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Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC)
A Guide to Market Rate Surveys For CCDF Tribal Entities
Executive Summary

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) regulations require that States receiving CCDF funds conduct a Market Rate Survey within two years of the effective date of the currently approved plan. Beginning in 1999, American Indian and Alaskan Native grantees receiving CCDF funds must also conduct a survey or use the State's Market Rate survey data. The Market Rate survey needs to be completed every two years. If the American Indian or Alaskan Native grantee adopts the State's Market Rate Survey, they need to know what that survey demonstrates. This document is written to assist tribal grantees in making decisions regarding the Market Rate Survey.

A Market Rate Survey describes the rates charged by child care providers, and paid by the users of the service, within a certain geographical area. The **market rate** is the price for child care services charged to families who receive no help in paying for their child care. The objective in establishing subsidy rates is to have the price paid by a government subsidy plus the portion of the fee paid by the family equal to the amount paid by non-subsidized families. This helps to provide subsidized families access to child care services across a range of providers.

The first step in conducting a Market Rate Survey is to identify the market area. The market area is the geographical area in which the child care providers are located who will be surveyed. Due to the differences among Tribes, the varying regulations regarding child care providers on reservations, and the different geographical configurations of tribal grantees, deciding the market area will be critical. Once the decision is made on the geographical area to be used in the Market Rate Survey, the grantee needs to identify which child care providers will be surveyed.

There are several possible resources that Tribes can use to collect the information needed for the Market Rate Survey: State Child Care Agencies, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tribal Offices and others. Some of the resources may have all the data that is needed. Other resources may be able to provide only some of the information. Some agencies may provide assistance to the tribal grantee in conducting their own Market Rate Survey.

The Market Rate Survey needs to produce reliable and valid information so that the data can be used to make accurate decisions. The format of the survey needs to ensure that it can be completed easily and quickly. After looking at all the data and making decisions and policies as described throughout the document, the Tribal decision makers can then set payment rates for families and providers. Based on a well-developed Market Rate Survey, tribal families will have valid options in the CCDF supported child care they select.

This Guide explores in detail the issues surrounding a Market Rate Survey. Identifying the market areas, deciding which child care providers to include in the data collection, designing the survey instrument, calculating the data, and applying the results of the survey are presented within the context of the needs of American Indian and Alaskan Native Child Care Development Fund grantees.

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Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC) A Guide to Market Rate Surveys For CCDF Tribal Entities II. Identifying the Market

The first step in conducting a Market Rate Survey is to identify the market area. **The market area is the geographical area in which the child care providers are located who will be surveyed.** Due to the differences among Tribes, the varying regulations regarding child care providers on reservations, and the different geographical configurations of tribal grantees, deciding the market area will be critical. Consequently, in identifying the child care market area for the survey, general questions to be answered by the Tribe are:

- Did the State Market Rate survey include geographical areas in which our Indian families select child care?
- Is that geographical area the eligible tribal families use for child care the same as the service area described in the CCDF plan? If not, in what additional areas does the Tribe need to collect data?

By deciding the answer to the above question, Tribes can begin to focus on the child care market area to be surveyed. The following discussion describes specific areas of thought for grantees on reservations, in tribal consortia, or in the states of Alaska, California, and Oklahoma.

Tribes on Reservations: Some families living on reservations will choose child care services from providers who also live on the reservation. Other families will select child care providers who live off the reservation, but close to work or school locations. The Tribe must decide if the Market Rate Survey will include providers on and off the reservation. It is important to consider the relationship between the service area described in the CCDF plan and the geographical area of the Market Rate Survey. A possible decision determining the Market Rate Survey area could be to survey the providers in the area where Indians living on the reservation work. Therefore, if persons traveled 20 miles off the reservation to work, the child care providers on the reservation plus those providers in a 20 mile perimeter around the reservation might be the population to be surveyed. In this case, the State may be asked to supply the information for those providers off the reservation. The Tribe may survey only those providers on the reservation, if they were not included in the State

Market Rate Survey. Then the Tribe would combine the information to determine their Market Rate Survey.

