how choices are made, as well as the ECE options that are available in a local market. The 2024 NSECE will allow for a comparison of data collected from both households and ECE providers, so analyses of parents' ECE choices as well as their decision-making process will be contextualized with detailed information about a sample of available providers in their area. We will, for example, be able to contrast a parent's assessment of available ECE providers with the actual availability of ECE providers in their area. This data will allow for policy makers at the federal and state levels to make more informed decisions about how to improve the fit between what is needed and wanted and what is actually available.

The 2024 NSECE will employ a 51-"state" design (50 states and the District of Columbia), which will permit analysis of policy variation across states. Many of the specific decisions that states face depend

⁸ Datta, A. R., Milesi, C., Srivastava, S., & Zapata-Gietl, C. (2021). "Center-Based Early Care and Education Providers in 2012 and 2019: Counts and Characteristics. Chartbook. National Survey of Early Care & Education." OPRE Report 2021-85. Administration for Children & Families.

⁹ Coffee, M. (2022). "Still Underpaid and Unequal Early Childhood Educators Face Low Pay and a Worsening Wage Gap." The Center for American Progress. < <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/still-underpaid-and-unequal/>>

¹⁰ Raver, C. C., Blair, C., & Li-Grining, C. P. (2012). Extending models of emotional self-regulation to classroom settings: Implications for professional development. In C. Howes, B. Hamre, & R. Pinanta (Eds.), *Effective early childhood professional development: Improving teacher practice and child outcomes* (pp. 113-130). Brooker Publishing

on market dynamics — how to strengthen regulatory and quality rating standards, what reimbursement rates and co-pay schedules to set, and what incentives to provider organizations and individual staff can produce higher quality in a cost-effective manner. The answers depend on the interaction of supply and demand within a local market, and thus, market data must be gathered at the state and local levels, not just the national level. States must decide how to vary reimbursement levels and program allocations by locality to reflect differences in wages, prices, and available classroom staff and local governments must decide how to present the best arguments for limited state funds.

Finally, the 2024 NSECE will collect information in a manner that facilitates comparisons with data collected for the 2012 and 2019 NSECE. Where programs and policies have been put into place since the 2019 NSECE, the 2024 NSECE will allow for examination of the changes in the characteristics of households and their use of non-parental care and the changing landscape of ECE programs during that 12-year period.

Time Commitment

The center-based provider survey can be completed by web or with a field interviewer over the phone or in person. The center-based provider survey is estimated to take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

The workforce (classroom staff) survey can be completed by web or with a field interviewer over the phone or in person. The workforce (classroom staff) survey is estimated to take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

We will contact each potential respondent approximately three to four times by mail and by phone asking that they complete the survey. If they have not responded by the third mailing, a field interviewer will contact them.

Compensation for Involvement:

Center-based provider survey honorarium

We will provide a \$25 honorarium for all center-based providers who complete the survey.

Classroom staff honorarium

We will provide a \$10 honorarium for all classroom staff members who complete the survey.

The center-based provider and classroom staff survey instruments are attached/included.

IRB Approval from Your University/Institution

NORC has received approval from the NORC Institutional Review Board. The project has also received a Certificate of Confidentiality to further protect the privacy of survey respondents. Both documents are attached/included.

Project Timeline

General Timeline for 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)

Description	Start Date	End Date
Data Collection Period	12/2023-01/2024	06/2024
First Analytic Results	Expected 03/2025	
First Public Use Files Available	Expected 09/2025	

*Since NORC is passing the data to the USDHHS, we cannot be sure when a final report will be submitted. However, when one is complete we will make sure to let the district know.

Center-based Principal Approval Letter: This letter will be sent to principals when their approval is needed before the ECE program at the school can participate in the survey.

Dear [NAME],

We are writing to ask for your support for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), an important study about how we care for children in the United States. We are currently recruiting a provider that you oversee to participate in this study. They have indicated that we need your approval before they will consider participating.

The 2024 NSECE 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 objective of this study is to document the nation's current use and availability of early care and education (including pre-school, pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs), and to deepen our understanding of the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offerings and constraints. The 2024 NSECE builds on the work of both the 2012 and 2019 studies which provide a national portrait of the demand for and supply of early care and education.

We are very eager to ensure that both publicly and privately funded centers are included in the 2024 data to provide an accurate representation of early care and education providers today. Our hope is that you will be able to provide your approval and indicate your support of the NSECE data collection via email or letter so that we may share it with the location we have contacted.

