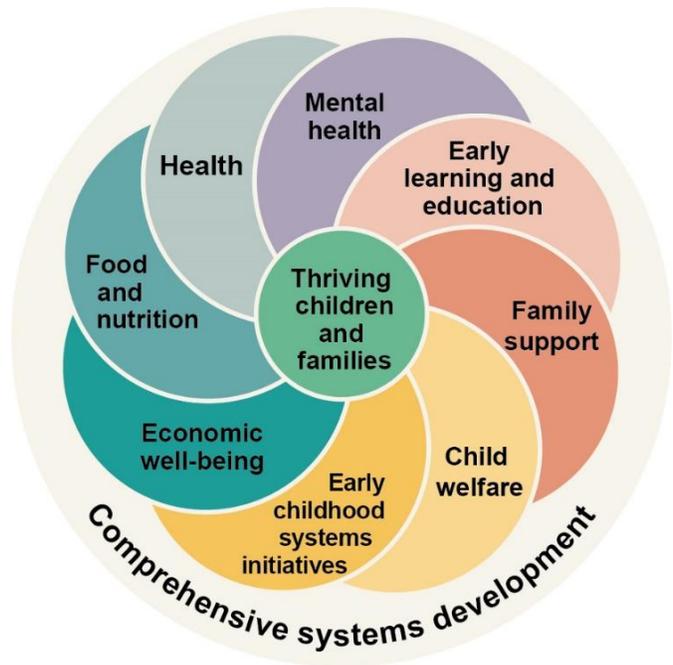


Early Childhood Systems Collective Impact Project

How to use the Early Childhood Systems Collective Impact Project catalog, crosswalk, and synthesis to align and coordinate federal programs supporting expectant parents, young children, and their families

October 2022



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I. Introduction

Inspired by a call from the field, leaders across federal agencies, including the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Education (ED), and Agriculture (USDA), have identified a shared vision for improving health and well-being outcomes for young children and their families. Yet long-standing barriers at the federal level—including lack of sufficient and meaningful coordination and alignment—impede the development of a unified, comprehensive early childhood system at the state and local levels. Funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), the Early Childhood Systems (ECS) Collective Impact Project aims to help advance a unified system and a coordinated approach to implementation of early childhood programs.

In pursuit of this goal, the ECS Collective Impact Project team¹ conducted a targeted review of 36 federal programs that support expectant parents, young children (birth to age 8), and their families (Exhibit I.1). Of the 36 programs, 3 are in USDA, 1 is in the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), 6 are in ED, 25 are in HHS, and 1 is in the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). The review of statutes, regulations, and guidance documents focused on **five key program elements**, which were determined to be important potential levers for coordination and improved outcomes: (1) program eligibility, (2) needs assessments, (3) outcomes and performance measures, (4) well-being metrics, and (5) equity. The project team identified the statutes and regulations for review and federal partners confirmed the relevancy of the documents. In response to an inquiry from the project team, federal program staff identified guidance documents.²

The project team used information from the review to develop three products that complement one another—a [catalog](#) of program requirements; a [crosswalk](#) based on the catalog with an overview of the requirements; and a [synthesis](#) document of key findings from the crosswalk. These products are intended to support policymaker at the federal and state level, program administrators, researchers and evaluators, and technical assistance providers in identifying opportunities to improve alignment and coordination across federal programs. Users can start with the synthesis to obtain counts of how prevalent requirements are across programs. They can then use the crosswalk to identify programs with or without certain requirements. The catalog provides more detailed information on statutory, regulatory, or guidance language. Alternatively, users could first review the catalog to gain a clear understanding of the requirements for how a federal program addresses the five key program elements and flexibilities that exist, then use the crosswalk and synthesis to examine whether other programs have similar requirements.

ECS Collective Impact Project Review Products

The **catalog** contains detailed information on how federal statutes, regulations, and guidance documents each address the five key program elements for each of the federal programs.

The **crosswalk** provides an overview of the requirements across programs based on aggregating the detailed catalog information across federal statutes, regulations, and guidance documents to highlight dimensions of the five key program elements.

The **synthesis** document covers key findings from the crosswalk on whether and how programs align in their requirements regarding eligibility, needs assessments, performance and well-being metrics, and equity.

