



March 4, 2018

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20201

Attn: OPRE Reports Clearance Officer

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Study of We Grow Together: The Q-CCIIT Professional Development System, a new collection proposed in the Federal Register (Volume 3, Number 2, page 382-383, Wednesday, January 3, 2018).

The National Head Start Association (NHSA) is a nonprofit organization committed to the belief that every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to succeed in life. NHSA is the voice for more than one million children, 250,000 staff, and 1,600 Head Start grantees.

Particularly given the limited opportunities available as far as professional development tools and curricula for infants and toddlers in child care settings, NHSA believes the Q-CCIIT system has the potential to be a much-needed support for Early Head Start and other child care providers. With the potential value that the results of this study could offer to providers of care for infants and toddlers, we find that the estimate of burden hours is accurate and worthwhile.

We would also like to bring to the researchers' attention the importance of ensuring that the study reaches a broad population, including having geographic and demographic diversity, to ensure that the findings are relevant for the diverse population of child care users and providers nationwide. We hope the researchers will ensure that the materials, questionnaires, content, and Q-CCIIT measure are sensitive to the rich diversity of culture, experience, and setting found in different communities.

We at NHSA would also like to offer to assist or advise this project to the extent that our expertise and organizational support could contribute to its success.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our comments about the We Grow Together and Q-CCIIT project. If you have any questions, please contact yvinci@nhsa.org.

Sincerely,

Executive Director
National Head Start Association

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The National Head Start Association, an independent membership organization, advocates on behalf of the entire Head Start community and provides training and resources to Head programs nationwide.

Response from the ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation

We appreciate the thoughtful comments submitted by the National Head Start Association (NHTA) regarding the Study of We Grow Together: The Q-CCIIT Professional Development System, a new collection proposed in the Federal Register (Volume 3, Number 2, pp. 382-383). NHTA affirmed the importance of examining the implementation of We Grow Together, a professional development system developed to promote high-quality caregiver-child interactions in settings serving infants and toddlers. We Grow Together is available on a secure interactive website and includes training videos, materials, and exercises to be used by caregivers with the help of local professional development providers (e.g., mentors, coaches, etc.) to support high quality practices with infants and toddlers.

This field test aims to examine implementation of We Grow Together and the constructs we hypothesize are associated with use of We Grow Together. Ultimately, findings from this field test will inform the refinement of the We Grow Together system and its capacity to support teachers and caregivers of infants and toddlers.

We aim to have a diverse study sample that includes caregivers and professional development providers, working in a variety of early care and education settings, with a range of qualifications and professional experiences. Diversity in care settings and experiences of study participants will allow us to ensure that the We Grow Together system is helpful for a wide range of caregivers and professional development providers. In particular, the study team plans to sample care settings in 10 geographical areas across the country. The field test will include center-based classrooms and family child care settings, operating both under Early Head Start (EHS) and in community-based settings. The current study is not seeking representativeness of the sample or generalizability of the findings to all potential users and all types of Head Start and/or community-based child care settings. The key research questions motivating this study are not ready to be asked in a large-scale, nationally representative evaluation that would seek to reflect geographic and demographic diversity as well as rich diversity of settings and communities served. We Grow Together has been developed with sensitivity to diversity in settings, caregivers and populations served, and we have designed the study with intent to examine differences in experiences and to inform further improvement of We Grow Together. Future research and evaluation efforts examining the We Grow Together system may expand to additional types of settings and geographic regions.

In addition, the study team will continue to consult with technical experts and stakeholders representing a range of professional and demographic perspectives who can provide complementary knowledge and experience related to professional development services in early care and education programs and the broader realm of early care and education practices and policies.