Evaluation of Safe Start: Promising Approaches for Children Exposed to Violence Teleconference Call Transcript

Moderator: Katherine Darke Schmitt
May 5, 2005

Operator:	Good day ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the Safe Start Promising Approaches conference call. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. Later, we will conduct a question and answer session and instructions will follow at that time. If you require any assistance during the conference, you can press star, then zero on your touchtone telephone. As a reminder, this conference is being recorded. Now, I would like to introduce your host for today's conference, Ms. Katherine Darke Schmitt. Ma'am, you may begin.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Thank you, Nabula (ph). Well, good afternoon everyone. Thank you for making time to be part of this conference call for potential applicants for the solicitation of the evaluation of Safe Start Promising Approaches for children. The structure of the call will involve both a presentation by Kristin Krackey who is the program officer here at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for the Safe Start initiative. And the purpose of Kristin's remarks will be to tell you a little bit about the Safe Start Promising Approaches program and also to answer any historical questions that you might have about Safe Start Phase 1 which she has worked with for several years now. We'll then have a chance for you to ask Kristin questions about the program end of things and then we'll switch to talking directly about the requirements of the solicitation and I'll do a presentation about the evaluation -- what OJJDP would like to see in proposals that come in under the evaluation solicitation, and then you'll have a chance to ask me questions about those issues.

I want to start the call by saying that the registration deadline for this solicitation is May 7th. That means that by the end of the day on May 7 you must have registered your agency as an applicant on the grants management system, and there are directions for doing that inside the solicitation documents. If you are shuffling through papers right now because you have seen the date May 2nd before, you're not imaging things. You did see that date and then we later found we had accidentally also published some material that said May 7, so in the interest of fairness, we are opening registration again until May 7th, and then it will close. Solicitations under this application are due on June 7th. And I'm fairly certain we haven't made any mistakes with that date, so it is my anticipation that the solicitation deadline will be 8:00 p.m. Eastern time on June 7th. And at that point the computer system, the grant management system, simply shuts down and stops accepting applications. And the computer has no sympathy for hard luck stories, I can assure you. So please know that June 7th is a firm deadline, and we encourage you to submit your application as early as possible to avoid those sort of heart rending situations that wind up happening close to deadline time for which the computer system has no tolerance at all.

I also want to make sure that you understand that the solicitation that we're discussing today for a multi-million dollar, multi-year national evaluation of the program. There are no program service dollars at all available under this solicitation. The sites that will be delivering services in this program are in the process of being selected. They competed through a competitive proposal process in the summer of 2004, and announcements about those sites will be made later in the summer. So if you are on this call thinking that we are going to be talking about program dollars, I'm sorry to say that that is not what this solicitation is about, and we are not accepting requests for program dollars. We are anticipating that we will be getting applications from organizations which have a track

record managing multi-million dollar, multi-year evaluations in order to complete the scope of work that is outlined in the solicitation.

All right. Giving you that as a background, I'm now going to turn this over to my colleague Kristin Krackey here at OJJDP. And Kristin is going to talk about the programmatic end of the Safe Start Promising Approaches, so her remarks are focused on the program which we are asking you as applicants to design an evaluation for.

Kristin Krackey: Hi everyone. Thank you for your interest in applying to the Safe Start Promising Approaches evaluation competition. And let me tell you just a few brief highlights about the Promising Approaches program solicitation. It was released last summer as Katherine indicated and the project calls for four years of funding at a level of $210,000.00 a year for those four years, with the primary focus and goal of the project to increase our knowledge base about intervention and children's exposure to violence with the intention that once we meet that goal of increasing our knowledge base that we will use that knowledge base to feed data back into and inform the development of a replication model which will be really largely Phase III of our Safe Start initiative. So if I could highlight a few key points from that solicitation, I'll do that now, but I would encourage everyone to read and re-read the program solicitation as there are many nuances in that document and some of the semantical clarifications are important that I will not have the time to cover today.

But to highlight some of those key points so that you can delve into that solicitation if you've not already. So the primary focus is children's exposure to violence. We define exposure to violence in three ways: witnessing domestic violence; witnessing community violence; and direct child maltreatment. All three elements of exposure. We acknowledge that there is a broader field of trauma, however, for the purposes and the intention of this solicitation and this intervention, we are defining trauma more narrowly as it specifically relates to violence. And how we are distinguishing between the two really to the proximal distance of the child to the incident, the intent to harm, and to the relationship of the child to either the victim or the aggressor. We talked about the three types of -- the three types of children's exposure to violence that we have defined in the definition are important in guiding the intervention and design or the project design in the sense that we require the applicants to take a comprehensive approach. They may tailor it in a way that makes sense to their community, but the project design must be sound and reasonable in the context of the data and the stated need that they have around children's exposure to violence in their community. What I mean by that is that in a rural community, for example, where community violence is not a key need or clearly indicated in the data, it is fine to narrow the project design to focus more exclusively on children's exposure to child maltreatment as a direct victim and witnessing domestic violence. We would be concerned about a project design that was narrowed so much though, however, that it focused exclusively on child maltreatment. The intention behind this intervention and this evaluation of interventions for CEV (ph) is to broaden the perspective of child maltreatment to capture and incorporate the element of witnessing and the trauma or the post traumatic stress that comes from witnessing and not only being a direct victim. However, we include the child maltreatment into that project design in that in order to create a sound and reasonable service delivery mechanism for children's exposure, we feel that -- and that the literature supports that you cannot exclude the child maltreatment. The co-occurrence of the two happen too frequently to isolate them and the service delivery mechanisms that are in place require system changes and policy and practice changes for children who are direct victims or witnessing domestic violence for the two agencies and the two systems to integrate together. If that's not clear, I can answer more specifically questions about that in a minute.