If the Tribe plans to provide subsidies for child care services only on the reservation, the Market Rate Survey would be conducted only with the providers on the reservation. A call to the State Agency administering the State's CCDF monies should indicate whether or not any of the State's data is useful for the Tribe. A list of the State CCDF Agencies and Contact Persons is included in Appendix B.

Some Tribes on reservations combine the use of State CCDF funds with Tribal CCDF funds. Tribal families, with dual eligibility for both State and tribal funding, apply for the State's subsidized child care services. In this case, the State pays the child care provider the State's determined reimbursement rate. The Tribe may pay the child care provider the family's co-payment or use the tribal grantee funding for other child care purposes. Conducting a Market Rate Survey in situations such as these would obviously be a collaborative effort between the State and the Tribe.

Tribal Consortia: In order to receive CCDF funds, Tribes participating in a consortia must be within geographic proximity to each other or have an existing consortium arrangement already in place. The concept of a Market Rate Survey becomes even more complex when the market may be small geographical areas spread across a state or multi-state area. The Consortium conducting the survey may wish to contact the State Agency or States administering the CCDF funding and inquire about their data. If the State(s) can break down their data into zip code areas, the Consortium may be able to use this data as their Market Rate Survey. Again, it is important to know whether or not the State included data from providers (regulated and unregulated) that provide child care services to both tribal and non-tribal families.

Alaska, California and Oklahoma: The CCDF funds for Tribal and Alaska Native entities are used to serve Indian children living on or near reservations except in the states of Alaska, California, and Oklahoma. Due to the demographics of American Indian and Alaska Native groups in these states, the service areas defined by the grantees are different. Tribal grantees may have overlapping service areas, areas spread across large underpopulated spaces, service areas which combine metropolitan and rural populations, or combinations of other factors.

Tribal or Alaska Native grantees in these states may contact the State CCDF Agency to find out how the State conducted their Market Rate Survey. Again, it is important to know whether or not the State included providers (regulated and unregulated) who provide child care services to tribal families. In areas where another tribal grantee or a consortium may also be receiving CCDF funding, all Tribes may need to collaborate on identifying the market area and

on using similar data for the survey. Tribal grantees with overlapping service areas are encouraged to collaborate in establishing their subsidized rates.

102-477 Tribal Grantees: Program Instruction (PI) ACYF-PI-CC-99-01, dated January 19, 1999 states that Tribes consolidating their funds in a 102-477 plan may meet the § 98.43 (a) statutory requirement by certifying that payment rates for child care services are sufficient for families to access equal services compared to those families not supported by CCDF or other Federal, State, or Tribal program assistance. Therefore, a Market Rate Survey is not required for 102-477 tribal grantees.

Child Care Providers

Once the decision is made on the geographical area to be used in the Market Rate Survey, the Tribe needs to identify which child care providers will be surveyed. It is often difficult to identify child care providers within a certain geographical area. Identifying the child care providers for a Tribe can be even more complex. In some cases, it is impossible to identify all the home care providers in the market area, especially those who are unregulated by the Tribe or State. For some Tribes, the number of Child care providers in a particular category, such as the number of centers on a reservation, will be so small that it is impossible to calculate market rates based on the sample. For some Tribes, the federal subsidies plus the family fees are the only rates charged in the area so this *is* the market rate. Some general questions to be answered by the Tribe are:

- For what categories of child care do we need to know the market rate?
 - child care centers
 - family and/or group child care homes
 - in - home providers (relative care and non-relative)
 - preschools
 - all categories in one location
 - other - such as out-of-school care
- Is only regulated care going to be included in the survey? Or, is all the child care provided to Indian families unregulated? Or, will the survey include both regulated and unregulated child care?
- How does the Tribe know who the unregulated child care providers are?
- Will Head Start, public or BIA preschool programs or tribally subsidized programs be included in the survey? Generally, these providers do not charge any rates and are excluded from market rate surveys. However, if CCDF funds are used for combining services with these providers, they may be included. A separate survey instrument probably will be needed to collect specific information.

In areas where there are many child care providers, some Tribes may need to consider sampling the child care provider population. This can be a complicated research technique that may require some additional assistance.

