

2024 NSECE Household Follow-up

**Appendix N: 2024 NSECE
Household Follow-up Survey
Respondent Contact Materials**

Contents

Household - Initial Invitation (Web)..... 1

Household—Thank You/Reminder Postcard: This is the second contact with sampled households,.....2

Household Mailing Series- Non-Response Follow-up Contact.....3

Household Survey- Email Prompt.....4

Advance Letter - Eligible Households..... 6

Household Gated Community/Locked Building Letter.....7

Household Gated Community/Locked Building Letter - Eligible Households.....8

Household Property Manager letter..... 9

Household Community Authority letter..... 10

Household Follow-up Survey Text Messages..... 11

Household Last Chance Contact..... 12

Contact for Households Selected to Receive the Sample Representativeness Token.....13

Household Survey Access Email..... 14

Household Survey Break-off Email..... 15

Household Survey Thank You Contact..... 16

Household Brochure..... 17

Household Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)..... 22

Household Talking Points..... 24

Household - Initial Invitation (Web): First contact with sampled households who participated in the 2024 NSECE Household Survey. This contact will be sent by mail and email.

Dear NSECE Participant,

We need your help! You are among a special group of households that participated in the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) in 2024.

Your participation in the 2024 NSECE provided valuable information about how families select care for their children. We are building on the findings of the 2024 NSECE by collecting more in-depth information about how families search, select, and pay for care. The 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey 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 enclosed a small token of appreciation to thank you in advance for your cooperation with our study. To thank you for your participation, we will send you \$XX for completing the questionnaire.

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



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 because you participated in the 2024 NSECE. It takes about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You can stop the questionnaire at any time 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. 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 0970-0391 and the expiration date is 06/30/2026. 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—Thank You/Reminder Postcard: This is the second contact with sampled households, encouraging them to complete the Household Survey.

Dear NSECE participant,

Last week, we asked your household to complete a short questionnaire to help us understand how families select and pay for care. This study is funded by the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Your response will help public and local agencies better understand how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area.

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

If someone at your address has already responded, thank you! If not, we ask you to take about 20 minutes to complete the survey.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us at nsece24survey@norc.org or [PLACEHOLDER].

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 us at: [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code with your phone to access the website.



2. Enter your pin [Scratch off]

3. Complete the questionnaire

Household Mailing Series- Non-Response Follow-up Contact: Third contact with sampled households who have not completed the 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey. This mailing occurs approximately two weeks after the second contact attempt.

Dear NSECE Participant,

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) Household Follow-up Survey to help improve support for the care and education of children in your community.

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

Complete your short questionnaire using one of the following options:

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



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

Your household participated in the 2024 NSECE last year and cannot be replaced.

If you have 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 Survey- Email Prompt: Email contact with sampled households who have completed the 2024 NSECE, prompting them to complete the Household Follow-up Survey using the self-administered web questionnaire.

Dear NSECE Participant,

You recently received a letter in the mail from us asking 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) Household Follow-up Survey 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. The 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey will explore how families choose care for their children, building upon the insights gained from the 2024 NSECE Survey. This additional information will enhance our understanding of how families select care for their children.

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



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 originally selected using scientific methods to participate in the 2024 NSECE. Your participation last year was very valuable. As a respondent to the 2024 NSECE, you cannot be replaced in this follow-up, which will build on the earlier survey. It takes about 20 minutes to complete the survey. To thank you for your participation, we will send you \$XX for completing the questionnaire. You can stop the questionnaire at any time 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

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Para español por favor llámenos al [PLACEHOLDER]

Advance Letter - Eligible Households: This letter will be sent just before in-person outreach begins for sampled Households identified as needing FI assistance.

Dear NSECE Participant,

Your household responded to the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) last year. Please accept our sincere thanks for your response. We want to speak more with parents to help us understand your needs and choices for child care services in your community.

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 2024 NSECE Survey 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. In the 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey, we are collecting additional information to deepen our understanding of how families search for and select care for their children. To thank you for your participation, we will send you \$XX for completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire will take about 20 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; you can skip any question or end the questionnaire anytime.

