

**American Indian and Alaska Native  
Head Start Family and Child  
Experiences Survey 2015  
(AI/AN FACES 2015)  
Data Application Protocol**



**American Indian and  
Alaska Native**

*family and child experiences survey*



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## Overview

The process of data access and dissemination for the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (AI/AN FACES) 2015 represents the outcome of a collaborative effort that involved members from the AI/AN FACES 2015 Workgroup, staff from Mathematica Policy Research, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), and the *Child Care and Early Education Research Connections*, together with representatives from a tribal community Institutional Review Board. This process is intended to ensure that: (1) the AI/AN FACES 2015 data are used accurately and appropriately and only by qualified researchers; (2) tribal input is taken into account when interpreting and reporting findings from the study; (3) tribal programs and communities have access to the findings and information about how the data are being used and by whom; and (4) participant privacy and data confidentiality are protected.

### AI/AN FACES 2015 Data Application

This document contains information to support researchers applying for access to the AI/AN FACES 2015 data file. Below is a checklist of requirements specific to applying for the AI/AN FACES 2015 data. These requirements are in addition to the *Research Connections* online application (see [ICPSR application guide](#)). The remainder of this document contains the information needed to complete the listed requirements. Thank you for your interest in the AI/AN FACES 2015 data!

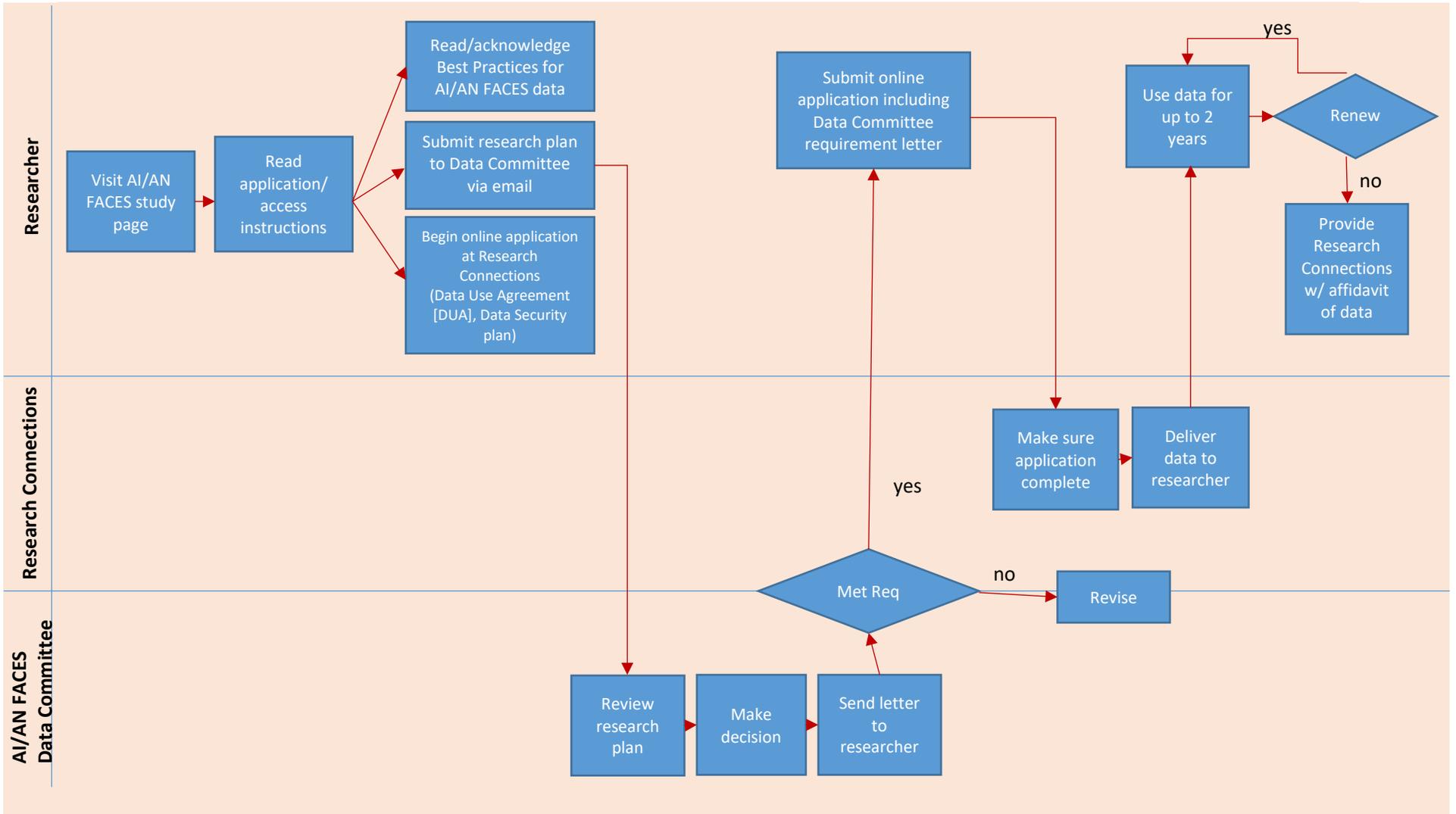
### Process for Obtaining Data Access

1. All team members (current and future) must read the [Best Practices for Working with AI/AN FACES Data](#).
  - a. Read the two required publicly available articles on tribal research and evaluation.
2. Create a research plan to submit to AI/AN FACES Data Committee (see [page 6](#) for detailed description of requirements) and email research plan to AI/AN FACES Data Committee ([AIAN.OPRE.Data@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:AIAN.OPRE.Data@acf.hhs.gov)).
3. Receive notification letter from AI/AN FACES Data Committee that indicates if research plan has met requirements. (If you did not meet requirements, review feedback from AI/AN Data Committee and re-submit).
4. Prepare materials for submission to [Research Connections](#). Include the following:
  - a. Notification letter from AI/AN FACES Data Committee
  - b. IRB approval documentation
  - c. Signed *Acknowledgements for AI/AN FACES Data Access* (see [page 17](#)) including *Best Practices for Working with AI/AN FACES Data* and confidentiality pledge agreeing to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants, and agreeing to not report any findings at the individual, tribal community or program level. Upload signed document for online application.
  - d. Signed Data Use Agreement

### **Processes Post Data Access**

1. Submit publications prior to submission and presentations prior to presentation to the Data Committee for review by email ([AIAN\\_OPRE\\_Data@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:AIAN_OPRE_Data@acf.hhs.gov)).
2. If the research questions or plans for analyses change over the course of the researcher's access to the data, a revised research plan should be submitted to the Data Committee for review.
3. Annually, researchers should submit a brief description of the research that has been conducted within the previous year, and a list of dissemination activities including journals, briefs, presentations, and posters. Links to these materials should be provided to *Research Connections* where possible.

Figure 1: AI/AN FACES 2015 Data Application Process



## Research Plan Guidelines for Researchers Submitting Applications for Data

American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015 (AI/AN FACES 2015) data are archived and available at *Research Connections*<sup>1</sup> (or any future ACF data archive grantee/contractor). Researchers requesting access to the data must submit a research plan for how they will use the data and disseminate findings. The research plan must also include information on their experience with tribal research and reading the *Best Practices for Working with AI/AN FACES Data* document. In addition, researchers must agree to submit copies of all manuscripts and presentation materials using AI/AN FACES 2015 data for review before they are submitted for publication or presented. The research plans, manuscripts, and presentation materials will be reviewed by a small committee, hereinafter referred to as the AI/AN FACES Data Committee or the Data Committee.