Other key highlights around the project design are that they must be -- the interventions must be developmentally specific and appropriate. Along those lines, we did define the

age range to be a 0-18, however, we -- drawing again from the literature, focused particular attention to the 0-6 age range. We went to six as opposed to five in order to help ensure that we capture the transition into the school, school age or the school population. But the particular emphasis on the 0-6 does not exclude the 6-18 population, but is really intended to focus people's attention on the need for the intervention to be developmentally specific and appropriate because the interventions are different depending on the age range and the points of entry become different because of the age range, as well.

So additional highlight relates to the necessity for the applicants to clearly define the points of entry, how they're going to identify, screen, refer and serve the target population. The applicants must clearly define the nexus or the intersection within which they are going to serve the target population, meaning that they need to define which service agency groups they are going to be working with, the range just being just for illustrative purposes, law enforcement, domestic violence, Child Protective Services, mental health, early childhood. We wouldn't expect an applicant to necessarily, or I should say not require, an applicant to work with every one of those service providers, but clearly define what the specific project intervention approach is that they're going to be using and have that intersection relate to their project design and to the target population they define. So for instance, if they are not responding to community violence, they may take a more concentrated intersection between mental health, CPS and DV as opposed to law enforcement, although law enforcement may come into the play in responding to domestic violence calls. So it really does depend on the nature of the project design. So I think that you are hearing is that applicants do have -- while we've asked for very specific and concrete things to be defined in their application, that they breadth and range is fairly wide from an evaluation standpoint in terms of the types of applicants that we may receive. And let's see if there's anything here that I've not covered. I think that's it. So we can go ahead and open it up for questions.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Thanks. Nabula, would you go ahead and open the Q&A?

Operator: Sure. Thank you, ma'am. If you have a question at this time, please press the one key on your touchtone telephone. If your question has been answered and you wish to remove yourself from the question queue, please press the pound key. If you are on a speakerphone, please lift your handset. One moment.

I'm showing no questions at this time, ma'am.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Okay. Callers, I need you to know that Kristin may not be with us at the end of the call. So I encourage you if you have questions about Kristin's portion of the program to raise those now just in case we lose her towards the end.

Operator: I'm showing questions, ma'am.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Excellent. Thanks, Nabula.

Operator: You're welcome. Our first question comes from Scott Crosse. Your question, please.

Scott Crosse: Sure. I was wondering about the extent to which the service providers are going to be providing direct services to families and children.

Kristin Krackey: Yes. They will be.

Scott Crosse: Okay. Is it too early to say how the services may be clustering, types of services and types of populations?

Kristin Krackey: Sure. Because we are still in the decision-making process on our end, we do not have the specifics regarding the particular project designs that the successful or selected applicants will have. So, no. There is a broad range as I described in terms of the types of intersections that they may define. They typically are addressing the three types of exposure, and there does seem to be some clusters around different types -- there does appear to be more clustering around certain types of intervention, but that's part of our decision point. We're really looking in order to achieve our goal of increasing the knowledge base to select applications that cut across the different types of interventions. So we are hoping to not have a cluster. We are hoping to have some diversity of intervention. But I can't give you specifics about that now.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: All right. Kristin, I have to step in here because I promised the evaluators in the solicitation that there would be clusters. Our goal is to fund as diverse a range of program as the proposals submitted will support, but we do anticipate that those proposals will fall into similar -- will fall into some groupings such as whether mental health agencies are the lead or whether domestic violence agencies are the lead or whether the education -- whether the interventions are education-based or law enforcement-based, along those lines. Kristin, is that fair to say?

Kristin Krackey: Yes. Thank you for that clarification. What I mean by the -- we're not going -- we're trying not to fund 14 applications that are all doing the same thing. While there may be clusters of three or whatever, we are looking for interventions that cut across the range of the continuum so that we increase our knowledge base in more than one practice area.

Scott Crosse: Thank you. That's very helpful.

Operator: Our next question comes from Heather Neurochgatlin. Your question, please.

Heather Neurochgatlin: Hi. Good afternoon. I have a question about to what degree will the selected programs be involved in the selection of this solicitation for the evaluations? Or what -- so let me stop there. I've got a follow-up question.

Kristin Krackey: Do you mean the selected applicants?

Heather Neurochgatlin: Yes.

Kristin Krackey: They will not be. That decision remains solely at OJJDP.

Heather Neurochgatlin: Okay.

Kristin Krackey: But I as the project staff and Katherine as the evaluation staff person are working hand-in-hand in that decision making process.

Heather Neurochgatlin: Okay. It sounds like both a great program and a great opportunity for evaluation. I'm trying to think about when we submit our proposal for the evaluation other than what you've talked about in the very generic terms, how do we think through what the selected proposals have said they were going to do and how this evaluation matches up? Does that make sense? Since we're not in contact with each other.

Kristin Krackey: Katherine, I'll let you take that one.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I am so sorry. My attention was momentarily distracted. Heather, would you sum up that question again?

