North Carolina’s Early Childhood Integrated Data System

The goal of NC ECIDS is to help answer key policy and program questions about North Carolina’s early childhood services and programs. Once built, NC ECIDS will be able to

• provide unduplicated counts of children being served by specific programs;
• provide information about current programs and services to better address areas of need and effective practice within systems; and
• connect with the North Carolina P-20W (preschool through workforce) data system to allow for the examination of longitudinal effects of early childhood programs and services.

Purpose of the NC ECIDS Research Portal

NC ECIDS is being built to serve as the single source for integrated early childhood data for selected education, health, and social services programs. It will help the state know which children are being served and where they are being served. NC ECIDS will allow for complex analyses to answer key policy and program questions. It also will help to answer questions that currently cannot be answered because the necessary data are not linked.

Intended Uses and Users

Participating state agencies, policymakers, researchers, and interested members of the general public will have web portal access to standard reports and query reports. The standard reports will provide data about unduplicated counts of children in multiple programs. Query reports are customizable. Internal and external researchers will be directed to a dedicated data request portal for individual research requests.

Process

A governance council composed of two committees sets policies for NC ECIDS’s operation and offers guidance and feedback on the development of the application and web portal. The Executive Committee provides leadership, and the Program Management Committee is made up of managers of participating programs.

The state also established a Research Stakeholder Group comprising seven external researchers from non-participating agencies to better inform this key group of external users about the ECIDS process and opportunities. The group helps

Reports and products generated from ECIDS data are an important part of a data use plan that meets the needs of users and stakeholders.
Figure 1. North Carolina’s data request process

Data Collection

NC ECIDS uses a hybrid system that will connect to existing state data warehouses to retrieve data and will store some aggregated data for customizable reports.

The following programs and data sources are part of NC ECIDS:

- NC Pre-K
- Subsidized Child Care
- Infant/toddler program (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Exceptional Children (IDEA Part B 619)
- Work First
- Food and Nutrition Services
- Child Protective Services
- Birth records
- Head Start and Early Head Start

NC ECIDS will take advantage of existing eScholar unique identification technology, currently used for North Carolina’s P-20W system. This will allow for NC ECIDS and the P-20W system to ultimately connect participating public programs serving individuals from birth to the workforce.

Future Steps and Next Phase

The Research Stakeholder Group held an initial meeting with NC ECIDS developers. The developers plan to provide a summary report of the meeting and will seek assistance from selected researchers about additional data elements from participating programs that might be useful to include in NC ECIDS.

Phase I of the NC ECIDS project includes the launch of a web portal by spring of 2016. A set of four standard reports that use aggregated data are planned for release at the same time. Phase II, expected to be completed by December 2016, is to develop report customization capabilities and a data request process.

For more information about early childhood data use, visit the ECIDS Toolkit at https://slds.grads360.org/#program/ecids-toolkit

Additional Resources

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This product of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) SLDS Grant Program was developed with the help of knowledgeable staff from state education agencies and partner organizations. The information presented does not necessarily represent the opinions of the IES SLDS Grant Program.

For more information on the IES SLDS Grant Program or for support with system development, please visit http://nces.ed.gov/programs/SLDS