Having investigated whether the State's survey area applies to the Tribe's population, determined the child care market area for CCDF -assisted Indian families, and decided which categories of child care providers need to be included in data collection, the Tribe now proceeds with gathering available information.

The next chapter explores the possibilities of getting data from other agencies and describes possible resources.

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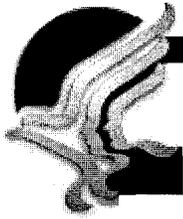
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**Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC)
A Guide to Market Rate Surveys For CCDF Tribal Entities
III. Determining Potential Resources**

There are several possible resources that Tribes can use to collect the information needed for the Market Rate Survey. Some of the resources may have all the data that is needed. Other resources may be able to provide only some of the information. Some agencies may provide assistance to the Tribe in completing its own Market Rate Survey.

State Child Care Administrators

Each state has a designated agency that operates the State's CCDF program. A list of State Child Care Administrators is provided in [Appendix B](#). As each state must conduct a Market Rate Survey within two years of the current approved plan, the Tribe may choose to use some or all of the state's data. It is important to know *how* the State conducted their survey and *if* the data is useful for Tribes. Here are some of the questions to ask:

- How does the state define the types of care provided to children—part-time, full-time care, etc? Are the State's definitions the same as the Tribe's for payments to child care providers?
- Did the State include information from tribal child care providers in the survey? Did they survey non-tribal child care providers who provide services to tribal children?
- Did the State include unregulated caregivers in the survey? How were relatives caring for CCDF supported children covered in the survey?
- Can the State provide data for a certain geographical area or only for the entire state? If the data can be broken down into smaller areas, what are these areas? Can the State supply data by county or zip codes?
- Did the Market Rate Survey include the costs of registration fees or activity fees charged by some providers in the market area? These fees affect the cost of care.
- What is the State's policy on including/excluding the child care provider's absentee policy in the cost of care? In other words, if the provider requires that the parent pay for care when the child is absent or sick, how did the state Market Rate Survey account for this?
- How does the State use the data from the Market Rate Survey in

determining what the CCDF reimbursement rate will be? What is the State's cut-off percentile for families accessing care? For instance, can CCDF families access 75% of the child care providers in their area with the funding support that is available?

- Does the State have a differential payment rate paying separate rates for different age groups and/or for differing levels of quality service?

After collecting the answers to these questions, the Tribe can decide whether or not the information in the State's Market Rate Survey is useful for its purposes.

Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Most states have a network of Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) community-based agencies. These agencies collect and maintain information on child care providers in the local areas. The CCR&R agency keeps extensive data on all types of child care providers: fees, location, vacancies, hours of care, ages of children cared for, licensure, contact persons and much more. This data may be available by zip code, city or by county. Tribes can contact the State CCR&R Network to get the names and contact persons of the agencies in their area.

Tribal Information

Depending on the specific characteristics of the Tribe, information needed to complete the Market Rate Survey may be available in a tribal office. This information may include the:

- names and addresses of some or all child care providers serving Indian children on or near the reservation, or service area.
- methodology used in the past to determine sliding fee scales, family income eligibility, and reimbursements to providers of CCDF supported children.
- names of persons on or off the reservation who could be of assistance in compiling the information needed.

Tribes in Alaska, California, and Oklahoma, the central offices of other Tribal Grantees may want to contact neighboring Tribes to compare data.

There are several decisions for the Tribe to make before deciding to use information from outside sources or to conduct their own Market Rate Survey. These decisions will be based on the following questions:

- Is the data collected in the State's Market Rate Survey useful for the Tribe?
- Does the local Child Care Resource and Referral agency have information

- about child care providers who serve tribal families?
- Is the service area defined in the tribe's CCDF grant the same as the geographic area for the Market Rate Survey? If not, what geographic area will be used?
 - Can the data from an outside source be broken down to the area described by the Tribe as their service area or survey area?

Having looked at the issues described in *I. Identifying the Market* and receiving the information from existing resources described in *II. Determining Potential Resources*, the Tribe can now decide whether or not to conduct its own survey. *Chapter III, Developing the Survey*, will assist Tribes in conducting their own survey or developing a survey which incorporates data provided by other sources.

