National and State Survey of Child & Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW): Site Recruitment and Baseline Data Collection

OMB Information Collection Request
0970 - 0202

Supporting Statement
Part A

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Type of Request: Revision

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Part A

Executive Summary

- **Type of Request:** This is a revision request under OMB 0970-0202 for a new cohort for the National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being. We are requesting three years of approval to allow sufficient time for baseline data collection efforts.

- **Description of Request:**
  This request seeks approval to: recruit a non-random (purposively) selected set of states and randomly selected set of county child welfare agencies (CWAs) within those states to participate in the National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW); sample cases from participating states and CWAs who agree to participate in NSSCAW; and collect survey data from sampled children and their caregivers. NSSCAW prioritizes questions that can inform states and their partners about how to better support the health and well-being of children and families, prevent the need for foster care, and promote the recruitment and retention of safe and stable foster homes. Data collected from this study is intended to be generalizable at the state level for children and families involved with the CWS, with the potential to be generalized at the national level through the use of inferential modeling.

  We do not intend for this information to be used as the principal basis for public policy decisions.

- **Time Sensitivity:** To stay on schedule with project timelines, recruitment will begin as soon as OMB approval is received.

Alternative Supporting Statement for Information Collections Designed for Research, Public Health Surveillance, and Program Evaluation Purposes

A1. Necessity for Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks approval to recruit child welfare agencies (CWA) and to collect information from children (and their caregivers) involved with the child welfare system (CWS) for the National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW), currently authorized by the Social Security Act § 429 [42 U.S.C. § 628b] (see **Appendix A**). NSSCAW is the only source of firsthand information about the well-being and service needs of children and families who come to the attention of the CWS, including foster and kin caregivers.

A2. Purpose

Purpose and Use

NSSCAW intends to provide state and national estimates on the well-being, experiences, and service needs and receipt of children and families involved with the CWS. NSSCAW aims to provide states with information to support decision-making about practice and policy improvements intended to strengthen child and family well-being (including their physical and mental health), prevent the need for foster care, and promote the recruitment and retention of safe and stable foster homes. ACF intends to use the information collected to better understand the health and well-being, experiences, and service needs and receipt of families involved in the CWS, and to address research questions described in this section. Information produced by this work may be released publicly in the form of presentations, reports, briefs, and/or manuscripts for submission to peer-reviewed journals. Data collected will be deidentified and archived for research use.

The overall goals of this information collection are to:

1) Recruit 10 non-random (purposively) selected states and 10 randomly selected child welfare agencies (CWAs) within each state, obtain monthly sample files, and select children and families for baseline data collection.
2) Collect baseline data, that includes in-person and/or online surveys with sampled children as well as their primary and former caregiver(s), as applicable.

The information collected is meant to contribute to the body of knowledge on ACF programs. It is not intended to be used as the principal basis for a decision by a federal decision-maker and is not expected to meet the threshold of influential or highly influential scientific information.

Research Questions

We aim to address the following research questions:

- What are the characteristics, circumstances, needs, and strengths of children/caregivers/families shortly after their involvement with the CWS?
- How does the baseline health and well-being of children differ across CWS events and outcomes (e.g., among children who remained in-home compared to children placed out-of-home)?
- What types of services and supports are needed and received by children, caregivers, and families shortly after their involvement with the CWS and how are they associated with foster care prevention?

- To what extent are contextual factors (e.g., community rates of employment, access to public transportation and childcare, state policy milieus, environmental hazards) associated with the health and well-being of children, caregivers, and families involved with the CWS?
- What types of community supports and resources are associated with the health and well-being of children, caregivers (i.e., biological/adoptive parents, foster caregivers, kin caregivers), and families involved with the CWS?
- What child/caregiver/family characteristics, as well as services and supports, are associated with a caregiver's motivations, interest, commitment, and challenges related to providing out-of-home care?

Study Design

The NSSCAW design aims to provide state-level estimates of well-being outcomes for a random sample of approximately 6,000 children aged 0-17.5 (and their caregivers) involved with the CWS over a 15-month period, and within a set of purposively selected states. States with the largest populations of children investigated for maltreatment will be recruited. Sampling within each state will be conducted independently. Prior to data collection, NSSCAW will identify cases to be sampled and initiate the sampling process through a three-stage selection process:

Stage 1: A non-random (purposive) selection of 10 states.

