

Appendix B: Site Recruitment Materials

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Monthly Sample File Reminder Email

Format: Email

Subject Line: Reminder to submit a monthly sample file for NSSCAW

Dear [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME],

This email is to serve as a reminder that your monthly sample file submission date for the National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW) is quickly approaching. If for any reason the data file cannot be sent on or before the designated date, please let your RTI site contact know as soon as possible.

To help the sampling team keep accurate records of the files sent, we ask that files be uploaded to RTI's secure website (URL TBD). If you need assistance with creating or transmitting the data file, please contact your assigned RTI programmer.

Thank you in advance,

The RTI NSSCAW Sampling Team

Site Name and Code:	AGENCY NAME AND ABBREVIATION
File Transmission Date:	DUE DATE OF NEXT TRANSMISSION
Type of File(s) Requested:	Completed investigations/assessments; children entering legal custody for MONTH/YEAR.
RTI Contact:	RTI CONTACT NAME
Toll Free Phone:	(800) ###-####
Direct Phone:	(919) ###-####
Email:	XXXX@rti.org
RTI Programmer:	RTI PROGRAMMER NAME
Toll Free Phone:	(800) ###-####
Direct Phone:	(919) ###-####
Email:	XXXX@rti.org

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.

Informational Brochure
National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW)
Frequently Asked Questions

What is NSSCAW?

The Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 628b) requires a survey of children and families involved with the child welfare system. The National and State Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSSCAW) carries out that requirement at both the state and national levels. NSSCAW looks at the health and well-being of children and families who have been the focus of a child maltreatment report or assessment.

Before NSSCAW, three other major surveys took place. They were known as the National Surveys of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAWs). These studies launched in 1999, 2008, and 2017. They were the first to provide information about the well-being of families in the child welfare system.

How is NSSCAW different from the past versions of the survey

NSSCAW builds on what we learned from the past three studies. It will continue to focus on child and family well-being, but there will be more emphasis on learning about child and family needs, strengths, and services.

NSSCAW uses a new state-focused approach that differs from past studies, which were conducted at the national level. This new approach will help the study team to:

- provide findings about how families are doing at both the state and national levels, and
- understand how different family situations, supports, and experiences can affect well-being.

Who is sponsoring this study?

NSSCAW is sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

This study was first authorized in 1996 under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. The study is currently authorized by the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 628b].

Who is carrying out this study?

[RTI International](#) is leading the study team. RTI is an independent scientific research institute located in North Carolina. RTI is partnering with [Foster America](#) and the [Urban Institute](#) to carry out the study.

How many children from each state will be included in the NSSCAW sample?

The study team plans to enroll 6,000 children in NSSCAW—600 children from each participating state. The study will examine outcomes for children and families involved in the child welfare system, including those who receive in-home and foster care services. It will also include those who do not receive services.

How were child welfare agencies chosen to participate in the study?

The study team selected state and county child welfare agencies for participation based on two factors:

- **Case volume:** Number of Child Protective Services investigations as reported in the most recent National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System collection.
- **Data access:** Ability to provide information about children and families who have been involved in maltreatment investigations or assessments.

The goal was to identify a subset of state and county child welfare agencies that reflect the characteristics of all agencies in the country.

What are the benefits of participating in NSSCAW?

- Child welfare agencies who take part in NSSCAW will be helping to strengthen policies, programs, and services for children and families in their states and across the nation.
- For the first time, the study will use a new **state-based** approach to learn about child and family well-being at the state level. Agencies can use study findings to improve services in their states. The study team can also apply statistical modeling to state data to develop national estimates. This can help to improve programs and services across the whole country.
- The study team will work directly with family members and children to learn about their health, well-being, and experiences. We will also work with participating agencies to understand their needs and priorities. Together, we will look for ways NSSCAW can provide resources and reports that can help agencies the most.
- NSSCAW is the **only national study** that focuses on the health and well-being of children and families in the child welfare system.

Will my agency have a chance to be involved in the research?

NSSCAW is designed to benefit participating agencies. The study team will talk with agencies about their priorities and use this information to help develop tools, resources, and other information that may support agency needs.

