



# What Can We Learn about Head Start from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education?

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The 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) contains rich information on child care centers, child care center staff, and family child care homes<sup>1</sup> funded by Head Start (box 1). This brief presents considerations for researchers interested in using the 2019 NSECE data in research on these centers and family child care homes and their classrooms and staff. It presents research questions that can and cannot be addressed with the 2019 NSECE data and provides relevant information about missingness, sample sizes, and precision of estimates for Head Start subgroups.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2019 NSECE collected data from “listed home-based providers,” defined as child care providers appearing on state and national lists that provided care in a home-based setting to at least one child under 13 who was not their own (NSECE Project Team 2022). In this brief, we refer to “listed home-based providers” as “family child care homes” to align with the terminology used in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (45 CFR 1302.23–Family child care option) to describe education and child development services delivered in a provider’s home or other family-like setting.

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## BOX 1

### A Brief Description of Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded program that provides early education and other comprehensive services and supports for families with children from birth to age 5 and expectant families. Eligible populations include children in families with incomes below the poverty level or whose families access public assistance, children identified as needing early intervention or special education services, children in foster care, and children experiencing homelessness.<sup>a</sup> The federal government distributes Head Start grants to recipients that deliver these services in centers and family child care home settings and through home visiting services.

In this brief we use the term Head Start to refer broadly to Head Start Preschool (services for children ages 3 and 4), Early Head Start (services for children under 3 and expectant families), Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (services for children of farmworker families), and American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start (services for children of families from tribal communities).

**Source:** <sup>a</sup> “Eligibility Reference Sheet,” Head Start, last updated June 28, 2023, <https://headstart.gov/ersea/ersea-insights/eligibility-reference-sheet>.

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## Sources of National Head Start Data

Multiple sources provide data about Head Start nationally, each with unique strengths and limitations. These include the 2019 NSECE, the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), the Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (Baby FACES), and the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR).

FACES, Baby FACES, and the Head Start PIR have long been recognized as rich and comprehensive national sources of information on Head Start programs, centers, classrooms, staff, and families. For example, FACES and Baby FACES are the only nationally representative sources of data on Head Start–specific policies and practices, classroom quality, and child and family outcomes. The 2019 NSECE may offer complementary insights to these other data sources—specifically, the 2019 NSECE is uniquely suited to examine centers and family child care homes that receive Head Start funding alongside those funded through other sources. These data sources each enable the examination of unique questions of relevance to Head Start.

The sections below describe these sources’ sampling designs, their sample sizes, and the constructs they capture.

### What Are the Sampling Designs of Sources of National Head Start Data?

The 2019 NSECE used a complex sampling design that allows users to produce estimates that are nationally representative of all early care and education (ECE) centers, center staff, and family child care homes. The sampling frame included data from the Office of Head Start (OHS) on Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes, and the sampling design drew providers from all 50 states

and the District of Columbia (NSECE Project Team 2022). Weighted estimates of the share or number of Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes nationally should be representative. Because the 2019 NSECE was not specifically stratified based on Head Start funding receipt or weighted based on Head Start characteristics, however, weighted estimates for subgroups in the sample of Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes may or may not be nationally representative. In addition, the surveys were sampled at the level of centers and family child care homes (referred to in the 2019 NSECE as “providers”), meaning estimates are not intended to describe Head Start grant recipients.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, the FACES and Baby FACES sampling frames were limited to all Head Start programs in the nation, and estimates were specifically designed to be representative of all Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start programs, centers, and families. The FACES 2019 sampled Head Start Preschool programs in geographically defined OHS regions (Kopack Klein et al. 2021). The Baby FACES 2018 sampled Early Head Start programs in the same regions but excluded programs in Alaska and Hawaii (Cannon et al. 2020).

The PIR does not employ sampling at all and instead collects data from the full population of Head Start grant recipients. It includes data that all Head Start programs are required to report annually to OHS. The PIR data reflect Head Start grant recipients, not individual centers or family child care homes, meaning the level of information available through the PIR is different than that in the 2019 NSECE estimates and some FACES and Baby FACES estimates.

## **What Respondents, Sample Sizes, and Constructs Are Examined in Sources of National Head Start Data?**

The 2019 NSECE, FACES 2019, Baby FACES 2018, and annual PIR differ in their respondents, sample sizes, and constructs. Table 1 summarizes these differences.

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<sup>2</sup> A “grant recipient” is an agency or organization that meets Head Start requirements and receives Head Start funding (45 CFR 1303.30—Grant recipient responsibility and accountability). Grant recipients may operate one or more centers or family child care homes (45 CFR 1302.20—Determining program structure).

TABLE 1

Differences between the 2019 NSECE, FACES 2019, Baby FACES 2018, and Annual PIR

2019 NSECE	FACES 2019	Baby FACES 2018	Annual PIR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nationally representative samples of centers and family child care homes across funding sources.</li> <li>▪ Allows for comparisons of Head Start centers with those funded by other sources within the broader ECE system.</li> <li>▪ Limited data on child outcomes, ECE quality, curricula, and other constructs of potential interest to Head Start researchers.</li> <li>▪ <b>Sample size:</b> 6,917 centers, 5,192 center staff, and 4,231 family child care homes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Size of Head Start sample:</b> 1,766 centers, 1,291 staff in centers, and 253 family child care homes.</li> <li>▪ Center and center staff datasets can be linked to examine relationships between center characteristics and staff demographics, activities, and well-being outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Center and center staff datasets allow users to examine subgroups of Head Start-funded centers and their staff.</li> <li>▪ No information about Head Start grant recipients.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nationally representative samples of Head Start Preschool programs, centers, classrooms, and children and their families.</li> <li>▪ The only nationally representative source of data on Head Start-specific policies and practices, classroom quality, and child and family outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Enables tracking of trends in Head Start programs, centers, classrooms, and families over time (from fall to spring and across cohorts).</li> <li>▪ Allows for analyses at and across each level, such as program characteristics and their influence on child and family outcomes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Sample size:</b> 165 programs and 203 centers.</li> <li>▪ Center and program dataset can be linked to classroom data. The FACES 2019 spring 2020 data collection took place at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional information about implications of the pandemic on the data collected and interpretation of findings are detailed in “A Portrait of Head Start Classrooms and Programs in Spring 2020: FACES 2019 Descriptive Data Tables and Study Design   The Administration for Children and Families.”</li> <li>▪ Sample does not include family child care homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nationally representative sample of Early Head Start programs, centers, classrooms, and children and their families.</li> <li>▪ The only nationally representative source of data on Early Head Start-specific services, policies, practices, and child and family outcomes.</li> <li>▪ Enables tracking of trends in Early Head Start programs, centers, classrooms, and families over time (across cohorts).</li> <li>▪ Allows for analyses at and across each level, such as program characteristics and their influence on child and family outcomes.</li> <li>▪ <b>Sample size:</b> 137 programs and 468 centers.</li> <li>▪ Center and program dataset can be linked to classroom, workforce, family, and child data to examine relationships between all levels.</li> <li>▪ Sample does not include family child care homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annual universe of Head Start programs.</li> <li>▪ Provides comprehensive information on the services, staff, children, and families served by Head Start programs nationally.</li> <li>▪ <b>Size differs by reported year,</b> depending on number of active programs.</li> <li>▪ Administrative data; no sampling or randomization.</li> <li>▪ Data can be used for point-in-time or longitudinal analyses of Head Start programs.</li> </ul>