Heather Neurochgatlin: Sure. So my question is about how we write an evaluation plan when we're not quite sure what the proposals are going to be funded. You know, how do we match that up?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Sure. Absolutely. And, you know, we had an earlier conference call on this as well last week, the first round. And of course, that was one of the first questions that were asked. And so we have written about this in the frequently asked questions document that's posted on the web. But I'll say that the tension here arose here because OJJDP wanted to make sure that evaluators were on board from the time that the programs were selected. And so we had this tension of trying to decide who would be selected first, and things have shaken out the way they are where we asking you all to propose an evaluation design where you do not know exactly what each site will be doing. So two things to say about that: one is that the sites are not going to be able to surprise you with what they're doing because the site applicants were required to submit a proposal which proposed an evidence-based strategy for serving children exposed to violence. And in fact, you will see in the program proposal that was released last summer that Kristin actually provided them with a nice reference list of where one would look for information about evidence-based programs for children exposed to violence.

So the successful applicants on the program side, the ones who did follow that direction to submit an evidence-based proposal, will largely have come from that group which Kristin identified of successful interventions. So that's hedging a bit, but it is telling you how you might begin to inform yourself about what to expect to see in the program site proposals. And then the equally important piece of this is that we are looking for someone who can propose an evaluation design using the design parameters that we have suggested in this solicitation -- for example, the comparison control groups and drafting of appropriate hypotheses and the inclusion of a resiliency study -- but who is also apparently able to be flexible as is necessary with an evaluation of this size, scope and length. So we would certainly not punish you where there is a lack of specificity in your proposal because you don't know exactly which interventions you might be evaluating, although you do know the universe from which those interventions come, as long as that lack of specificity is accompanied by evidence that you are familiar with a range of evaluation tools and strategies that would be useful and willing to be flexible about how your craft is applied in this initiative.

Heather Neurochgatlin: That makes sense. So when there's some flexibility, we'll need to change some variables under study depending on what programs are funded and how they conceptualize?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I think that is a good example, except that I will say that particular one, what variables you're studying, is one that the national evaluator will have significant influence over because although we have directed the program sites that they will be responsible for collecting data and we have suggested to them what kind of data that is for their treatment families, the national evaluator will be the one who determines at the bottom line which data are to be collected and with which data instruments they will be collected. So in that particular example you gave, I think the national evaluator has more control and less need to be entirely flexible. But there are plenty of others components of the evaluation in which we will very much appreciate flexibility on the evaluator's part.

Heather Neurochgatlin: Okay. Great. That's a lot of help. Thank you.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Sure.

Operator: Our next question comes from Quinta Martin. Your question, please.

Quinta Martin: I have a two part question. One is: is the program proposal available for review, what the program people will be -- their grant proposal. Was that available for review to us?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: It is, and it's posted on the website with the frequently asked questions document and the other resources for this solicitation.

Kristin Krackey:	The program solicitation is available. The applicants' proposals are not. I'm not sure which you intend.
Quinta Martin:	That's what I'm talking about. The program -- I'm talking about the programs that we are evaluating, are there -- is their proposal available for review?
Kristin Krackey:	They are not at this time because we have not made final decisions [inaudible].
Quinta Martin:	No, I mean, not what they're submitting, but is there overall -- the RFP, per se, is that available for review, what they're responding to?
Kristin Krackey:	The solicitation. Yes, it is. That was the --
Quinta Martin:	That's on the frequently asked questions?
Kristin Krackey:	Is that where it is, Katherine?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	I think there is a link to it at frequently asked questions, but if it's not directly in the FAQ page, it is definitely on the same web page where the FAQ is posted.
Quinta Martin:	Okay. Because I did not see it; that's why I'm asking the question.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Okay. Well, I will read at the end of the call. I'm going to read the URL out loud for you all so you can write it down if you need to, about where this stuff is.
Quinta Martin:	All right. And the second part of that is: what is the timeline for identification of the programs that will be awarded with the program funds?
Kristin Krackey:	What is the timeline for the --
Quinta Martin:	For identification of the program.
Kristin Krackey:	We expect to have the programs identified by July 1st, but it will be after the closing of this evaluation solicitation.
Quinta Martin:	Okay.
Operator:	Our next question comes from Josh Collins. Your question, please.
Josh Collins:	My question is with the 14 sites that have already been, I guess, the word I'm trying to use -- have been selected, no other program or no other agency is allowed to solicit for funds, right, for programs? These are just for sites that have already been selected, right?
Kristin Krackey:	The sites are in the process of being selected, but the solicitation for that competition has closed. So no new program proposals are allowed at this point because that stage of the competition is already over.
Josh Collins:	Okay. And that happened last year of 2004, right?
Kristin Krackey:	Correct. Correct.
Josh Collins:	Okay. Thank you.
Kristin Krackey:	Uh-huh.