If you would like to know more about what centers will be asked to do, please flip this over.

We will call in the next two weeks to follow-up on this letter and address any questions or concerns you may have about the 2024 NSECE. If you wish to reach us sooner, please email us at nsece24prov@norc.org or please call us toll free at [PLACEHOLDER].

We have enclosed profiles of the questionnaires as well as an endorsement from the Office of Childcare. More information about the NSECE and a list of study publications can be found at <http://nsece.norc.org>.

Thank you in advance for assisting us in our efforts to field the 2024 NSECE.

Sincerely,



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]. 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]

Summary

1. Purpose of the study: The objective of the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is to document the nation's current utilization and availability of early care and education, and to deepen our understanding of the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offerings and constraints.

2. Date and time required for participants in the study: The NSECE will be conducted between January and June 2024. We are planning to survey only pre-school, pre-kindergarten or Head Start programs that may be located within the selected schools in your district. Each center will be asked to complete a short questionnaire that takes about six minutes to complete. A subsample of centers will be selected to complete a longer questionnaire that takes about 45 minutes. The workforce (classroom staff) survey is estimated to take approximately 20 minutes for each respondent to complete. Selected centers and staff will be contacted by mail and provided instructions to access the online survey.

3. Description of the sample (participants): Center-based Provider: In eligible centers, we expect that the director or instructional leader of the pre-kindergarten or Head Start program will be sampled.

Workforce (Classroom Staff): One or two classroom staff members will be randomly selected as the classroom staff study participant. Respondents must be at least 18 years of age, work for a program responding to the center-based provider survey and be associated with a randomly-selected classroom in that program. Selected staff may elect to complete the interview on their own time and use their own computing devices or over the phone or in-person with a field interviewer.

4. Methods: Quantitative research methodology will be used for the NSECE.

5. What did we learn in 2019? The 2019 study collected information from center-based and home-based providers that helped inform policy maker's decisions on early-care and education. For example, 121,000 center-based providers ('centers') of child care and early education (CCEE) served at least one child age five and under, not yet in kindergarten. In 2019, 23% of centers served only children ages 3 through 5 years, not yet in kindergarten, compared to 30% of centers in 2012. Additionally, almost 800,000 children under age 13 received care from listed providers in 2019, a significant decline from 2012 where almost 1 million children received care from listed providers. The 2024 NSECE will further investigate how the CCEE landscape has changed between 2019 and 2024, as well as explore key areas of interest which have arisen in the past five years, such as recovery, rebuilding, and expansion efforts to increase the supply of quality child care and early education services available to children and families, business, management and program leadership approaches, continuous quality improvement efforts, including supports for CCEE staff and professional development, and providers' experiences with major public ECE funding programs.

Center-based Provider Passive Consent Letter: This letter will be sent to district research offices to notify them that school(s) from their district will be included in the study. The purpose is to inform the district about the study, purpose and timeline.

Dear Director of Research,

I am writing to notify you that some schools from your district have been selected as part of the sample for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). This study is scheduled to begin later in 2024 and will be conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

The objective of the 2024 NSECE is to document the nation's current utilization and availability of early care and education (including pre-school, pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs), and to deepen our understanding of the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offerings and constraints. The experiences of low-income families are of special interest as they are the focus of a significant component of early care and education and school-age public policy. This study was conducted in 2012 and 2019, and we are excited to continue to build on what we have learned so far about how the early care and education (ECE) landscape has changed overtime.

We anticipate that there will be no more than [PLACEHOLDER] schools in your district selected for participation in the 2024 NSECE and up to 2 classroom staff from each participating school. Your school district's support for this study will help ensure that the data collected are representative and thus provide policymakers with accurate and complete information. We are surveying only pre-school, pre-kindergarten or Head Start programs that may be located within the selected schools in your district. Each school will be asked to complete a short questionnaire that takes about six minutes to complete. A subsample of schools will be selected to complete a longer questionnaire that takes about 45 minutes. The classroom staff survey is estimated to take approximately 20 minutes for each respondent to complete. Selected schools will be contacted by mail and given a URL and PIN to access the online survey.

Data collection for this study is proposed for only a sample of school districts throughout the nation. This greatly increases the importance of your participation since the early childhood education providers in your school[s] represent other providers in districts and schools similar to your own.

