

Child Care Workforce Survey and Analysis RFA Questions and Responses

1. Are the response rates requested based on total population or sample? While the population of programs was surveyed in 2003 for smaller counties, for larger counties, a random sample was first chosen and the response rates were based on an adjusted sample.

A statistically valid stratified random sample including all permit and program types may be used ONLY in NC's urban counties. The 15 urban counties* in NC are: Buncombe, Catawba, Gaston, Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Rowan, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Alamance, Orange, Durham, Wake, Cumberland and New Hanover.

**As defined by NC Rural Center as counties having a population density of more than 250 people per square mile at the time of the 2000 U.S. Census. This definition of urban has been incorporated in legislation adopted by the N.C. General Assembly.*

2. The response rate as spelled out in the RFA (per county rate) will result in a much greater response rate statewide than was achieved in 2003. While the 2003 survey resulted in a statewide response rate of 78% for directors and family child care providers and 52% for teachers, county rates ranged from 68%-100% for directors and family child care providers and 25%-97% (participation rate) for teachers. Is this per county rate negotiable?

All submitted proposals should address the achievement of the requested response rates of 78% of directors, 50% of teachers and 70% of family child care home providers in each of NC's 85 non-urban counties.

See response to Question 1 above for listing of 15 urban counties where sampling will be accepted and a description of acceptable sample protocol in urban counties.

3. Based on prior experience, after numerous attempts (written, phone and in person) many programs refuse to participate. What should be done in those small counties when programs refuse to participate resulting in the inability to achieve the high response rates requested? (For example, in a county with less than 9 programs-which is approximately 12% of our counties-if 2 programs refused to participate, the highest response rate that would be attainable with all remaining programs responding would only be 75%.)

The anticipation of challenges in achieving expected response rates is a valid concern for groups and organizations responding to this Request for Applications. All proposals submitted should provide detailed information regarding the applicant organization's anticipated strategies for encouraging and achieving required response rates.

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4. With the addition of school-age information in the 2011 study, comparisons to 2003 data will be skewed as the 2003 study was only on programs serving birth to five. How can data from the current survey be compared to the information from 2003 given that the two populations are different?

School age data, having been collected only with the 2011 survey, will be considered baseline data for this age group.

5. Prior experience with program evaluations that are conducted online have resulted in a mere 20% response rate. Participants were more likely to respond than would be the case with a workforce study because these individuals know us, receive a monetary benefit from us and overall are extremely satisfied with our program. What is the value added to offering an online option for an expected low rate of return?

Online survey and response is intended as one of three options for individuals. The three-tiered (telephone, online, written) survey strategy is intended to allow all potential respondents to complete survey questions in the most convenient, expedient and efficient manner.

6. To ensure unduplicated responses, online surveys require a personal email sent specifically to each email address. Will you supply us with a current, valid, email address for each child care center? family child care home? child care program teacher and other staff?

The Division of Child Development has possession of electronic mail contacts for approximately 66% of licensed facilities (not individuals). This information will be shared with the contractor chosen for this project. Contractors are welcomed and encouraged to work toward collection of a greater percentage of electronic contacts, should they choose to, but may contact facilities where the Division does not possess electronic contacts by telephone or written survey.

7. If you cannot supply us with email addresses for any or all of these participants groups (teachers, child care center directors, family child care homes) would the requirement for an online survey option be dropped?

For facilities where electronic mail contacts are not available, there is no expectation of the completion of online surveying and response. Telephone and mailing address information will be provided for all programs.

8. Does the report need to focus only on statewide data or must it also include data and comparisons on the county level?

County level data and analysis must be included in all proposals.

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9. If questions on the workforce surveys have previously been determined to be valid, accurate and easy to complete, must they be retested? If not, what, if any, documentation is needed?

Documentation explaining how each survey question has been validated is required.

10. Once collected, raw data is cleaned, analyzed, sliced into parts then analyzed again. Data used by “participating organizations” at any point along the process will yield results that differ from our final analysis. How can we be assured of the integrity of our data once the information is used by others?

As a project supported by federal block grant funds, all data produced and collected, including the survey instrument, as a part or result of the Child Care Workforce Study is considered public information and will be shared upon request.

11. In 2003, DCD recognized the need for a study of the child care workforce and a needs and resources assessment. As such, nearly \$700,000 was given to produce this comprehensive study. The workforce section of the report was completed for \$340,000 (of which \$324,000 was from DCD funding). Eight years later, DCD is proposing to provide \$300,000 and is requiring (in addition to a handful of minor additions) surveying the school-age population, an online survey option, all raw data, an evaluation process and a much greater response rate per county than was achieved eight years ago. The amount allotted to do this study is much less than was available in 2003, given the much larger workforce population to be surveyed, the increased costs for certain elements of the project over the 8 year lapsed time, the higher expectations for response rates and the much shorter time frame, is there any flexibility in the deliverables you described based on this information?

All proposals must include all outcomes and deliverables as requested by the RFA within the budget allocated.

12. Given the start data [sic] of the grant and the requirement to first convene an advisory committee and then to offer an online survey as the first of a three-tiered survey approach, written survey collection would necessarily begin later in the spring. Summer staffing is vastly different and in many cases programs are closed during this time yet the high response rate necessitates that every possible day be used to gather survey information. Adding schoolage programs further complicates this dynamic that in the previous study we found with Head Start and pre-k programs. What leeway is available in the study implementation to address these issues?

Upon contract agreement with an applicant organization or agency, outcome deadlines *may* be negotiated.

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13. What format is “compatible with current DCD technology” for electronic submission (for both report and raw data)?

All reports and raw data should be able to be viewed and manipulated using Microsoft Office Suite 2003 software.

14. Because the study requires a comparison to 2003 data, use of the 2003 survey instruments would necessarily serve as the basis for a comparison study. These products are the property of CCSA and as such, the surveys used for the 2011 study would not be considered part of the “products” considered public documents. Does this fit with the RFA requirement?

See response to Question 10 above.

15. For the school-age population, employees during the summer may be different than during the school year and certainly hours of work and pay may differ significantly. Should we survey this population during the summer? during the school year? How would these differences then extrapolate to compare to preschool employees?

Data related to staff working with school age children will be expected to be collected during the traditional school calendar. Also see response to Question 4 above.

16. The grant timeline requires that all activities must be complete by August 1, 2011. It is impossible to get the desired response rate by county, call and retrieve missing data, enter all data, clean all data, analyze all data and prepare 101 reports in 7 months. We would require at least an 18 month timeframe. Should we continue to pursue this grant?

See response to Question 12 above.

17. Just to clarify the RFA, it says that the final report is due August 1, 2011, giving us only a few months to conduct the study and present our results. Is this date correct?

See response to Question 12 above.

18. What is the anticipated number of participants who will need to surveyed?

Child care administrators, lead teachers, teachers and aides, school age program coordinators, assistant and group leaders for school age care, and family child care home operators will be surveyed in the approximately 8,500 regulated family child care homes and child care centers in every county throughout North Carolina. It is estimated that there are approximately 42,000 people employed in child care in NC.