

Measuring subsidized child care utilization in the National Study of Child Care Supply and Demand

CCPRC

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Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

Overview

Issues/Problems

Household Survey questions

Administrative Data

Potential problems - questionnaires

Why would respondents not provide accurate information on whether or not they receive a subsidy?

They never knew

Unclear definition

Respondent recall - last week

Program names - provide them with lists

Vouchers versus contracts

Funding stream blending

Potential problems - administrative data

Why might administrative data not be the ideal resources for getting subsidy receipt data?

Poor access to data

Permissions

Technical transfer issues

Data may not be electronic

Vouchers v. contracts/grants

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Household Survey Approach:

(Based on our questions on the NSAF questionnaire)

Do not ask about CCDF subsidy receipt directly

Ask about how families pay for care

Ask what they know about how care is paid for

Determine if they are receiving subsidy from multiple questions

Household questionnaire

- Most respondents knew how much they paid for care and if they received financial assistance.
- This process did not appear to be more complicated with multiple children or arrangements.

Household questionnaire

- Varying interpretations of terms related to subsidy receipt, specifically: sliding fee scale and co-payment
- *“In addition to the payments made by (this source/these sources), do you have a co-payment? In other words, do you need to pay [PROVIDER] yourself with money out of your own pocket?”*
- “Co-payment” should be defined in order to reduce misinterpretations

Household questionnaire

- *Who pays them [provider]? MARK ALL THAT APPLY*
 1. *WELFARE OR OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES*
 2. *AGENCY FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT*
 3. *LOCAL OR COMMUNITY PROGRAM*
 4. *COMMUNITY OR RELIGIOUS GROUP*
 5. *FAMILY OR FRIEND*
 6. *EMPLOYER*
 7. *OTHER*
 8. *DON'T KNOW*
 9. *REFUSED*
- Add “public schools” or “education agency”

Household questionnaire

- Sometimes the amount of money that a parent is charged for a child care arrangement or program depends on how much the family earns. This is sometimes called a sliding fee scale. Is the amount you are charged for the care provided by [provider] determined by how much money you earn?
- Keep the definition in

Household questionnaire

Thinking about the past 12 months, including what you have just told me, did you ever receive a child care subsidy from the government at any time for any child, including child care money from the welfare office?

- A definition of “subsidy” could be included in the question set or available for interviewer reference in the event that a respondent does not know what it means. This definition should be broad enough to include an adequate range of subsidy options.
- We recommend further testing of the extent to which subsidy reports are improved when the local program or office name is supplied to respondents. This can be a difficult effort, but could substantially increase self-reports of subsidy receipt.

“Free” care

Concerns that arrangements that parents report as 'free' are most likely not.

Few actually said that they did not their service was free.

Found that these 'free' programs were public pre-Ks and Head start programs.

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Administrative data:

Some mechanism should exist because of 801 requirement

Will get informed consent

Will access electronic data when available

Will go to local offices when electronic data is not available

Will attempt to get a history of subsidy receipt