

Applying for and obtaining the Jim Casey Initiative data

1. How long does it take from applying to receiving the data?

The process takes 2-4 months from the time you submit your application to receipt of the data. This timeline includes a review of your application by Child Trends staff (data managers) and the Annie E. Casey Foundation (data owners) and signing a Data Use Agreement (DUA). The length of time will vary based on your institution's DUA processes.

2. How detailed does my application need to be?

Your application should provide sufficient information on the background/importance of your study, intended contribution to the field, proposed research questions and methods, and how your study will advance equitable outcomes for young people. The review committee needs enough detail to understand the scope of your project and determine the feasibility of the methods you propose.

3. Do I need an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval letter before submitting an application?

Yes, you must provide an approval letter from your IRB when applying for the data.

4. Are there restrictions in applying for and using grant funds to cover the cost of analyzing and disseminating the data?

No, there are no restrictions in applying for grant funds to cover the cost of your project involving the restricted use dataset. However, you must be approved to use the data for each project. This means that if you already have access to the dataset and then submit an application for grant funds that will require use of the dataset for a new project, you will need to submit a new application to jimcaseysitesupport@childtrends.org. Each project must be approved separately.

5. I already have access to the dataset; how do I add a user to my application?

Email jimcaseysitesupport@childtrends.org with their name, email address, and IP address.

6. I already have access to the dataset and want to start a new project. Now what?

Before using the data for anything other than your currently approved project, you must submit a new application and be approved to start that new project. You will need to fill out a new application and submit it to jimcaseysitesupport@childtrends.org. We approve projects and do not provide blanket approval to researchers.

The Dataset

7. What is the Jim Casey Initiative's target population?

The Jim Casey Initiative serves young people between the ages of 14 and 26 who have spent at least one day in foster care (out-of-home placement) after their 14th birthday. The specific age requirements of participants vary across sites.

8. What are the sampling criteria for the survey?

All young people in the Jim Casey Initiative Opportunity Passport[®] intervention (financial literacy, mainstreaming banking experience and matched savings for assets program) complete a baseline survey within 45 days of enrolling in the Opportunity Passport[®] and then every April and October after that until they exit the program. The restricted use dataset contains only those young people over the age of 18 who provided consent to share some or all of their information.

9. Can you provide more information about how the survey is administered?

Survey procedures vary slightly across the 17 [Jim Casey Initiative](#) states because each state is allowed to tailor the procedures and recruitment to their needs. However, there are several Initiative-wide standards sites must meet which include: all young people complete the survey electronically; individual survey responses are not shared with anyone other than Child Trends as the data and self-evaluation partner; and respondents must receive a minimum \$40 stipend. Young people receive reminder emails from the automated data collection system as well as from their site staff. Every young person receives a unique ID (upon program enrollment) which they enter into the web-based survey system in order to take the survey. The unique ID also allows Child Trends to link each respondent's most recent survey with their baseline and other surveys. The survey was designed and refined with young people and questions have been added overtime. All data in the Opportunity Passport® Participant Survey System, is self-report. All data in Opportunity Passport® Data System is administrative data entered by the site staff.

10. What does the informed consent process involve?

To construct the restricted use dataset, Child Trends administers informed consent to all young people at their first survey after turning 18 years old regardless of how long they had been enrolled in Opportunity Passport®. Young people have three options: 1) consent for use of their retroactive data only, which means any data collected through surveys administered before they turned 18; 2) consent for use of data collected through surveys administered at age 18 and above, or 3) consent for use of all their data, all past survey data collected prior to and after age 18, as well as all future survey data. Details on how many young people choose each type of consent are provided in the technical guide sent with the data. All Opportunity Passport® Participant Survey respondents—age 18 and older—are shown a 4-minute video which explains and administers the consent procedures. This video is incorporated as the first portion of the electronic survey. The young person can either skip the consent process altogether or watch the video, answer 3 questions to assess their comprehension of consent, and choose not to provide consent or select the type of consent they agree to provide (detailed above). The young person then proceeds directly to the survey questions. The video provides details on how to change their consent preferences, so respondents only watch the video once, each subsequent round of the survey does not include the consent process. This process was designed in partnership with young people and approved by Child Trends' IRB.

11. What are the survey response rates?

Since 2011 The Opportunity Passport® Participant Survey consistently has had over an 80% response rate, which does vary slightly by state. Young people take a survey twice a year for as long as they are actively enrolled. Therefore, the number of surveys really varies by respondents as some survey respondents are only active in Opportunity Passport® for a short period while other respondents participate in the program for many years. The number of surveys will depend on how long they were active in Opportunity Passport® and if they completed a survey every April and October while active.

12. What is the sample size?

The sample size varies because new data is added after each survey month and not all respondents choose to share their data. As of November 2021, the sample size was 2,923 young people.

13. Is the data longitudinal?

Yes, the data is longitudinal. While the Jim Casey Initiative has collected data since 2003, the restricted use dataset you will receive has data from 2015 onward. The informed consent process was first administered in April 2020, allowing only those young people active at that time to consent to share their data. Since April 2020, every program participant aged 18 and over has been given the option to provide consent.

14. Does every young person have the same number of surveys from the same years?

No, each young person will have a different number of surveys included from the years they were active in the Jim Casey Initiative. The Jim Casey Initiative collects data every April and October and young people are asked to complete a survey every survey month while they are active in the Initiative. There is not a set amount of time a young person can be active in the Initiative.

15. How often is the dataset updated?

Data collection for the Jim Casey Initiative is ongoing. New data is collected every April and October and made available to researchers in May and November. This means that if you finish a research project in April 2021 and apply for a new project in December 2022, you will receive additional data in December 2022 that was not available in April 2021.

16. Can I change the format of the data from wide to long?

Yes, you can change the format of the dataset and recode variables without overwriting the original data file. Simply save a copy of the original and work from that copy.

17. Is there more detail on the age variable?

Not at this time. The age variable is currently in categories because of sample size and the need to protect confidentiality. We will continue to check this variable as the sample size grows and update when we are able to without the risk of identification.

18. Are there separate variables for sexual orientation and gender identity?

Not at this time. To protect confidentiality of respondents we are unable to provide separate variables for gender identity and sexual orientation. We will continue to check this variable as the sample size grows and update when we are able to without the risk of identification.

19. Is it possible to link to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)?

Not at this time, there are no common unique identifiers between AFCARS, NYTD, and the restricted use dataset.

20. How is missing data treated?

We do not apply any imputation or other treatment for unexplained missing data. Opportunity Passport® Participant Survey data has very little unexplained missingness because nearly all questions are required. We do use extended missing values (set in STATA) to explain why a data element is missing. “.s” is system-missing due to a programmed skip pattern on the survey (i.e., the question was

not shown because a prior question was answered *no*). “.c” is system-missing due to a change in the survey (i.e., the question was not asked during that survey administration). This happens as survey questions are added, removed, and modified over the years. The [OPPS/OPDS Codebook](#) includes notes for relevant variables that generally indicate the year changes were made to the specific variable and other variables that are affected by the change.

In the Opportunity Passport® Data System data, not all fields are required, so data elements have large variance in the number of missing observations. The frequency of updates to this administrative data in the live system depends on each Jim Casey Initiative site’s specific practices.