Operator:	Our next question comes from Douglas Wilson. Your question, please.
Douglas Wilson:	Yes. Thank you. I want to follow-up on the first question, just to verify something. This amount of money that these 14 sites will use for service is the $200,000.00?
Kristin Krackey:	Correct.
Douglas Wilson:	And there's $10,000.00 of that, which makes it 210 for data gathering?
Kristin Krackey:	Correct.
Douglas Wilson:	Does that -- what about -- if -- I'm not sure this is where you want this kind of question asked, but let me try it and you can table it if you'd like. If the control site is a separate organization, how will they be compensated for the collection of data and follow-up of the control cases?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Doug, that comes from the evaluator's budget.
Douglas Wilson:	Okay.
Kristin Krackey:	The national evaluator's budget. Is that what you mean, Katherine?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Yes. That is what I mean.
Kristin Krackey:	Yes. Okay.
Douglas Wilson:	Okay.
Kristin Krackey:	Because there is not a program evaluator's budget, but simply a data collection application.
Douglas Wilson:	Now, last time it was -- maybe I need some clarification on this. The treatment site is also required to follow up on cases over a period of two years; is that correct?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	That's correct, although we're now hedging between two and four. But yes.
Douglas Wilson:	Well, that's a big difference, two years versus four years.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Yes.
Douglas Wilson:	Will you have clarification on that?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Not until the first two years are over and we see how data collection is going.
Douglas Wilson:	Okay. Okay. Okay. So you only expect the budget to cover the first 12 months?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	That's right. That's right. So after this first 12 month period, we will readdress any questions that need to be readdressed as the evaluator prepares their second 12 month budget, and then their third and their fourth and their fifth.
Douglas Wilson:	Okay. Okay. Thank you.
Kristin Krackey:	Sure.
Operator:	Our next question comes from Kate Hoskinson. Your question, please.

Kate Hoskinson:	Hi. I actually had kind of two questions here, and I'm not -- hearing the timeline here, you might have already kind of answered this. Whoever is selected as the national evaluator, are they involved at all in the program selection or decision or development or anything of that nature?
Kristin Krackey:	No.
Kate Hoskinson:	Okay. And then I guess to kind of follow up on some of the other program design questions we had before. These programs are including -- it sounds like a lot of them are primarily intervention after the children have already been exposed to violence. Is that -- was this open to also any kind of prevention programs too or is this specifically designed for just intervention?
Kristin Krackey:	It is specific to intervention; however, some projects have proposed other types of strategies as a part of their project design development. For example, training of staff and increasing provider awareness and increasing public awareness around the issues of exposure as important practice steps towards identification and treatment support for children already exposed on the intervention side. So the two are intertwined. They are not necessarily prevention activities, but they are more universal strategy.
Kate Hoskinson:	Okay. And are those subject to evaluation, too, then, or part of it?
Kristin Krackey:	Katherine, do you want to take that? In terms of what the individual projects are proposing; they all approached it differently.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	I would say that the evaluation is geared specifically to outcomes of children and families exposed. So my design for the evaluation is focused on those components of the intervention.
Kate Hoskinson:	Okay.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	I know you're grateful we're not asking you to evaluate a national prevention program.
Kate Hoskinson:	Thanks.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Sure.
Operator:	Our next question comes from Dale Parent. Your question, please.
Dale Parent:	I just am curious if there will be a parallel technical assistance [inaudible] for the new sites as there was for the demonstration sites.
Kristin Krackey:	No. There will be not -- there will -- there won't; however, there will be training and technical assistance support available to the sites. It will managed and organized and handled differently in the sense that there will not be an identified, dedicated provider, but rather handled on a site specific basis.
Dale Parent:	Thank you.
Operator:	Our next question comes from Sarah Heinemeier. Your question, please.
Sarah Heinemeier:	The evaluation materials that are linked to your FAQ site, is that all of the evaluation materials from Phase I that are available?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Yes and no. It was all the evaluation materials that were available at the time the website was posted. We currently have a couple of products in that are undergoing review. It is

	possible that we would have some other process evaluation pieces to post within the next two weeks, but I'm not guaranteeing it because the review process does not always go as quickly as I would like.
Sarah Heinemeier:	Thank you.
Operator:	Again, if you have a question at this time, please press the one key on your touchtone telephone. Our next question comes from Douglas Wilson. Your question, please.
Douglas Wilson:	Yes. On the May 7 deadline which is Saturday, I suspect that some firms, some organizations that are considering responding are still trying to get themselves organized, and maybe dealing with folks who have not registered and may not be in a position to register until after the 7th. Those people -- but those people may be very critical to the bid and might play a leading role. Does that, the fact that they haven't registered, leave them out of being able to play a leading role?
Kristin Krackey:	Only one member of each team submitting a proposal regardless of how many agencies or organizations make up the collaborative need register. And it should be the lead, the one who is going to be the fiscal agent. So no, there is no need if you are an evaluation firm who I -- don't put any weight to this; I'm just throwing out an example. If you're an evaluation firm who is thinking you might use local mental health centers, for instance, to assist you in data collection with comparison control, there is no need for each one of those mental health center partners to register on GMS; only the lead agency need register. And yes, that must happen by May 7th.
Douglas Wilson:	Okay. Let me give you another example. Suppose you had a person who might end up being a principle investigator but was not a member of the agency who was the fiscal agent, does that -- the organization that person comes from have to register?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	It does not, Doug. We can deal with principle investigators who come from multiple agencies who need not be the lead fiscal agent, but whoever is the lead fiscal agent must register by May 7th.
Douglas Wilson:	Okay. Okay. Can I ask a follow-up, a different question?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Of course.
Douglas Wilson:	Could you comment on the fact that there are -- I do not believe, anyway; perhaps I've misread the piece. There are points awarded for staff or capabilities of the staff.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Oh, gosh. Doug, give me a minute to flip through the solicitation and --
Douglas Wilson:	There's 100 points, of which all go to pieces of the narrative.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Oh, no. No, I know that's not true. I know they don't all go to pieces of the narrative because some of them are assigned to the budget.
Douglas Wilson:	Ten points to the budget. Yes. Correct. You're correct.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Okay. I'm still going to have to look through my solicitation. Can I come back to you?
Douglas Wilson:	Sure. Absolutely. No problem.
Operator:	Our next question comes from Scott Crosse. Your question, please.