Participation is voluntary and no negative consequences will attend a decision not to participate. Responses to this proposed data collection will be kept private and used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and not associate responses with a specific district or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you or your district, or the sampled schools, to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at [PLACEHOLDER] or at nsece24prov@norc.org. **We are planning to begin contacting schools and programs in your district beginning [PLACEHOLDER].**

We thank you for considering this request and we hope we will be able to include programs from your district in this important study.

Sincerely,



A. Rupa Datta, Ph.D.
2024 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]. 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]

Request for Permission to Contact (non-district and non-tribal request): We expect that some sampled providers will ask us to seek permission from an owner or organization that oversees multiple provider locations. The FAQs for the appropriate sample will be attached to this contact. This contact will be sent by email or mail as needed.

Dear [CONTACT],

We are writing to ask for your support for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), an important study about how we care for children in the United States. We are currently recruiting a provider that you oversee to participate in this study. They have indicated that we need your approval before they will consider participating.

The 2024 NSECE 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 objective of this study is to document the nation's current use and availability of early care and education (including pre-school, pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs), and to deepen our understanding of the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate with providers' offerings and constraints. The NSECE was first conducted in 2012, which assembled the first national portrait of the demand for and supply of early care and education in 20 years. The study was again conducted in 2019. We are excited to learn how the early care and education landscape has changed since that time.

We are very eager to ensure that both publicly and privately funded centers are included in the 2024 data to provide an accurate representation of early care and education providers today. Our hope is that you will be able to provide your approval and indicate your support of the 2024 NSECE data collection via email or letter so that we may share it with the provider we have contacted.

If you would like to know more about what providers will be asked to do, please look below.

We will call in the next two weeks to follow-up on this email and address any questions or concerns you may have about the 2024 NSECE. If you wish to reach us sooner, please contact me at [PLACEHOLDER] or [PLACEHOLDER]

We have enclosed a brochure about the study as well as endorsement from the Office of Childcare and the Department of Education. More information about the NSECE and a list of study publications can be found at <http://nsece.norc.org>.

Thank you in advance for assisting us in our efforts to field the 2024 NSECE.

Sincerely,

2024 NSECE Study Team

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]. 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]



Center-based Provider Questionnaire Profile

Purpose: The 2024 NSECE Center-Based Provider Questionnaire is designed to collect information about center-based providers across the US caring for children birth to five, not yet in kindergarten, including enrollment and characteristics of the children served, staffing, prices charged, schedules of service, participation in government programs, and staff compensation and professional development policies. The questionnaire also includes the selection of a representative classroom about which more detailed staffing, compensation, and curriculum information is collected.

Selected segments of the center-based provider questionnaire mirror the home-based provider questionnaire to allow for comparisons across provider types on enrollment, program participation, and prices charged.

Length: Approximately 45 minutes.

Sample: Sampled from administrative lists; addresses designated 'eligible' in the Center-Based Provider Screener.

Eligibility: Organizations that provide care to children birth to age 5, not yet in kindergarten.

Respondent: The respondent for the questionnaire will generally be the director or supervisor of the program. If no one has that title or role, the respondent needs to be knowledgeable about and have responsibility for enrollment, staffing, and participation in government programs. A **worksheet** is available for respondents to gather requested information in advance of completing the questionnaire.

Token of appreciation: \$25 token will be sent to respondents after completing the web survey.

Modes: Advance letters went out in [PLACEHOLDER], and many sites were screened by telephone throughout the fall. Some data entry may have occurred on the web. This questionnaire may be completed by web or by an interviewer by phone or in-person.

Definitions or key concepts: We are interested in all programs at the sampled address run by the sampled organization that qualify for the study (Head Start, pre-school, public pre-kindergarten, or before/after school for children under age 13). We are not interested in regular elementary school (grades kindergarten and up).

Highlights from each section:

- A. Program Level Information – capture age groups served by the program
- B. Schedule and Rates – hours of operation and highest rates charged to parents for different age groups
- C. Enrollment– summary questions about currently enrolled students
- R. Revenues – detailed questions on the extent of participation in government programs like Head Start, public pre-kindergarten, child care subsidies, etc.
- D. Admissions/Marketing – how the program enrolls new students and communicates with potential parents, as well as items on services supplemental to the center’s basic offerings (e.g., meals, health screenings, developmental assessments, etc.).
- E. Staffing – summary questions about staffing and benefits to staff.
- F. Care Provided – questions about children’s activities and curriculum. This section collects additional information for one randomly selected classroom, including all staff who worked in the classroom in the prior week.
- H. Respondent Characteristics and Selection of the Workforce – respondent demographic characteristics and questions to result in the selection of the workforce (classroom staff) interview respondent.