**Source:** Authors’ analyses of the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education, 2019 Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey, 2018 Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study, and Head Start Program Information Report.

**Notes:** Baby FACES = Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study; ECE = early care and education; FACES = Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey; NSECE = National Survey of Early Care and Education; PIR = Head Start Program Information Report.

# How Does the 2019 NSECE Capture Information about Head Start?

As shown above, multiple national data sources capture information about Head Start, each with different sampling designs and constructs reported. This brief focuses on the 2019 NSECE (box 2) because it is unique among sources of national Head Start data given its potential for examining large sample sizes of Head Start centers, Head Start family child care homes, and staff in the broader early care and education context. The 2019 NSECE contains data from a nationally representative sample of all ECE centers and family child care homes.

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## BOX 2

### What Is the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education?

The **2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)** is a set of four nationally representative, integrated surveys of: (1) households with children under 13; (2) home-based providers of early care and education (ECE) to children under 13; (3) center-based providers of ECE to children from birth through 5 who are not yet in kindergarten; and (4) the center-based provider workforce in classrooms serving children not yet in kindergarten. The surveys captured data about the availability and use of ECE. They were designed to be nationally representative of households and ECE providers, with data collected across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The datasets include sampling weights that allow users to produce estimates of child care centers, those centers' staff, family child care homes, and households with children under 13.

Public-use data are available to users through the Child & Family Data Archive.<sup>a</sup> Select variables from each survey are available on a restricted basis, meaning an application is required to access the data and the results of any analyses must undergo disclosure review. The 2019 NSECE has three levels of restricted-use data, with different restrictions depending on the sensitivity of the data. Depending on which level of data a user wants to access, they must submit a restricted-use data application to the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (L1 data)<sup>b</sup> or NORC (L2 and L3 data)<sup>c</sup> that specifies the scope of their project and how they intend to protect the security of the data. The level of restricted-use data also dictates the stringency of disclosure rules by which users must abide.

In 2020, the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation funded follow-up surveys to capture data about ECE in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSECE team tried to reach 2019 NSECE respondents and collect data about their pandemic experiences. Users can link restricted-use data from the COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up survey to the 2019 NSECE data. Although the COVID-19 Longitudinal Follow-up is not discussed in this brief, the data offer an additional opportunity for users interested in understanding the ECE field's experience during the pandemic.

The Child & Family Data Archive's NSECE webpage provides more details for users interested in learning more about the NSECE. The NSECE team has developed resources, including user's guides for each survey and several webinar series.<sup>d</sup> These resources are designed to help users understand the surveys' complex sampling, produce representative estimates, and correctly set up comparisons between subgroups and across surveys.

#### Sources:

<sup>a</sup> See "National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Public-Use Files, [United States], 2019 (ICPSR 37941)," Child & Family Data Archive, September 30, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR37941.v8>.

<sup>b</sup> “National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Level 1 Restricted-Use Files, [United States], 2019 (ICPSR 38445),” Child & Family Data Archive, September 30, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR38445.v3>.

<sup>c</sup> “National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Level-2 Restricted-Use (L2) Data Application and Information Packet,” Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, accessed May 2, 2025, <https://acf.gov/opre/report/national-survey-early-care-and-education-nsece-level-2-restricted-use-l2-data>.

<sup>d</sup> “Data Training Resources from the NSECE,” Child & Family Data Archive, accessed May 2, 2025, [https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/pages/cfda/nsece.html?utm\\_source=NSECE-RESOURCES&utm\\_medium=NSECE-RESOURCES&utm\\_campaign=NSECE-RESOURCES](https://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org/cfda/pages/cfda/nsece.html?utm_source=NSECE-RESOURCES&utm_medium=NSECE-RESOURCES&utm_campaign=NSECE-RESOURCES).

Researchers can use responses to items about funding sources to identify Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes in the 2019 NSECE sample and create subgroups of these centers and family child care homes. Table 2 describes the Head Start constructs that researchers can examine in the 2019 NSECE (differences in terminology between the 2019 NSECE and Head Start are highlighted in the table notes).

**TABLE 2**  
**Head Start Funding Information Captured in the 2019 NSECE, by Head Start Group**

Head Start group	Funding information captured in 2019 NSECE	2019 NSECE instrument	Dataset
Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Funding source(s)</li> <li>■ Enrollment by age and funding source (including children from birth to age 3 funded by Head Start and children ages 3 to 5 funded by Head Start)</li> </ul>	Center-based provider survey	Public-use dataset
Center-based staff <sup>a</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Funding source(s)<sup>b</sup></li> </ul>	Center-based workforce survey	Public-use dataset
Family child care homes <sup>c</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Funding source(s)<sup>d</sup></li> <li>■ Enrollment by funding source (does not distinguish the ages of children funded by Head Start)</li> </ul>	Home-based provider survey (listed home-based providers)	L1 restricted-use dataset

**Source:** Authors’ analyses of the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education.

**Notes:** NSECE = National Survey of Early Care and Education.

<sup>a</sup> Whereas Head Start primarily refers to employees at Head Start centers and family child care homes as “staff,” the 2019 NSECE uses “workforce.” The center-based workforce survey sampled teachers, assistant teachers, aides, and other kinds of instructors.