If you want more information about this study or have questions, please call NORC at the University of Chicago [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: This letter will be sent to sampled households that have not completed the Household Survey and are inaccessible. It will be sent throughout the field period as needed.

Dear NSECE respondent,

Recently, NORC at the University of Chicago attempted to reach you about the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Household Follow-up, 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 to take 20 minutes to do a follow-up questionnaire. Your response will help inform how public money is spent to support the care and education of children in your area.

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



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

Even if you do not use child care, 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 children in your community. Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study and cannot be replaced. We rely on your voluntary participation to make the study a success. [We enclosed a small token of appreciation to thank you for your cooperation.]

Because this survey is so important, we will contact you again over the next few weeks to answer any questions and assist you in completing the questionnaire. We can arrange to talk by telephone at any time, entirely at your convenience. If you have questions or need assistance, please get in touch with 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 sampled households that are in gated communities or locked buildings inaccessible to interviewers. This letter will be sent throughout the field period as needed.

Dear NSECE respondent,

We are trying to reach you because your household responded to the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE). Please accept our sincere thanks for your response. Recently, NORC at the University of Chicago attempted to reach you about the 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up but could not enter your building. I am writing to ask you to contact us or to allow one of our interviewers to call you or visit you in person to ask 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 helped policy makers and local agencies better understand families' needs for affordable and flexible early care and education options. Now, we are collecting additional information to understand better what families need when they search for and pay for care for their children.

To thank you for participating, you will receive a \$XX token of appreciation for completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire will take about 20 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; you can skip any question or end the questionnaire anytime.

Because this survey is so important, we will contact you again over the next few weeks to answer any questions 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 get in touch with 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 sampled 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 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Household Follow-up Survey. 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 at the University of Chicago has a variety of resources for individuals to **verify the legitimacy of the study**. Interviewers visiting in person will have a 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 at the University of Chicago staff 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.

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,



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 Community Authority letter: This letter was sent to key community members to inform them about the study and to inform them 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 several 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) Household Follow-up. The attached letter provides additional details on this effort.

As part of this work, NORC at the University of Chicago field interviewers may visit selected households 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 found that some people selected to be interviewed called organizations such as yours for information about our presence.

Be assured that participation in any of our research studies 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 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 at the University of Chicago is one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious social survey research organizations. We have been conducting nationwide surveys for more than 75 years, during which we earned a reputation for research that is scientifically sound and in the public interest.

You can learn more about NORC at the University of Chicago at www.norc.org.

Sincerely,

[F_NAME] [L_NAME]

Senior Vice President

Education and Child Development

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

Initial Invite (Questionnaire): 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education Household Follow-up: Thanks for agreeing to receive text reminders. Please complete 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 Household Follow-up today. Learn more at <http://nsece.norc.org>. Visit [LINK] and enter [PIN]. 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 Household Follow-up today. Learn more at <http://nsece.norc.org>. Visit [LINK] and enter [PIN]. Reply STOP to opt-out of texts.

Household Last Chance Contact: Respondents will receive this final written contact. 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 Household Follow-up!

Don't miss this chance to explain to policymakers and businesses how families learn about and make decisions about their children's care.

[PLACERHOLDER] | nsece24survey@norc.org

Why is the 2024 NSECE Follow-up Survey important?

The 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey is a study aimed at better understanding the relationship between families' needs for early care and education and what childcare services are available to them. In the Follow-up, we dive deeper into specific topics. The study will help answer questions such as:

- **What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?**
- **How do parents choose providers, people, or organizations to care for their children? What decisions do parents make as they seek this care?**
- **What characteristics are hardest for parents to find when they're looking for child care providers?**
- **What fraction of families consider new arrangements with the start of a school year?**
- **How does childcare search and selection differ when families have one or more children with special needs?**
- **What steps did families take to find affordable care?**

Why are you so important to the NSECE Follow-up Survey?

Your household was scientifically selected to take part in this study because you participated in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) last year. 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 children in your area.