Stage 2: A probabilistic sample of 10 counties or agencies within each selected state.

Stage 3: A stratified simple random selection, with a target of 6,000 completed surveys with children and caregivers from agencies within the participating sampled counties or agencies.

After identifying cases to be sampled and starting the sampling process, data will be collected using in-person and online surveys with sampled children and their adult caregiver(s) (i.e., biological/adoptive parents, foster caregivers, kin caregivers). Key respondents of the 6,000 sampled children will complete an in-person or online survey. The current caregiver is considered the key respondent if the child is under the age of 11 (estimated N=3,780). The child is considered the key respondent if the child is 11 years of age or older (estimated N=2,220). After a key respondent survey is completed, a non-key respondent (e.g., caregiver of an 11 year old child) survey will be sought. As relevant, non-key, former caregivers (e.g., noncustodial parents of children in out-of-home placement) will also be surveyed.

Although children aged 11 and older are considered key respondents, children aged 6 to 10 years of age will also be surveyed (assuming a completed key respondent caregiver survey). Children under 6 years of age will not be interviewed directly. Caregivers will answer questions about children under 6 years of age during their interview.

NSSCAW will use a single-mode design with a nonresponse follow-up. This design prioritizes in-person surveys (conducted at the respondent's home or another preferred location), offering the web mode only when in-person recruitment is unsuccessful.

Information will be collected on a range of demographic variables, including race/ethnicity, primarily for internal operational and statistical purposes necessary to ensure the accuracy and representativeness of the study data.

Specifically, information on a range of demographic variables, including race/ethnicity, will be used for the following purposes:

- **Administrative data linkage.** A range of demographic variables may be used as components of probabilistic record linkage methods when linking administrative data to survey data. In combination with other available personally identifiable information, these variables can improve the likelihood of accurate matches between records across data systems.
- **Weighting and estimation.** Demographic variables may be incorporated into nonresponse adjustment and poststratification weighting procedures at both the state and national levels. Incorporating these variables into weighting adjustments helps align the final weighted sample with known population distributions, including benchmark distributions available through NCANDS, thereby improving the accuracy and validity of survey estimates.
- **Sampling.** A range of demographic variables may be used as sorting variables prior to sample selection to ensure a balanced sample.
- **Recruitment and monitoring participation.** Information on a range of demographic variables may be used during data collection operations to identify potential differences in outreach response and interview completion rates. Monitoring participation patterns allows the study team to implement targeted or modified recruitment strategies, where appropriate, to improve overall representativeness and reduce the potential for nonresponse.

Demographic information collected will adhere to the minimum categories recommended in OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 to align with federal standards and collect the minimum information necessary for the statistical and operational purposes noted above. There are no plans for ACF to conduct analyses or disseminate findings by race/ethnic subgroups.

Exhibit 1 below describes the data collection activities, respondents, content, and purpose of the data collection.

Exhibit 1: Overview of Data Collection Activities

Data Collection Activity	*Instruments*	*Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection*	*Mode and Duration*
CWA Monthly Sample File Submissions	Instrument 1: Specifications for Monthly Sample File Submissions	**Respondents**: CWA designated data systems staff **Content**: Data requested in the monthly sample files, including child and caregiver identifiers, demographics, and contacting information, and information about the child welfare maltreatment report and investigation. **Purpose**: Obtain monthly files from agencies with the information needed for sampling eligible child cases and contacting families.	**Mode**: Online **Duration**: 1 hour per month for 15 months
Survey with Caregiver	Instrument 2: Caregiver Baseline Survey	**Respondents:** Caregivers of children ages 0 to 17. **Content:** Physical, mental, and behavioral health of the caregiver and child, family service needs and receipt, the child's developmental	**Mode:** In-person or online **Duration:** 60 minutes