<sup>b</sup> The staff sampled in the center-based workforce survey were employed in the centers sampled in the center-based provider survey. This means the two datasets can be linked and more detailed funding information from the center-based provider dataset can be leveraged in analyses of the center-based workforce dataset. See the survey user guides, available at <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR37941.v8>, for more detail on how to link the two datasets.

<sup>c</sup> We use “family child care homes” to refer to what the 2019 NSECE calls “listed home-based providers.” These do not include Head Start home visiting (home-based) services.

<sup>d</sup> Although the public-use home-based provider dataset includes some funding information, all Head Start funding information for family child care homes is only included in the L1 restricted-use dataset.

The 2019 NSECE defines “Head Start–funded centers” and “Head Start–funded family child care homes” as centers and family child care homes enrolling at least one child funded by Head Start. This definition aligns with the OHS requirement that centers and family child care homes receiving any Head Start funding are subject to the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

In addition to the terminology differences highlighted in table 2, the 2019 NSECE refers to centers and family child care homes jointly as “early care and education providers,” whereas Head Start tends to refer to them as “settings.” As described in the [section](#) on Head Start data sources’ sampling designs, the 2019 NSECE was not designed to collect data at the level of Head Start grant recipients.

## Strengths and Limitations of the 2019 NSECE for Conducting Head Start Research

The research team conducted a series of analyses to identify Head Start–relevant constructs, create subgroups of Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes, and examine the missingness and precision of 2019 NSECE Head Start estimates. See below for the results of these analyses. For the research questions and methodology underlying these analyses, see box 3.

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### BOX 3

#### Research Questions and Methodology

The research team aimed to understand whether and how the 2019 NSECE could be used to answer research questions about Head Start. The team’s research questions were as follows:

- **Head Start constructs:** What kinds of Head Start constructs are captured in the 2019 NSECE? Are there constructs relevant for answering research questions about Head Start that are not in the 2019 NSECE?
- **Sample sizes:** How large are the sample sizes of Head Start–funded centers, center staff, and family child care homes in the 2019 NSECE? How large are the sample sizes of Head Start subgroups?
- **Item-level missingness:** How do differences in the item-level missingness between Head Start subgroups in the 2019 NSECE affect researchers’ ability to draw comparisons? What issues related to accuracy and reliability of estimates arise because of missingness for different constructs?
- **Precision of estimates:** How precise are 2019 NSECE estimates for Head Start–funded centers, center staff, and family child care homes compared with estimates for those funded by other sources? How does precision differ for different constructs captured in the 2019 NSECE? How precise are the 2019 NSECE estimates for Head Start subgroups?

The research team examined the 2019 NSECE’s variable-level documentation to identify Head Start–relevant constructs. It identified the samples of centers by different funding sources and created subgroups of Head Start–funded centers by ages enrolled with Head Start funding, share of enrolled children funded by Head Start, and provider auspice (see table 3 below). The team then examined the

missingness and precision of more than 90 variables in the center-based provider and center-based workforce datasets for each subgroup.

**Missingness.** To identify patterns of missingness, the research team recoded values according to each survey’s public user guide. In the 2019 NSECE, missing values reflect questions that respondents did not answer, skipped because the questions did not apply to them, or answered with a response of “I don’t know” or “No answer.” Some variables include calculations that the NSECE team performed based on responses to other questions, and so missing values may also reflect cases where the calculation could not be completed. In other cases, respondents were unsure of the numeric value they were being asked to report but knew of “at least one” case, which the NSECE defines as a missing value. Missing values are always indicated with negative response values or with a period (“.”).

For each variable, the research team then calculated the share of the total sample size that was missing. It used a threshold of 5 percent missingness to determine when listwise deletion may be sufficient to account for item-level missingness in each variable according to its percentage of missing values. Literature suggests that for missingness greater than 5 percent, users may wish to employ multiple imputation techniques and should consider the assumptions underlying these techniques before doing so (for instance, see Jakobsen et al. 2017 and Schafer 1999).

**Precision.** To determine the precision of the 2019 NSECE’s estimates, the research team used survey weights to calculate estimates and standard errors for each variable, which it used to calculate the coefficient of variation for each variable (the ratio of the standard error to the estimate; US Census Bureau 2018). The coefficient of variation indicates how much spread an estimate has relative to the estimate itself, with smaller coefficients meaning that users can be more confident that the estimated value is near the population value. Based on the US Census Bureau’s approach for classifying estimate precision, the research team used a threshold of 0.30 to evaluate these coefficients (Gardner, Kimpel, and Zhao 2015). Coefficients above 0.30 have lower levels of precision and researchers may need to exercise more caution when using them.

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## What Types of Questions about Head Start Can Be Examined Using the 2019 NSECE?

The 2019 NSECE has sufficiently large sample sizes of centers and center staff to allow users to produce precise estimates about the populations of Head Start centers and staff and to construct subgroups of Head Start–funded centers and center staff (table 3). For example, the 2019 NSECE includes variables capturing the ages of children enrolled in centers by funding source, the percentage of enrolled children funded by different funding sources, and center auspice (for profit, nonprofit, or government run). These variables can be used to construct subgroups of Head Start–funded centers. Sample descriptive statistics show that the overall sample of Head Start centers and center staff is sufficiently large for most analyses, with relatively large subgroups of Head Start–funded centers defined by the ages of enrolled children funded by Head Start, the share of enrolled children funded by Head Start, and the auspice of the center. These subgroups are hereafter referred to as **Head Start subgroups**.