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

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Contact for Households Selected to Receive the Sample

Representativeness Token: Contact sent to sampled households selected to receive the additional token. Contact may be sent by mail and/or email.

Dear NSECE respondent,

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 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Follow-up has been collecting information from households across the nation. We would like to talk with you to understand whether child care options in your area meet families' needs. Your household was selected for this study among all of the 2024 NSECE respondents 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 \$XX on top of the \$XX thank you token of appreciation for participating in the 2024 NSECE Follow-up.

Please participate in this important study. Please complete the online questionnaire at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code with your phone to access the website.



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

Call us at [PLACEHOLDER] or email nsece24survey@norc.org to schedule a telephone interview.

The 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey 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 time 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 handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Rupa Datta'.

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

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

Dear NSECE respondent,

Thank you for your assistance with the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Household Follow-up Survey. We are interested in learning about families and how they select care for their children.

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



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.

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 20 minutes to complete, and your responses will be kept private. Participation is voluntary; you can skip any question or end the questionnaire anytime. 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 'Rupa Datta', written in a cursive style.

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

Household Survey Break-off Email - Email text for prompts to sampled households that began the questionnaire but did not finish.

Dear NSECE Participant,

We need your help!

Thank you for your interest in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Household Follow-up study. **Please take a few minutes today to finish your questionnaire and receive your \$XX token of appreciation for participating.**

We know that you're busy, but your participation will provide reliable and accurate information that will help policymakers understand whether child care options in your area meet families' needs.

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



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

Your complete response will help ensure that the results of this study are valid and accurate. If you experienced technical difficulties that prevented you from completing the questionnaire, let us know by replying to this message or calling toll-free at [PLACEHOLDER]. We will resolve the issue right away.

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]

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

Subject [FOR EMAIL]: Thank You from the NSECE - Code Enclosed

Dear NSECE respondent,

We thank you for your recent participation in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education Household Follow-up. 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 enclosed a [\$xx] token of appreciation.

If you have any additional questions, please 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 the 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 in the U.S. to participate in the 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up because you participated in the 2024 NSECE. Your participation last year was very valuable, and with the NSECE Household Follow-up, we aim to deepen our knowledge about challenges in finding affordable child care. It is important for us to hear from every selected household to get a complete picture of the availability and use of child care 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 support working families that rely on it more effectively.

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 to further protect your privacy. With this Certificate, NORC at the University of Chicago 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 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up Survey is easy. You can respond online at [SURVEY URL] or scan the QR code with your phone to access the website. You will need to enter your unique PIN to access the questionnaire. Alternatively, NORC at the University of Chicago interviewers will work with your schedule to find a convenient time to reach you by phone. Contact us at [EMAIL] or [PHONE], and we can help you set up an appointment.

Questions about NSECE Household Follow-up?

[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 0970-0391 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 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Household Follow-up Survey is funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

When the NSECE was conducted in 2024, we heard from over **XX** households with young children across the U.S. who told us about their needs and choices for child care services. The information helped provide policy makers and public agencies information to understand better how much families need child care that is affordable and flexible. The 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up is building on that work to dive more deeply and better understand challenges in finding affordable child care. This new information will help inform policies and programs that support families in need of child care and the individuals who provide these important services.

What is 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 early care and education research. ACF helps children in low-income families access high-quality child 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 child care programs.

BROCHURE INTERIOR

CENTER PANEL

Why is the NSECE Follow-up so important?

The 2024 NSECE provides an up-to-date national picture of supply and demand for child care. The Household Follow-up to the 2024 NSECE allows us to understand details about how families look for and select care. This additional information will help policy makers, government officials, and local agencies better understand how parents make decisions about how their children are cared for, and whether households children have access to high quality and affordable child care that fits their needs.

Your participation in the 2024 NSECE was highly beneficial. The 2024 Household Follow-up will dive more deeply into selected topics, such as challenges in finding affordable care. It is critically important that we collect these additional details so we can examine the child care needs of families with children.

Who are you surveying?

