INTEGRATING EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA: WHAT LEGISLATORS NEED TO KNOW
THURSDAY, SEPT. 17, 2015
2:00 PM ET/1:00 PM CT/NOON MT/11:00 AM PT
The ECDC supports state policymakers’ development and use of coordinated state early care and education (ECE) data systems to improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve children’s outcomes. ECDC partners with the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at UC Berkeley, Child Trends, Council of Chief State School Officers, Data Quality Campaign, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Pew Home Visiting Campaign to inform the development of products and guide ECDC’s strategic planning based on current trends in data systems development and policies. King leads ECDC’s national survey of states’ early care and education data systems and directs the delivery of policy consultation and strategic communications that promote the development, implementation, and use of early childhood data. King has over 15 years of experience conducting state and national level research on early childhood issues and examining the impact of state and federal policies on parents’ access to child care services, licensed child care supply, child care costs, and the child care workforce.

Carlise King, Executive Director of the Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC) at Child Trends
Early Childhood Data Collaborative

Integrating Early Childhood Data:
What Legislators Need To Know

The Early Childhood DATA Collaborative

September 17, 2015
Overview

- Why Are Early Childhood Data Critical?
- How Can Integrating Early Childhood Data Help Legislators?
- State Success Stories
- Policy Options
The Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC) promotes policies and practices to support policymakers’ development and use of coordinated state early care and education (ECE) data systems.

Effective use of data systems will help policymakers improve:

- Program quality
- ECE workforce quality
- Access to high-quality programs
- Child outcomes
To date, the ECDC has made important contributions, including:

- Key early childhood policy questions to guide ECE data systems
- 10 Fundamentals Framework for Coordinated State ECE Data Systems
- 2010 and 2013 State of States’ Early Childhood Data Systems Surveys

Policy Briefs

- Linking Head Start Data with State Early Care and Education Coordinated Data Systems
- Stacking the Blocks: A Look at Integrated Data Systems
Why Are Early Childhood Data Critical?

- Birth-8 is a critical time period for children in achieving positive health, learning, and economic outcomes later in life.
- The need for data during this period is growing to understand the impacts of early childhood interventions and services.
- Data about young children, including longitudinal data, typically cannot be connected together.
What Are "Early Childhood" Data?

- The ECDC currently focuses on six of the early care and education (ECE) programs—
  1. Early Intervention, IDEA Part C (birth-age 3)
  2. Preschool Special Education, IDEA Part B 619 (ages 3-5)
  3. Federal and state-funded Head Start (prenatal-age 5)
  4. State Prekindergarten (ages 3-5)
  5. Subsidized Child Care (birth-age 13)
  6. Home Visiting (birth-5 years)
Early Childhood Data About Young Children, Families, and Programs Are Disconnected

To K-12, health, and social services
Are there certain populations that are disproportionately underserved by child care subsidies?

- Allows policymakers to know what populations are being served and have more accurate information about the number of high-risk/high-need children served to target resources.

Do children receiving subsidized care, particularly in high poverty areas, have access to high quality programs?

- Provides policymakers information related to the quality of programs and their distribution throughout the state—how well the programs are working and what is being achieved.
Are there barriers for working families to access early care and education programs?

- Supports policymakers’ decisions related to program eligibility, reimbursement rates, and funding.

What policies and investments lead to a skilled and stable early childhood workforce?

- Facilitates policymakers’ understanding of workforce preparedness and identifies state needs for professional development and training.

How are children and families benefiting from programs?

- Provides policymakers with cross-sector and longitudinal data to assess progress over-time.
Strategies for Using Integrated Early Childhood Data

1. Creating a vision for early childhood data systems
2. Developing interagency governance structures
3. Identifying information gaps
4. Strengthening linkages between early childhood and other services
5. Planning for system sustainability
Policymakers can encourage and support partnerships

- Pennsylvania’s Enterprise to Link Information for Children Across Networks (PELICAN) is a data partnership between the Department of Public Welfare and the Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

- The Early Learning Network collects information about children (ex. assessments), teachers, and programs to inform Pennsylvania’s early childhood initiatives and services, and support program evaluation and improvement.
Pennsylvania

- Policymakers can access reports on child enrollment, early learning outcomes data, and staff qualifications.

- Annual reports let policymakers know how children are progressing in different ECE settings.

- Because data can be linked to school outcome data in kindergarten and 3rd grade, policymakers can also understand trends over time.
Utah policymakers can develop and raise awareness around their questions.

- Utah’s Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Data Integration Project facilitates data sharing and coordination among early childhood programs in Utah.