Workforce (Classroom Staff) Questionnaire Profile

Purpose: The 2024 NSECE Workforce (Classroom Staff) questionnaire collects information from one to two selected classroom staff members in each program completing a center-based provider questionnaire. This information will be used to better understand the experiences of the early care and education workforce and help develop initiatives to support caregivers.

Length: Approximately 20 minutes.

Sample: Administrative list Sample. Respondents are spawned from completed Center-based Provider Questionnaires. Potential roles that a respondent may have are Lead Teacher, Instructor, Teacher (possibly including Director/Teacher), Assistant Teacher/Instructor, and Aide.

Eligibility: The Workforce respondent must be assigned to a classroom within a Center-Based Provider organization and then be selected at the close of the Center-based Provider Questionnaire. Only the selected individuals are eligible to complete the workforce questionnaire. These individuals will work as teachers, assistant teachers, or aides; although, they may have other titles as well.

Respondent: The respondents for the workforce questionnaire will be the individuals randomly selected from the completed center-based provider questionnaire. The identifying and contacting information that we have for these individuals may vary considerably based on the preferences of the respondent to the Center-Based Provider questionnaire.

Token of appreciation: Respondents will receive \$10 after they complete the questionnaire.

Modes: This questionnaire may be completed by web, or by the interviewer by phone or in-person.

Highlights from each section:

- A. Qualifications and Experience** – respondents' education and training, including recent professional development received
- B. Employment Schedule and Compensation** – respondents' employment circumstances, including wages and benefits
- C. Activities in the Classroom**– what children are doing in the respondents' classrooms, as well as how respondents plan those activities
- CL. About the People in the Classroom** –Characteristics of the students and staff in the respondents' classroom
- D. Staff attitudes and orientation to caregiving**– respondents' attitudes toward education and caregiving, including interactions with parenting and emotional state
- E. Demographics** – personal characteristics of the respondents
- F. Consent to Access Administrative Records**- requests permission to search for the respondent in state or national employment records and other data sources that contain information about college attendance or professional development for study purposes

Tribal Statement for Research Relevance: 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education Relevance for American Indian/Alaska Native Populations. This information will be shared with Tribal leaders and other interested parties to provide background on the relevance of the NSECE for Tribes.

NSECE Overview. The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is a nationally representative study that characterizes the use and availability of early care and education (ECE) in the United States. The NSECE has been conducted before at two different timepoints, first in 2012 and again in 2019. A new NSECE is taking place in 2024 that will help shed light on how the ECE landscape has changed over the past five years. The NSECE is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The 2024 NSECE will include four integrated, nationally representative surveys of: 1) households with children under age 13; 2) home-based providers of ECE; 3) center-based providers of ECE; and 4) the center-based provider workforce. Data will be collected from more than 15,000 providers and nearly 10,000 households to help better understand how well families' needs and preferences align with providers' offerings and constraints. The study uses a provider-cluster approach for sampling all four surveys from the same small geographic areas. This approach allows the survey to document the interaction of the supply of and demand for early care and education where it occurs—in local communities—while simultaneously capturing data that efficiently construct national estimates. Because the experiences of low-income families are of special interest in public policy addressing ECE and school-age care, the NSECE oversamples low-income areas.

Relevance to Tribal Populations. Because the focus of the NSECE is on national representativeness, it is critical to the survey design and integrity of the data and findings that every part of the nation be included in the data, including households and providers located in tribal areas or providers with tribal affiliations. At the same time, the study will include Tribal households and providers at the current rates of prevalence, so the sample sizes of Tribal households and providers will be quite small and unlikely to support stand-alone meaningful analyses. It is likely that the two ways that the NSECE is most useful for American Indian research and policy-making is to ensure that the experiences of Tribal families and providers are reflected in the national data, and to offer a benchmark or comparison that can be used with other data sets to document how Tribal experiences (on or off tribal-designated lands) compare to the experiences of other sub-populations.

Introduction Contact for Tribal Leaders: First contact with tribal leaders introducing them to the NSECE and attempting to gain permission to contact households and providers located in Tribal areas.