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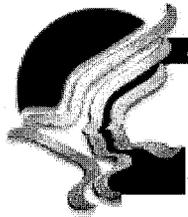
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Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC) A Guide to Market Rate Surveys For CCDF Tribal Entities IV. Developing the Survey

Having decided what market area to survey and who to survey among the child care Tribe now decides what needs to be measured and what information needs to be gathered. A Market Rate Survey needs to produce reliable and valid information so that the data can be used to make accurate decisions. Decisions will need to be made about:

Defining the ages of the children

- Will the survey use the same age brackets as the State - usually those bracketed by the State's licensing requirements.
- Does the Tribe cover the same age divisions?
- How will age bracket data from outside sources, such as the State's Market Rate Survey, be incorporated into the Tribe's?

A typical question for providers about the ages of the children served might be:

Do you accept children in the following age groups? Please check all that apply.
Infants (0-12 months of age)
Toddlers (1 -2 years of age)
Two Year Olds
Three Year Olds
Four - Five Year Olds
Kindergartners (currently attending Kindergarten)
School-age (6 years or older or completed kindergarten)
Special Needs Individuals up to age 19

Defining the Units of Service

The unit of service is the time element that providers use to charge for the child care providers charge only full-day or full-month rates regardless of how long

care. Others have a part-time rate, a weekly rate, or an hourly rate. These are the number of units of service must be selected as a part of the survey since all possible be covered. It is best to use units of service that match what the majority of providers establish their rates. A formula must be determined to convert other units of service categories. Tribes may want to consult both the local CCR&R and State Agency to find measure the units of service and what conversion formulas were used. This would make State and/or CCR&R data into a Tribal survey much easier.

Here is a sample question that combines both the ages of the children served with

	Infants	1 year olds	2 year olds	3 year olds	4 year olds	5 year olds preschool
How many children in each age group were enrolled full-time in X month?						
How many children in each age group were enrolled part-time in X month?						

Enrollment data reflects the current number of children being served rather than the provider could be serving. The licensed capacity of a center is often overestimated. child care home providers choose to serve only two or three children even though they are licensed for a larger number. So *enrollment data* provides more accurate information than capacity data.

Market Cost

The purpose of the survey is to describe the cost of child care in the area. This guide describes possible approaches to defining the cost:

Market rate: the price charged to families who receive no help in paying for the services OR the price paid by a government subsidy plus the portion of the fee that the family pays. This is the one most typically measured.

Market cost - the cost per child when all contributions are taken into account including discounts, or donated services.

Full cost of care: the market cost plus the unpaid wages and benefits that workers in other jobs who have similar educational backgrounds.

Because child care is expensive and subsidies are limited, many child care providers use fee scales, scholarship programs, or reduced rates for additional children in the same families who do not receive any outside financial assistance. Some providers receive assistance from agencies such as the United Way or receive free rent and other assistance. Some providers cover the difference in income by having fundraisers. This cost data can seriously affect the Market Rate Survey. Therefore, the Market Rate Survey may collect data on the market amount of fees paid plus the value of any donated items, scholarships, or sliding fee question to retrieve some of this data is:

List the items you received in the past 12 months as donations or gifts from parents	
Item:	Estimated Value:
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____

Another possible question is:

During X month, how many of the children counted above received a scholarship or subsidy from another organization other than the CCDF monies?
--

These and other questions will help the Tribe estimate what the cost of child care rate is actually charged.

Additional Fees

Child care providers often charge additional fees for registration, transportation, supplies, and field trips. The Market Rate Survey can include questions that determine what additional fees are charged above and beyond the hourly/weekly/monthly fees. A sample question to collect this information is:

Please indicate whether your facility charges for the following (show estimated COSTS PER CHILD):		
	NO	YES
Deposit	___	___
Registration or Enrollment	___	___
Activities and Field Trips	___	___
Transportation to school or home	___	___

Supplies	—	—
Other charges (please describe)	—	—

Having this type of information will help the tribe know whether some providers charge add on special fees to the base rate reported in the survey. Also, if a lot of provider fees, it may be difficult for low-income families to get that quality of care if they are fee. The Tribe may need to establish a policy that allows payment of special fees from monies or includes the costs of additional charges in the payment rate.

