

August 21, 2014

Administration for Children & Families
Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation
370 L'Enfant Promenade SW
Washington, DC 20447
Attn: OPRE Reports Clearance Officer

RE: Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency: Follow-Up Data Collections

To Whom It May Concern:

After reviewing the draft 36-Month Follow-Up Survey, Social Dynamics, LLC is pleased to provide the following comments regarding the proposed collection of information. Given the extensive nature of the survey, we feel that OPRE should consider methods to lessen the burden to participants by reducing the survey's length. To accomplish this, focus groups of stakeholders, such as those who participated in the outreach discussions from March to September of 2008, could provide feedback on the relative value and importance of the topics included in the draft 36-Month Follow-Up Survey. The input from these focus groups could be combined with an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative properties of the survey questions in an attempt to streamline the survey.

Allowing participants to participate in all or part of the survey via an online or app-based option would allow for greater flexibility in the location in which participants complete the survey, and would also offer the opportunity to complete the survey in several shorter sessions. Some of the topics, such as those related to demographic information, may lend themselves to an online or app-based format. Making all or part of the survey available in this way could serve to decrease burden and increase response rates. We would also suggest that OPRE consider offering gift cards, rather than checks, as a token of appreciation for survey participants. This option could ease the burden on participants who may not have a checking account.

Finally, we suggest that OPRE consider the following changes/additions to the 36-Month Follow-Up Survey:

- Replacing "One-Stop Career Centers" with "One-Stop Career Centers/American Job Centers" to reflect the new name, in items such as C3 and C11.
- Adding options such as *Ex-Offender Status*, *Substance Abuse/Mental Health Issues*, *Concerns about Losing Social Security or Other Benefits*, and *Language Barriers* to item B10 (*What was the main reason you did not have a job during that time?*).

SOCIAL DYNAMICS

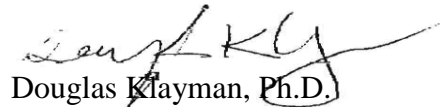
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- Given the potential differences in interest rates and repayment options, it could be useful to differentiate between Federal and non-Federal students loans in item C11 (*Funding sources used to pay for school expenses*).
- Including options such as Vocational Rehabilitation funds in item C11 (*Funding sources used to pay for school expenses*).

Thank you for your consideration of our suggestions. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and hope that they are helpful in OPRE's ISIS evaluation activities.

Sincerely,



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