Scott Crosse:	Hi. Thank you again for having this teleconference. It's very helpful. I was wondering, and maybe this is more of a question for Kristin than for Katherine, but the extent to which data collection capabilities of the grantee organization to the applicants were considered in selecting the grantees, their experience with data collection, their capabilities to do that?
Kristin Krackey:	You will see in the solicitation that we included very specific data collection instructions as a part of their proposed response. And they are all being screened in terms of their capability to respond to that part of the solicitation. They were scored accordingly to that part of the solicitation and they are being embedded within OJJDP from that perspective. That's not to say that there will not be some capacity support needs, but they are all being -- yes, the answer is yes.
Scott Crosse:	Okay. Thank you.
Operator:	Our next --
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	I'm going to come back in, Nabula, if I can before the next question to address Doug Wilson's last question. Doug, I think that your question was about are there any points being assigned to management and organizational capability in the proposal. And if I'm misremembering your question, please get back on queue with Nabula so that you can ask it again. The version of the solicitation that I'm looking at, and I have this printed from a PDF file. I don't know how you all have yours printed, but on mine it's page six. There's a broad heading which says Management and Organizational Capability. It's under the program narrative statement. And that section, Management and Organizational Capability, is worth ten points and it outlines our needs in terms of knowing the applicant institution's experience with and institutional capacity to manage a multi-site evaluation of this size. It also asks that you outline your staffing plan and identify your key staff with CVs or resumes so that we can judge their experience. And then asks some things about your previous experience developing and sustaining collaborative relationships in the context of evaluation. So, Doug, I hope that answers your question. If it doesn't, get back in queue and I'll try again. Thanks Nabula. I'm ready for the next one if there is one.
Operator:	Sure. There is another question from Sarah Heinemeier. Your question, please.
Sarah Heinemeier:	This question has two parts. First is, was there a Phase I technical working group? Second part is, if so, where can we find the membership information?
Kristin Krackey:	I'm not sure in terms of what you mean by Phase I technical working group. If you mean on the --
Sarah Heinemeier:	Expert panel of advisors for the Phase I demonstration projects and evaluation.
Kristin Krackey:	Katherine, that's yours.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Oh, for the evaluation. The national evaluation of Phase I was structured between two firms who have supplied -- who have filled different roles in terms of process and outcome evaluations. So their membership is public. That was Caliber Associates in Fairfax, Virginia and the Association for the Study and Development of Community in Gaithersburg, Maryland. But there was no outside advisory board for the initial -- for the evaluation of Safe Start Phase I. It was pointed out to us that that was a lack, and so in this solicitation we remedied that.
Sarah Heinemeier:	Thank you.

Operator: Our next question comes from Quinta Martin.

Kristin Krackey: This is Kristin. I'd like to just add to that, in just cautionarily from a project standpoint, the Safe Start demonstration effort which people are referring to as Phase I, is different in design from Phase II. I just want to clarify that.

Operator: Our next question comes from Quinta Martin. Your question, please. Your line is open.

Quinta Martin: Hello. Can you hear me?

Kristin Krackey: Yes. We can hear you.

Quinta Martin: Okay. I just wanted to make sure that I'm understanding that the programs that will be evaluated will not be selected until July 1, 2005. This solicitation, the national evaluator, will be selected and the grant will start September 1, 2005. So that's about a two month difference. So there will be some established relationship between July and September, I'm imaging, such that the evaluation instruments and the protocol will be followed shortly after the program implementation by the people we are evaluating.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: We have lined up sort of best case scenario for the timing of these. And let me walk you through it and Kristin will jump in if she needs to. We hope that the national evaluator and the sites will be selected at approximately the same time, although as you can tell by the timing of the solicitation the evaluator is behind in terms of months, but we're anticipating an easier peer review because we're going to get far fewer applications for this. That being said, yes, Kristin does hope that announcement of the successful program site is made around July 1; however, the program sites all have some sort of ramp up work that they need to do. Many of them need to hire a project director for instance or get signed memoranda of understandings in place between the agencies that are going to be collaborating and so forth. We are counting on that period taking probably until winter 2005 so that the national evaluator would not only be selected but have had several months to work with the sites on the launch of the national evaluation before the first child is served.

Kristin Krackey: This is Kristin and I would just add that it may not take that long to ramp up. It may not take as long as Katherine projected, but the commitment is to synchronize the start up of the intervention program side with the startup of the evaluation. So if that means that we hold back the sites while we're waiting for the evaluation timing, we are working very hard to have that happen. There are administrative balances across the board each way, and so the commitment is certainly there for them to launch together because of the importance of that to the mutually supporting role between program practice and evaluation.

Quinta Martin: And you said that they have a data collection component of their -- program sites have a data collection component of their program grant and then we have a control component in the evaluator's program grant, correct?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: That's right, and this careful relationship between the two is outlined in the solicitation for the evaluation.

