

RESEARCH REPORT

Working with Administrative Data in Early Childhood and Related Fields

A List of Resources

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Working with Administrative Data in Early Childhood and Related Fields: A List of Resources

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CCEEPRA
Child Care and Early
Education Policy and
Research Analysis

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Overview

Introduction

This list includes resources useful to researchers and agency staff who analyze state-level early care and education (ECE) administrative data for research purposes. The resource list emphasizes materials that explain how to acquire, use, manage, link, and analyze administrative data in early childhood or related fields.

Purpose

The resource list aims to support Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrators and their research partners in using administrative data to address policy-relevant early care and education research questions.

Methods

The authors identified resources by searching the Child Care and Early Education Research Connections website for reports, briefs, fact sheets, and other written materials. We used the following search terms: administrative data, early childhood administrative data, child care administrative data, early care and education administrative data, data governance, data security, data confidentiality, and data analysis. We also reviewed several other websites, including the following:

- the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS);
- Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC);
- the Data Quality Campaign (DQC);
- the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy);
- the Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC);
- the Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE);
- the BUILD initiative;
- Common Education Data Standards (CEDs);

- the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Learning Network; and
- the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE).

We then narrowed the list down to resources that would be useful for those conducting analyses of *state-level* ECE administrative data *for research purposes*, with an emphasis on materials that explain **how to use, manage, or link such data**. In particular, the resources were selected because they

1. highlighted advantages and disadvantages to using administrative data;
2. detailed steps or procedures about how to use administrative data;
3. provided state examples about administrative data use; or
4. were tools or toolkits that housed information about administrative data.

This resource list includes the same resources hosted on the “[Working with Administrative Data](#)” page on the Child Care and Early Education Research Connections webpage as of September 2020.

Glossary

Administrative data: refers to information about individual children, families, or providers of early care and education and other family benefits that is collected and maintained as part of the operation of government programs.

Introduction

This list includes resources useful to researchers and agency staff who analyze state-level early care and education (ECE) administrative data for research purposes. The term administrative data refers to information about individual children, families, and/or providers of early care and education and other family benefits that is collected and maintained as part of the operation of government programs.

The resource list emphasizes materials that explain how to acquire, use, manage, link, and analyze administrative data in early childhood or related fields. The first section lists several websites that offer resources for working with administrative data. This is followed by four tables listing resources on the following topics:

1. linking and integrating administrative data;
2. analyzing administrative data;
3. managing administrative data; and
4. data confidentiality and security.

For each resource in the four tables, we list the name of the resource, the type (e.g., report, webinar, fact sheet, etc.), and a brief description. We include an asterisk if the resource provides a state example of administrative data use.

We hope the listed resources will support state/territory child care administrators and their research partners in using administrative data to address policy-relevant early care and education research questions.

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The next step was to narrow the list down to resources that would be useful for those conducting analyses of *state-level* ECE administrative data *for research purposes*, with an emphasis on materials that explain **how to use, manage, or link such data**. In particular, the resources were selected because they

1. highlighted advantages and disadvantages to using administrative data;
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4. were tools or toolkits that housed information about administrative data.

The resource list was initially compiled by Van-Kim Bui Lin, Kelly Maxwell, and Carlise King, Child Trends researchers with the Child Care Administrative Data Analysis Center (CCADAC). They conceptualized the list, developed resource categories, and identified resources for inclusion, as part of CCADAC’s larger goal of strengthening the ability of state and territory child care administrators and their research partners to use administrative data to address policy-relevant early care and education research questions. The “[Working with Administrative Data](#)” list was published on the Child Care and Early Education Research Connections website, with regular updates made by CCADAC through September 2018. CCADAC was part of the Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis contract at Child Trends.

Urban Institute researchers Kassandra Martinchek and Julia Isaacs updated the list in May and September 2020 and developed this written report. For updates made in 2020, we also reviewed materials submitted in response to a request posted on the Urban Institute’s “Building Child Care Research Capacity” web page: “In Search of Resources about Using Administrative Data in Early Care and Education.” We also reviewed discussion posts from an online administrative data discussion forum

for members of the Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC). The Urban update was done as part of the work of the Child Care Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Center.