Data Collection Activity	*Instruments*	*Respondent, Content, Purpose of Collection*	*Mode and Duration*
		status, caregiver experiences with the CWS, social support and network quality, economic well-being, income and benefits, motivators and challenges of caregivers providing out-of-home care **Purpose:** Collect information on caregiver, child, and family well-being and request permission to combine caregiver and child survey data with administrative data.	
Survey with Child	Instrument 3: Child Baseline Survey	**Respondents:** Children aged 6-17. **Content:** Experiences at school and with peers, physical, mental and behavioral health, relationships with family and friends, perceptions of safety and stability of the child's home environment. **Purpose:** Collect information on child well-being.	**Mode:** In-person or online **Duration:** 45 minutes
Quality Assurance	Instrument 4: Telephone Verification Interview	**Respondents:** Caregivers who completed survey **Content:** Questions about the survey process, length, and token of appreciation received. **Purpose:** Verify a percentage of each data collector's completed caregiver surveys. Gather information from caregivers about their interactions with the data collector and the survey process.	**Mode:** Phone **Duration:** 8 minutes
Panel Maintenance	Instrument 5: Panel Maintenance Contact Card	**Respondents:** Caregivers and young adults (i.e., children interviewed at baseline who have reached the age of 18) in the cohort. **Content:** Questions about current address and phone number, and about the name and contact information of someone who can help contact them. **Purpose:** Maintain updated cohort contact information to support any future follow-up data collection efforts.	**Mode:** Mail, phone, or online **Duration:** 3 minutes

Other Data Sources and Uses of Information

We intend to combine the survey data collected with administrative data when feasible. This expands the value of NSSCAW data and grows the child welfare knowledge base, which in turn can inform child welfare programmatic and policy discussions. Additionally, combining survey data with administrative data decreases respondent burden by reducing the number of questions to be asked in the surveys. The

study team will incorporate aggregated administrative data that can be linked to the geographic location of a family (e.g., a family's neighborhood, county, and state) when a CWS investigation occurs. The combination of a broader range of contextual data (aggregated at multiple geographic levels) with survey data (i.e., individual- and family-level predictors) can lead to important findings on how to improve well-being outcomes for children and families involved with CWS. In addition, NSSCAW will integrate a broad array of administrative data that can be tied directly to families. These combined data elements could enable researchers to better understand, for example, the contextual factors (e.g., access to childcare, benefit amounts) surrounding a child and family at the time of a CWS contact.

A3. Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

Both the in-person and online versions of the baseline survey instruments will use computer-assisted interviewing (CAI). CAI reduces respondent burden through skip patterns that route respondents to answer only the items intended for their specific demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, type of caregiver) and by "filling" respondent answers to previous questions into the wording of subsequent questions. Additionally, CAI allows for "real-time" checks on potential inconsistencies in a respondent's answers, reducing the need to follow-up with respondents to clarify their responses.

In-person surveys will also use Computer-Assisted Recorded Interview (CARI) technology, where portions of the surveys (with respondent permission) are randomly recorded for quality control purposes. In contrast to field observations which involve a supervisor accompanying a data collector to an interview to monitor quality, CARI allows non-invasive and unobtrusive monitoring, reducing respondent burden.

A4. Use of Existing Data: Efforts to reduce duplication, minimize burden, and increase utility and government efficiency

NSSCAW is the only source of national, longitudinal data on the health, well-being, service needs and receipt of children and families in the CWS. While two established federal reporting systems—the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS)—provide critically important, ongoing snapshots of the safety and permanency of children in the CWS, there is no equivalent source of CWA-level data on the well-being of these families. For example, while AFCARS counts the foster care placement changes a child experiences, it does not provide contextual information about the foster caregiver's experiences or circumstances that may have been associated with the placement change. Together, the three data sources provide detailed information on the safety, permanency, and well-being of those served by the CWS.

A5. Impact on Small Businesses

No small businesses will be involved with this information collection.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Now subsumed under 2(b) above and 10 (below)

A8. Consultation

Federal Register Notice and Comments

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), ACF published a notice in the Federal Register announcing the agency's intention to request an OMB review of this information collection activity. This notice was published on June 25, 2026 (91 FR 38446) and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. During the notice and comment period, ACF received one public comment from Casey Family Programs. The commenter expressed support for the collection and provided recommendations related to enhancing the utility of study data for state and local child welfare agencies, reducing burden on participating agencies, and ensuring methodological transparency. ACF greatly appreciates these recommendations.

NSSCAW is intended to produce information that can inform policy, priorities, and program design at the state and national levels. ACF is working in partnership with states to explore a variety of approaches for ensuring that information collected through NSSCAW is useful and yields actionable insights for participating agencies, including sharing study data back with states. This new cohort of NSSCAW is specifically designed to help participating agencies better understand service gaps and child and family outcomes and inform strategic planning, resource decisions, and program and policy improvements. ACF will continue working with states to identify opportunities to maximize the usefulness of NSSCAW data for participating agencies.