Kristin Krackey: Katherine, are you still going to take a few minutes and present on the evaluation itself?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I am still. Yes.

Kristin Krackey: Okay. So if it would be possible to focus the remaining questions on the program piece itself, that way I may politely excuse myself from the rest of the call.

Operator: Our next question comes from Douglas Wilson. Your question, please.

Douglas Wilson: I just want to follow-up on the response that Katherine Schmidt made. That is, 10 percent is the weight.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes. Ten percent is the weight.

Douglas Wilson: Thank you.

Operator: Our next question comes from Martha Vurt. Your question, please.

Martha Vurt: Yes. As long as we're talking about scheduling, I am still totally not getting how OMB (ph) happens by winter of 2005. Assuming from the last call that you said that it was -- you expected it to take six to nine months, you're going to fund this in September, there's no way that you can even begin to submit something before October. That puts it at March or June.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Martha, we're going to do our best with that, and I'd like to hold all other questions about the evaluation piece specifically so that we can folks who need Kristin's advice on Safe Start Promising Approaches sites issues before she needs to leave the call in a few minutes.

Martha Vurt: Okay. You're going to come back to this issue, though?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes. I'm writing myself a note that I need to come back to it.

Martha Vurt: Good.

Operator: I'm showing no questions at this time, ma'am.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Okay. Excellent. Kristin, you are gracefully excused.

Kristin Krackey: Thank you very much, and thank you all for your interest. We look forward to the proposals and our venture together with children's exposure to violence. Take care.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Okay. This is Katherine again, and I'm just going to spend a minute or two talking about what you have all already read in the solicitation for the evaluation. You will see that OJJDP, like many other federal agencies at this point in time, is committed to using the best evaluation science that we can so that the outcome data that we are able to collect from the dollars we invest in programs can be really useful, not only in terms of how it informs the process of the Safe Start initiative, but also because we feel data is critical in the children exposed to violence field and we are eager to be able to make a contribution to it. As such, we are aiming for a quasi experimental or experimental design, and you will see that while the program sites have specific responsibilities for collecting data on the children and families they serve and the data that they collect will be informed by the recommendations of the national evaluator. It is the national evaluator's job to design, fund, identify, recruit, retain and collect data from children in either comparison or control groups at each of the local sites. The local sites know that this is coming, and for many of them, the idea of a randomly drawn control group was completely unpalatable because of political considerations in their jurisdictions and what they perceive to be the unfortunate circumstance in which a child seeking services did not receive services because they are randomly drawn to be in the control group. We did our best to educate the program sites about why it is not logical that a child would necessarily be hurt by not receiving services which are untried and unproven, but some of them maintain random control is not possible. And because of that, we allowed the sites to tell us that only a comparative group design would be feasible in their site. So the national evaluator in

working with the sites will have some sites who have said yes, random control come in and we will facilitate that as we can for you; and some of the sites will have said, no, random control from our agency is not possible. You're going to have to come in and draw a comparison group.

In addition to designing and planning for the testing of the hypothesis specifically related to the effectiveness of the intervention services that are funded with the Safe Start Promising Approaches dollars, we have also included a small piece on resiliency in the evaluation solicitation. We are interested in collecting data on children's resiliency and would like to know how a study that focuses on children's exposure to violence can help the field better understand what characterizes children's resiliency, perhaps take one approach towards explaining how resiliency can prevent negative outcomes for children -- in the specific situation children who are exposed to violence. This award will be made as a cooperative agreement, which means that the program staff here at OJJDP will work intensively with the national evaluator as part of your team to implement the national evaluation. Anyone who has done work with us in the past will probably say that is both a curse and a blessing, but we do feel that that is the best approach to making sure that the national evaluation is responsive to what the Department fees are its needs and it also allows us to learn from you by watching you in action in the field. We have addressed several questions so far about the timing of this evaluation and again, folks who have experience working with the federal government may recognize that although we often set ambitious timelines there are times when we are not able to successfully pull them off. And given the complexity of the balancing act that Kristin and I are doing here in terms of trying to get the sites selected and the evaluators on board at approximately the same time, we recognize that we have time budgeted where only the best case scenario will possibly allow this to work smoothly. We do anticipate that we will get off track. We both have significant program management experience, and we are very creative about how we will try to correct situations where the timing of one side or the other of this gets off. And so this speaks to Martha's question that OMB clearance is an issue. I have seen some OMB clearances go very quickly. I have seen some not go quickly at all. And we are prepared to deal with both eventualities. Our eyes are open about what the costs are of OMB slowing down an evaluator who is ready to get out into the field. So we are aware that we need to keep our eye on that. We will help you as much as we can to get your OMB package through. And we are prepared for the fact that it is possible that we will lose the opportunity to collect data on the first cohort of children to come through if the timing gets off, and we will just deal with that situation as best we can when it happens.

Nabula, I'm ready now to take any remaining questions about either the program or the evaluation, so the phone lines can be opened again for Q&A.

Operator: Thank you, ma'am. If you have a question at this time, please press the one key on your touchtone telephone. Our first question comes from Douglas Wilson. Your question, please.

Douglas Wilson: Katherine, in the solicitation you talked about the number that you should expect, I think in the treatment side as being 50. Is that correct?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I did hazard that estimate for budgeting purposes for you all.