The requirements for access to the data are based on agreements made between the data collection team at Mathematica Policy Research and the tribal IRBs governing the communities in which data were collected. These reviews are intended to assist researchers to use the data with consideration for the tribal contexts from which they came. The feedback that the committee provides is intended to aid the researcher; it is not intended to infringe in any way on academic freedom or to limit researchers to a specific line of inquiry. Tribal review of some kind is standard operating procedure in most (if not all) tribal research partnerships, so this requirement aligns with best practices for conducting research with tribal communities. The required review of any publication or presentation using AI/AN FACES 2015 data is not meant to replace the peer review that would be done by a journal or professional conference in advance of accepting a manuscript or presentation.

The application for data includes the investigator's research plan as well as plan for disseminating findings. The research plan should be 2-3 pages in length and include the following:

- Main research questions and rationale for that study (what is the knowledge gap, why is the AI/AN FACES 2015 data the right data to answer this question)
- Variables to use in analyses (this does not need to be comprehensive, but should show that they have reviewed the [User's Manual](#) for what data are available and appropriate for answering their research questions)
- Description of the analytic sample
- Specification of subgroup comparisons (if any) proposed
- Analysis plan (demonstrating an understanding of what the data can and cannot do)
  - Statistical method(s)
  - Analysis weight(s)
- General plan for disseminating findings that should include plans for publications, presentations, and any other sharing of methods and/or results

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<sup>1</sup> *Research Connections* is a cooperative agreement funded by OPRE. As part of their mission, they archive and disseminate data, and provide data trainings to qualified researchers through the Inter-University Consortium for Policy and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan.

The information that is included in the research plan needs to demonstrate that the applicant knows and has highlighted a basic understanding of the data set, they have proposed a reasonable and sound data analysis plan, and they have reviewed all data documentation.

In addition to the research plan, prospective data users must also show evidence demonstrating the principal investigator or a senior member of their research team has prior experience conducting research with tribal programs and communities. Evidence of this experience may be highlighted in a bio sketch or curriculum vitae (for example, publications, research projects, service on workgroups or advisory panels, previous or current partnerships with a tribal community as documented by a letter of support, or other relevant activities reflecting AI/AN research). If the principal investigator or a senior member does not have prior experience with research in tribal communities, the application must describe the plan for engaging others with expertise and/or experience in these communities (listing their names, affiliations, and relevant experiences) and how the consultation has influenced the research project.

All research plans will be reviewed by the AI/AN FACES Data Committee, which is comprised of individuals with expertise in conducting research with tribal communities and those with knowledge of and experience working with large-scale national datasets. Additionally, it will include representatives from Region XI Head Start programs or tribal community representatives.

The committee will review each research plan to:

- Evaluate whether the research plan demonstrates a sound understanding of the study design and sample.
- Evaluate whether the proposed research questions are able to be answered by the data.
- Evaluate the plan for disseminating findings.
- Evaluate expertise and/or experience of research team in working with tribal communities. If no previous experience, evaluate plan for engaging experts.

The reviewers on the Data Committee will provide a narrative based on their review of the application (see [page 16](#) for guidelines the reviewer will use) including a recommendation for the applicant's request for access to AI/AN FACES data. The Data Committee Chair will review the application as well as the reviewer narratives and recommendations when making the final decision on data access.

