Collecting Survey Data on Subsidy Receipt

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November, 2011

CCPRC: Washington DC

National Survey of **Early Care** & **Education**

Why we want survey data on subsidy receipt

- **Subsidy administrative data…**
  - Only include subsidized families, and only in the time periods they receive subsidies
  - Have limited information on demographics, other relevant behaviors (work, school, etc.)
  - Vary across geographic localities
- **Administrative data are not suited to support comparisons of subsidized with non-subsidized families, or child-care receipt on and off subsidy spells.**

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The challenge of collecting subsidy survey data

- **Subsidy families can be hard to sample because sample frames can be out of date and uptake is low.**

- **Providers can have limited awareness of program participation, especially with blended funding.**

- **Parents have almost no awareness of programs and amounts received.**

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What we wish we could ask

"Do funds from the Child Care Development Fund defray the cost of your child's receipt of non-parental care?

If so, what is the magnitude of the CCDF contribution relative to the overall cost of care?

What are the requirements you face in maintaining these contributions, for example, co-pays, work/school hours, earnings limits, etc.?"

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Results from NSECE cognitive testing

- **Collection of subsidy amounts and program types can generate unusable data that can lead to incorrect analytic results**

- **Probes using specific local context (form names, agency names, program names) reduce item non-response and certainty of response**

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Results from NSECE Feasibility Test

- **Feasibility test compared parent reports and provider records for a purposive sample**

- **Parents are quite accurate at reporting whether or not they receive any help**

- **Parents are not aware of which programs they participate in**

- **The greatest confusion surrounds 'free' programs like public pre-K and Head Start**

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Recommended solution: Exploit context

- **Do not attempt to collect accurate and detailed subsidy receipt data from parents**

- **Focus on what respondents can answer: paperwork required, agencies used, provider names, own costs**

- **Collect information in and out of the survey to help determine receipt: eligibility rules, location, income, work schedule, etc.**

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