ACF recognizes the competing priorities and resource demands faced by state and local child welfare agencies and has made substantial efforts to reduce agency burden compared with previous cohorts of NSSCAW. The study has been designed to minimize the amount and frequency of information requested from all participants to the extent feasible. Time associated with initial coordination and engagement with states, which will provide a foundation to inform formal study recruitment and subsequent data collection activities, is accounted for under *National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW): Informing Site Selection and Recruitment Processes*, approved under the *Formative Data Collections for ACF Research and Evaluation* (OMB No. 0970-0356). The burden estimates included in this information collection request reflect activities occurring after this initial coordination and engagement. Based on experience with prior NSSCAW cohorts and the data collection procedures planned for this cohort, ACF believes that, taken together, the applicable burden estimates reasonably reflect the anticipated burden on state and local agencies associated with participation in NSSCAW.

ACF is also committed to transparency regarding the design and implementation of NSSCAW. A purposive sample of states was selected to provide representative information at the state-level with the potential for national-level inference via statistical modeling. This design was selected to support the study's ability to achieve the targeted sample size within each participating state and to produce reliable state level estimates. ACF plans to make information about the study publicly available, including technical information describing the study design and methods. As described in SSB, ACF plans to pre-register the study and publicly post a full analysis plan prior to the start of data analysis.

Consultation with Experts Outside of the Study

Feedback was requested about proposed NSSCAW instruments via small group discussions with 9 or fewer individuals and/or one-one one discussions from a variety of individuals who have different types of expertise: caseworkers, data users and researchers, parents, out-of-home (OOH) caregivers, and young adults with past involvement in the CWS. Their feedback informed how the study team prioritized which constructs would be measured, with the goal of reducing instrument administration time, and thereby lessening respondent burden.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation

Survey Tokens of Appreciation

Tokens of appreciation are used to encourage participation and convey appreciation for respondent contributions to the research. This is true not only for adults, but also children. Because adolescents have historically been difficult to recruit on the predecessor cohort studies to this information collection request (National Surveys of Child and Adolescent Well-Being or NSCAW I-III; OMB #0970-0202), including tokens of appreciation may be particularly important for their participation. For example, Martinson et al. (2000) found that using monetary tokens of appreciation increased participation rates among adolescents from 55% to 69%[1].

During the predecessor cohort studies (National Surveys of Child and Adolescent Well-Being or NSCAW I-III; OMB #0970-0202), caregivers received $50 to participate, youth aged 11 and older received a $20 gift card, and children aged 10 and younger received a $10 gift card. The baseline wave of NSCAW III achieved a 27% unweighted response rate for caregiver and child key respondents. This response rate was significantly lower than the 69.2% and 55.8% unweighted response rates achieved for the NSCAW I and NSCAW II cohorts, respectively. During the baseline wave of NSCAW III (OMB #0970-0202), OMB approved an increase to the tokens of appreciation for adolescents in the form of an added non-monetary gift (e.g., headphones) of equal value to the $20 gift card. Even with this revised approach, response rates remained lower than expected during baseline data collection. Unfortunately, a direct comparison of the response rate before and after the increased token of appreciation cannot be made because the increase was 1) implemented after the COVID pandemic subsided and data collection could resume, and 2) provided to a small number of cases due to the majority of interviews being completed prior to the pandemic.

Taking experiences with previous cohorts into account, we propose to offer $75 (cash or gift card) to caregivers and parents who participate in NSSCAW, a $50 gift card to youth aged 11 and older, and a $20 gift card to children aged 10 and younger. The proposed tokens of appreciation offered to caregivers and children for NSSCAW is considered necessary to reduce nonresponse bias, ensure representativeness at the state-level, and achieve the sample sizes needed for subgroup analyses (e.g., foster caregivers). Tokens of appreciation remained the same for NSCAW I-III while response rates

[1] Martinson, B., Lazovich, D., Lando, H., Perry, C., McGovern, P., & Boyle, R. (2000). Effectiveness of Monetary Incentives for Recruiting Adolescents to an Intervention Trial to Reduce Smoking. *Preventive Medicine*, 31(6), 706-713.

decreased over time. Based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Inflation Calculator[2], $50.00 offered in 2000 (NSCAW I) would be equivalent to $96.80 in February 2026, while $50 from 2008 (NSCAW II) would have the same purchasing power as $77.41. If tokens of appreciation do not keep pace with the rising cost of living, participation often becomes skewed toward higher-income households who face fewer logistical barriers. Additionally, the proposed amounts may help offset expenses associated with participation, such technology costs if the survey is completed online (e.g., phone data plans).