Preparing the survey instrument requires skills and understanding in methods of survey prepared instrument can collect the information needed. The information needed in Rate Survey includes:

- NUMBER of children cared for in EACH AGE BRACKET
- RATE charged the general public for FULL-TIME and PART-TIME CARE
- HOW rates are charged: by the HOUR, DAY, WEEK
- CURRENT ENROLLMENT by AGE GROUP
- VACANCIES by AGE GROUP
- TYPES of CARE offered: flexible care, evening care, overnight, weekends; care children with disabilities
- RATES for each special TYPE of CARE
- ADDITIONAL FEES CHARGED: what fees are charged, what amount is paid by paying customer, and how often is the fee charged

Sometimes additional questions are added if the State or Tribe has a special interest. An example of this is: "Do you participate in the Child Care Food Program?"

When constructing the survey instrument, the Tribe will need to pay careful attention to definitions used in the survey.

Terms and Definitions

- Are the terms and definitions similar to terms and definitions used by the major providers in the area?
- Is every term specifically defined? See the sample questions for examples of terms.
- Are definitions part of the actual question rather than a separate set of instructions?
- Are the questions very specific so they can not be misinterpreted?

Survey Format

The format of the survey needs to ensure that it can be completed easily and quickly to be mailed, the design may direct the provider to fill in the appropriate blanks as questions shown in this guide. To make sure the providers only fill in the blanks near

their services, be clear that providers are instructed NOT to fill in all the blanks if the ages or charge rates in all units of service. It is a good idea to ask for the same key several different questions. Then the answers can be used to check on the accuracy

If a telephone survey is used, make sure the format is well spaced on the page and easily read. Surveyors need to be scripted so each **one has the** same conversation. Telephone surveys should not last more than five to ten minutes.

Pre-Test

It is always helpful to try out the survey on a few child care providers before giving survey population. After "Pre-testing" the survey instrument, changes can be made questions before the actual Market Rate Survey is completed.

Once the information is collected, the data is tallied mathematically depending on the question. Typical calculations are:

- Total Responses in Each Category of Care
- Total Number of Children Cared for in Each Age Bracket
- Total Number of Children Cared for in Each Type of Care Total Number of Children time, part-time, etc.
- Average Rate Charged for Each Unit of Service. This may be divided high, medium areas
- Rates for Special Types of Care: flexible care, evening care, and weekend care children or children with disabilities
- Additional Fees Charged

This chapter has described the development of the Market Rate Survey including defining the children, defining the units of service, market rate versus market cost and additional by providers. Preparing the survey instrument was discussed with an emphasis on the definitions, survey format, pre-testing the survey instrument, and calculating the data

The next chapter describes using the survey data in making decisions about rate policy quality care for children.

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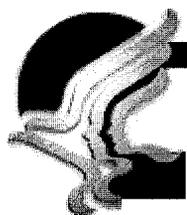
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**Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC)
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V. Application of Survey Data**

This Guide has focused on understanding the child care market, developing the survey instrument, and conducting the Market Rate Survey. This chapter describes how the data may be used by the Tribe to make decisions about rate payments and policies and procedures that encourage quality child care. The policies which Tribes need to establish include: establishing rates, whether or not to include differential rates within a category of care and for each age group; incorporating special fees into the rate structure; and, establishing policies regarding absences, vacations, or breaks in employment.

Establishing Rates

In the decision making process many other considerations are involved: dual eligibility of the children, the amount of the grant award to the Tribe, the State's payment rates, the economic conditions on the reservation, and the supply and demand for child care. While reimbursement rates are normally based on the amount charged in the marketplace, the Tribe must decide what is the maximum amount it is able to pay for child care. Under ideal conditions, all providers would be paid whatever they charged their non-subsidized families. However, the Tribe's CCDF funds rarely meet their needs. Therefore, the Tribe must decide how many children need CCDF support and how to set the rate ceilings in each category of care so families can access the highest quality of care possible with the funds available.