The final decision on data access will result in one of two outcomes:

1. Met requirements without change.
2. Did not meet requirements.

The second outcome above will include an explanation of the reasons why the requirements have not been met for access to the AI/AN FACES 2015 data. This feedback is intended to help researchers create better research plans with the AI/AN FACES 2015 data. This does not limit the researcher from applying again if they have satisfied the concerns of the Data Committee.

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## Research Plan Template for Applicants

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### Introduction

Provide background information to your project. Why are you interested in these data? What are your goals?

### Research Questions

Include main research questions for the project. This can be a bullet point list.

### Variables

List key variables you plan to use in your analyses. These do not need to be the variable names (could be constructs), but demonstrate that you have reviewed what data are available in this dataset. This can be a bullet point list.

### Analytic Sample/Analysis Plan

What is the sample you are interested in working with? Will you be limiting the sample in any way? Who do you hope to be able to describe in your conclusions? Will you be doing any subgroup comparisons?

What sampling weights are you planning to use?

What types of statistical analyses are you planning on doing?

### Dissemination Plan

How do you plan to share results of your work? Will you submit results for publication? If so, list some possible outlets, including journal articles, conference presentations, etc. How will you share your research findings with tribal communities and Region XI Head Start programs? How will you ensure findings are presented to a non-research audience?

### Research Team

Include evidence of experience with research in tribal communities in a bio sketch or curriculum vitae (for example, publications, research projects, service on workgroups or advisory panels, or other relevant activities reflecting AI/AN research). If the principal investigator or a senior member does not have prior experience with research in tribal communities, the application must describe the plan for engaging others with expertise and/or experience in these communities (listing their names, affiliations, and relevant experiences) and how the consultation has influenced your research project. You may include this section as addendum to the research plan.

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\*Please review the AI/AN FACES User's Manual when preparing your application.

## Requirements After Receiving Data Access

### Review

Once granted access, all publications and presentations using AI/AN FACES 2015 data must be submitted to the Data Committee for review prior to presentation or publication (see [page 10](#) for more information).

The review of manuscripts and presentations for those using AI/AN FACES 2015 data is different from the peer review process for a journal or the review of presentations for conferences. The primary purpose is to ensure that the AI/AN FACES data were used appropriately and that the interpretation of the findings is reasonable and takes into consideration the cultural context in which the data were collected. The purpose is not to judge the scientific merit of the publication or replace the peer review process for publications and presentations. The purpose is not to infringe on academic freedom, but instead to satisfy the IRB concerns of the tribal communities in which the data were collected. All feedback is a suggestion, but the Data Committee strongly recommends the author(s) consider this feedback in their revisions.

Author(s) should submit all draft manuscripts and presentations to the committee for review. All draft publications should be submitted for review at least **two months prior to submission** and presentations should be submitted at least **4 weeks prior to the presentation date**.

### Reporting

Researchers should submit a brief description of the research that is being conducted within the previous year and a list of dissemination activities including journals, briefs, presentations, and posters. Links to these materials should be provided to the Data Committee, and see the Data Use Agreement for what is required to be submitted to *Research Connections*.

## Publication and Presentation Requirements

The Data Committee must review all publications and presentations created using AI/AN FACES 2015 prior to release.

The review of manuscripts and presentations for those using AI/AN FACES 2015 data is different from the peer review process for a journal or the review of presentations for conferences. The primary purpose is to ensure that the AI/AN FACES data were used appropriately and that the interpretation of the findings is reasonable and takes into consideration the cultural context in which the data were collected. The purpose is not to judge the scientific merit of the publication or replace the peer review process for publications and presentations. The purpose is not to infringe on academic freedom, but instead to satisfy the IRB concerns of the tribal communities in which the data were collected. All feedback is a suggestion, but the Data Committee strongly recommends the author(s) consider this feedback in their revisions.

Author(s) should submit all draft manuscripts and presentations to the committee for review. All draft publications should be submitted for review at least **two months prior to submission** and presentations should be submitted at least **4 weeks prior to the presentation date**.

The committee will review each manuscript and presentation to:

- Assess the appropriateness of the research questions (e.g., is there a classroom level question without consideration of the child)
- Assess whether the analyses and findings presented are appropriate for the data (e.g., are all findings reported at the child level)
  - This may include comments asking the author(s) to restate findings. (e.g., instead of: Teachers in Region XI programs, it should say: Teachers of children in Region XI Programs)
- Assess the interpretation of findings
  - The reviewers should carefully review the entire manuscript/presentation since researchers' interpretation of study findings could come up in multiple sections.
    - Did the author(s) make unfounded connections between findings and another topic?
    - Did the author(s) interpret the findings in a way that demonstrates ignorance of the culture?

Each reviewer will write a narrative in response to each presentation and/or manuscript. The Chair will compile the responses and send comments back to the author(s). Those author(s) that make the suggested changes will have the option to include the following on their publication or presentation: *“This manuscript/presentation has been reviewed by the AI/AN FACES Data Committee that is tasked with conducting reviews of the work of researchers to make sure it is done in a good way. The Data Committee includes researchers with experience working with tribal communities and Head Start Directors in Region XI.”*

Researcher teams should submit a brief description to *Research Connections* annually of the research that has been conducted within the previous year, and a list of dissemination activities

including journals, briefs, presentations, and posters. Links to these materials should be provided to *Research Connections* where possible. This annual update of materials disseminated from the work of the AI/AN FACES 2015 was a request from the tribal IRBs in the communities where data was collected.