Providing higher tokens of appreciation in other studies conducted with child welfare-involved populations has demonstrated benefits in enhancing data quality and potentially minimizing nonresponse bias. For example, ACF grant recipients conducted a local evaluation that included a randomized control trial evaluation of Next4You[3]. The local evaluation offered $160 to foster youth (ages 16 and older) to complete three 20-minute surveys over the course of the study . Participating foster youth were offered $40 for completing a baseline survey, and $60 for completing each of the 3-month and 9-month follow-up surveys. The study achieved an 80% response rate after the final 9-month follow-up survey, with the tokens of appreciation contributing to higher data quality through consistent youth participation across all waves. The amounts offered in the Next4You evaluation align with the proposed $50 tokens of appreciation for youth (11-17 years) for NSSCAW, where youth will be asked to complete a 45-minute survey.

The proposed tokens of appreciation for parents and caregivers also align with the amounts offered to adults in other federally sponsored surveys, including those involving child welfare populations. Adults participating in the Survey of Youth Transitioning from Foster Care (OMB: 0970-0546) were offered a $75 token of appreciation for a 55-minute survey about their experiences with the child welfare system. Only 13% of the adults contacted refused participation in the survey. Adults participating in the baseline wave of the Evaluation of LifeSet (OMB # 0970-0577), funded by ACF, were offered a $25 token of appreciation for a 30-minute survey about their foster care experiences. A 60% response rate was achieved. The follow-up survey, supported by a private funder, offered a $75 token of appreciation for a 75-minute interview. A 71% response rate was achieved overall and a 53% response rate was achieved among baseline non-responders, despite the follow-up round occurring two years or more after the baseline survey. The refusal rate for the Evaluation of LifeSet decreased from 16% at baseline to 7% at follow-up (when a higher token of appreciation was offered).

Panel Maintenance Tokens of Appreciation

Panel maintenance strategies help maintain contact with study respondents to support potential future follow-up. To aid in respondent retention, the study team proposes enclosing a $2 cash token of appreciation paired with a non-monetary token of appreciation (e.g., magnetic photo holder), in the panel maintenance mailing described in SSB, Section B.4. Historically, response to panel maintenance mailings for previous NSCAW cohorts has been low. Panel maintenance mailings sent between waves of the study for prior cohorts, have been less effective over time, with only 5% of families for NSCAW III providing updated contact information compared to 14% for NSCAW II. Pairing a small monetary token

[2] https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

[3] JMIR Research Protocols - Youth-Centered Mobile Intervention (Next4You) to Promote Healthy Relationships and Sexual Wellness Among Adolescents in or Transitioning From Foster Care: Protocol for a Randomized Controlled Trial

of appreciation with a non-monetary token, such as a magnetic photo holder with a study contact card, may encourage participants to maintain contact with the study team, increasing the likelihood of adequate response rates in future follow-up surveys.

A similar approach was used on the Wisconsin implementation of the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Survey where participation rates have been consistently high, supported by a protocol that included a $5 prepaid cash token in an introductory mailing[4]. The Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) and the PSID-Transition to Adulthood Study also included a token of appreciation in a contact update mailing to maintain engagement and collect updates before the upcoming wave of data collection. Sample members who received $10 or $20 for returning the contact update form had significantly higher return rates[5].

Other non-federal child welfare studies have included panel maintenance tokens of appreciation in between wave mailings, including gift cards or cash. An evaluation of the Child First intervention[6] provides a $2 cash token of appreciation in panel maintenance mailings to encourage families to provide contact updates by phone or mail between waves of the survey. While only 11% responded directly to that mailing, 77% completed the follow-up survey, suggesting that the token of appreciation included in the between-wave mailing may have helped sustain participant engagement and/or a positive association with the study, contributing to the 77% follow-up survey completion rate. A supportive housing intervention for child welfare-involved families with a history of homelessness received a $10 prepaid gift card with a panel maintenance mailing. Only 10% of families replied, yet 33% ended up receiving and using the gift card. The inclusion of a panel maintenance token of appreciation supported engagement with families and long-term tracking efforts. As a result, a 71% response rate was achieved when families were contacted for the next survey, approximately five years after they were randomized.