TABLE 3

**Sample Sizes of Early Care and Education Centers, Center Staff, and Family Child Care Homes in the 2019 NSECE, by Key Characteristic**

Sample or subgroup definition	Centers	Center staff	FCC homes
<i>Overall sample size of the 2019 NSECE</i>	6,917	5,192	4,231†
<i>Sample size by funding source</i>	-	-	-
Any Head Start funding	1,766	1,291	253‡
Any public funding other than Head Start	3,696	2,922	1,340‡
Private funding only	1,320	907	1,820‡
<i>Head Start subgroup: Ages enrolled with Head Start funding</i>	-	-	-
Enrolls at least one child from birth to age 3 funded by Head Start	1,028	749	190‡
Enrolls at least one child ages 3 to 5 funded by Head Start	1,404	1,022	195‡
<i>Head Start subgroup: Type of Head Start center or FCC home</i>	-	-	-
Serves only children from birth to age 3 funded by Head Start	362	269	57‡
Serves only children ages 3 to 5 funded by Head Start	738	542	62‡
Serves children from birth to age 5 funded by Head Start	666	480	133‡
<i>Head Start subgroup: Share of enrolled children funded by Head Start</i>	-	-	-
Serves at least one child funded by Head Start but exact percentage unknown	550	359	96‡
Less than 50 percent of children enrolled are funded by Head Start	418	319	70‡
50 to 99 percent of children enrolled are funded by Head Start	233	188	43‡
All children enrolled are funded by Head Start	565	425	40‡
<i>Head Start subgroup: Provider auspice</i>	-	-	-
Private / for profit	489	347	-
Nonprofit	944	699	-
Public / government run	308	230	-

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use and restricted-use data from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider, center-based workforce, and home-based provider surveys.

**Notes:** FCC= family child care. NSECE = National Survey of Early Care and Education. Missing values are not reported. Dashes mean "not applicable."

† Though the home-based provider survey includes both listed and unlisted home-based providers, the Office of Head Start list of Head Start-funded providers in summer 2018 was one of the administrative data sources used in building the NSECE provider sampling frame (NSECE Project Team 2022). Therefore, Head Start providers would be unlikely to appear in the 2019 NSECE's sample of unlisted ECE home providers. For comparison, only the sample size of listed home-based providers is reported.

‡ Home-based provider variables capturing Head Start funding for family child care homes are only available in the restricted-use data. Counts are rounded to three significant figures for reporting reasons.

As mentioned above, information about family child care homes' receipt of Head Start funding is restricted, meaning users must consider the time needed to develop and revise a restricted-use data application, navigate a secure environment through which to access data, and abide by policies around disclosure reviews and data suppression when reporting findings. Though the sample size of Head Start family child care homes is smaller than those of Head Start centers or center staff, it may be sufficient for some analyses. Estimates of Head Start family child care homes do not indicate sample-size-driven precision issues. But users should take caution when analyzing subgroups of Head Start family child care homes because the smaller sample sizes may generate imprecise estimates or be too small for some analyses.

The 2019 NSECE also allows users to compare centers and family child care homes that receive Head Start funds with centers and family child care homes that receive funds from other sources. For example, the 2019 NSECE includes variables about whether centers and family child care homes receive funds from Head Start, the Child Care and Development Fund, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, state prekindergarten, and private sources. These variables allow users to examine centers and family child care homes that receive funding from different sources or combinations of sources.

Users can also use the 2019 NSECE to answer Head Start questions related to the following:

- centers' and family child care homes' sponsorship (i.e., whether they are independent or sponsored by another organization)
- centers' and family child care homes' enrollment by funding source and child characteristics (including children with disabilities and children experiencing homelessness), vacancies by age group, and enrollment turnover
- centers' and family child care homes' staffing, staff turnover (centers only), and benefits and professional development opportunities offered
- center characteristics, including schedule, comprehensive services offered, participation in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, director/operator characteristics, and location (building type, census region, and community characteristics, including urbanicity)
- characteristics and enrollment of center classrooms
- characteristics of center classroom staff<sup>3</sup> (including demographics, qualifications, health and mental health, and perspectives on caregiving), classroom staff professional development activities, and classroom learning activities

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<sup>3</sup> There is limited information about funding for classrooms within centers (see the next section for more information). Because of this limited information, it is difficult to determine whether the classroom staff represented in the 2019 NSECE serve children funded by Head Start.

## What Types of Questions about Head Start Cannot Be Examined Using the 2019 NSECE?

For the following reasons, the 2019 NSECE’s sampling design and questionnaire limit its potential for analyses of households enrolled in Head Start–funded centers or family child care homes, classrooms and teachers in classrooms enrolling children funded by Head Start, and Head Start programs or grant recipients:

- **The 2019 NSECE household survey has limited information about children’s enrollment in Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes.** Although the survey includes some variables about children’s enrollment in Head Start, the sample size is small. Moreover, the household data do not include variables about the characteristics of the Head Start centers or family child care homes in which children are enrolled, nor can they be linked to data from the center-based provider, center-based workforce, or home-based provider surveys to leverage the more detailed information in those datasets.
- **The 2019 NSECE reports funding sources at the center level, with limited funding information for individual classrooms.** When asked to report the number of children in a randomly selected classroom funded by Head Start, most directors reported that they “did not know.”<sup>4</sup> This randomly selected classroom was then used to identify staff to respond to the center-based workforce survey. Because of this high level of missingness on the classroom funding question, estimates from the center-based workforce survey for the subgroup of Head Start–funded center staff may not necessarily represent “Head Start classrooms” or “Head Start teachers.” Instead, the workforce data may represent “classrooms or staff within a center that received Head Start funding for at least one child.”
- **The 2019 NSECE does not contain information about grant recipients or organizations within which centers or family child care homes operate, and users cannot aggregate center or family child care home data to the grant-recipient level.** That is, analysis of survey data can produce estimates for Head Start–funded centers, staff in Head Start–funded centers, and Head Start–funded family child care homes, but not for Head Start grant recipients.
- **The 2019 NSECE was not specifically designed to be nationally representative of subgroups within the sample of Head Start centers or family child care homes.** Head Start funding was not specifically accounted for as a stratum in the survey design, nor was it incorporated in the survey weights. Although estimates of the number of Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes *are* nationally representative, estimates for subgroups *within* the samples of

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<sup>4</sup> The center-based provider survey asked directors about the characteristics of a randomly selected classroom in their center, including the number of children funded by Head Start in this classroom. Directors may not be able to report which children in a given classroom are funded by different funding sources. Relatively few directors indicated that the randomly selected classroom did have at least one child funded by Head Start, and most reported that they “did not know” whether the classroom had any children funded by Head Start, so the sample size for this question is small. The 2024 NSECE included a similar question, though the sample size of classrooms reported to have at least one child funded by Head Start is currently unknown.

Head Start–funded centers, center staff, and family child care homes may not be nationally representative.

