

HEAD START FAMILY AND CHILD EXPERIENCES SURVEY
Program Director Information Call and Script

INTRODUCTION

My name is _____. I am calling from [Mathematica Policy Research/Juarez and Associates] to talk about your program's participation in the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES). We are calling about [PROGRAM NAME], which is GRANTEE NUMBER [#] and DELEGATE NUMBER [#]. We recently sent you a letter informing you that your program was selected to be part of a research project for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We included a brochure and fact sheet with information about the study. Did you receive a letter from Dr. Jerry West about the visit and the other materials? [HAVE LETTER AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION IF PERSON IS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE STUDY]

Is this a good time to talk? I would like to answer any questions you may have about FACES, and discuss the logistics of the study with you. I would also like to speak with you about your identifying an on-site coordinator (OCS) for your program. This person will work with the project team to plan the visits to the centers in your program. I would also like to explain more about how centers and children will be selected for the study.

[ALLOW TIME FOR QUESTIONS, RESPOND OR DEFER UNTIL LATER IN THE CALL WHEN THE TOPIC IS PRESENTED].

SITE VISIT PURPOSE AND BASIC ACTIVITIES

First, I would like to review some of the details about the purpose and design of FACES that we included in the letter, and some of the activities that will take place when we visit Head Start centers in your program. Please stop me at any time if you have questions. As we noted in letter from Dr. Jerry West, the FACES project director, the Office of Management and Budget is currently reviewing the design of the FACES 2009 cohort, and clearance of the study is pending. [IF NEEDED: OMB has approved our contacting you to obtain some basic information about your program and identify an on-site coordinator.]

The purpose of FACES is to provide descriptive information about Head Start children and families, and Head Start classroom practices and quality.

- We will interview Head Start staff and conduct classroom observations. We will also interview the parents of Head Start children and administer a battery of child assessments to children participating in the study.
- The information that comes from FACES will be used to identify strategies for improving program effectiveness and by ACF and the Office of Head Start to obtain longitudinal information on the characteristics and experiences of, and outcomes for, children and families served by Head Start.

Site Visit Details:

- We will send a team of 5 to 6 people to spend about one week in your program. They will divide their time between the 2 centers selected for the FACES study.
- We will work with the OSC to limit any disruption caused by our visit.
- During the visit, we would like to interview the center director, the education coordinator, and the teachers and home visitors of the study children.
- We will administer a child assessment battery to children in the study. The assessment measures a range of areas that are covered by the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. The assessments will be administered by our staff that have been specially trained to assess children for FACES.
- Teachers from each selected class will be asked to supplement this information by completing brief forms about the social and emotional development of each child. This questionnaire will be available both as a web-based and hard copy instrument. Teachers will receive a small payment for each of the forms they complete.
- We will also interview parents of the children participating in the study, ideally at the Head Start center or by telephone. Parents will be given \$35 for taking part in the interview and will be given a gift for the child each time he or she participates.

Privacy: Please be assured that everything that staff and families tell us during our visit is private. No individual program or center will be identified and no individual will be quoted by name. Our reports on the Head Start programs will describe the range of practices identified by staff and families across programs, but comments will not be attributed to specific individuals or programs. All staff are required to sign a privacy agreement as a condition of employment

Field Staff Requirements: Criminal Background Checks for Field Staff

To ensure the safety of our field staff and respondents, MPR hiring policy requires all newly hired and rehired field staff to pass a background check. Mathematica has selected Sterling Testing Systems to conduct the background checks, which include Social Security trace, criminal conviction search, sex offender database search, and a Department of Motor Vehicles report. For more information on Sterling Testing Systems, visit its website <http://www.sterlingtesting.com/>.

Information is not for accountability or monitoring: We want to assure you that the information collected during this visit will not be used for program accountability or monitoring purposes. It will be reported in aggregate with information from all of the 60 Head Start sites; it will not be reported by program, center, or child.

Do you have any questions so far?