A10. Privacy: Procedures to protect privacy of information, while maximizing data sharing

Personally Identifiable Information

For site recruitment, no personally identifiable information (PII) beyond name, professional affiliation (e.g., name of the state or county CWA), and role will be sought. This information is collected for the purpose of contacting and recruiting CWAs for participation.

For baseline data collection, the following PII will be collected: caregiver name, caregiver date of birth, child name, child age, child date of birth, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, social media profile names, and Social Security Numbers. This information will be used for contacting selected families to schedule baseline surveys and maintaining contact with families over time. PII used for locating and contacting purposes will be kept separately from any information collected during the baseline surveys and will be linked by a unique participant identification number. A subset of this PII (i.e., names, dates of birth, Social Security Numbers) as well as unique child/caregiver identifiers in the sample files provided by participating CWAs (as relevant) will be used to link survey data to contextual and administrative data files with participant consent. All survey and administrative data files will be deidentified prior to being archived and made available to researchers.

[4] https://acf.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/nytd-outcomes-wi-2021.pdf

[5] McGonagle, K., Schoeni, R., Couper, M. (2013). The Effects of a Between-Wave Incentive Experiment on Contact Update and Production Outcomes in a Panel Study. Journal of Official Statistics., 29(2), 261-276.

[6] Child First | MDRC

Information will not be maintained in a paper or electronic system from which data are actually or directly retrieved by an individuals' personal identifier.

Additionally, both the in-person and online versions of the baseline instruments will be programmed for computer-assisted interviewing (CAI). Capturing responses electronically ensures better data encryption and protection. The laptop computers and tablets will be secured with Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 140-2 compliant encryption software, Microsoft BitLocker, at the equipment level. The computer applications and case information will be secured through a series of username and password protections.

Assurances of Privacy

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data in the consent and HIPAA Authorization forms (**Appendix D**) and that their participation is voluntary.

Due to the sensitive nature of this research (see Section A.11), the Contractor (RTI) plans to obtain a Certificate of Confidentiality. The Certificate of Confidentiality helps to assure participants that their information will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. This study will be reviewed by RTI's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Site recruitment and data collection will not begin until we receive IRB approval.

Data Security and Monitoring

As specified in the contract, the RTI shall protect respondent privacy and will comply with all Federal and Departmental regulations for private information. RTI has developed a Data Security Plan that assesses all protections of respondents' PII and will also go through the Assessment and Accreditation (A&A) process and obtain a three (3) year Authority to Operate (ATO).

RTI shall ensure that all its employees, subcontractors (at all tiers), and employees of each subcontractor, who perform work under this contract/subcontract, are trained on data privacy issues and comply with the above requirements.

RTI complies with the originally passed E-Government Act of 2002 and the amended Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) of 2014, which covers site security, security control documentation, access control, change management, incident response, and risk management. RTI/Global Technology Solutions (GTS) is an ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certified provider whose Information Security Management System (ISMS) has received third-party accreditation from the International Standards Organization. Additionally, GTS has received an Authority to Operate under the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SP 800-53r4 for FIPS LOW and FIPS MOD classifications assessed by an accredited FedRAMP Third Party Assessment Organizations (3PAO). In accordance with these frameworks, RTI has implemented continuous monitoring capabilities to ensure that all security controls are regularly monitored and reported on. These monitoring capabilities include but are not limited to regular vulnerability scanning, automated audit log monitoring, intrusion detection and prevention measures, data loss prevention measures, and periodic control auditing.

Systems for this project will operate in the FIPS Moderate network, RTI field laptops and case data transmitted to and from them are encrypted with FIPS 140-3 Cryptographic Modules security requirements. The laptops are password protected, and a separate password is needed to access case-level information on the laptop.

Access to RTI project file shares, systems, and databases is strictly controlled by role-based security in the form of Windows security groups. An individual's security group membership is determined based on the minimum necessary access to perform their job function on the project, and need-to-know. Addition to or removal from security groups is strictly controlled and audited, accomplished via a formal request to GTS which must be approved by the project director or authorized designate. Security group membership is audited quarterly by project leaders to ensure that only those who still need specified access continue group membership.

