

The Early Childhood Data Collaborative

A partnership of the Council of Chief State School Officers • Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at UC Berkeley • Data Quality Campaign • National Center for Children in Poverty • National Conference of State Legislatures • National Governors Association Center for Best Practices • Pre-K Now at the Pew Center on the States

The Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC) is a new consortium of national organizations convened to help state policymakers build, link, and use early childhood data systems. Effective early childhood data systems can be used to document and improve the effectiveness of early childhood programs and enhance the healthy development and learning of young children, birth to age five, and throughout the K-12, postsecondary, and workforce continuum. Over the next year, the ECDC will:

- Document current state early childhood data efforts, and the priorities of state policymakers and other key audiences for improving early childhood data systems and data use;
- Generate a template of key policy questions, essential elements or capabilities of exemplary state early childhood data system, and actions to promote data-based decision making;
- Create policy tools, resources, and services that build political will and support states to develop and use comprehensive early childhood data systems that link with K-12.

This initiative builds on growing interest in strengthening the availability, quality and use of early childhood data and in building state longitudinal data systems. States are planning to take advantage of significant new federal investments in education data, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Early Learning Challenge Fund, and Early Childhood Advisory Councils. The ECDC will help states develop policies that support interoperable early childhood data systems that link with K-12 data and use data to improve children's readiness for school and eliminate disparities in early learning opportunities and outcomes.

The ECDC was created in the spring of 2009 to coordinate three initially separate projects aimed at accelerating the development of state early childhood data systems and enhancing the use of data to inform policy decisions. With funding from the Birth to Five Policy Alliance, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Department of Education, the ECDC convened state, local, national leaders in the birth-5 and K-12 policy fields, with significant involvement from the U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services, in July 2009. Participants at this meeting explored the current landscape of state systems, how local early childhood agencies manage data, and provided feedback on how this collaborative could best support the development of state early childhood data system efforts.

The ECDC is supported through funding from the Birth to Five Policy Alliance and the Pew Charitable Trusts. For more information, please contact one of the ECDC members listed below.

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