Next, I want to confirm and collect some basic information about your Head Start program. [CONFIRM AND/OR UPDATE THE FOLLOWING INTO THE FACES DATA BASE OR ON THE CONTACT SHEET FOR LATER DATA ENTRY]:

- CONFIRM CONTACT INFORMATION: Would you mind confirming the following information? I want to be sure I have the correct information and spelling for each: (program director name, physical and mailing addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses)
- PROGRAM OPTION: Is your program center-based, home-based, a combination, or is it locally designed?
- If center-based: How many centers do you have? Could you give me the name of each Head Start center in your program as well as their address and/or zip code. [IF THIS IS A LARGE PROGRAM, ASK IF THEY CAN EMAIL OR FAX YOU THE INFORMATION. FOR NOW YOU CAN COLLECT JUST CENTER NAME AND ZIP CODE].
- The FACES sample is composed of newly enrolled (first year) Head Start children. Can you give me an estimate of the number of newly enrolled 3- and 4-year olds at each Head Start center this fall? Fall 2009? [ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS MAY BE VERY PRELIMINARY].
- What is the estimated percent of Dual Language Learners in each center?
- What days of the week do you operate the children's classrooms? Is it five days a week, four, or some other schedule? Does it vary by center? [SOME PROGRAMS DO NOT HAVE CLASSES ON MONDAYS OR FRIDAYS].
- IF SOME OR ALL HOME BASED: What is the name of each home visitor and the center out of which s/he is based? Can you give me an estimate of the number of newly enrolled 3- and 4-years olds in each of your home visitors' caseloads for fall 2009? [ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS MAY BE VERY PRELIMINARY]
- What is the estimated percent of Dual Language Learners for each of your home visitors?
- When does your program start and end the program year?

Identify On-Site Coordinator (OSC)

We will need to work with the On-site coordinator (OSC) from your program to assist us with our preparations. This can be one person or two depending on your preference. This person will be responsible for. . .

- working with a FACES Enrollment Specialist (FES) to identify eligible classrooms and children to be sampled for the study,

- helping us to obtain parental consent and tracking the receipt of consent forms,
- helping coordinate the visit to each center, and
- scheduling the child assessments, on-site parent interviews and staff interviews.

We plan to provide an honorarium to the OSC for this person's help, and will provide more details on this when they are available. We assume that most of the work can be done outside of regular work hours so that it will not take this person's time away from his or her normal duties.

- Do you know who you would like this person [these people] to be or do you want to think about it some more? I can call you at another time to discuss this if you are not sure. [ENTER THIS PERSON'S NAME INTO THE FACES DATABASE. BE SURE TO HAVE A CONTACT PERSON OTHER THAN THE OSC JUST IN CASE!]
- If your program or any of your centers include children who are not funded by Head Start, will this person [those people] be able to distinguish those children so they are excluded from the sample? Is the "funding stream" always clear and will the OSC know this?

With your permission, I would like to contact this person to discuss our FACES procedures and what is expected of the OSC. [GET THE OSC'S NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION, BUT WAIT FOR PERMISSION TO CONTACT THEM]

It is important that we establish a close working partnership between the OSC and the FACES project—the OSC is the person we will work with to ensure that we develop a data collection plan that conforms to your local requirements and minimizes the burden on your program. I will work with the OSC to develop such a plan. We will send you a copy of the plan after it is drafted. The plan will include:

- a schedule for the preliminary visit to the program by the FES for selecting the sample of classrooms and children
- the procedures for obtaining parental consent
- a schedule for the data collection week
- arrangements for testing and interview locations

CENTER, CLASSROOM, AND CHILD SELECTION

Finally, I would like to explain to you the way that we will chose the centers, classrooms and children that will be asked to participate in the study.

- **Center Selection.** Two centers that are projected to have newly enrolled 3- and/or 4-year olds in the fall will be randomly selected from each program. If a programs has only two centers, both will be included in the study.
- **Classroom Selection.** Three classrooms will be randomly selected taking into account whether it is center based or home based and whether or not it operates on a full-day or half-day schedule. If a center has 3 or fewer classrooms, we will include them all. Classrooms with no newly enrolled 3- or 4-year olds will not be eligible for the sample.
- **Child Selection.** The FES will ask for lists of newly enrolled 3- and 4 year olds in the selected classrooms. We will select approximately 10 children per classroom and will invite these children and their families to participate.

NEXT STEPS

- Once we establish who the OSC will be, with your permission, I would like to send the OSC detailed information about the study. I would like to contact her/him to arrange a time for us to discuss the responsibilities of the OSC. I would like to do this as soon as possible.
- I will need to conduct a brief interview with you later in the year. What is usually the best time to reach you? Is this the best number to reach you?
- In case I need to follow up with you for any other reason, which is the easiest way to reach you—by phone or e-mail? [CONFIRM THAT THIS PERSON IS THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE YOUR REGULAR CONTACT].
- Do you have any questions at this point? If questions or concerns come up, please feel free to contact me at [PHONE or E-MAIL ADDRESS].

Thank you for participating in this important study. We appreciate your cooperation, and I look forward to working with your program.