Douglas Wilson: Okay. Now, that's 50 treatment and you said the balance was on 50 control?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: That I leave up to your discretion as to what the best numeric match is for comparison control and program.

Douglas Wilson: Okay. Now, that's 50 each year?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes.

Douglas Wilson: Okay. So 50 times four or something like that.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes.

Douglas Wilson: Okay.

Operator: Our next question comes from Martha Vurt. Your question, please.

Martha Vurt: Yes. This is a cooperative agreement, and the ones that I've had in the past have not needed OMB clearance. Is something new?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Oh, no, Martha. The fact that it's a cooperative agreement doesn't affect OMB clearance. It is going -- oh, are you saying you've had other cooperative agreements that didn't need OMB clearance?

Martha Vurt: Yes.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Oh, well, goodness, Martha, I will ask our financial people immediately. What a boon that would be if that were true.

Martha Vurt: Well, thank you. Normally a grant -- well, especially when you switch from grants to cooperative agreements, but we asked about it because we had one that was in that situation and we kept saying, "But wait a minute. We're collecting data from individuals here." And it was sort of like, you don't need it.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Okay. Well, if it weren't wearing a headset that connects to the phone on my desk, I'd be dancing right now.

Martha Vurt: Well, don't bet on it, but, you know.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I will investigate.

Martha Vurt: Okay. And it would be important to let us know because we will -- it will be a task for all of us.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Absolutely it will be.

Martha Vurt: And we will be budgeting it.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: So the response to this will be posted in the FAQ within a week.

Martha Vurt: Right. It's usually just contracts.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Okay.

Martha Vurt: Or at least you can see if you can finesse it.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: You bet.

Martha Vurt: Okay.

Operator: Our next question comes from Mary Hyde. Your question, please.

Mary Hyde: Hi. My question has to do with the requirement for a comparison/control group. Is it absolutely mandatory that one be identified for each site selected?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I think if I were writing a proposal in response to this solicitation, I would assert that I was planning to do that because that is what this solicitation requires. It does not mean that should some circumstance develop in some site that seemed insurmountable, it does not mean that later down the road the agency would not be willing to negotiate with you. But I suggest you address the terms of the solicitation as closely as possible when writing your proposal because the peer reviewers will not know the latitude of flexibility that the agency has. They'll just be looking for the letter of the law.

Mary Hyde: Okay. Thank you.

Operator: Our next question comes from Rachel Espiritu. Your question, please.

Rachel Espiritu: Hi. I have a few questions. I'll start off with the easiest one first, which is a question about format. It says that we should use a standard 12 point font. I just wanted to make sure does that also stand for the logic model and/or tables that might be in the application?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Let's keep the narrative text in 12 point font. If your logic model is complicated enough that something else works better, it's fine to deviate from 12 point, but I will warn you that peer reviewers get tired of reading at some point. So you want everything to be very presentable and legible.

Rachel Espiritu: Okay. My second question is about dosage. That's one of the hypothesis that wants to be analyzed for this particular evaluation. But I didn't notice anywhere where the requirements for the program sites to submit data on dosage. Is that something that's the requirement of the national evaluator to collect as well?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes and no. The program sites in their proposals to us had to specify what the dosage of the intervention they were proposing is. We know that information and as soon as the national evaluator is picked, we will convey that information to the evaluator. However, you will also see that there is some reference in the solicitation for the evaluator that suggests that there may be some process sorts of evaluation components which would be useful and welcome. And I would imagine that confirming that the sites are in fact delivering the dosage that they said they were going to deliver would be important in terms of both understanding what the sites are doing and then for the evaluator in doing their work, understanding what's actually happening on the ground.

Rachel Espiritu: Okay. My last question is about the follow-up data collection, the timing of it. It indicates that the data is to be submitted semi-annually by the program sites. But it doesn't seem as though subjects are entered in as cohorts, so my assumption is that the data collection is continuous but that program sites will be actually just submitting it to the national evaluator two times a year just based on what they have at that point. Is that correct?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: That sounds like a good description to me, but I'm not sure I fully understand your question.

Rachel Espiritu: I just want to make sure that the collection of the data is actually at six month follow ups based on when the individual was entered into the program.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes. That is what we told the program sites to expect.

Rachel Espiritu: Okay. But then they will be only submitting the data to the national evaluator at six month intervals. So in other words, there may be just some data on baseline for some of the youths, but some of the youths may already have had their six month follow-up, so it won't be necessarily that an individual has -- that you have all the baseline data for all the youths served right away.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Well, I hope we do. In the sites that are performing well, we have told them that from intake they must collect baseline; they must assign a case number so that we can follow that child; and they must continue to report the six month follow-up data by case number so that we know what child that is and when that child entered. We hope we have as many complete data sets -- rows as possible.

Rachel Espiritu: Okay. Thank you.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: You're welcome.

Operator: Again, if you have a question at this time, please press the one key on your touchtone telephone. Our next question comes from Douglas Wilson. Your question, please.

Douglas Wilson: This is a minor question. What's your expectation about how large the technical working group will be?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Oh, I guess, in the past my experience at the agency is that technical working groups have been between four and ten, maybe.

Douglas Wilson: Okay. And what's the pay rate for them now?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: You must use our guidelines, which is no more than $450.00 per day or for any eight hour period, but you can pay them less than that if you wish.