- **The 2019 NSECE can be used to examine differences between Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes in geographically specified regions, but only with L2 restricted data.** The 2019 NSECE sampling design treated state as a stratum; therefore, estimates for geographically defined regions are supported by the dataset. This means users with approval to use the L2 restricted data can group multiple states into regions and produce estimates for those regions. But users should also consider the data-suppression and data-reporting requirements for L2 estimates before deciding to submit a restricted-use data application, given the potential for small sample sizes and the reporting requirements regarding geographically defined estimates.
- **The 2019 NSECE has limited data on child outcomes, early care and education quality, curricula, and other constructs of potential interest to Head Start researchers.** Although some of these constructs are partially addressed in the restricted-use datasets, other national Head Start data sources may be better equipped for analysis of these constructs.

## Considerations for Using the 2019 NSECE in Head Start Research

As with any analysis of survey data based on a representative sample, those using the 2019 NSECE to address questions about Head Start should be aware of several factors that may support or hinder analyses, including the missingness levels for key variables and the precision of estimates. Missingness is important because *if not properly accounted for in analytic techniques, it can bias findings. Substantial missingness can reduce sample sizes and decrease statistical power, particularly if imputation is not warranted nor used.* Precision is important because *it helps users determine how well estimates represent the underlying population. With more precise estimates, users are better able to detect differences and make valid inferences about the population.* Conversely, with less precise estimates, it may be more difficult to detect differences in the population and inferences may not be valid. For examples of Head Start–relevant variables with low missingness and high precision, see the appendix.

### What Is the Level of Missing Data on Select 2019 NSECE Center-Based Provider and Center-Based Workforce Variables for Head Start–Funded Centers and Center Staff?

For the sample of centers funded by Head Start and across Head Start subgroups (i.e., groups within the sample of Head Start–funded centers based on ages served, shares of enrolled children funded by Head Start, and auspices; see table 3), no differences in missingness patterns are observed that indicate subgroup-driven problems of missingness. Overall, there is some variation in item-level missingness across constructs and variable types (e.g., continuous versus categorical variables) in the

center-based provider and center-based workforce surveys. Users should consider the missingness of the specific variables of interest to determine how to approach accounting for missingness. Because the 2019 NSECE often captures a construct with multiple variables, users may be able to identify variables with lower levels of missingness that suit their research questions and analyses.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR MISSING VALUES

The relatively low missingness in the example analyses presented in the appendix highlights that researchers can generally examine key constructs relevant to Head Start research without the need for imputation techniques. But despite this relatively low level of missingness for some variables, the 2019 NSECE also includes variables with patterns of missingness users should be aware of.

Key considerations for missing values include the following:

- **Most Head Start subgroups examined have relatively low levels of missingness.** Analyses of missingness for subgroups revealed that only a few subgroups show patterns of relatively higher missingness. Those subgroups are Head Start–funded centers enrolling “at least one but percentage unknown” regarding the percentage of children funded by Head Start, and Head Start–funded centers that reported not knowing their organization’s auspice. Analyses of the data could not reveal whether the subgroups are driving this missingness. Nonetheless, an examination of missingness for Head Start subgroups of interest can reveal what types of analyses are feasible.
- **Some values are coded as missing but may still contain useful information.** For example, exploration of valid skips may provide insight into the age group that a center does or does not serve (in the center-based provider survey) or that an educator does or does not work with in their classroom (in the center-based workforce survey). In addition, several continuous variables that capture the number or percentage of children in a center with a certain characteristic or who were funded by a given source include a response option of “I don’t know, but at least one child.” Currently, the 2019 NSECE datasets report these responses as missing, but users could recode them as binary variables.
- **Because the NSECE team supplemented survey responses with administratively completed data, some variables are missing because of a lack of available administrative data.** The NSECE team populated information for a subset of the center-based provider survey (61 Head Start–funded centers and 483 centers total) with administrative data. It identified administrative data for variables on many characteristics for these centers but could not identify data for other characteristics. Because these centers did not participate in the center-based provider survey, the NSECE team could not identify staff from these centers to respond to the center-based workforce survey. Responses from these centers are coded as a -8 in the datasets for both the center-based provider survey and center-based workforce survey.
- **Certain constructs in the 2019 NSECE may have greater missingness because of the construct, level of detail, or sensitivity of the information collected.** Variables reporting sensitive and detailed information have greater missingness than those reporting less sensitive

and detailed information. For instance, variables capturing enrollment in numbers (continuous variables) tend to have greater missingness than those capturing enrollment through categories, the latter of which are less detailed and may be easier to report. Some potentially sensitive constructs, such as staff members' wages, also have greater missingness. Missingness is also greater for questions asking center respondents about a particular classroom or staff member. Thus, it is important for users interested in these constructs to examine variable-level missingness to determine whether to include variables in analyses or employ other analytic approaches, such as multiple imputation.

## How Precise Are 2019 NSECE Estimates of Head Start–Funded Centers and Center Staff?

The precision of many estimates in the center-based provider and center-based workforce surveys meets accepted thresholds in the literature (Gardner, Kimpel, and Zhao 2015). Specifically, the coefficients of variation for many estimates do not exceed 0.30, indicating the general precision of estimates in the 2019 NSECE is within the accepted threshold. (See box 3 for information about the calculation of precision estimates.) But some types of variables consistently exceed this threshold. These include

- categorical variables with many response options,
- binary variables with weighted estimates of the frequency of responses close to 0 percent or close to 100 percent, and
- some continuous variables reporting the number or share of enrolled children with certain characteristics or specific funding sources.

Examining these types of variables could inform users' determination of whether their specific variables of interest are appropriate to include in planned analyses.