A11. Sensitive Information [7]

Because NSSCAW's target population are children and families who have been involved in a maltreatment investigation with the CWS, information collected focuses on behaviors associated with maltreatment and may include topics considered sensitive. This information is necessary to address the study's core research questions and is not reliably available from other sources. The caregiver survey includes questions on adverse childhood experiences, depression, anxiety, suicidality, and trauma. The survey for children 11 and older includes questions on substance use and abuse, bullying, sexual risk behaviors, self-harm, suicidal ideation and behavior, as well as sexual and dating violence.

The most sensitive questions will be administered in Audio Computer-Assisted Self Interview (A-CASI, in which the respondents completing an in-person interview hear the questions read by the computer through headphones and enter their responses directly into the computer). At the beginning of this part of the interview, respondents are reminded that honest answers are important and assured that any information they provide will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents are also reminded of the exceptions to privacy (i.e., information indicating suicidal intent or that the child's life or health may be in danger).

At the end of the survey, respondents will be asked to provide their Social Security Number (SSN) or the last four digits of their SSN. Respondents are informed that the study team will use SSNs for only two purposes: 1) to locate the respondent if they move, and 2) to combine administrative data with survey data (for respondents who provide consent). There is no available alternative to SSN that can reliably identify individuals across administrative data sources, particularly if individuals have moved to another state. In the predecessor survey to this information collection (i.e., National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being, Third Cohort or NSCAW III; OMB #0970-0202; Expiration Date: 08/31/26), SSNs

[7] Examples of sensitive topics include (but not limited to): social security number; sex behavior and attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close relationships, e.g., family, pupil-teacher, employee-supervisor; mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to respondents; religion and indicators of religion; community activities which indicate political affiliation and attitudes; legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers; records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment; receipt of economic assistance from the government (e.g., unemployment or WIC or SNAP); immigration/citizenship status.

were used as the primary matching variable to combine child survey data with their Medicaid services data on a national level over a five-year period. SSNs allowed the study to link to the Medicaid data of approximately 70% of 1,750 respondents, providing information on their use of health and mental health services. As described in Section A10, data security precautions, IRB approval, and a Certificate of Confidentiality specific to this information collection will be in place prior to data collection.

A12. Burden

Explanation of Burden Estimates

Exhibit 2 summarizes the reporting burden to obtain monthly sample files from CWAs and conduct surveys with caregivers and children.

- **Instrument 1: Specifications for Monthly Sample File Submissions.** We anticipate that 100 individuals, or 1 individual from 10 randomly sampled counties per each of the 10 selected states, will be involved with generating and submitting monthly files of eligible children for sampling purposes. For CWAs, preparing and submitting monthly sample is estimated to take 1 hour per month for 15 months.
- **Instrument 2: Caregiver Survey.** We estimate that up to 6,273 caregivers of children aged 0-17 will complete an in-person or online caregiver survey. This total includes 50 caregivers for the field test:
    - 3,780 key respondent caregivers in households where the child is under age 11,
    - 2,131 non-key respondent caregivers where the child is age 11 or older, and
    - 312 former caregivers for the baseline data collection.

  The survey is expected to take 60 minutes.
- **Instrument 3: Child Survey.** We estimate that 4,160 caregivers will be caring for a sampled child aged 6 or older[8] who will complete an in-person or online child survey. This total includes 50 children for the field test, 2,220 key respondent children who are 11 and older, and 1,890 non-key respondent children between the ages of 6-10. for the baseline data collection. The survey is expected to take 45 minutes. Surveys with younger children are expected to be shorter than surveys with older children.
- **Instrument 4: Telephone Verification Interview.** A telephone verification interview will be conducted with 10% of the caregiver sample (randomly selected**),** or 627 caregivers. The verification interview is expected to take 8 minutes.
- **Instrument 5: Panel Maintenance Contact Card.** We anticipate that 15% of cohort members, or 900 caregivers and young adults, will respond to the panel maintenance contact card. Providing updates to contact information is expected to take 3 minutes.

Exhibit 2: Burden Estimates

Instrument	No. of respondents (total over request period)	No. of responses per Respondent (total over request period)	Avg. Burden per response (in hours)	Total/ Annual burden (in hours)	Annual Burden (in hours)*	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
Instrument 1: Specifications for	100	15	1.0	1,500	500	$52.93	$26,465

[8] The number of children expected to complete a survey is based on data from NCANDS and NSCAW III.