Douglas Wilson: If you think you can get away with it.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: It just depends how charitable they're feeling, perhaps.

Douglas Wilson: Okay. Thank you.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Sure.

Operator: Our next question comes from Martha Vurt. Your question, please.

Marta Vurt: Yes. This is actually a piggyback on a previous question about dosage. Are you relying on everybody doing -- everything happening the way people think it was supposed to happen?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Well, that would be impossibly naïve. We don't know.

Martha Vurt: Because normally you would -- I mean, whatever they're doing, and especially because they may be doing things over time and not just a one hit kind of intervention, people drop out.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Of course.

Martha Vurt: People get more, people get less. So are they actually recording how much they're giving so that one could actually get the real dosage information?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Yes. The national evaluator could absolutely require that each site record dosage for each individual.

Martha Vurt: And if the national evaluator required that, would the national evaluator have to pay for it?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: No. No. I think that should come out of their $10,000.00 budget.

Martha Vurt: Excellent. Okay.

Operator: I'm showing no questions at this time, ma'am.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Okay. Last call for questions, folks.

Operator: There is one more question. It comes from Joy Kaufman. Your question, please.

Joy Kaufman: Hi. I have a question about the $10,000.00. When I chart this out, there are some years where there's over 200 data collection points would need to happen in later years of the grants. I'm wondering if that $10,000.00 has a chance of increasing over time to enable the intervention sites to collect all the required data.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: I would say yes, it does, if we find that $10,000.00 is insufficient in the out years, the program staff from here will handle that by increasing the budget that's available to the sites, but please don't tell them that.

Joy Kaufman: Okay. Thank you.

Operator: Our next question comes from Quinta Martin. Your question, please.

Quinta Martin: I just wanted to remind you that you were going to give us the URL for the --

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Oh, thank you, thank you so much for doing that. Okay. I'm looking it up right now. Somebody ask another question while I type.

Operator: Our next question comes from Dale Parent. Your question, please. Your line is open.

Dale Parent: I'm sorry. I had my mute on. A question about the sporadic six month delivery of data. I'm wondering if there are some -- would it be contrary to the sites' expectation if the national evaluator were to propose and deliver some kind of a tool that they could use to enter that data routinely?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: No.

Dale Parent: No what?

Katherine Darke Schmitt: No, it would not be contrary to what sites have been instructed.

Dale Parent: Even if they could deliver it every six months, there would at least be a possibility of providing a little more uniformity and quality control [inaudible] recording.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Absolutely. Yes.

Dale Parent: Okay. Thank you.

Katherine Darke Schmitt: Sure.

Operator:	I'm showing no questions at this time, ma'am.
Katherine Darke Schmitt	Okay. I have that URL now to read to you all. And this is crazy internet language, so if you want it, get out a pencil, here it comes. It is: http://ojjdp -- that stands for Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention -- so it's http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/progsummary.asp?pi=41. I'm going to read that one more time a little faster. http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/progsummary.asp?pi=41. Nabula, do we have any more questions remaining in queue?
Operator:	Yes, we have one more question. It comes from Susan Chibnall. Your question, please. Ma'am, your line is open. Could you check your mute button?
Susan Chibnall:	Hello? I'm here. Katherine.
Katherine Darke Schmitt	Okay, Susan, we're ready.
Susan Chibnall:	Hey. I was wondering if there would be any resistance to a plan that requested more frequent data submissions than every six months? I know that the data need to be collected on the children at six month intervals, but if the data submissions were requested more frequently, would that be a problem?
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	If I were writing a proposal, I would definitely hit the semi-annual six month marker that is called for in the solicitation, and if my design would benefit from having more frequent data collection, I might also mention that in the text. But I would make sure that a peer reviewer would not think that I had either ignored or not seen the requirement for semi-annual data collection.
Susan Chibnall:	Great. Thank you.
Operator:	There is no more question at this time.
Katherine Darke Schmitt:	Okay, folks. I'll just remind you of the May 7th registration deadline, the June 7th application deadline. In addition, if further questions arise for you over the course of preparing your proposal, there is a telephone number you can call. Neither Kristin nor I nor anyone else whose contact number has been published with this solicitation is allowed to take phone calls at our desks. To keep the playing field even, we do not respond to individual inquiries about this solicitation; however, there is a way to get a response from program staff here at OJJDP, and that is to call this number: 202-305-9234. That phone has voicemail only, but voicemail is answered by the program staff here. So if you leave us your question and your contact information, we will get back to you to address the question. We do encourage you to read the FAQ so that we don't have to call people and answer those same questions over and over again. And we want to remind you that as you get into the business of preparing your application on GMS that Kristin and I cannot answer GMS questions. We're not the analysts who do that. The analysts who do that do have their own telephone number, and it is 1-888-549-9901. That's the number for the GMS help desk, and those are the folks who actually can walk you through submitting an application in case you've never done it before. Please don't wait until June 7th to do it as the help desk tends to get very busy and sometimes they can't handle the call volume on the last day that a solicitation is due. Thank you so much for giving us your time this afternoon. We look forward to reading the proposals that come in. Just because you have registered does not mean you must apply; it's okay if you registered and then decide not to. Thanks for your attention and have a good afternoon.
Operator:	Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for participating in today's conference. This concludes the program. You may all disconnect. Have a wonderful day.