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRECISION OF ESTIMATES

The example findings in the appendix show that the 2019 NSECE has sufficient precision for analyses of key variables for the samples of Head Start–funded centers, center staff, and family child care homes and for Head Start subgroups. But some factors are associated with more precise estimates. Users seeking higher levels of precision for planned analyses of 2019 NSECE data can consider the following:

- **Generally, the larger the valid sample size, the more precise an estimate will be.** When seeking to define an analytic group or subgroups, users should keep in mind how the valid sample size of the focal group(s) and any comparison groups will influence precision. Larger sample sizes correspond to smaller standard errors and greater power to detect statistical differences.
- **Most Head Start subgroups have sufficient sample sizes to limit concerns about imprecision of estimates.** In constructing the Head Start subgroups for the example analyses, lower

precision was generally found among subgroups smaller than 230. For example, some Head Start subgroups had somewhat smaller sample sizes, including Head Start–funded centers serving only children from birth to age 3 funded by Head Start, those enrolling 50 to 99 percent of children funded by Head Start, and those operating in public settings. These subgroups had patterns of higher coefficients of variation, regardless of the specific variables examined. Users interested in using these smaller subgroups can consider whether the sample sizes are sufficient for their analytic approach.

- **The 2019 NSECE has larger samples of Head Start–funded centers and subgroups of Head Start–funded centers than many other Head Start data sources.** Therefore, the 2019 NSECE may have less sample-size-driven precision issues than other Head Start data sources with smaller sample sizes, such as FACES and Baby FACES, as sample size is related to precision in most instances (see table 1 for a comparison of sample sizes). Users interested in exploring precision could conduct precision analyses for the other Head Start data sources.
- **If analytically appropriate, transforming continuous variables into binary ones can increase valid sample sizes and precision.** As discussed above, certain continuous variables in the 2019 NSECE have values coded as “missing” that contain useful information. Users can leverage this information by transforming those continuous variables into binary variables. The 2019 NSECE includes several constructs that have both continuous and binary variables, and example analyses have shown that the binary versions of the variables generally have more precision. For example, constructed binary versions of variables related to the share of vacancies by age group in center-based providers were more precise than their continuous counterparts. This approach may not be appropriate for users interested in the variation provided by the continuous variables on vacancies. Therefore, users could consider the variables that best align with planned research questions, hypotheses, and analyses when deciding whether to use continuous versus dichotomous variables.
- **The 2019 NSECE’s complex sample design and the variance of the underlying population also influence precision.** Although users cannot directly control these factors, they are components of estimates’ standard errors, which users should know when conducting analyses. Users can see the influence of the 2019 NSECE’s complex sample design by examining design effects for variables and subgroups.<sup>5</sup> To account for population variance, users can consider whether binary or categorical versions of measures, which inherently have less variance than continuous measures, are appropriate for the research questions and analyses they plan. In addition, for binary variables, items closer to a 50/50 split have greater variance than those with more extreme splits. Users should consider whether their analytic approach would benefit from the greater variation typically present in continuous variables, as certain correlation and regression analyses do, as this variation can increase the potential to detect differences that exist in the population.

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<sup>5</sup> Although there is no threshold for interpreting the size of a design effect, values close to 1 indicate that the variance of the estimates is close to what we would see if the survey used simple random sampling.

## Conclusion

The 2019 NSECE is well suited to address many questions of interest to users studying Head Start given its range of relevant variables and its large sample sizes of Head Start–funded centers and staff in Head Start–funded centers. Sample sizes of Head Start–funded family child care homes may also be sufficient for many analyses. The 2019 NSECE datasets include variables that allow users to create subgroups of Head Start–funded centers and center staff and to draw comparisons between Head Start–funded centers and centers funded by other sources, a feature that distinguishes the 2019 NSECE from other Head Start data sources. The restricted-use home-based provider dataset also includes variables that allow users to explore a more limited set of analyses of Head Start–funded family child care homes.

Many variables have low levels of missingness and adequate precision to calculate reliable estimates, although users should still examine the missingness and precision of the variables relevant to their research questions to determine whether they should employ imputation techniques or variable transformations. The 2019 NSECE is also unique among Head Start data sources in capturing information on Head Start–funded family child care homes, although a restricted-use data application is required to access these data. Although the 2019 NSECE is more limited for examining subgroups of Head Start–funded family child care homes because of its smaller sample sizes, it is a promising source for answering research questions about Head Start–funded centers, staff in these centers, and Head Start–funded family child care homes.

## Appendix. Example Analyses

To illustrate the potential of the 2019 NSECE for examining differences across Head Start–funded centers, center staff, and family child care homes, subgroups of Head Start–funded centers and family child care homes were constructed using variables in the center-based provider and home-based provider survey datasets. For these subgroups, analyses of variables relevant to Head Start research questions were conducted to highlight the missingness and precision of 2019 NSECE estimates. The results from these analyses are presented below. Although the analyses below highlight specific examples of Head Start–related variables, the conclusions drawn in the brief were based on more extensive analyses of variables in the center-based provider, center-based workforce, and home-based provider survey datasets.

### Missingness and Precision

Below, find analyses of the missingness and precision for example variables relevant to Head Start. These examples illustrate considerations regarding the missingness and precision of key variables in the 2019 NSECE, and how users could identify missing values or maximize precision in their analyses. The example variables are described in table A.1.

TABLE A.1

**Example Head Start Variables for Missingness and Precision Analyses**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Variable name and definition</b>
Public funding sources	Center-based provider survey	CB9_RVNU_CENTER_FUND_COMBO. This variable captures the combination of public funding sources from which a center is receiving revenue. It includes combinations of funding from the Child Care and Development Fund, state prekindergarten or other local government funding, and Head Start.
Professional development opportunities	Center-based provider survey	CB9_STAFF_PROFDEV_MENTOR. This variable indicates whether a center provides teachers, assistant teachers, or aides with mentors, coaches, or consultants who visit and work with staff in their classrooms.
Professional development participation	Center-based workforce survey	WF9_PROFDEV_COACH. This variable shows whether a center staff member participated in coaching, mentoring, or consultation in the past 12 months.
Comprehensive services	Center-based provider survey	CB9_SRVC_HEALTH_SCRN_OFFER. This variable identifies whether and how centers offer health screenings to children and their families. Centers may offer health screenings on-site and pay for them, offer health screenings on-site and not pay for them, not offer health screenings on-site but provide referrals, or not offer health screenings on-site and not provide referrals.

**Source:** Authors’ analyses of public-use data from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider and center-based workforce surveys.

**Notes:** Because of limitations in accessing the restricted-use data in the National Survey of Early Care and Education home-based provider survey, examples of variables from that survey are not presented. To analyze Head Start–funded family child care homes, users must access the restricted-use data from the home-based provider survey.