Linking and Integrating Administrative Data

Below you can find resources related to integrating data systems or combining two or more administrative datasets either within the same organization or between different organizations.

Note: An asterisk in the description section indicates that a state example is included.

Resource	Type	Description
10 fundamentals of coordinated state early care and education data systems: Inaugural state analysis. Early Childhood Data Collaborative. (2011). Washington, DC: Early Childhood Data Collaborative.	Fact sheets and briefs	This brief presents highlights of an analysis of a survey of 48 states and the District of Columbia on state implementation of ten essential components of coordinated early care and education (ECE) data systems. Suggestions are offered in response to the finding that current systems, though they collect large amounts of data on children, providers, and program sites, are often inadequate for the needs of state ECE policymakers in assessing data and formulating policy.
A Compendium of Administrative and Survey Data Resources in the Administration for Children and Families (OPRE Report 2020-10). (2020). Washington, DC: Division of Data and Improvement, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.	Report	This compendium documents data collected by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) that is or could be used for evidence-building purposes. It includes summaries of twelve major ACF administrative data sources and seven surveys. It provides an overview of each data source; its basic content; major publications, websites, and documentation; data quality; capacity to link with other data sources; examples of prior research using linked data; and other information.
A look at Maryland's early childhood data system. Stedron, J. (2010). Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.	Reports and articles	This report briefly discusses Maryland's Early Childhood Data System—covering governance, history, linkages, access, reporting, use, and next steps.*
A look at Pennsylvania's early childhood data system. Stedron, J. (2010). Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.	Reports and articles	This report briefly discusses Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Data System—covering governance, history, privacy, linkages, access, reporting, use, and advice.*
A planning guide for linking data to support program improvement in early care and education (Report # 2016-39). Friese, S., Maxwell, K. L., Epstein, D., & Abrams, J. (2016). Bethesda, MD: Child Trend	Reports and articles	This planning tool is designed to help programs and technical assistance partners assess their capacity to engage in data linking efforts and identify next steps to accomplish data linking goals based on six areas of practice.
Administrative Data Sources to Address Early Care and Education Policy-Relevant Research Questions (OPRE Research Brief #2019-81). Shaw, S., Lin, V., & Maxwell, K. (2019).	Fact sheets and briefs	This brief highlights a range of federal, state, and local administrative data sources that could be used to address policy-relevant early care and education (ECE) questions. It describes data sources across

Resource	Type	Description
Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.		
Linking EHDI and Part C Data Webinar . Bernstein, H., Shaw, E., Walsh, S., Converse, A., Altmaier, F., Kerr, J., Culpepper, B., & Pennington, L. (2019). Menlo Park, CA: The DaSy Center.	Webinars and presentations	This webinar highlights stories from Part C Coordinators who have or are developing collaborative data sharing agreements that allow them to share Part C data with their Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EHDI).*
NNIP'S Resource Guide to Data Governance and Security . Hendley, L., Gold, A., & Pettit, K. (2018). Washington, DC: National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership.	Reports and articles	To help groups improve their data policies and practices, this guide assembles lessons from the experiences of partners in the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership network and similar organizations. The guide presents advice and annotated resources for: protecting privacy and human subjects, ensuring data security, and managing the data life cycle. While applicable for non-sensitive data, the guide is geared for managing confidential data, such as data used in integrated data systems or Pay-for-Success programs.
Nothing to Hide: Tools for Talking (and Listening) About Data Privacy for Integrated Data Systems . Future of Privacy Forum. (2018). Washington, DC: Future of Privacy Forum.	Toolkits and guides	This toolkit provides tools for integrating data for policy and program improvement in government setting. In addition to a step-by-step guide to communication and engagement on data privacy, the toolkit includes action-oriented appendices, including worksheets, checklists, exercises, and additional resources.
Policies for users of student data: A checklist (PTAC-CL-8) . Privacy Technical Assistance Center. (2015). Washington, DC: Privacy Technical Assistance Center.	Fact sheets and briefs	The purpose of this checklist is to define a data use policy and provide best practices for using student data.
Privacy and confidentiality in the use of administrative and survey data . US Office of Management and Budget. (2016). Washington, DC: US Office of Management and Budget.	Reports and articles	This white paper reviews some of the most relevant US privacy laws and discusses how they provide a strong legal framework that governs Federal agencies, using the Census Bureau's Data Stewardship program as a case study. The paper then considers a range of protocols used by different agencies to provide researcher access to restricted data, such as the National Center for Education Statistics data licensing program.
Privacy and Security Considerations When Integrating Home Visiting Data . Bui Lin, V., & Shea Crowne, S. (2020). Bethesda, MD: Child Trends.	Fact sheets and briefs	Home visiting programs typically collect sensitive information about family characteristics, risk factors, and services received. States may choose to integrate these data with other early childhood data to learn more about the reach and effectiveness of the services and supports that families receive. As more states begin to integrate data across early childhood programs, data integration leaders should consider how the privacy and security of home visiting data are maintained when shared across organizations or