In summarizing the data collected, the Tribal Market Rate Survey will likely report:

- the average charge per day for child care centers, family child care homes and in-home care (as possible.)
- the average daily charges broken down into the different age groups
 - infants
 - 2 to five year olds
 - kindergarten and school age children
 - children with special needs

This initial summary of the data collected will provide the Tribe with a base from which to make decisions.

Differential Payment Rates

Tribes may choose to establish different rates for different categories of care. Center-based care, group home care, family child care, and in-home care can have different rate ceilings. Within a category of care, Tribes can establish a different rate for regulated or unregulated care. For example, family child care homes that meet the state or Tribe's regulations above the basic health and safety regulations can be paid more than homes that do not. There can be no differential rates between relative care and non-relative in-home care based simply on the relationship to the child. Also, the Fair Labor Standards Act and minimum wage laws apply to caregivers; in the child's home. Different rates are also based on the ages of the children in care. For example, rates paid for infants and toddlers will likely be higher than for school-age children.

Over one-fourth of the states have established differential payment rates to encourage providers that serve low-income children to provide high quality services. In states where this occurs, the differential payments include providers who meet higher standards such as accreditation, providers who offer additional services such as serving children with special needs, or providers located in very low-income areas where none of the families can afford to pay the actual cost of care. In the latter case, the price of care in these areas is below the market rate.

Special Fees

Special fees can present serious problems to low income families if they are not included in the Tribe's rate payments. Low-income families may be unable to use care when activity or registration fees are charged; or, their children may be unable to participate in special programs that require additional costs. The Tribe needs to consider market practices when establishing policies regarding the payment of special fees. The Tribe could pay these fees or add them to the base rate when establishing rate ceilings and reimbursing providers.

Some providers charge the families less for second or succeeding children in the same family. However, the cost of care per child does not change even though there are multiple children from the same family in child care. Therefore, the Tribe needs to reimburse the provider on a per child basis regardless of the number of children from one family who are in care.

Absences, Vacations and Breaks in Employment

The CCDF regulations do not establish attendance requirements for children

receiving child care services. Therefore, the Tribe has flexibility in determining policies to cover payment for absences, vacations or breaks in service. These policy decisions can be stated in the CCDF Tribal Plan.

After looking at all the data and making decisions and policies as described throughout the document, the Tribal decision makers can then set payment rates for families and providers. Based on a well-developed Market Rate Survey, tribal families will have valid options in the CCDF supported child care they select. The Tribe may wish to develop and make available a Tribal Market Rate Survey Report summarizing the data collected and providing the decisions made as a result of the survey.

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Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center (TriTAC) A Guide to Market Rate Surveys For CCDF Tribal Entities VI. Summary

This ***Guide to Market Rate Surveys for CCDF Tribal Entities*** has presented some major issues related to market rate surveys that are critical for American Indian and Alaska Native CCDF grantees. How grantee personnel respond to the questions asked in the Guide and what decisions are made can seriously affect the CCDF-assisted services provided. The subject of the Market Rate Survey and its application to Tribes is complex. The issues of child count, service areas, use of state or CCR&R data, constructing a reliable survey, and describing the results are key to achieving the best usage of limited funds. The payment rates and sliding fee scales resulting from the Market Rate Survey will determine the services available to tribal families.

Some key points presented throughout this document may be summarized in the following recommendations:

1. Consult the State CCDF agency to see if their Market Rate Survey is applicable to the tribal needs and economy.
2. Since American Indian and Alaska Native children have dual eligibility to use both State and Tribal CCDF funds, collaborate with the State Agency to maximize the use of both funding streams.
3. If the decision is made to incorporate data from outside agencies, be sure the data included child care providers who received payments for services to American Indian or Alaska Native children.
4. Seek help, as needed, from persons trained in survey methodology. Colleges and universities, marketing firms and state agencies may be able to provide some "pro bono" (free) or reduced cost consulting to assist the Tribe.
5. Because the relationship between the market rate survey results, the payment rates and family sliding fee scales is complicated, consider the supply of child care providers and the demands for child care services when setting rates as a result of the survey.

Hopefully, this Guide will provide assistance as Tribes begin the task of addressing the Market Rate Survey requirement by looking at the Market Rate Surveys conducted by the States, conducting their own Market Rate Survey, or revising outdated Tribal surveys.

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