**MISSINGNESS LEVELS FOR EXAMPLE VARIABLES**

To illustrate patterns of missingness for variables and subgroups relevant for Head Start research, tables A.2 through A.5 show the percentages of missing values for four example variables for different Head Start subgroups. These variables generally had low missingness, making them suitable for analyses of Head Start subgroups.

The center-based provider survey variable that captures combinations of public funding sources has no missing values (table A.2). The lack of missingness makes this variable suitable for answering questions about sources of funding for ECE centers without the use of listwise deletion or multiple imputation.

TABLE A.2

**Sample Size and Missingness of the Variable on Centers' Public Funding Source Combinations, by Funding Subgroups**

Subgroup	Valid sample size	Percentage of missing values
Centers with any Head Start funding	1,766	0%
Centers funded by public sources other than Head Start	3,696	0%
Centers funded only with nonpublic funding	1,320	0%

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable CB9\_RVNU\_CENTER\_FUND\_COMBO from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider survey.

The 2019 NSECE center-based provider survey includes many other variables related to funding sources. Some of these other variables document the combinations of public and private funding sources, the percentage of children enrolled in a center who are funded by a specific source, and each center's top revenue sources. These variables differ in their specificity and tend to have more missingness than the example above. Users may choose to compare these variables and consider which is more relevant to their research questions and analyses.

The 2019 NSECE captures both professional development resources that child care centers provide to staff and staff members' use of these resources. For example, the center-based provider survey captures whether centers *provide* mentorship, coaching, or consultation opportunities. This variable has relatively low missingness, though it does exceed the 5 percent missingness threshold for Head Start-funded centers where the share of enrolled children funded by Head Start is unknown (table A.3). The center-based workforce survey captures whether teachers *participated* in mentorship, coaching, or consultation in the past 12 months. This variable has higher missingness among teachers in Head Start-funded centers where the share of enrollment funded by Head Start is unknown, though the remaining subgroups have fairly low missingness (table A.4).

TABLE A.3

**Sample Size and Missingness of the Variable on Whether Centers Provide Coaching, Mentorship, or Consultation to Staff, by Share of Enrolled Children Funded by Head Start**

Subgroup	Valid sample size	Percentage of missing values
At least one child funded by Head Start but percentage unknown	520	5% <sup>†</sup>
Less than 50 percent of enrolled children funded by Head Start	404	3%
50–99 percent of enrolled children funded by Head Start	228	2%
100 percent of enrolled children funded by Head Start	555	2%

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable CB9\_STAFF\_PROFDEV\_MENTOR from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider survey

**Note:** † denotes when the missingness for a variable-subgroup combination exceeds the 5 percent missingness threshold used for recommending imputation techniques.

TABLE A.4

**Sample Size and Missingness of the Variable on Whether Center Staff Participated in Coaching, Mentoring, or Consultation with Specialists in Past 12 Months, by Share of Enrolled Children Funded by Head Start**

Subgroup	Valid sample size	Percentage of missing values
At least one child funded by Head Start but percentage unknown	228	20% <sup>†</sup>
Less than 50 percent of enrolled children funded by Head Start	308	3%
50-99 percent of enrolled children funded by Head Start	186	1%
100 percent of enrolled children funded by Head Start	411	3%

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable WF9\_PROFDEV\_COACH from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based workforce survey.

**Note:** † denotes when the missingness for a variable-subgroup combination exceeds the 5 percent missingness threshold used for recommending imputation techniques.

The variables in tables A.3 and A.4 illustrate several differences between the center-based provider and center-based workforce surveys and their levels of missingness. First, the two variables capture similar information from the perspectives of centers and of their staff members. Conceptually, users should consider whether they are most interested in the resources that centers provide or the resources that staff use. Users can also link the two sets of survey data to examine how center characteristics align with staff experiences or perceptions. In this case, one could explore whether the provision of professional development opportunities (the center-based provider survey) is associated with staff-reported use of professional development resources (the center-based workforce survey).

The valid sample sizes are also smaller in the center-based workforce survey, reflecting that survey's smaller overall sample size compared with the center-based provider survey. Although the sample sizes in the center-based workforce survey are sufficiently large for many analytic techniques, users should consider how using subgroups may reduce the sample sizes further.

The center-based provider survey variable that captures whether and how centers provide health screenings has low levels of missingness for subgroups of Head Start-funded centers by ages served (table A.5). In other words, the percentage of missing values for this variable falls below 5 percent for each subgroup. Given the thresholds supported by the research literature, users may opt to apply listwise deletion to the cases with missing values and forgo imputation techniques.

TABLE A.5

**Sample Size and Missingness of the Variable on Whether and How Centers Offer Health Screenings to Children and Families, by Head Start Age Group Served**

Subgroup	Valid sample size	Percentage of missing values
Head Start centers serving only children from birth to age 3 funded by Head Start	353	2%
Head Start centers serving only children ages 3 to 5 funded by Head Start	718	3%

Subgroup	Valid sample size	Percentage of missing values
Head Start centers serving children from birth to age 5 funded by Head Start	639	4%

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable CB9\_SRVC\_HEALTH\_SCRN\_OFFER from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider survey.

### PRECISION OF EXAMPLE VARIABLES

To illustrate patterns of precision for variables and subgroups that may be relevant for Head Start research, tables A.6 through A.9 show the weighted estimates and standard errors for four example variables across different Head Start subgroups. Estimates that exceed the 0.30 coefficient of variation threshold are indicated by a cross (†).

The center-based provider survey variable capturing combinations of public funding sources for subgroups of Head Start-funded center auspices does not have substantial precision issues (table A.6). The coefficients of variation (not shown) for most values and subgroups do not exceed the 0.30 threshold, so users should not be concerned about the precision of this variable. Though one response option does exceed this threshold for government-run Head Start-funded centers (indicated with a cross), the variable does not show consistent patterns of imprecision for this subgroup. In addition, the estimates for this variable have enough variability to leverage in analyses.