The 2024 NSECE Household Follow-up will be interviewing households in selected communities that participated in the 2024 NSECE. Our goal is to measure how well families' child care needs match early care and education resources that are available to them. 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 child care use and needs. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes. Questions will cover:

- ❑ Searching for and selecting child care arrangements for fall 2024
- ❑ Parents not interested in child care
- ❑ The type of care families use for their children
- ❑ Parents' work schedules
- ❑ Seeking financial assistance for child care
- ❑ What parents look for as they search for child care
- ❑ Parents' relationships with their child care providers

BROCHURE INTERIOR

RIGHT PANEL

Why should I participate?

By collecting information from parents and caregivers in selected areas across the nation, the NSECE will be able to describe how well the supply of child care meets the needs of families. This description can help national, state, and local governments and other organizations 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 many families are not interested in arranging child care from someone other than parents or guardians
- 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 child care do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
- What qualities do parents find difficult to meet when looking for providers?
- What early care education programs are families aware of in their local area?
- What percentage of families consider new arrangements with the start of a school year?
- How do families' child care search, selection, and participation differ when they have children with special needs?
- What steps did families take to find affordable child care?

Household Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): This document provides responses to household participants' most frequently asked questions. Field interviewers use these FAQs to answer questions and include them 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 care for America's children and the services they provide. The study was conducted in 2012, 2019, and again in 2024. We are now collecting new information to inform policies and practices to support families with children.

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 participated in the 2024 NSECE. Your household was scientifically selected from all household respondents 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?
- How many families are not interested in child care for their young children?
- What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
- What do parents do when available care doesn't meet their needs?
- What challenges do parents face when searching for affordable child care?
- What early care and education programs are families aware of in their local area?
- What percentage of families consider new arrangements with the start of a school year?
- When are parents not looking for child care?

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 training 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 their job and face legal action.
- Any data that could identify you is held by the project until the end of the contract and will be destroyed or transferred to a different contractor only at the request of OPRE. These data are used to answer important questions about how programs to help families with children are used.

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.

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 0970-0391 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]

Household Talking Points: We expect some participants will require several contacts before completing 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 Household Follow-up will be used to:

- Help shed light on how households search for and select child care arrangements and seek financial assistance for child care.
- Better understand questions like:
 - 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?
 - Which desired characteristics of providers are most challenging for parents to satisfy in their search activities?
 - How many families are not interested in child care for their young children?
 - What types of early care and education do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
 - What early care and education programs are families aware of in their local area, and how much do they know about program rules and the family's own eligibility?
 - What fraction of families consider new care arrangements with the start of a school year?
 - How do families' child care search, selection, and participation differ when they have one or more children with special needs?
 - What steps did families take to find affordable care, including subsidies, free care, or private assistance such as sliding scales and scholarships?

Text explaining why NSECE Follow-up is important to 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 Follow-up will be able to describe community by community how well child care options meet the needs of families.
- The NSECE Follow-up is talking with households with children nationwide to learn what options you have for child care, whether it fits your schedule, and whether it is quality, affordable care.
- The 2024 NSECE study collected valuable information. The NSECE Follow-up will build on that to gain even more information.
- The NSECE Follow-up will inform important policy decisions such as licensing regulations, health and safety guidelines, and how funding is allotted for child care programs and public schools.
- The NSECE Follow-up 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.
- Researchers will utilize the study to estimate the number of families that are not interested in child care for their young children.
- The study will be used by researchers to understand how people find, finance, and maintain child care arrangements.

- The NSECE Follow-up 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 your family's needs 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 children. We need you to answer these questions so public policy will not be based on wrong information and guesswork.
- The NSECE Follow-up will provide urgently needed information about the provision of early care and education and school-age care across the country. We need detailed information to understand how well families are served and what challenges they face in finding and paying for care.
- This study is unique. The NSECE Follow-up 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 can 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 child care options in your community are meeting families' needs.
- The 2024 NSECE was conducted last year. Now, we are collecting additional information to learn about how families learn about and make decisions about their children's care. 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?
 - Which families are not interested in using child care for their young children?
- 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 American families' challenges in providing high-quality care for their children.
- By sharing your experiences, you will play an important role in improving early care and education for your and 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 Follow-up 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 match between what is needed and desired and what is available for child care.
- The results of the NSECE Household Follow-up will help inform initiatives and policies to improve families' access to quality care.
- The success of the NSECE Follow-up 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 this study because you participated in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) last year. Now, we are collecting additional information to better understand what families need when they select care for their children. 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 in order to learn more about the challenges parents have finding and paying for care for their children.

