National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) Regional Partnership Grant (RPG) Policy Academy Discussions

Formative Data Collections for Program Support

0970 – 0531

Supporting Statement

Part A - Justification

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A1. Necessity for the Data Collection

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) seeks approval for the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) to conduct discussions with respondents as part of the Regional Partnership Grant (RPG) Policy Academy. The effort to elicit feedback from RPG representatives as part of the Policy Academy is needed to inform ACF planning.

Background

The Supporting America's Children and Families Act, Pub. L. 118-258, was signed into law on January 4, 2025. This law reauthorizes and amends title IV-B programs. Included in the reauthorization language is a description of changes to RPG which have implications for future ACF/Children's Bureau programming. These changes include:

1. Increase in RPG funds
2. Update to RPG planning phase requirements
3. Expanded scope of evidence-based services
4. Update to performance indicators
5. Availability of services funded by the grant statewide
6. Addition of required partners

More information about this can be found in the Children's Bureau, ACF Information Memorandum, ACYF-CB-IM-11-04.

The reauthorization of the program and the additions to the legislation present an ideal opportunity for ACF to elicit feedback from representatives from past and current RPG rounds and subject matter experts to inform future programming.

Legal or Administrative Requirements that Necessitate the Collection

There are no legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. ACF is undertaking the collection at the discretion of the agency.

A2. Purpose of Survey and Data Collection Procedures

Overview of Purpose and Use

The Policy Academy will bring together representatives from all seven rounds of RPG to share lessons learned. This information gathering effort aims to collect feedback and insights from RPG representatives on their experiences with RPG to provide ACF with findings that can inform future RPG activities, and technical assistance (TA) offerings. This information will also be used with other information to inform aspects of future programs. Each discussion will focus on a specific topic:

- RPG planning lessons (Instrument 1)
- Programs and service selection (Instrument 2)
- Performance indicators and evaluation (Instrument 3)

- Sustainability and going to scale (Instrument 4)
- Partners in practice (Instrument 5)

This proposed information collection meets the following goals of ACF's generic clearance for formative data collections for program support (0970-0531):

- Delivery of TA and/or workflows related to program implementation or the development or refinement of program and grant recipient processes.
- Planning for provision of programmatic or evaluation-related T/TA.
- Obtaining input on the development of program performance measures (PM) from grant recipients or experts in a relevant field, such as development of PMs for programs focused on a specific population served by ACF.
- Obtaining feedback about processes and/or practices to inform ACF program development or support.

Processes for Information Collection

To collect this feedback, NCSACW proposes to ask pre-approved discussion questions that are topic related. Each of the five instruments includes a set of potential questions. It is not the intention to ask respondents all of the pre-approved questions, but to have the flexibility to use questions from the pre-approved banks (e.g., instruments specific to planned topic) depending on the number of participants who attend each discussion and the participants' roles in RPG (e.g., evaluators).

The topic-specific instruments include open-ended questions to elicit discussion among respondents. The discussion questions will be used during a series of virtual meetings to understand respondent experiences and gain insights in the five identified topic areas.

Each virtual meeting will include multiple breakout rooms (participation dependent), where respondents will be asked questions based on their particular role. Target respondents were selected based on a developed list of contacts for current and previous RPG grants, as well as subject matter experts. NCSACW developed this list in collaboration with ACF staff who have experience and familiarity with RPG rounds one to seven. Individuals who will be invited to participate include:

1. Current RPG Project Directors, evaluators, project staff, community partners
2. Former RPG Project Directors, evaluators, project staff, community partners
3. Current and former NCSACW staff who have experience providing TA to RPG
4. Subject matter experts

Target respondents will be invited by email to participate in one of the planned discussion sessions once following approval of this request. Scheduling will take place through email as will any individualized follow up. Target respondents will be asked to respond in real-time during the discussions. With respondent permission, discussion will be recorded. NCSACW staff may also communicate with discussion group participants via Microsoft Teams. Discussions will be co-facilitated by two NCSACW staff members. The discussion group transcripts will be

reviewed, along with notes, and themes will be pulled and aggregated from all topic discussions for the final internal report for ACF.

A3. Improved Information Technology to Reduce Burden

The discussion group sessions will be conducted utilizing the Zoom platform. This platform will allow NCSACW staff to record the discussions for transcription and analysis for reporting purposes. This reduces the burden on participants as they can talk freely and do not need to reply to a survey and/or written questions, which would take more time to complete. Planning will be communicated through email. The NCSACW staff may also communicate with discussion group participants via Microsoft Teams.

NCSACW staff may use CoPilot to identify themes for creating the report for ACF.

A4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

NCSACW conducted a comprehensive environmental scan to identify, analyze, and synthesize information relevant to 5 topics generated by changes to the RPG program in the 2024 Title IV-B reauthorization. The topics were: programs and service selection; performance and evaluation: evaluation strategy and performance indicators; sustainability and going to scale; and partnerships and structuring collaboration. NCSACW developed research questions for each of the topics, totaling 31 research questions.

NCSACW reviewed and analyzed a wide range of resource documents to assess what information exists and is known about each of the research questions: RPG publications in the scientific literature, RPG site-level reports, assessments of evaluation plans, Reports to Congress, pertinent legislation, Notice of Funding Opportunities, and the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse website and resources.

The results of the environmental scan in part informed the development of the RPG Policy Academy discussion questions, particularly in content areas in which the scan identified gaps. For example, while the scan identified that some RPG sites' evaluation design shifted over time, it did not identify the full scope of sites in which this change occurred nor the various factors contributing to the shift. Other examples include: the scan did not identify how RPG sites shape their evaluation design nor did it uncover RPG evaluation data that is available for submission to the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse.

