Statement, to evaluate how well each proposal addresses the goals of this announcement.

1. Issues and Objectives (maximum of 10 points)

• The extent to which the application reflects a solid understanding of critical issues, information needs, and research goals.

• The extent to which the conceptual model, research issues, objectives and hypotheses are significant, well-formulated and appropriately linked.

• The extent to which the collaborative framework is appropriate, feasible, and will significantly contribute to the importance, comprehensiveness, and quality of the proposed research.

2. Background and Significance (maximum of 15 points)

• The completeness and sophistication with which the applicant reviews the relevant literature.

• The effectiveness with which the application articulates the current state of knowledge relative to issues being addressed, including (1) critical child care issues and the complex interrelationships among major variables; (2) the significance of these issues and variables for child care policies and programs; (3) how current knowledge can be brought to bear on the proposed research; and (4) how the research would benefit various audiences.

• How well the proposed research will build on the current knowledge base and contribute to policy, practice and future research.

3. Technical Approach (maximum of 50 points)

 The extent to which the applicant's proposed research methodology (1) appropriately links critical research issues, questions, variables and data sources; (2) employs technically sound and appropriate approaches, design elements and procedures for sampling, data collection, data processing and analysis; (3) reflects sensitivity to technical, logistical, cultural and ethical issues that may arise; (4) includes realistic strategies for the resolution of difficulties; (5) adequately protects human subjects, confidentiality of data, and consent procedures, as appropriate; (6) includes an effective plan for the dissemination and utilization information by researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field; and (7) effectively utilizes collaborative strategies.

• The extent to which the application (1) outlines a sound and workable plan

of action that details how the proposed work will be accomplished; (2) shows a reasonable schedule of accomplishments and target dates; (3) presents an adequate staffing plan; and (4) demonstrates the ability to gain access to necessary information, data and subjects.

• The extent to which the application (1) presents a sound administrative framework for maintaining quality control over the implementation and operation of the study; (2) includes a sound plan for coordination of activities carried out by partners; (3) demonstrates an effective approach to team-building, including project staff, consultants and advisory panels; and (4) demonstrates the ability to carry out collaborative research, both within the proposed Child Care Research Partnership and as a member of the ACYF Child Care Research Consortium.

• The extent to which proposed project costs are reasonable, the funds are appropriately allocated across component areas, and the budget is sufficient to accomplish the objectives.

4. Staff Background and Organizational Capacity (maximum of 25 points)

• The extent to which the application (1) presents relevant background, experience, training and qualifications of the key staff and consultants, including work on related research and similar projects; (2) makes available adequate personnel resources for sampling, experimental design, field work, statistical analysis and reporting; and (3) proposes key personnel who have demonstrated competence in areas addressed by the proposed research and are geographically accessible.

 The extent to which the application demonstrates that (1) facilities and organizational experience are adequate to carry out the tasks of the proposed project; (2) the collaborative partnerships are well structured and demonstrate effective coordination of organizational resources; (3) the organization can effectively and efficiently administer a project of the size, complexity and scope proposed; (4) the applicant has the capacity to coordinate activities with other organizations for the successful accomplishment of project objectives; and (5) research partners have the capacity to carry out their proposed functions and roles.

C. The Selection Process

The Commissioner of ACYF will make the final selection of the applicants to be funded. Applications may be funded in whole or in part depending on the applicant ranking, consultations and staff review, the combination of projects which best meets ACYF research objectives, the funds available, and other relevant considerations.

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award which sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement, the effective date of the award, the budget period for which support is given, and the total project period for which support is provided.

D. Funding Date

It is anticipated that successful applications will be funded no later than September 30, 1995.

Part VI. Instructions for the Development and Submission of Applications

This part contains information and instructions for submitting applications in response to this announcement. Application forms are provided along with a checklist for assembling an application package. Please copy and use these as single-sided forms in submitting an application.

Potential applicants should read this section carefully in conjunction with other information and proposal requirements contained within this announcement.

A. Required Notification of the State Single Point of Contact

All applications for research projects are covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, and title 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 100, Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities. Under E.O. 12372, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs. Therefore, the applicant should contact his or her State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) directly to determine what materials, if any, the SPOC requires. Contact information for each State's SPOC is found at the end of this announcement.

All States and territories, except Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Oregon, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, American Samoa and Palau, have elected to participate in the Executive Order process and have established a State Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Applicants from these