



An Early Childhood Integrated Data System

What is an Early Childhood Integrated Data System?

An Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) collects, integrates, maintains, stores, and reports information from early childhood programs across multiple agencies within a state that serve children and families from birth to age eight. Typically, the data included in an ECIDS are related to the individual child, the child's family, the classroom, the program/providers, and other services that provide comprehensive care and education for young children.

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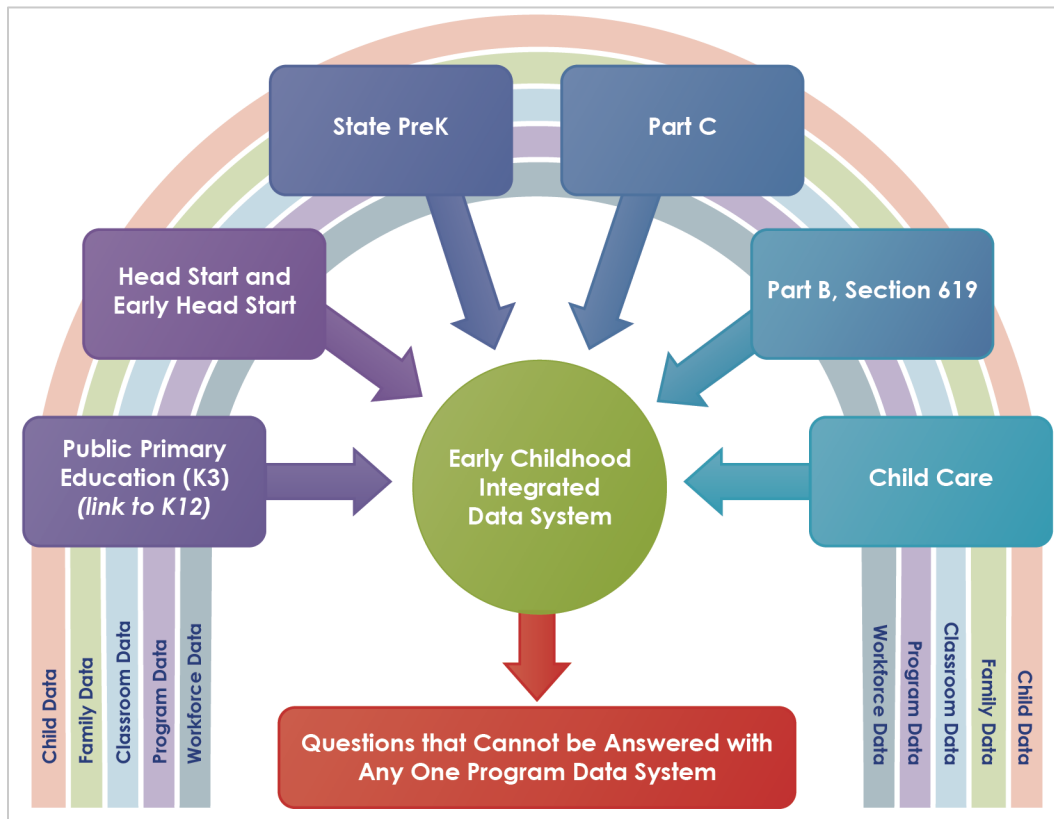


Figure 1: Examples of programs contributing data to an ECIDS



Whom does an ECIDS serve?

An ECIDS can serve numerous stakeholders. The intended users should be defined by the agencies contributing information to the system in support of the common early childhood goals and priorities within the state. In many states, ECIDS data will help to inform policymakers and state agency executive leadership, early childhood program leadership, parents and families, researchers, and service providers.

What is the purpose of an ECIDS?

The broad purpose of an ECIDS is to provide integrated, cross-program data that inform decisions about early childhood policies, services, and education. The state's early childhood leadership team should define and drive the specific purpose(s) of the ECIDS in support of the state's goals and to meet the information needs of their intended users.

How is an ECIDS connected yet distinct from a P-20W¹ Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)?

A statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) is a data system that integrates unit-level, high-quality student, staff, and program data that are linked across entities and over time, and makes these data accessible through reporting and analysis tools. Some ECIDS data—potentially all in some states, depending upon the purpose—should be included in the state's P-20W SLDS to provide a longitudinal view of children as they progress through their schooling and into the workforce.

The primary difference between an ECIDS and a P-20W SLDS is the scope—the sectors that are included. An ECIDS brings together data from multiple early childhood programs and agencies. A P-20W SLDS brings together data from numerous sectors, one of which is usually early childhood. In turn, an ECIDS is designed to answer questions focused on early childhood and a P-20W SLDS is designed to answer questions that span more than one sector. In many states, these systems are being designed simultaneously, and so it is important for states to establish the distinct purpose of each system and to leverage the commonalities and share best practices and lessons learned.

¹ P-20W refers to data from prekindergarten (early childhood), K12, and postsecondary through post-graduate education, along with workforce and other outcomes data (e.g., public assistance and corrections data). The specific agencies and other organizations that participate in the P-20W initiative vary from state to state.