

Why was I selected?

Your household was scientifically selected from all of the household addresses in the U.S. to participate in this study. It is important for us to hear from every selected household to get a complete picture of the availability and use of ECE in your area. You represent many other households like yours across the nation and cannot be replaced.

Your participation will help policy makers, local agencies, and other key decision makers better understand the need for child care and ways to more effectively support working families that rely on it.

Will my responses be private?

Anything you tell us will be used for statistical purposes **only**; identities of individuals and the programs that you discuss will not be disclosed except as required by law. All project staff who handle information collected for the study must sign a privacy agreement that provides for criminal and civil penalties if privacy is not kept.

The NSECE has also obtained a federal Certificate of Confidentiality from the Department of Health and Human Services in order to further protect your privacy. With this Certificate, NORC cannot be forced (for example by court order or subpoena) to disclose information that may identify you in any federal, state, local, civil, criminal, legislative, administrative, or other proceedings.

How can I participate?

Participating in the NSECE is easy. NORC interviewers will work with your schedule to find a convenient time to reach you in person or by phone. Contact us at nsece24survey@norc.org or at 1-800-487-4609 and we can help you set up an appointment.

Questions about NSECE?

1-800-487-4609

or

nsece24survey@norc.org



NATIONAL SURVEY OF EARLY CARE & EDUCATION | 2024



Participation is voluntary. 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 for this information collection is 0970-0391 and the expiration date is 6/30/2026. Please send comments regarding the time required for this survey or any other aspect of the described information collection to: NORC at the University of Chicago, 55 E Monroe St, Ste 3000, Chicago, IL, 60603, Attention: A. Rupa Datta

What is the NSECE?

The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) is funded by the Administration for Children and Families, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago.

The NSECE interviews both providers of early care and education (ECE) and households with young children to better understand the relationship between what families need and the ECE options available to them in their communities. The NSECE was first conducted in 2012 and then again in 2019. The NSECE is collecting new information in 2024. We will be contacting close to 20,000 providers and 80,000 households across all 50 states to participate in the study beginning in late 2023.

Why is the NSECE so important?

The NSECE provides reliable information about families' needs and preferences for early care and education and the individuals and organizations caring for children. Information collected by the NSECE in both 2012 and 2019 has been used to inform policy decisions to better support families and providers of care.

The NSECE has helped public and local agencies better understand how parents manage complex family schedules with child care arrangements and whether they have access to high quality and affordable child care. Family, friends, and neighbors also play a critical role in helping parents meet their child care needs, so we talk with them as well to get a complete picture of who is looking after children and how parents manage to fill in gaps in care.

It has been five years since the NSECE was last conducted. A lot has happened since then that affects parents' use of child care (inflation, pandemic, economic downturn) and what care options are available to them. We need updated information to help show what families and caregivers most need now.

What is the Administration for Children and Families?

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that administers Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund (which funds child care subsidy) programs, and sponsors ECE research. ACF helps children in low-income families access high-quality care and helps coordinate efforts across Head Start, child care, pre-K, home visiting, and other early childhood development programs throughout the federal government. The NSECE will assist ACF in its mission to improve the availability of high-quality ECE programs.

Who are you surveying?

The NSECE will be interviewing both households and caregivers in selected communities so we can measure how well families' child care needs match the ECE resources available to them. Within households, the study will collect information from:

- **Families with children.** Parents or guardians of children under age 13 will be interviewed to learn more about their ECE use and needs. The survey will take about an hour. Questions will cover:
 - Child care usage and schedule
 - Parental employment and school schedule
 - What parents look for as they search for care
 - Types of care parents prefer to use
 - How parents pay for their children's care
- **Individuals who regularly look after other people's children under age 13 in a home-based setting.** This group includes:
 1. Individuals like grandparents, other relatives, friends, neighbors, or baby-sitters who may not consider themselves as child care providers. This survey will take about 20 minutes.
 2. Regulated, licensed, or registered home-based providers. This survey will take about 40 minutes.

Questions will cover:

- Number of children individuals look after and how often
- Reasons why they look after children
- Activities they do with children in their care
- Support and other resources for providers
- General attitudes toward caring for children

To round out the picture in each community, the NSECE will also interview **center-based providers, schools, and other programs as well as staff who work in these classrooms.**

Why should I participate?

By collecting information from both parents and caregivers in selected areas across the nation, the NSECE will be able to describe community by community how well the supply of ECE meets the needs of families. This description can help national, state, and local governments, as well as other organizations identify areas where families and providers may be mismatched. Some questions the NSECE will address are:

- How do parents balance work and school with child care?
- How do parents choose providers, people, or organizations to care for their children? What decisions do parents make as they seek this care?
- What types of ECE do parents most need? Is this care available in their area? Is it affordable?
- How do parents at different income levels pay for their children's care? What kind of help do they need?
- Which families use care provided by family, friends, and neighbors most often and why?
- How can we better support these types of caregivers and offer opportunities to help them improve the care they offer children?