## Data Committee Protocol

American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015 (AI/AN FACES 2015) data are archived and available at *Research Connections*<sup>2</sup> (or any future ACF data archive grantee/contractor). Researchers requesting access to the data must submit a research plan for how they will use the data and disseminate findings. The research plan must also include information on their experience with tribal research and signed AI/AN FACES 2015 Data Access Acknowledgements of Research Team (see [page 17](#)). In addition, researchers must agree to submit copies of all manuscripts and presentation materials using AI/AN FACES 2015 data for review before they are published or presented. The research plans, manuscripts, and presentation materials will be reviewed by the AI/AN FACES Data Committee or the Data Committee.

The requirements for access to the data are based on agreements made between the data collection team at Mathematica Policy Research and the tribal IRBs governing the communities in which data were collected. These agreements included: convening a data committee; making sure data are reported appropriately and not identifying any tribe or community in any analyses or report; receiving an annual report with the names of the institutions who have been granted access to the data; and receiving an annual report with all publications and presentations that are made with the data.

This section describes the responsibilities, composition and structure of the Data Committee and outlines how the committee will operate when reviewing:

- Research plans submitted by researchers who are requesting access to the AI/AN FACES data.
- Manuscripts and presentation materials based on researchers' analyses of these data.

A separate section (see [page 16](#)) outlines the critical elements to be included in the researchers' plans and the Committee review of those plans and any manuscripts and presentations.

### Responsibilities

The AI/AN Data Committee will review the:

- 1) Research plans submitted by researchers who are requesting access to the AI/AN FACES data.
- 2) Manuscripts and presentation materials based on researchers' analyses of these data.

These reviews are intended to assist researchers to use the data with consideration for the tribal contexts from which they came. The feedback that the committee provides is intended to aid the researcher; it is not intended to infringe in any way on academic freedom or to limit researchers

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<sup>2</sup> *Research Connections* is a cooperative agreement funded by OPRE. As part of their mission, they archive and disseminate data, and provide data trainings to qualified researchers through the Inter-University Consortium for Policy and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan.

to a specific line of inquiry. Tribal review of some kind is standard operating procedure in most (if not all) tribal research partnerships, so this requirement aligns with best practices for conducting research with tribal communities. The Data Committee is taking on this role for AI/AN FACES and in accordance with the tribal agreements for the study.

The Data Committee will make a recommendation regarding the applicants' request for access to AI/AN FACES data. Their initial review of researchers' proposal will result in one of two outcomes:

1. Met requirements without change, or
2. Did not meet requirements.

The second outcome above will include an explanation of the reasons why AI/AN FACES 2015 data cannot be used to answer the questions in the researchers' plan by the Data Committee. This does not limit the researcher from applying again if they satisfy the concerns of the Data Committee in the next application.

Researchers granted access to the data will agree to provide presentations and publications prior to distribution to the Data Committee. The Data Committee will review and offer comments and suggestions, but will not have the power to interfere with a researcher's plan for publishing or presenting findings using AI/AN FACES data. Researchers agree to strongly consider feedback from the Data Committee. This review will not take the place of any formal peer review conducted by a journal or conference prior to acceptance for publication or presentation. Decisions about the scientific merit of any manuscript or presentation will be evaluated as part of the professional peer review process.

### **Composition and Structure**

The Data Committee will be comprised of individuals with expertise in conducting research with tribal communities and those with knowledge of and experience working with large-scale national datasets. It will include representatives from Region XI Head Start programs and/or tribal communities. The Committee will include a Chair and 6 to 8 members. At any given time, the Committee should include members with tribal research expertise, tribal Head Start or tribal community representatives, and with large-scale national study expertise. This number of members with this mix of expertise will help to ensure that each review includes input from individuals with different strengths and perspectives and will help to enable the Committee to complete its reviews in a timely manner. Data committee members agree to abide by the "preserving confidentiality" standards for all research plans, manuscripts, and presentations they review as stated by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Research Integrity (see <https://ori.hhs.gov/chapter-10-peer-review-Preserving-confidentiality>).

**Committee Chair.** The Committee Chair will be the direct point of contact with researchers requesting access to the data and data users requesting review of publications and presentations. The Chair will be an employee at OPRE who works on AI/AN early childhood research. The Chair will coordinate the review process. The Chair's responsibilities will include: 1) identifying the reviewers for each research plan, manuscript or presentation (the initial assumption is that

each will be reviewed by 2-3 Committee members with at least one being a tribal community representative), 2) assigning each product to reviewers and monitoring their progress in completing the review, 3) compiling a brief summary (using a template to include open-ended, narrative options) of the Committee members' review and recommendations, and 4) answering researchers' questions about the review and the Committee's feedback. In cases where the reviewers' comments disagree, the Chair will make a final determination of the overall guidance, weighing in as necessary, to include seeking ad hoc reviewers as described below. The Chair is also responsible for sending comments back to applicants as well as an official letter for access to the data to include in their application to *Research Connections*.

**Committee Members.** Committee members will serve as reviewers of researchers' initial analysis and dissemination plans and their publication manuscripts and presentations. Their responsibilities will include: 1) reviewing each assigned research plan, manuscript and presentation, 2) preparing and submitting comments and recommendations to the chair (using a template) within the agreed upon timeline (typically within 2-3 weeks), and 3) answering questions that the Chair may have about the feedback they are providing to the researcher.