Agencies will be asked to do the following activities:

What will participating child welfare agencies be asked to do?

- **Send monthly reports for sampling.** Agencies will send files each month about closed child abuse investigations and assessments. These will include cases where a child was placed in legal custody without an investigation.
- **Provide case numbers.** Agencies will share the number your agency assigns to each child and other demographic information in the sample files. This will allow the study team to link a child's survey data to other existing data records.
- **Share contact information.** Agencies will share contact information for children and families chosen for the study with an RTI data collector. The study team will use the information to invite families to take part in NSSCAW.
- **Submit existing records.** Agencies will send copies of the NCANDS and AFCARS files they already submit to the Children's Bureau to the NSSCAW study team. These will include a crosswalk of encrypted and unencrypted child case numbers so RTI can identify participating children.
- **Look for other information.** Agencies will work with the study team to see if there are other state data (e.g., Title IV-E prevention services, Medicaid, TANF, school records) that could be shared with RTI and linked to the survey data.

How will the study keep the sample files data provided by participating child welfare agencies secure?

Protecting agency-provided data is a top priority of the study. RTI will make sure that all personally identifiable information (PII) remains private to the extent permitted by law.

Agencies will send data to RTI using a secure website that is password-protected. Data storage will meet government cybersecurity standards. The study will provide each agency with unique credentials. Agencies will use these credentials to access the site and submit monthly files.

Only authorized members of the study team will have access to identifying information. The entire study team signs an agreement to keep information private. Penalties for disclosing private information include termination of employment and financial fines. A detailed security plan for the protection of all NSSCAW data is available upon request.

How will children be involved?

The child's involvement will be different depending on their age:

- **Ages 0–5 years:** We will collect information about younger children from the parent or caregiver.
- **Ages 6–17 years:** We will ask older children and youth to

take part in a survey in person or online.

Older children ages 6 to 10 will be asked about their experiences with school, family, and friends. Youth ages 11 and older will be asked about their health, use of social media and other online activities, relationships with family and friends, and risky behaviors such as drug use. Youth in out of home care will be asked about their current placement and experiences with caseworkers. We will get permission from the legal guardian before we ask older children and youth to take part in a survey.

How will parents and caregivers be involved?

Parents and caregivers, including biological parents, foster parents, and relative caregivers, will be asked about their health and about the child's health. They will also be asked about family needs; benefits, services, and supports; and experiences with the child welfare system. Foster and relative caregivers will be asked about licensing/training, satisfaction with agency practices, motivators and challenges, and plans for child permanency.

How long will the interviews take?

Interviews will take place in person or online, based on what participants prefer.

Interviews with parents or caregivers will take about 60 minutes.

Interviews with children 6–10 years old will take about 25 minutes.

Interviews with youth 11 years and older will take about 45 minutes.

Do participants receive any tokens of appreciation?

Parents and caregivers will receive \$75.

Children 6–10 years old will receive a \$20 gift card. Children 11 years older will receive a \$50 gift card.

How will the privacy of the information be maintained?

A federal Certificate of Confidentiality protects identity of the study participants. The NSSCAW study team is committed to privacy. All staff have signed an agreement to keep information private.

There is one exception. If a data collector or a study team member thinks a child's life or health is in danger, they will inform the appropriate state or county agency.

The participation of selected children and families is completely voluntary. They can withdraw from the study at any time. Protecting the privacy of children and families is very important to the study. Participant names and other personally identifying information are never released or reported.

How might the study findings be used?

Findings will inform federal, state, and local child welfare policies and practices. Key takeaways will highlight service needs common to children and families in the child welfare system. The study will capture support received, identify service gaps, and provide insights into physical and mental health and economic well-being. Finally, the findings will show how things like access to community support

and resources might affect well-being.

State-level data will be made available for analysis by agencies.
Reports and research briefs will be available to the public.

**Who should we contact
for additional
information?**

Federal Project Officer

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Families
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Human Services
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The described collection of information is voluntary and will be used to gather information about child and family experiences with the child welfare system. Public reporting burden for the described collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. 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 and expiration date for the described collection are OMB #: 0970-0202, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Melissa Dolan; mdolan@rti.org.