

EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA INTEGRATION IN VERMONT

VISION

Vermont's vision is to use high-quality, up-to-date data to inform policy and programmatic decisions to improve equitable access to and quality of services, resources, and supports for young children, their families, and the early childhood system. This will increase our ability to:

- Obtain a full picture of Vermont's early childhood landscape and understand the relationship between individual service utilization/access to programs, and cross-sector and longitudinal outcomes
 - Gaps in service provision: access and supply across communities
 - Relationships among characteristics and outcomes
- Connect data and examine long-term outcomes for children across multiple agencies, departments, divisions, and partners to support state leaders in determining child, staff, and program needs for both real-time and longer-term planning
 - Tracking progress of cohorts and individuals over time
- Consistently access data on how many children are being served across sectors, where there are gaps in equitable access, how services are impacting children and under what conditions
 - Availability, utilization, and quality of services available
 - What combinations of programs do children receive and how are they related to outcomes?
- Use centralized data alongside qualitative data and best practice to best allocate limited resources and meet the needs of children and families
 - Understanding of how to organize early childhood systems and supports to achieve outcomes

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Vermont has strong systems for monitoring the early childhood system and linking data.

- Increasing the capacity of agencies and Building Bright Futures to prioritize data linking and integration efforts
- Convening and orienting the Data and Evaluation Committee, Agency leaders, and data stewards to the vision and reviewing/documenting past efforts, the current status, and opportunities for linking and integrating early childhood data
- Continue building and using the Data Development Agenda to identify Vermont's key questions, priorities, and gaps in data across early childhood sectors
- Developing new processes for larger-scale systems monitoring, including
 - developing common language and definitions,
 - improving each step of the data cycle including collection, analysis/compilation, and reporting
 - improving data quality
- Supporting data literacy statewide to improve data collection and use
- Coordinating and aligning past, current and new data, monitoring and evaluation efforts



- Restarting Data Governance Council: Linking data about children’s early childhood experiences across multiple agencies, departments, divisions, and partners to develop an unduplicated count and support state leaders in determining child, staff, and program needs for both real-time and longer-term planning
 - Building out the early childhood data inventory
 - Initiating new (universal) data sharing agreements/MOUs and protocols Reviewing and revising protocols to support data governance, protect privacy, and guide data integration, access, and use
 - Developing shared definitions
 - Designing and implementing new protocols for data storage and data use cases
 - Reviewing and revising protocols for master data management and unique IDs
 - Develop a data lake to support data linking/integration and determine which entity will host/support centralizing data

Data is centralized, meaningful, publicly available, and accessible through Vermont’s Early Childhood Data and Policy Center.

- Vermont’s Early Childhood Data and Policy Center is the mechanism to support data analysis, and dissemination of data (producing and making data accessible)
- Convening data stewards to determine data availability, cadence/frequency of data sharing, and assessing capacity, as well as to provide technical assistance
- Ensuring the Center has the direct ability to pull data from the Data Lake through APIs
- Developing continuous protocols for sharing, reviewing, validating, and uploading data
- Producing an unduplicated count
- Continue to build and refine the Early Childhood Data Portal and Vermont’s Early Childhood Data and Policy Center as a nonpartisan, independent source of data, research, publications and important information for policymakers, stakeholders, and the public on issues and priorities for children ages birth through age eight in Vermont.
- Partnership between agencies and BBF to develop data briefs, fact sheets, non-technical summaries, the State of Vermont’s Children, and other publications alongside the data portal to disseminate information

Vermont policymakers, the Administration, practitioners, and partners consistently use data to inform decisions because they have the ability to track early childhood outcomes and services, measure the return on investments, inform program planning and policies, and drive continuous quality improvement.

- Consistently access data on how many children are being served across sectors, where there are gaps in equitable access, how services are impacting children and under what conditions
- Examine long-term outcomes for children who participated in various early childhood programs and improve the quality of programs through the use of data to inform decision-making.
- Use centralized data alongside qualitative data and best practice to best allocate limited resources and meet the needs of children and families through data-driven decision-making.