**Ad hoc Reviewers.** At times, the Chair and the 6-8 sitting members of the Data Committee may not have the subject matter or technical expertise required to review a research plan, manuscript and/or presentation. In addition, the number of plans, manuscripts and presentations the committee will be asked to review at any given time is unknown. Therefore, from time-to-time, the Chair may need to reach out to others to assist in the reviews. The Chair will have responsibility for identifying these persons, in consultation as needed with other members of the Committee. Once the ad hoc reviewer is identified, contacted and accepts the invitation to review a research plan or set of findings, the review will be conducted in the same manner as one being done by a sitting member of the Committee with the same responsibilities.

From time-to-time, there may also be disagreements among reviewers as to the merits of a research plan or set of findings. While it is assumed that the Chair will make the final determination, the Chair may also want to reach out to ad hoc reviewers for their thoughts. As this may extend the review timeline, the ad hoc reviewers will be asked to provide an expedited review in these special circumstances (1 week). Such requests for additional review will follow the same procedures for manuscript and presentation review outlined above.

### **Recruiting Members and Terms of Service**

The AI/AN FACES 2015 data will be available to researchers in future years. To create stability for the Data Committee, an employee of OPRE who works on AI/AN early childhood research will serve as the Chair of the committee. Sitting and ad hoc members of the Data Committee will be identified and recruited by ACF staff and the AI/AN FACES Workgroup. Initially, members of the AI/AN FACES Workgroup will be asked to serve as members of the Committee. However, membership on the Committee and the Chair will change over time. Tribal Head Start programs or communities will always be represented on the AI/AN FACES Data Committee.

The Chair of the inaugural Committee will serve for three years and the other members for two years. A process of identifying a new Chair will begin during year two of the Chair's three-year term. New members (reviewers) will be identified and recruited at the start the second year of

members' two-year term by the Chair and sitting members. The goal here is to have a new chair and a full complement of reviewers in place at the end of the terms of the current members.

Membership on the Data Committee is voluntary. Committee members and ad hoc reviewers will be compensated with a small honorarium for this work.

## **Guide for Data Committee Review of Research Plans, Publications, and Presentations**

*Guide for Review of Research Plan (Reviews are expected within 2 weeks of receiving the plan)*

The Data Committee will review each plan to:

- Evaluate whether the plan demonstrates a sound understanding of the AI/AN FACES study design and sample. See tip sheets for reminder of the study design and sample (See [page 18](#)).
- Evaluate whether the proposed research questions are able to be answered by the data. See tip sheet for reminder of the study design and sample.
- Evaluate the plan for disseminating findings.
- Evaluate experience and/or expertise of research team in working with tribal communities. If no previous experience, evaluate plan for engaging experts.

Each reviewer will be expected to write a narrative in response to the application. The Chair will compile the responses when making the final recommendation and will send comments and the recommendation to the applicant.

*Guidelines for Review of Publications/Presentations (Reviews are expected within 2 weeks of receiving the publication/presentation)*

The review of manuscripts and presentations is different from the peer review process for a journal or the review of presentations for conferences. The primary purpose is to ensure that the AI/AN FACES 2015 data were used appropriately and that the interpretation of the findings is reasonable and takes into consideration the cultural context in which the data were collected. The purpose is not to judge the scientific merit of the publication or replace the peer review process for publications and presentations.

The reviewers will:

- Assess whether the analyses and findings presented are appropriate for the data (e.g., are all findings reported at the child level)
  - This may include comments asking the author(s) to restate findings: (e.g., instead of: Teachers in Region XI programs, it should say: Teachers of children in Region XI Programs.
- Assess the interpretation of findings
  - The reviewers should carefully review the entire manuscript/presentation since researchers interpretation of study findings could come up in multiple sections.
    - Did the author(s) make unfounded connections between findings and another topic?
    - Did the author(s) interpret the findings in a way that demonstrates ignorance of the culture? Author(s) should refer back to the ethics training materials to ensure they are being sensitive to the cultural experience of the participants in this study.

## AI/AN FACES 2015 Data Access Acknowledgements of Research Team

Please initial your acknowledgement of each point below and then sign and date. You will need to upload the signed copy to the online application form. This acknowledgement is in addition to the Data Use Agreement, which needs to be signed and uploaded separately.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby acknowledge that I and all members of the research team have read, understand, and will aspire to the best practices laid out in the *Best Practices for Working with AI/AN FACES Data* document.

\_\_\_\_\_ I and all members of the research team have read the required articles noted in the Best Practices document.

\_\_\_\_\_ I and all members of the research team agree to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants, and agree to not report any findings at the individual, tribal community or program level.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby agree to submit manuscripts and presentations to the AI/AN FACES Data Committee prior to publication or presentation and to strongly consider the Committee's feedback when finalizing my publications and presentations.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby agree to have information about my research with AI/AN FACES data shared in an annual report on the use of the AI/AN FACES data. The report will include the names of the institutions and research organizations that have been granted access to AI/AN FACES data, brief descriptions of the research that is being conducted by these institutions and organizations within the previous year, and list of presentations and publications (links to the *Research Connections* archive where feasible).

\_\_\_\_\_  
PI Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
PI Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Tip Sheet for AI/AN FACES 2015 Data Users<sup>3</sup>

Before requesting access to the AI/AN FACES 2015 data and preparing a research plan, researchers should have carefully reviewed the AI/AN FACES 2015 User's Manual. The manual includes detailed descriptions of the:

- Study design and the broad set of research questions the study set out to answer
- Instruments that were used to assess children's development and school readiness skills and to collect contextual data about children's parents and families, teachers, classrooms, and programs.
- Available assessment scores and constructed or derived variables (such as variables that combine responses across more than one survey item or wave of data) that capture key information about children's parents, teachers, classrooms, and programs.
- Analysis weights that are included on the data file and when and how to use them when analyzing AI/AN FACES 2015 data, and the appropriate methods to use when calculating variances and standard errors when using AI/AN FACES 2015 data given its complex sample design.