Dear [Title] [First] [Last],

I am writing to tell you about an important national study that is being done in more than 700 areas across the country. The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is scheduled to begin later this year and will be 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. Several of the areas selected have addresses that are found on Native Lands, including yours.

The objective of the 2024 NSECE is to document the nation's current use and availability of early care and education (ECE) (including pre-school, pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs), and to deepen our understanding of the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offerings and constraints. The experiences of low-income families are of special interest as they are the focus of a significant component of early care and education and school-age public policy. This study was first conducted in 2012, and again in 2019. We are excited about learning how the early care and education landscape has changed since then through the 2024 NSECE.

Your tribe's support for this study will help ensure that the data collected are representative and thus provide policymakers with accurate and complete information. Data collection for this study will occur in only a sample of households and child care providers throughout the nation. This greatly increases the importance of your tribe's participation since the households and early childhood education providers in your area represent others in areas similar to your own.

Participation is voluntary and no negative consequences attend a decision not to participate. Responses to this data collection will be kept private and used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific tribe or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you, selected households, or the sampled schools, to anyone outside authorized personnel associated with the study, except as required by law.

The project is ready to answer any questions or concerns you may have. A project staff member will be contacting you in the near future. Please feel free to call us at [PLACEHOLDER] or email us at [PLACEHOLDER]. Thank you for considering this request. We hope to be able to include households and care providers from your tribal area in this important study.

Sincerely,



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]. 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]

Prompting Contact for Tribal Leaders: Second contact with tribal leaders about the NSECE and attempting to gain permission to contact households and providers located in tribal areas.

Dear [Recipient],

I am writing to follow up with you about recent correspondence (attached for reference) from the Office of Child Care in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is being conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. **Several of the areas selected have addresses on Native Lands, including yours.** Data collection from households and child care providers is proposed to begin later this month.

Your tribe's support for this study will help ensure that the data collected are representative and thus provide federal policymakers with accurate and complete information. Data collection will occur in only a sample of households and child care providers throughout the U.S. This greatly increases the importance of your tribe's participation since the households and early childhood education providers in your area represent others in areas similar to your own.

Participation is voluntary and no negative consequences attend a decision not to participate. Responses to this data collection will be kept private and used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific tribe or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you, selected households, or the sampled schools, to anyone outside authorized personnel associated with the study, except as required by law.

We would welcome the opportunity to ensure that our data collection is respectful of local customs and practices, and answer your questions about the NSECE. Please call us toll-free at [PLACEHOLDER] or email [PLACEHOLDER] to reach study staff about our proposed work in your area. **If we do not hear of any concerns or objections by [PLACEHOLDER], we will proceed with contacting households and providers in your tribal area.** Thank you for considering this request. We hope to be able to include households and care providers from your tribal area in this important study.

Sincerely,



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]

Tribal Leaders – Letter of Support from OCC: The Office of Childcare letter of support to be shared with Tribal leaders. This will be used to gain cooperation with Tribes. This may be sent by email or mail as needed.

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to share information about the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE), funded by the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The NSECE is the only national survey of child care and early education use and availability. The NSECE has been conducted before at two different timepoints, first in 2012 and again in 2019. We are now collecting new, nationally representative information about all segments of early care and education (ECE) and families' needs for ECE services. Based on these prior efforts, we have learned an enormous amount about families who use ECE, as well as about those who provide ECE, such as ECE programs, teachers and caregivers, and individuals who regularly care for children who are not their own. We are excited about the possibility of learning how recent policy and program changes have affected providers and the availability of ECE services since 2024.

A key aim of the 2024 surveys is to describe all households that use ECE in the United States throughout the country, as well as to provide updated profiles of programs and individuals providing ECE. For this reason, it is essential that we are able to collect data from every community that is scientifically selected for this study. The 2024 NSECE includes center and home-based provider surveys, a household survey, and a child care workforce survey, all based on nationally representative samples. Households and providers in your tribal area have been randomly selected as a part of the 2024 sample. It is important for us to include households and providers in your area to get a complete picture of the current availability and use of ECE services. All data provided by households and providers will be used only for statistical purposes. Identities of programs and individuals will not be disclosed.

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, along with its partners, is conducting the 2024 NSECE on behalf of HHS. NORC staff will follow up with you to answer any questions you may have and to obtain your approval to conduct the study on your tribal land. You may also contact the NSECE project team at [PLACEHOLDER] or the Federal Project Officer, Ivelisse Martinez-Beck at the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S Department of Health and Human Services, at (202) 690-7885 or ivelisse.martinezbeck@acf.hhs.gov.