Resource	Type	Description
		integrated with other early childhood data. (author abstract)
Roadmap to Safeguarding Student Data . Data Quality Campaign. (2015). Washington, DC: Data Quality Campaign.	Toolkits and guides	This document provides specific, practical recommendations for state education agencies as they safeguard student data and review and update their data privacy policies and practices to address changes in technology.
SLDS Issue Brief: Best Practices for the Design and Implementation of Data Privacy and Security Programs . Borkosky, L., Cunningham, J., Cottrell, S., Sellers, J., Frederick, C., Smith, A., Straw, M., Gray, E., & Lemke, R. (2020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics at IES.	Brief	This brief offers an overview of key concepts and content to be covered in privacy and security plans for state longitudinal data systems (SLDS) agencies as well as methods of developing and implementing these plans. It draws on best practices identified by the Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and includes examples of privacy and security plans from Wisconsin and Kentucky.
SLDS Issue Brief: SLDS IRB Requirements . Armstrong, C., Gosa, K., McGrew, C., Patton, J., Ream, D., Rodamar, J., Tay, A. (2020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics at IES.	Brief	To ensure that federally funded work related to statewide longitudinal data systems (SLDS) adequately protects the privacy and well-being of the individuals whose data they contain, the US Department of Education (ED) requires states to have their SLDS grant-funded projects undergo the same processes as other research grants to determine whether they require institutional review board (IRB) approval. This publication describes ED's IRB requirement for SLDS grantees and offers expert perspectives and tips for states approaching the IRB review process.
SLDS Spotlight: Accessing SLDS Data: Innovative Solutions to State-Specific Security Controls . Cottrell, S., Watson, J., Gray, E., Lemke, R., Nesmith, K., and Wisnia, E. (2020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics at IES.	Brief	This spotlight highlights two states, California and Louisiana, with laws that strongly regulate data access. It describes how their state education agencies have adapted their data management and data use procedures to comply with state requirements while continuing to meet their reporting and operational needs.
Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program resource database . National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.	Toolkits and guides	The Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program offers a variety of support resources.
Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program resource database . National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.	Fact sheets and briefs	This document is intended to assist elementary and secondary schools and local educational agencies (LEAs or "districts") in achieving greater transparency with respect to their data practices.
Toolkit for communities using health data: How to collect, use, protect, and share data responsibly . National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics. (2015). Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.	Reports and articles	The Toolkit briefly introduces each important principle of data stewardship for communities using health data. It provides both broad background information and tips for data users. Descriptions of stewardship principles are provided, along with checklists for each principle.

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Carlise King is the executive director of the Early Childhood Data Collaborative at Child Trends, which promotes policies and practices that support the development and use of coordinated early childhood data across departments of education, social services, and public health to guide policy. She has experience conducting state and national level research on early childhood issues and examining the impact of state and federal policies on parents' access to child care services, licensed child care supply, child care costs, and the child care workforce.

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Julia B. Isaacs, a senior fellow in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population, is an expert in child and family policy with wide-ranging knowledge of government programs and budgets. She directs the Child Care Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Center and other research on early childhood education and co-leads Urban's *Kids' Share* analyses of public spending on children.

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