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 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 participated in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education last year. Your participation was very valuable. We are now interested in talking with parents to learn more about how to manage their child care needs. As a respondent to the 2024 NSECE, you cannot be replaced in this follow-up, which will build on the earlier survey. 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 talking with parents is the best way to understand what kinds of care families need. 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 know it can be hard for parents to spare time to sit with an interviewer. This study is vital for understanding families' challenges 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, quality, and search 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 many families have difficulties finding child care in their community that suits their needs. There are very few opportunities to share these problems with policy makers. Talking with our field interviewer is an opportunity for you to have your voice heard.
- There are many reasons that families may seek 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.
- For this survey, most families will be able to complete the survey online at your convenience.

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

- We collect information from many 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 age, their care and education needs become more complex. By sparing some of your time, you can help illuminate the considerations parents take in finding care once their children graduate from early child care and education services.
- Many families struggle to find quality child care in their area. This can especially be a problem for low-income households and rural families. We are collecting information to help better understand the barriers 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. To address those concerns, the following talking points will be used to communicate with respondents. 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 your information 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 containing no names or other information identifying you.
- All NSECE Follow-up 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 Follow-up 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.

Responses for households that express concerns about government spending.

- You expressed concerns about government spending, especially during financial challenges. As fellow citizens, we share your concerns 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 U.S. population's true needs, circumstances, and desires. That understanding can only come from us, the citizens, otherwise it is pure guesswork.
- Specifically, your participation in the NSECE Follow-up 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. Selecting a representative sample of the population is much more cost-effective, and you are part of that sample. We don't want research based on the survey to get skewed because only the people concerned 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 that speaks for you and 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 patchwork 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 learned that when parents search for care, they report finding a suitable one only half the time. Having providers nearby can be a challenge, especially for families in rural areas. 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 gathered in the past, households with lower incomes often rely on publicly funded pre-kindergarten, 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 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, 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 it has worked to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities. In 2024, ACF asked the NSECE to collect updated information to help them understand how the early care and education landscape has changed in the past five years and this follow-up survey is an important part of gathering additional details.
- ACF is one of our country's largest sources of public support for early and school-age care. 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!

General

- Your continued participation in this study is important. We are interested in asking some additional questions to create a more complete picture of how families find and pay for care. This questionnaire will ask where you looked for care for your children, what kinds of care you considered, how you learned about available financial assistance, and what informed your decisions.
- Thank you again for participating in the 2024 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) last [MONTH]. We learned such valuable information from participants like you about what kinds of care families are using and what options for care are available in their communities.
- Please take some time today to complete this new questionnaire. We would like to ask some additional questions to learn more about how families find and pay for care. Your responses will be combined with the information you shared last [MONTH] and can inform future initiatives to make high-quality care more accessible to families with children.
- The Household Follow-up Study for the 2024 National Survey and Early Care and Education (NSECE) is closing soon, but you still have time to complete it today. Your responses to this short

follow-up questionnaire will help us better understand families' challenges in finding care that works best for them.

- Time is running out to participate in the NSECE Household Follow-up Survey. The survey will be closing in X days/weeks. Your experiences are unique. We want to make sure they are reflected in the results of this study.
- Last year, a member of your household participated in the 2024 National Survey of Early Education by completing a questionnaire about the types of care your family uses. Your continued participation in this study makes a difference.
- Don't miss your opportunity to contribute to this important study. Families have different experiences looking for early care and education for their children, and they select the best options for their unique circumstances. Please take 20 minutes to complete this questionnaire today so that your experiences are reflected in the results of this study.