Instrument	No. of respondents (total over request period)	No. of responses per Respondent (total over request period)	Avg. Burden per response (in hours)	Total/ Annual burden (in hours)	Annual Burden (in hours)*	Average Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
Monthly Sample File Submissions							
Instrument 2: Caregiver Baseline Survey	6,273	1	1.0	6,273	2,091	$24.85	$51,961
Instrument 3: Child Baseline Survey	4,160	1	0.75	3,120	1,040	N/A	N/A
Instrument 4: Telephone Verification Interview	627	1	0.13	82	27	$24.85	$671
Instrument 5: Panel Maintenance Contact Card	900	1	0.05	45	15	$24.85	$373
Total				**11,020**	**3,673**		**$79,470**

*This request is for three years of approval and has been annualized over three years. This is to allow sufficient time for baseline data collection efforts.

Estimated Annualized Cost to Respondents

For each instrument included in Exhibit 2, we calculated the total annual cost using the following average hourly wage information.

- **Instrument 1: Specifications for Monthly Sample File Submissions.** An average hourly wage estimate for CWA data systems staff is based on a national average hourly wage of $52.93 for Database Administrators (code 15-1242, May 2025 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates bls.gov).[9]
- **Instrument 2: Caregiver Baseline Survey.** An average hourly wage estimate for caregivers was calculated by using the usual weekly earnings of full-time employees over the age of 25 who are high school graduates with no college experience ($24.85/hour).
- **Instrument 3: Child Baseline Survey.** No costs were calculated for children.
- **Instrument 4: Telephone Verification Interview.** Calculated as described for Instrument 2.
- **Instrument 5: Panel Maintenance Contact Card**. Calculated as described for Instrument 2.

A13. Costs

There are no additional costs to respondents.

A14. Estimated Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

Exhibit 3 presents estimated total and annualized costs to the federal government directly related to this information collection, which would not have been incurred otherwise.

[9] Reference: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2026, July 21). Usual weekly earnings of wage and salary workers, second quarter 2026 (USDL-26-1257). Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/news.release/wkyeng.nr0.htm

Exhibit 3: Estimated Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

Activity	Detail	Estimated Cost
Site Recruitment	• 1,856 labor hours • Operational expenses ($64,475): Includes software hosting servers, shipping of materials and supplies, recruiter expenses (travel costs, per diem), and site administrative costs.	$570,211
Field Test	• 2,058 labor hours • Operational costs ($50,7460): Includes materials and printing, tokens of appreciation for respondents, data collector expenses (mileage, travel costs), laptops, and tablets.	$301,718
Baseline Data Collection	• 151,427 hours • Operational costs ($1,764,454): Includes software hosting servers, licensing fees, software licenses, shipping of materials and supplies, tokens of appreciation for respondents, data collector expenses (mileage, travel costs)	$12,126,932
Analysis and Reporting	• 7,359 hours • There will be no costs beyond labor costs for staff.	$871,204
	Total costs over the request period	$13,870,065
	Annual Costs	$4,623,355

A15. Reasons for changes in burden

This is a revision to OMB #0970-0202 for data collection for a new NSSCAW cohort. Burden changes reflect the completion of all previously approved data collection efforts under this OMB # and the start of a new cohort of data collection.

A16. Timeline

The project timeline is provided in **Exhibit 4**. Baseline survey data collected on NSSCAW will be deidentified and archived for research use. Contextual and administrative data will be merged with survey data and analyzed to address the research questions provided in Section A2. Planned dissemination products may include reports, research briefs, and other publications or presentations. We are requesting three years of approval to allow sufficient time for baseline data collection efforts.

Exhibit 4: Timeline

Activity	Timeline	Duration
Recruit sites	Begin 2 weeks after OMB approval	8 months
Conduct field test	Begin 2 months after OMB approval	2 months
Collect baseline data	Begin 5 months after OMB approval	21 months
Clean baseline data and merge contextual and administrative data; analyze data; prepare reports and other dissemination products	Begin 23 months after OMB approval	22 months

A17. Exceptions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

Appendices

Appendix A: Statutory Requirement
Appendix B: Site Recruitment Materials
Appendix C: Family Outreach Materials
Appendix D: Informed Consent and HIPAA Authorization Forms

Instruments

Instrument 1: Specifications for Monthly Sample File Submissions
Instrument 2: Caregiver Baseline Survey
Instrument 3: Child Baseline Survey
Instrument 4: Telephone Verification Interview
Instrument 5: Panel Maintenance Contact Card