Your Question:

You asked for information and state examples of early childhood integrated data systems.

Our Response:

Early childhood education programs serving children from birth to age five span a range of services run by numerous different state agencies and those who offer early childhood programs and services collect substantial data. While there are challenges associated with connecting data across programs and services (e.g. privacy, cross-agency sharing, etc.), at least 22 states link some or all their early childhood program data.

A common approach to linking early childhood data is through an early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS). Generally, an ECIDS combines, secures, and reports information from a variety of early learning services and programs, including data related to children and families served by early childhood programs, members of the workforce, and the characteristics of the program or services.

National Landscape of Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems

Based on a 2018 50-state survey conducted by The Early Childhood Data Collaborative, 22 states link data between all or some early childhood programs. Georgia and Mississippi are the only two states that reported fully linking data across all programs. Of the 22 who link some or all their early childhood program data, 18 have implemented an early childhood integrated data system. There are at least 12 states who have plans to link child data, while 16 states reported no linkage or plan to link data (see graphic below). States can face a range of challenges when trying to link data. Data sharing agreements, agency rules, and concerns over privacy are notable barriers that states have identified as standing in the way of sharing data.


Of the 22 states who can link early childhood data, states reported varying linkages across programs in their state. A majority of states reported linking data for children enrolled in subsidized childcare (17 states), state pre-

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Types of Data Linked

The data collected and reported varies across states and within programs within a state. States generally collect child-level and program site-level data for early childhood education programs. The following data types and counts come from state responses to the 2018 State of State Early Childhood Data Systems survey.

Child-Level Data

Child-Level Data: The survey asked states if they linked demographics (e.g., ethnicity, age, gender, languages), program participation (e.g., attendance, length of time in program/services), family (e.g., parent education level, employment status, household income, ethnicity), and child development data (e.g., screening, assessment). Of the 22 states that link some or all the early childhood data, the distribution is outlined in the chart below.

Child-Level Early Health Data: The survey asked states if they linked four general types of health data with early childhood education data, including birth, immunization, Medicaid, and Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) records. At least eight states reported linking health and early childhood education record. Three states (Oklahoma, Mississippi, and Rhode Island) linked all four types of health data.

Child-Level Social Service Access Data: The Survey asked states if they linked four types of social service data with early childhood data, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), child welfare, Supplemental...
Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or housing assistance. Eleven states reported linking or having the ability to link social service data to early childhood data.

**Child-Level K-12 Data:** The Survey asked states if they linked or can link K-12 data with early childhood education data. A common connection point between K-12 and early childhood education data is through kindergarten entrance assessment data.

**Program Site-Level Data**

States linked several types of information about program sites, including data about licensing status (e.g., capacity, violations), structural standards (e.g., curriculum, class size), working conditions (e.g., wages, benefits, turnover), and quality measures.

Out of the 22 states, 20 states could link quality measures or licensing data for at least one ECE program. Additionally, 17 states could link data on structural standards, and 15 states could link working conditions for at least one program.

### Early Childhood Data Governance

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Out of 50 states surveyed, 22 states have a defined governing body that oversees the coordination of early childhood data. States generally use one of three models for their data governance structure.

- **Single lead state department of agency model**: Governance responsibilities fall to one agency for early childhood data integration. Five states use a single lead state departmental/agency structure (Connecticut, Kansas, Louisiana, Oregon, Washington).
- **Cross-departmental or coordinating entity model**: Governance responsibilities are shared across participating agencies or departments. Eight states use a cross-departmental or coordinated agency structure (Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Utah).
- **Single and independent governing body (only oversees the ECIDS) model**: One entity oversees the ECID in the state, while each contributing agency governs their data. Six states have a governance model specific to ECIDs (Illinois, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Vermont, Wisconsin).

**State Examples**

**Georgia**: Georgia’s Cross Agency Data System aligns critical data from programs and services for children from birth to five and their families. The mission of the data system is to create high quality, comprehensive, integrated early childhood data system for Georgia to inform policies and practices that produce outcomes for children and families. In total, eight early childhood programs participate in the system, ranging from the state home visit program to Georgia’s Pre-K program. Users of the system can create customized reports.

**Mississippi**: Mississippi’s LifeTracks system links data in the state across early childhood, K-12, postsecondary, and workforce data. LifeTracks online tool allows users to learn about the characteristics of the state’s Pre-K through 12th grade, postsecondary, and workforce. Each state agency has governing authority over their specific data in the system; LifeTracks has a board with representatives from the various agencies that contribute to the connected data system.

**Minnesota**: The state’s Early Childhood Longitudinal Data system is presented as a new and evolving tool to help the state answer questions about young children and their development and learning. The data system brings together data from birth to age five programs, kindergarten, third-grade outcomes. The resource provides users with opportunities to explore and map the data. A presentation by the Minnesota department to the National Conference of State Legislators Early Learning Fellow program provide more detail on the state’s Early Childhood Longitudinal System.