The options below are examples of third-party resources that some centers choose to use. These are not part of the standard NCA Qualtrics system for OMS. We encourage you to find the options that work best for your center, but these examples may be helpful for you.

**How to Shorten and Customize Your Links**

If you plan on typing the link in manually on devices, particularly if you will be providing links to participants to complete surveys on their own computers or smartphones, we recommend using free services such as <https://bitly.com/> or <https://tinyurl.com/> to transform the longer link into a short, customized link. Each service will walk you through the process, but essentially you will copy and paste your long link and then choose a brief ending (“alias”). Be sure to use something that identifies the link as being from your CAC and the survey type, such as “mycac-initial” or “yourplace-1.” This will save time and reduce the likelihood of typos when entering the link manually. This is also an essential first step before setting up handouts or using text services to distribute links.

**Making a Link into a QR Code**

Similar to using free websites to shorten and customize your links, there are also free websites to change your link into a QR code. This allows survey participants to scan the code and pull up the survey on their smartphone, without needing to type in the link. This does require the participant to have a QR code reader on their smartphone already, but many newer phones have this built in or free apps can be downloaded. It is helpful to have BOTH a short link and a QR code (not just the QR code by itself), so the participant can use whichever option works best for their phone/device.

Search for “free QR code generator” on Google and you will find many services available, such as:

<https://www.qrstuff.com/>

<https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>

***See the example template on the next page for creating a handout with your link and/or QR code.***

**Options for Texting Surveys**

There are many free or low-cost text message services online as well. Some centers are using these to text families the survey link, as well as information about parenting classes and invitations to community events. The text messages are similar to what doctors, dentists’ offices and school districts are using for appointment reminders or event notifications. Try searching for “send text messages from computer” on Google to see the many services available. **Remember to always get consent to contact families by text message, such as adding this question to an intake form or separate opt-in form, along with fields for contact information.** Here are two services that CACs have used successfully for OMS.

#1: Google Voice - <https://www.google.com/voice>

This is a free service. If you set up a Gmail account and go to Google voice, you can request a free phone number.  You can text from Google Voice’s webpage (unlimited number of texts).  If they text you back, it will go to an email which you can have auto-forwarded.  You can also have it set to send whatever they text back as a text message to a phone # you designate.

#2: EZ Texting - <https://www.eztexting.com/>

This is a paid service that offers many advanced features, such as scheduled texts. Create an account and choose which service plan is best for your center, such as the pay as you go option that charges a small fee (a few cents) per text message or a monthly plan to service a larger number of families.

For both options, use a brief message followed by your short, custom link. Text is limited to 160 characters, so think carefully about how to encourage participation in a brief format.

Example:

Please help improve our services for families by completing a brief survey about your experience at the CAC <https://tinyurl.com/example-cac-initial>



Please tell us about your visit to

[Children’s Advocacy Center Name Here]

Did you feel supported? Were your questions answered?

Did you receive information about additional services available for you and your child?

Please tell us how we did and how we can improve our services for children and families!

Please use the following link to take an anonymous online survey about your experience at the center:

[[Your](http://nationalchildrensalliance.fluidsurveys.com/s/CumberlandCountyCACInitial/) Center’s Customized Link to the Initial Survey Here]

**[Add QR Code Here]**

Contact Us with Questions or Concerns:

123-456-7890

fake-email@example.com