To fill the gap in knowledge, the Policy Academy discussions are required; the information is not available elsewhere.

A5. Involvement of Small Organizations

No small business will be involved with this information collection; however, efforts will still be made to schedule data collection at times that are convenient for respondents.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This is a one-time data collection.

A7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances for the proposed data collection efforts.

A8. Federal Register Notice and 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 request to extend approval of the umbrella generic with minor changes. The notice was published on April 28, 2025, (90 FR 17603), and provided a sixty-day period for public comment. ACF did not receive any comments on the first notice. A second notice was published, allowing a thirty-day period for public comment (90 FR 42248, in conjunction with submission of the request to OMB. ACF did not receive any comments on the second notice.

Consultation with Outside Experts

No consultations have taken place with experts outside of the project team.

A9. Tokens of Appreciation for Respondents

No tokens of appreciation are proposed for this information collection but Honoria will be provided to participants when appropriate. See section A13 for additional information.

A10. Privacy of Respondents

Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Respondents will be informed of all planned uses of data, that their participation is voluntary, and that their information will be kept private.

Discussion group participants will not provide a signed consent form; the nature of their participation will be described at the initiation of the discussion group. Those unwilling to participate can leave the discussion group at any time. By remaining in the discussion group, consent to participate is implied. Although consent form will not be signed, several steps will be taken to ensure the privacy of participants. *First*, the NCSACW staff will not record personally identifiable information (PII) during the discussion groups. *Second*, when presented and reported, all data will be in aggregate form, for the overall group of participants rather than individuals. Any quotes will be de-identified to ensure they cannot be identified (e.g., "a participant in the discussion group"). *Third*, recordings and transcripts of the discussion groups will be destroyed after reports are finalized. *Fourth*, data will be viewed only by those on the

project who will be collecting the data and analyzing it. When these tasks are not active, data will be stored on password protected computers and digital storage folders accessible only to identified key project staff.

A11. Sensitive Questions

There are no sensitive questions in this data collection.

A12. Estimation of Information Collection Burden

Burden Estimates

Burden was estimated by calculating the total time needed for respondent prep and participation in the discussion group. We estimate the average burden per discussion to be 1.5 hours. We estimate 30 respondents per topic area and respondents will participate in one discussion each.

Data collection is expected to be completed within one year.

Cost Estimates

The cost to respondents was calculated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) job code data from May 2024 (Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics Profiles) for the different jobs that potential respondents perform. Costs per hour were estimated based on the average costs to respondents who perform the following jobs:

- Administrative Services Managers [11-3012], which is $52.11 per hour. To account for fringe benefits and overhead the rate was multiplied by two which is $104.22 per hour.
- Social and Community Service Managers [11-9151], which is $37.61 per hour. To account for fringe benefits and overhead the rate was multiplied by two which is $75.22 per hour.
- Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors [21-1018], which is $36.65 per hour. To account for fringe benefits and overhead the rate was multiplied by two which is $73.30 per hour.

The average wage rate based on this data is $84.24 per hour.

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Annual/ Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Wage	Total Annual Cost
NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- RPG Planning Lessons (Instrument 1)	30	1	1.5	45	$84.24	$3,790.80
NCSACW Policy Academy- Programs	30	1	1.5	45	$84.24	$3,790.80

and Service Selection (Instrument 2)						
NCSACW RPG Policy Academy-Performance Indicators and Evaluation (Instrument 3)	30	1	1.5	45	$84.24	$3,790.80
NCSACW RPG Policy Academy-Sustainability and Going to Scale (Instrument 4)	30	1	1.5	45	$84.24	$3,790.80
NCSACW RPG Policy Academy-Partners in Practice (Instrument 5)	30	1	1.5	45	$84.24	$3,790.80
Totals:	150	1	1.5	225	$84.24	**$18,954**

A13. Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers

An honoraria of $62.50 per hour is proposed for professionals to provide feedback on RPG from their professional background. It will only be offered to those who are not affiliated with an RPG (e.g., retired person with expertise), so as to avoid any conflict of interest. The hourly rate of $62.50 was determined based on the Federal daily consulting rate.

A14. Estimate of Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost for the data collection activities under this current request will be $23,973.

A15. Change in Burden

This is for an individual information collection under the umbrella formative generic clearance for program support (0970-0531).

A16. Plan and Time Schedule for Information Collection, Tabulation and Publication

Upon approval of the information collection, NCSACW intends to hold all topic area discussions immediately, over about a one-month timeframe.

The analysis of information collected and development of an internal report is expected to take place over the following year and the report will be submitted to ACF by March 2027.

Currently, there are no plans for publication of materials but the findings are intended to inform ACF activities and may be incorporated into materials beyond the Policy Academy report. Additionally, findings from the Policy Academy may be used to develop internal TA plans or TA materials that can be shared with future TA recipients.

A17. Reasons Not to Display OMB Expiration Date

All instruments will display the expiration date for OMB approval.

A18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection.

Attachments

Attachment 1. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- RPG Planning Lessons (Instrument 1)
Attachment 2. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Programs and Service Selection (Instrument 2)
Attachment 3. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Performance Indicators and Evaluation (Instrument 3)
Attachment 4. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Sustainability and Going to Scale (Instrument 4)
Attachment 5. NCSACW RPG Policy Academy- Partners in Practice (Instrument 5)