A good place to begin is the Getting Started section in the User's Manual. It provides important information to help you decide whether AI/AN FACES 2015 data can be used to answer particular research questions (see the Getting Started section of the [User's Manual](#)). Below we identify some of the features of the study's design, sample, instruments, and data that you should keep in mind when assessing whether AI/AN FACES 2015 is appropriate for answering your research questions.

### General Features of the Study Design

- AI/AN FACES 2015 is a descriptive study of children and families who attend Region XI Head Start.
- It is not a study of the effectiveness of Region XI Head Start or its overall impact on children and families.
- Data were collected in the fall and spring of a single program year (2015-2016 program year).
- The study includes children who were attending Head Start for the first time as well as those who were attending for a second year.

### Study Sample and Its Limitations

- The sample consists of a nationally representative sample of Head Start Region XI programs, classrooms, and children.
- It represents all children (AI/AN and non-AI/AN) enrolled in Region XI Head Start.
- 1,049 children and their families participated from 73 classrooms in 21 programs. The actual number of children with data in fall 2015 and spring 2016 and the number with

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<sup>3</sup> Modified from User's Manual. For more details see the [User's Manual](#).

child assessment, parent survey, teacher survey, classroom observation, and director survey data will vary due to nonresponse and other factors. For example, only 20 programs participated in fall 2015, but 21 programs participated in spring 2016.

- AI/AN FACES 2015 is not representative of AI/AN children in Head Start as a whole. AI/AN children attending Head Start in Head Start Regions I-X and XII were not included in the study's sample.
- The numbers of programs, centers, and classrooms in the sample are not large enough to support analyses at the program, center, or classroom levels. The data can only be used to report at the child level. Any descriptions of program, center, or classroom data will be relative to the child. When speaking about classroom quality, for example, appropriate interpretations are about the classroom quality for Region XI children not the classroom quality for Region XI classrooms.
- The sample will support analyses of children in Region XI as a whole. It will not support analyses of the children enrolled in individual programs or tribal communities, or geographic locations within Region XI (e.g., Southwest or Pacific Northwest). Additionally, no information is available on the data file to identify particular communities, tribes, or locations.
- Researchers should carefully consider sample sizes, standard errors, and the reliability of the findings and be especially cautious when analyzing data on special populations (for example, children with a tribal language as their primary home language or children with identified disabilities). Also, their ability to compare groups of children may be limited at times given the overall sample size and the sample sizes for different groups. They may only be able to detect large differences.

### Study Instruments

- In fall and spring, the study assessed the school readiness skills of children, surveyed parents about their family characteristics and home and community experiences, and asked children's teachers to rate children's social and emotional skills, classroom behavior, and approaches to learning, and to report on any concerns about the children and how the concerns were addressed.
- In spring 2016, children's classrooms were observed in order to obtain information about the quality of their classroom experiences and children's exposure to tribal language and a variety of cultural items in the classroom. Children's teachers, center directors, and program directors completed surveys that included questions about their backgrounds and experience and the characteristics of Head Start classrooms, centers, and programs.

The following table lists the instruments that are used at each wave of data collection and provides a general description of the content of each.

## Data Collection Methods and Content

Child	Parent	Head Start Staff (Teachers/Directors)	Classroom
Direct Assessment/ Teacher Child Report	Survey	Survey	Observation
Fall 2015, Spring 2016	Fall 2015, Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Literacy</li> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Executive Functioning</li> <li>• Social Skills</li> <li>• Problem Behaviors</li> <li>• Approaches to Learning</li> <li>• Physical Measurements (height, weight)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic Information (household members)</li> <li>• Home Experience</li> <li>• Community Experience</li> <li>• Head Start Experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Experience</li> <li>• Classroom Characteristics</li> <li>• Cultural and Native Language Resources/Opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom Quality</li> <li>• Teacher-Child Interactions</li> <li>• Cultural and Native Language Resources/Opportunities</li> </ul>

- You should review the study’s questionnaires and instruments to know exactly how AI/AN FACES 2015 posed individual questions and groups of questions to participants.
- You should also check for respondent paths and skip patterns in the instruments. In some cases, failure to consider valid skip patterns could result in incorrect reporting of findings.

### Data File and Data File Codebook

- All AI/AN FACES 2015 data have been merged on a single child-level data file. You should be mindful of this when using program, center, and classroom or teacher variables. The data file contains data collected at different levels of measurement including:
  - Child level (child assessment, parent survey, and teacher reports of individual children’s social skills, problem behaviors and approaches to learning)
  - Classroom level (teacher survey and classroom observations)
  - Center level (center director survey)
  - Program level (program director survey)
- Certain item-level data are not available on the data file (responses to individual items from copyrighted measures and instruments, for example)
- You should review the data file codebook to check variable values and frequencies to ascertain whether they are appropriate for their planned analysis.
- Before creating your own combined variables, you should check for the availability of constructed or derived variables on the data file. These variables were created by combining (1) responses to several questions, (2) data across the two waves of the study, or (3) data from different sources (for example, parent survey data and data from the study’s sample accrual or consent process), can save them considerable time.

