



## Questions and Answers about the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being

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We invite you take part in another round of interviews for the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW). Below you will find answers to some of the most common questions asked about the survey.

### **What is the National Survey on Child and Adolescent Well-Being?**

The NSCAW is the first ever nationwide longitudinal study of children and families who had contact with the child welfare system. We designed the NSCAW to follow children and young adults as they grow older to collect data on their health and well-being. We will use this information to learn about the needs of children and families and to make improvements to the child welfare system.

### **Why should I participate?**

You took part in an earlier round of interviews in the past. At that time, we may have interviewed your parent or guardian. We are following up with those that took part approximately 36 months after that last interview to see how things may have changed. This is a chance to have your voice heard and to talk about your needs and experiences from your own point of view. You will receive a \$50 gift card for sharing your input with us.

### **Who is doing this study?**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sponsors the study. ACF hired a team of researchers from RTI International (RTI), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Washington University in St. Louis to conduct the study. No one from the research team works for the child welfare agency.

### **Who is RTI International?**

RTI is research company located in North Carolina. RTI conducts research projects for a wide variety of clients, including government agencies and private companies. Our local interviewers will contact and schedule interviews with children, families, and caseworkers.

### **How was I chosen?**

In doing this survey, we cannot talk to everyone in the country. That would be costly and take too long. You are among 4,000 randomly selected children and adolescents who had contact with the child welfare system during a 12-month period. We want to interview you about your life experiences, health, behaviors, and transition to adulthood.

### **How is the study conducted?**

If you decide to take part, we will ask you some questions over the telephone and others you will answer privately on the Internet. The interview can also be conducted in person.

Upon completion of the interview, we will ask for your okay to keep and use in our research any information we may obtain from child welfare agency records. If you have received services since the last interview, we may also interview your caseworker.

### **Tell me more about my involvement.**

The interview will last about 45 minutes. The first part of the interview can take place over the telephone or in person. The second part of the interview will take place over the Internet.

The interviewer will read the questions and type the answers into a computer. The interviewer will tell you how to log on to a secure web site to finish the survey on the Internet. The interview includes questions about your life experiences. The questions will focus on your health, employment, relationships, social support system, behaviors, and

use of services. The interview also includes questions about the community in which you live, involvement with the police, and risky behaviors such as sexual activity and drug use.

### **Are the questions personal?**

Some questions may seem personal to some people. We keep your information private; no one else (even other household members) will know what you said during the interview. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer.

### **What happens to the information?**

We store your survey responses in a safe and secure way. We combine your answers with other interviews and report in summary form. We do not link your name to the information you provide. We keep your name separate from your answers. We only use your name and other identifying information to locate you. RTI may also telephone you or send a letter to check on the quality of the interviewer's work.

### **How will you contact child welfare personnel?**

We will also ask permission to keep and use in our research any information we may obtain from talking to your caseworker. We will ask the caseworker questions about the child welfare services provided to you and your family. We will ask the caseworker to refer to your service records when answering our questions.

### **What about privacy?**

We keep your responses private to the extent permitted by the law. We keep your interview answers on a secure computer labeled with an ID number. We do not identify you by name. All staff involved in this research signed a Privacy Pledge.

Part of the study will ask you to enter information in a secure website. We anticipate that your participation in this study presents no greater risk than everyday use of the Internet. Though we are taking precautions to protect your privacy, you should be aware that if you email information in an unsecure manner, it could be read by a third party before it reaches our secure environment.

This research is covered by a federal protection called a Certificate of Confidentiality. This means the researchers cannot share the information they gather that may identify you. This paper prevents researchers from revealing this information even if it is subpoenaed by a court.

However, this paper does allow researchers to share information in some situations. For example, researchers must follow reporting laws about child or adult abuse. Also, as part of agreeing to be in this study, you are giving permission for researchers to share information in the rare circumstances that it is needed to prevent serious risk to yourself or others. In addition, the agency that funds this research (ACF), is permitted to access information to confirm that the research is being conducted properly.

We never identify a single person in our reports. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write up the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information. You will not be identified in any published or presented materials.

### **Where do I get more information about the study?**

If you have other questions, please call toll-free: Jennifer Keeney at RTI, 1-800-334-8571, extension 919-316-3525 or send us an email via our study email box, NSCAW@rti.org. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, call toll-free: **RTI's Office of Human Research Protections** at 1-866-214-2043.