- Integrates existing data from publicly funded early childhood programs into the Child Advance Record Management (CHARM) data bridge housed in the Department of Health.
ECCS informs key policy questions such as:

- How many eligible children in Utah ages 0-5 are receiving no services? Or multiple services?

- What is crossover count between any pair of programs?

- What are the long term outcomes for children who participate in early childhood programs?
Early Childhood Comprehensive System Overview

- EI Part-C
- VS - Birth Records
- Child Care
- Head Start
- EI Part-B
- Foster Care
- OHV
- Title 1 Preschool
- EHDI
- UDOH
- Research Web Application
- Early-Childhood Researchers
- EC Data System
- UDA Database
- Education Researchers

Real-time, Continuous Data Integration
Policymakers along with legislators can support data integration

- The Early Learning Data system, housed within the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and including data on children, the workforce, and programs, will generate timely, relevant, and accessible information to support decision making in the state.

- In 2009, the state passed the P-20 Longitudinal Data Systems Act (105 ILCS 13/5 et seq.) establishing a framework and governance structure for its data system, and includes provisions for a unified early childhood data system. Using Race to the Top funds, the state is working to implement the new system.
Gateway to Opportunities, Illinois’ professional development system includes data on over 10,000 early care and education educators with goals to expand.

Collecting comprehensive workforce data will allow policymakers to know more about relationship between educators and the programs and services they provide.
New Jersey

Policymakers can use the resulting studies to improve capacity

- In New Jersey, the Enterprise Analysis System for Early Learning integrates data from multiple early care and education programs, as well as public education data.

- Linking early care and education data to the state longitudinal data system, connects participation in preschool programs with children’s performance later in school.
These studies allow policymakers to see if there are significant gains in literacy, language, math and science through fourth and fifth grade for children participating in preschool programs.
New Jersey
Enterprise Analysis System for Early Learning

What is NJ-EASEL?

NJ Enterprise Analysis System for Early Learning

Legend:
- Program Agency System

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Child Protection & Permanency
DCF
NJ Spirit

Grow NJ Kids
DHS
Workforce Registry

Child Care Resources
DCF
Licensing

TANF / SNAP
DHS
CARES, FAMIS, OMEGA

Home Visiting
DCF
Healthy Families, Nurse Family Partnership, Parents As Teachers

Early Intervention
DOH
Early Intervention

Public Education
DOE
NJ Smart, Title 1, CDS

Birth Registry
DOH
Birth Registry

NJ-EASEL Integrated Data System

Questions that Cannot be Answered with Any One Program Data System
What can policymakers do to improve access to early care and education information?

- Identify the questions you need answered to inform state early care and education investments and policies.
- Engage early childhood leaders, researchers, practitioners, and parents through collaborative mechanisms in studying and using data.
What can policymakers do to improve access to early care and education information?

- Strengthen state policies to enhance the coordination, security, and appropriate use of ECE data across health, education and family support programs.
- Support staffing and resources needed to translate information into actionable reports for policymakers.
Questions?
Why Early Childhood Data Now?

Closing the achievement gap and preparing all students to succeed begins long before students enter a classroom. Building and using coordinated state ECE data systems will improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve child outcomes.

What are the characteristics of effective programs?

Get the Facts

States collect ECE data, but they are uncoordinated, often incomplete, and therefore cannot effectively support continuous improvement efforts. Not only are states unable to answer critical policy questions about their states' public ECE systems, but policymakers often struggle to obtain answers to basic questions. How does your state compare?

View State ECE Analysis »

Featured Case Study

The goal of Pennsylvania’s Office of Child Development and Early Learning is to regularly assess the development of children from birth to age 5 who receive state-funded early childhood services. Early childhood education and care providers collect child information across seven developmental domains using a research-based, authentic assessment aligned with the state’s early learning standards.

View Case Study

Spotlight

Check out the 2013 National Results of the Early Childhood Data Systems Survey

Click here to view the results.

We want to hear from you!

Email info@ECEdata.org with suggestions »
Contact ECDC

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- Visit www.ecedata.org for more information.
- Follow us on Twitter @ecedata
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• An archived version will be available shortly, please visit: ncsl.org/research/human-services/integrating-early-childhood-data-strategies-what-legislators-need-to-know.aspx

• Learn more about the Early Learning Fellows Program ncsl.org/research/human-services/early-learning-fellows-program.aspx

• Learn more about NCSL’s Early Care and Education project: ncsl.org/research/human-services/early-care-and-education.aspx

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