## Tip Sheet for AI/AN FACES Data Committee<sup>4</sup>

As a member of the AI/AN FACES Data Committee, you will be asked to review:

- 1) Research plans submitted by researchers who are requesting access to the AI/AN FACES 2015 data; and
- 2) Manuscripts and presentation materials based on researchers' analyses of these data.

You and other members of the Data Committee will be asked to provide feedback to researchers that is intended to assist them in using the data accurately and responsibly. The information contained in this tip sheet is meant to assist you in carrying out your duties as a member of the Committee.

*Please remember that you are not the only reviewer. There will be a panel of two or three reviewers per application, representing the voices of both researchers and tribal Head Start directors. As a reminder, we hope that the comments you provide will assist researchers as they refine their research plans and publications. We are committed to bidirectional learning.*

Please use the AI/AN FACES 2015 [User's Manual](#) as a reference throughout your reviews. There is essential information about the study design, sampling, and variables included that will help you in making your recommendations. The Manual includes detailed descriptions of the:

- Study design and the broad set of research questions the study set out to answer. *The questions contained in a research plan or that are addressed by a researcher's analysis of the AI/AN FACES 2015 data will likely be more specific than the ones found in the Manual.*
- Instruments that were used to assess the study's children's development and school readiness skills and to collect data about these children's parents and families, and their Head Start teachers, classrooms, and programs.
- Available child assessment scores, their meaning, and which scores to use to answer different research questions.
- Relatively large set of constructed or derived variables (such as variables that combine responses across more than one survey item or across the two waves of data) that capture key information about children's parents, teachers, classrooms, and programs.
- Analysis weights that are included on the data file and when and how to use them when analyzing AI/AN FACES 2015 data.
- Appropriate methods to use when calculating variances and standard errors when using AI/AN FACES 2015 data given its complex sample design. This information indicates the variability around an estimate due to the fact we have a sample and did not measure everyone in the population. Researchers calculate variance and standard errors to know how precise their findings are and when testing the statistical significance of their findings (such as a difference between two groups or if change between fall and spring is different from

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<sup>4</sup> This is a living document and may change over time.

zero). *The research plan should include information on accounting for the complex sample design in their analysis.*

The User's Manual is quite large and contains a great deal of detail on each of the above topics and others. A good place to start is the Getting Started section of the Manual.<sup>5</sup> It provides important information to help you decide whether AI/AN FACES 2015 data can be used to answer the research questions included in the research plan and whether a researcher's findings are reasonable and valid. Below we identify some of the features of the study's design, sample, instruments, and data that you should keep in mind when assessing whether AI/AN FACES 2015 is appropriate for answering different types of research questions.

### General Features of the Study Design

- AI/AN FACES 2015 is a descriptive study of children and families who attend Region XI Head Start. *The study is designed to answer a broad set of descriptive questions. The questions contained in a research plan or that are addressed by a researcher's analysis of the AI/AN FACES 2015 data will likely be more specific than the ones found in the manual.*
- It is not a study of the effectiveness of Region XI programs or their overall impact on children and families. *AI/AN FACES 2015 cannot be used to test whether children who attend Head Start in Region XI have better school readiness skills than those not in Region XI Head Start or whether participation in the program leads to improved child and family wellbeing.*
- Data were collected in the fall and spring of a single program year (2015-2016 program year). *Some research questions can be answered using only the fall or spring data and other questions require that both rounds of data be used.*
- The study includes children who were attending Head Start for the first time as well as those who are attending for a second year. *A researcher's plan for analyzing the data and reporting of findings from these analyses should specify whether data from the full population of children enrolled or data from only those attending for the first time are used.*
- Since the AI/AN FACES 2015 data is a sample of children that reflects the national picture of children in Region XI Head Start, sample weights must be used in all analyses. *A researcher's plan should include information on which sampling weight they will use.*

### Study Sample and Its Limitations

Chapter II of the User's Manual contains a full description of the AI/AN FACES 2015 sample. Some of this information is quite technical. Below are some of the key features of the sample that you should keep in mind when reviewing a research plan or the findings from AI/AN FACES 2015.

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<sup>5</sup> You might also want to read the [Best Practices for Working with AI/AN FACES Data](#) that is a required reading for those wishing to access the data.

- The sample consists of a nationally representative sample of Region XI AI/AN Head Start programs, classrooms, and children.
- It represents all children (AI/AN and non-AI/AN) enrolled in Region XI Head Start. *Unless a researcher has limited their findings to only the AI/AN children participating in the study, the findings pertain to all children, both AI/AN and non-AI/AN.*
- 1,049 children and their families participated from 73 classrooms in 21 programs. However, the actual number of children with data in fall 2015 and spring 2016 and the number with child assessment, parent survey, teacher survey, classroom observation, and director survey data will vary due to nonresponse and other factors. For example, only 20 programs participated in fall 2015, but 21 programs participated in spring 2016.
- AI/AN FACES is not representative of AI/AN children in Head Start as a whole. AI/AN children attending Head Start in Head Start Regions I-X and XII were not included in the study's sample. *Therefore, AI/AN FACES data cannot be used to describe all AI/AN children who are attending Head Start. It can only be used to describe AI/AN children who are attending a Head Start program in Region XI.*
- The numbers of programs, centers, and classrooms in the sample are not large enough to support analyses at the program, center, or classroom levels. The data can only be used to report at the child level. Any descriptions of program, center, or classroom data will be relative to the child. When speaking about classroom quality, for example, it is appropriate to describe the classroom quality for Region XI children, not the classroom quality for Region XI classrooms.
- The sample will support analyses of children in Region XI as a whole. It will not support analyses of the children enrolled in individual programs or tribal communities, or geographic locations within Region XI (e.g., Southwest or Pacific Northwest). Additionally, no information is available on the data file to identify particular communities, tribes, or locations.
- The sample sizes for special populations (for example, children with a tribal language as their primary home language or children with identified disabilities) can be small. As a result standard errors can be large and the findings for these groups unreliable. This may limit researchers' ability to compare groups of children, and they may only be able to detect large between group differences. *Research plans that propose such subgroup or comparative analyses should identify the minimum detectable differences that can be expected given the sample sizes of the groups being compared.*