TABLE A.6

### Estimates and Standard Errors for the Variable on Centers' Public Funding Source Combinations, by Head Start Center Auspices

Subgroup and variable response options	Estimate	Standard error
<i>Private Head Start centers</i>		
Only Head Start	8%	0.022
Head Start and CCDF	30%	0.040
Head Start and public pre-K	6%	0.015
Head Start, CCDF, and public pre-K	56%	0.041
Total	100%	-
<i>Nonprofit Head Start centers</i>		
Only Head Start	25%	0.028
Head Start and CCDF	13%	0.019
Head Start and public pre-K	30%	0.043
Head Start, CCDF, and public pre-K	33%	0.033
Total	100%	-
<i>Government-run Head Start centers</i>		
Only Head Start	26%	0.048
Head Start and CCDF	6%	0.022†
Head Start and public pre-K	35%	0.065
Head Start, CCDF, and public pre-K	33%	0.061
Total	100%	-

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable CB9\_RVNU\_CENTER\_FUND\_COMBO from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider survey.

**Notes:** CCDF = Child Care and Development Fund. Dashes mean "not applicable." † denotes values with a coefficient of variation that exceeds the 0.30 threshold. The coefficient of variation is calculated by dividing the estimate by the standard error. Funding source combinations with no values are omitted. Estimates may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding.

The variables from the center-based provider (table A.7) and center-based workforce (table A.8) surveys related to coaching, mentorship, and consultation do not exhibit issues with precision when grouped by centers' funding sources. The coefficients of variation (not shown) for these variables do not exceed the 0.30 threshold. Again, this example shows how differently the center-based provider and center-based workforce surveys capture information on the same construct, with substantially different estimates across the same subgroups (while maintaining adequate precision across both surveys). This example also shows the 2019 NSECE's strength in allowing for comparisons of estimates for centers with different funding sources.

**TABLE A.7**  
**Estimates and Standard Errors for the Variable on Whether Centers Provide Coaching, Mentorship, or Consultation to Staff, by Funding Source**

Subgroup and variable response options	Estimate	Standard error
<i>Centers funded by Head Start</i>		
Centers provide coaching, mentorship, or consultation	71%	0.028
Centers do not provide coaching, mentorship, or consultation	29%	0.028
Total	100%	-
<i>Centers funded by public funding sources other than Head Start</i>		
Centers provide coaching, mentorship, or consultation	56%	0.018
Centers do not provide coaching, mentorship, or consultation	44%	0.018
Total	100%	-
<i>Centers funded only with nonpublic funding sources</i>		
Centers provide coaching, mentorship, or consultation	42%	0.025
Centers do not provide coaching, mentorship, or consultation	58%	0.025
Total	100%	-

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable CB9\_STAFF\_PROFDEV\_MENTOR from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider survey.

**Notes:** Response options of "Yes" and "No" to the question "Do you provide mentors, coaches, or consultants who visit and work with staff in their classrooms?" are reported. Dashes mean "not applicable." The coefficient of variation is calculated by dividing the estimate by the standard error.

TABLE A.8

**Estimates and Standard Errors for the Variable on Whether Center Staff Participated in Coaching, Mentoring, or Consultation with Specialists in Past 12 Months, by Funding Source**

Subgroup and variable response options	Estimate	Standard error
<i>Centers funded by Head Start</i>	-	-
Staff participated in coaching, mentorship, or consultation in last 12 months	44%	0.039
Staff did not participate in coaching, mentorship, or consultation in last 12 months	56%	0.039
Total	100%	-
<i>Centers funded by public funding sources other than Head Start</i>	-	-
Staff participated in coaching, mentorship, or consultation in last 12 months	33%	0.022
Staff did not participate in coaching, mentorship, or consultation in last 12 months	67%	0.022
Total	100%	-
<i>Centers funded only with nonpublic funding sources</i>	-	-
Staff participated in coaching, mentorship, or consultation in last 12 months	28%	0.031
Staff did not participate in coaching, mentorship, or consultation in last 12 months	72%	0.031
Total	100%	-

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable WF9\_PROFDEV\_COACH from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based workforce survey.

**Notes:** Response options of "Yes" and "No" to the question "In the past 12 months, have you participated in coaching, mentoring, or ongoing consultation with a specialist?" are reported. Dashes mean "not applicable." The coefficient of variation is calculated by dividing the estimate by the standard error.

The center-based provider survey variable capturing whether and how centers offer health screenings does not have substantial precision issues for subgroups of Head Start–funded centers by the ages they serve (table A.9). The coefficients of variation (not shown) for most values and subgroups do not exceed the 0.30 threshold. One response option does have a coefficient of variation that exceeds this threshold for Head Start–funded centers serving only children from birth through age 3 funded by Head Start. This may owe in part to the smaller sample size of this subgroup compared with the others. Still, the lack of systematically large coefficients of variation do not indicate concerning patterns of imprecision.

TABLE A.9

**Estimates and Standard Errors for the Variable on Whether and How Centers Offer Health Screenings to Children and Families, by Head Start Age Group**

Subgroup and variable response options	Estimate	Standard error
<i>Head Start centers serving only children from birth to age 3 funded by Head Start</i>	-	-
Offers screenings on-site and pays for them	32%	0.048
Offers screening on-site and does not pay for them	50%	0.051
Does not offer screenings on-site and provides referral	10%	0.024

Subgroup and variable response options	Estimate	Standard error
Does not offer screenings on-site and does not provide referral	8%	0.029 <sup>†</sup>
Total	100%	-
<i>Head Start centers serving only children ages 3 to 5 funded by Head Start</i>		
Offers screenings on-site and pays for them	40%	0.041
Offers screening on-site and does not pay for them	33%	0.038
Does not offer screenings on-site and provides referral	15%	0.032
Does not offer screenings on-site and does not provide referral	11%	0.019
Total	100%	-
<i>Head Start centers serving children from birth to age 5 funded by Head Start</i>		
Offers screenings on-site and pays for them	41%	0.039
Offers screening on-site and does not pay for them	24%	0.031
Does not offer screenings on-site and provides referral	10%	0.020
Does not offer screenings on-site and does not provide referral	15%	0.025
Total	100%	-

**Source:** Authors' analyses of public-use variable CB9\_SRVC\_HEALTH\_SCRN\_OFFER from the 2019 National Survey of Early Care and Education center-based provider survey.

**Notes:** Dashes mean "not applicable." † denotes values with a coefficient of variation that exceeds the 0.30 threshold. The coefficient of variation is calculated by dividing the estimate by the standard error. Estimates may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding.

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