

Thank you so much for your interest in and comment on the proposed data collection. The Chafee Strengthening Outcomes for Transition to Adulthood (Chafee SOTA) project will work with a small number of promising programs that demonstrate readiness to participate in future evaluations. Programs will participate voluntarily, and will get support to implement innovative learning methods that will build evidence about what works to promote positive outcomes for youth transitioning from foster care into adulthood and young adults formerly in care who transitioned in the recent past (ages 14-26).

We have outlined information about the proposed types of information collections, frequency, and intended uses of the data in our Supporting Statements, which are included with this request to establish an umbrella generic clearance. We have provided a brief overview here in response to your specific comments, as well.

In brief, the project will address common challenges that have been observed in prior evaluations of programs serving transition age youth, such as small sample sizes, lack of appropriate comparison groups, or implementation challenges. To address these challenges, this project aims to use innovative research designs that do not require the same conditions as large scale impact evaluations. For example, the project may use a research method such as single case design (SCD)¹, which is an alternative to randomized control trials that can accommodate small sample sizes and can be implemented flexibly. Findings from this study will inform the feasibility and rigor of evaluations that test the effectiveness of program services or components. Since this study will be testing new approaches to evaluation that may require different types of data, it cannot use existing data from NYTD surveys. Potential data collection efforts will request information using similar methods, which could include conducting interviews, focus groups, and surveys with program directors and current, past, or potential participants in programs serving youth with foster care experience.

As the evaluation is working with programs who have demonstrated interest in participating in the evaluation, all data collection activities will be voluntary and will not impose any additional data collection burden on state child welfare systems. Although the exact research designs and data collection plans to be implemented are still being developed in consultation with programs who are interested in participating, in our Supporting Statements we have provided the following examples of types of data collections we expect to submit under this umbrella generic: rapid cycle evaluation, theory of change refinement, core components analysis, continuous quality improvement, implementation and fidelity assessment, predictive analytics, single case design, propensity score analysis, regression discontinuity design, synthetic controls analyses, non-equivalent group designs, and interrupted time series design. The study team will work with programs to minimize burden on staff and participants and will use existing sources of data whenever possible.

Thank you for your feedback and attention to the proposed data collection.

¹ In SCD, a case serves as its own control, with the outcome variable(s) measured several times prior to an intervention and several times following its introduction.