### Study Instruments

AI/AN FACES used a variety of child assessments, questionnaires, and observational tools. These are described in Chapter III of the User's Manual. Copies of the parent, teacher, and director questionnaires can be found in Appendix D of the manual. The instruments used at each wave of data collection is summarized below.

- In fall and spring, the study assessed the school readiness skills of children, surveyed parents about their family characteristics and home and community experiences, and asked children's teachers to rate children's social and emotional skills, classroom behavior, and approaches to learning, and to report on any concerns about the children and how the concerns were addressed.

- In spring 2016, children’s classrooms were observed in order to obtain information about the quality of their classroom experiences and children’s exposure to tribal language and a variety of cultural items in the classroom. Children’s teachers, center directors, and program directors completed surveys in the spring that included questions about their backgrounds and experience and the characteristics of Head Start classrooms, centers, and programs.

The following table lists the instruments that were used at each wave of data collection and provides a general description of the content of each.

## Data Collection Methods and Content

Child	Parent	Head Start Staff (Teachers/Directors)	Classroom
Direct Assessment/ Teacher Child Report	Survey	Survey	Observation
Fall 2015, Spring 2016	Fall 2015, Spring 2016	Spring 2016	Spring 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Literacy</li> <li>• Math</li> <li>• Executive Functioning</li> <li>• Social Skills</li> <li>• Problem Behaviors</li> <li>• Approaches to Learning</li> <li>• Physical Measurements (height, weight)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic Information (household members)</li> <li>• Home Experience</li> <li>• Community Experience</li> <li>• Head Start Experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Experience</li> <li>• Classroom Characteristics</li> <li>• Cultural and Native Language Resources/Opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom Quality</li> <li>• Teacher-Child Interactions</li> <li>• Cultural and Native Language Resources/Opportunities</li> </ul>

- When reviewing a research plan, manuscript, or presentation, you should examine the study’s questionnaires and instruments so that you know exactly how AI/AN FACES 2015 posed individual questions and groups of questions to participants. In most cases, you should be able to limit your examination to those questionnaires and instruments that are relevant to the plan and findings that you are reviewing.
- You should also check for respondent paths (for example, biological parents of the study's children may be asked a different set of questions from those asked of non-parental guardians) and skip patterns (for example, some questions such as the type of child care arrangement a child participates in outside of the Head Start program may only be asked for those children who attend any child care arrangement) in the instruments. In some cases, failure to consider valid skip patterns could result in incorrect reporting of findings (for example, the percentage of Region XI Head Start children enrolled in a center-based before- and after-child care program would be too high if the estimate is based only on the number of children who attended some form of child care).

## Data File and Data File Codebook

You will not be working directly with the AI/AN FACES 2015 data file when performing your duties as a member of the Data Committee. However, the data file codebook that is included in Appendix E of the User's Manual can be quite helpful. It provides useful information about the values and frequency of responses for the variables included on the data file. Features of the data file and data file codebook that will be useful to you are summarized below.

- All AI/AN FACES 2015 data have been merged on a single child-level data file, both fall and spring data collections. The data file contains data collected at different levels of measurement including:
  - Child level (child assessment, parent survey, and teacher reports of individual children's social skills, problem behaviors, and approaches to learning)
  - Classroom level (teacher survey and classroom observations)
  - Center level (center director survey)
  - Program level (program director survey)
- Certain item-level data are not available on the data file. For example, children's responses to individual items from copyrighted child assessment measures are not included on the data file. *As a result, researchers must use the scores for these measures that have been calculated by the study team.*
- The data file codebook can be used to check variable values and frequencies to determine whether the variables that researchers propose to use or have used in their analyses are appropriate for their analysis. *Variables with limited response distributions (for example, most of the cases data are found in a single response category) may not be very useful, depending on the research question or analysis being done.*
- When appropriate, researchers should use one or more of the constructed or derived variables that are included on the data file. Use of such variables, which the study team created by combining (1) responses to several questions, (2) data across the two waves of the study, or (3) data from different sources (for example, parent survey data and data from the study's sample accrual or consent process), can save researchers considerable time. In addition, using these variables makes it easier for the findings from one analysis of the AI/AN FACES 2015 data to be compared with the findings from other analyses.

## Assistance is Available

AI/AN FACES 2015 is a complex study with hundreds of variables that can be used to explore a nearly infinite number of research questions. You are not expected to know every detail about the study's design and its execution, nor to be an expert in all of the data analytic techniques that researchers may use. As a whole, the Data Committee has a wealth of knowledge about the design, instruments, and technical features of AI/AN FACES 2015 as well as extensive expertise doing research with large-scale, national datasets. The Chair and other members of the Committee and experts outside of the Committee are available to answer your questions and provide assistance as needed.