More information about the survey is available at <http://nsece.norc.org>. You can also access findings from 2012 online at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-early-care-and-education-nsece-2010-2014> and findings from 2019 online at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/national-survey-early-care-and-education-2019-2017-2022>.

There you will find information reports and fact sheets about the characteristics of the 121,000 center-based programs, 1.4 million teachers and caregivers working with young children in those programs, and 1 million paid and about 4 million unpaid individuals who regularly care for other people's children at home.

In addition, you will find insights into the early care and education experiences, choices and perceptions of the nations' parents and guardians of young children in 2012 and 2019.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this important study.

Sincerely,

[PLACEHOLDER]

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Request for Endorsement Letter: Request for endorsement from regional associations, corporate offices, and national organizations.

Dear [NAME],

I am writing to ask for your support for the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). A key aim of this study is to describe the current supply of early care and education (ECE) in the United States as well as to provide updated profiles of programs and individuals providing ECE. The 2024 NSECE is scheduled to begin later this year and will be 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 [14,000 center-based providers to better understand the programs and services they provide./20,000 households with young children about their needs for early care and education services and the choices they have made for their families./10,000 teachers, aides, and assistants to better understand their experiences working directly with children in the classroom.] Since 2019, new legislation, funding opportunities, and program standards have been introduced in an effort to better support ECE providers and make quality care more accessible to all families, including policy and programs implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes make it a critical time to collect updated information so that we can examine what impact they have had on ECE services in general and [PROVIDER TYPE/AREA PROVIDERS] in particular.

We would appreciate it if [ORGANIZATION NAME] would provide an endorsement letter for the 2024 NSECE.

[FOR REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS or CORPORATE/NATIONAL OFFICES:] We estimate that the NSECE sample includes approximately [XX] from your area/associated with [ORGANIZATION NAME]].

[FOR NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:] We estimate that the NSECE sample includes [NUMBER PROVIDER TYPE].

We want to make every effort to ensure that the survey results are accurate and representative and include all types of early care and education providers as well as the individuals who work directly with children [from your area]. Your support will help us achieve this goal.

For more information on the 2024 NSECE, please visit our website: <http://nsece.norc.org>

Findings from the 2012 NSECE (including factsheets and reports) can be found here: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-early-care-and-education-nsece-2010-2014>.

Findings from the 2019 NSECE (including snapshots, chartbooks, and reports) can be found here:
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/national-survey-early-care-and-education-2019-2017-2022>

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this request further, please contact us at [PLACEHOLDER] or at [PLACEHOLDER]. Thank you in advance for supporting the 2024 NSECE.

Sincerely,



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]

Generic Endorsement Letter: This letter is a generic template that we share with organizations from which we seek endorsements. We use these endorsement letters to gain cooperation from center-based providers and other samples during the field period as needed.

Hello Colleague,

We are writing to ask for your help with an important study called the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). [ORGANIZATION NAME] endorses this study because the NSECE will provide much-needed information about all segments of the early care and education (ECE) community including family child care and the individuals who work directly with children in the classroom like [ORGANIZATION NAME] employees.

The NSECE was first conducted in 2012 to create the first national profile of early care and education use and availability in more than 20 years. We conducted the NSECE a second time in 2019. Across both efforts, we have spoken with more than 14,000 providers and 20,000 families. We are now collecting new information to better understand ECE and to learn how recent policy and program changes and the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected center-based providers like you. The 2024 NSECE will be used to:

- Document the types of providers available to families, how many providers there are, and the types of programs offered.
- Learn how effective professional development initiatives and programs have been in helping to maintain a stable staff to work with children.
- Better understand families' needs and preferences for care and describe how well the available supply of ECE supports them

Your program has been selected for participation in this study from a list of providers in your area based on geographic and program criteria. It is important for every selected provider to participate so that the 2024 NSECE provides an accurate picture of the availability of early care and education services across the country.

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. Information you provide will be kept private and used solely for the purposes of this study. Information that could identify you or your organization will never be released to the public.

Please participate in the 2024 NSECE. Your responses will help inform how public funds are spent to subsidize early care and education of young children and to support related services. More information about this study is available at the following website: <http://nsece.norc.org>.

Thank you for participating in the 2024 NSECE.

Sincerely,

[PLACEHOLDER]

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]