¹ The ECS Collective Impact Project team consists of staff from Mathematica and the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Throughout this document, “the project team” refers to the ECS Collective Impact Project team.

² For information on how statutes, regulations, and guidance were identified for this review, see [Overview of methods for the Early Childhood Systems Collective Impact Project catalog and crosswalk of federal programs supporting expectant parents, young children, and their families.](#)

Exhibit I.1. Early Childhood Systems Collective Impact Project review list of key federal programs serving young children and families

Federal program	Department/agency
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	
Military Child Care	U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)
21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)	U.S. Department of Education (ED)
Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS)	
Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (Title I, Part A)	
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Section 619	
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C	
Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Education	
Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)	
Child Support Program	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families
Child Welfare Services Program (Title IV-B, Subpart 1 of the Social Security Act)	
Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Grants	
Early Head Start	
Head Start	
Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)	
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	
The Federal Foster Care Program and the Prevention Services Program (Title IV-E of the Social Security Act)	
Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (TMIECHV)	
Essentials for Childhood	
Learn the Signs. Act Early.	
Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	
Medicaid	
Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Program	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Health Resources and Services Administration
Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) State Programs	
Family-to-Family Health Information Centers	
Health Center Program	
Healthy Start	
Infant Toddler Court Program (ITCP)	
Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant (Title V)	
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)	
Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program	
Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children’s Health (Project LAUNCH)	
Mental Health Block Grant	
Family and Child Education (FACE)	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
	U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Indian Education

Note: The programs are in alphabetical order by department, agency, and program name.

*Note that these materials **should not** be used as a comprehensive or authoritative source for program or policy requirements or guidance. Users are advised to consult the relevant federal, and where applicable, state/local/Tribal or other implementing agency for guidance.*

II. Catalog

The catalog contains detailed information on how federal statutes, regulations, and guidance documents address the five key program elements for each of the federal programs. Each of the three tabs of the catalog includes a different source of information: statutes, regulations, or guidance documents. A Read Me First tab and a Field Definitions tab in the catalog provide more detailed information on how to use the catalog. The catalog can answer a variety of questions, for example:

- Who is eligible for a specific program?
- What needs assessment data does a specific program require?
- What child and family well-being data does the federal government collect from grantees of a specific program?
- What systems-level outcomes related to coordinating child and family services does the federal government collect from grantees of a specific program?
- How does a specific program address equity?

Orientation to catalog spreadsheet

Tabs on

- Read Me First (important points about each tab)
 - Field Definitions
 - Each document type (statutes, regulations, and guidance) with fields related to key program elements
-

III. Crosswalk

The crosswalk aggregates the detailed information contained in the catalog and contains 118 pieces of information (or dimensions within program elements) for each program. The crosswalk contains four different tabs of data: one each on eligibility, needs assessments, performance and well-being measures,³ and equity. The crosswalk aggregates information in each tab from the statutes, regulations, and guidance documents tabs in the catalog. The crosswalk also indicates if the information is found in statute, regulation, or guidance documents. A Read Me First tab and a Field Definitions tab in the crosswalk file contain more details on how to use the crosswalk. The crosswalk can answer several questions, for example:

- What is the landscape of federal programs that serve expectant parents, young children, and their families?

Orientation to crosswalk spreadsheet

Tabs on

- Read Me First (important points about each tab)
 - Field Definitions
 - Data overview for program elements
-

³ Because the catalog fields for outcomes and performance measures contain similar information to the fields for well-being measures, the crosswalk and synthesis combine these two key program elements.

- Which programs have overlapping types of eligibility requirements? For example, how do the means-tested eligibility thresholds compare across programs with such thresholds?
- Which programs require that needs assessments engage families and participants?
- Which programs are required to report data to the federal government on children’s psychological and social development, child health and functioning, or family socioeconomic well-being?
- Which programs promote equity by incorporating cultural and linguistic practices into programming?
- Where are the program element requirements articulated—in statutes, regulations, or guidance documents?

IV. Synthesis

The synthesis organizes findings into four sections—eligibility, needs assessments, performance and well-being measures,² and equity. In addition to answering the types of questions included here, the synthesis contains examples of unique program features agencies might want to consider incorporating into other programs. The synthesis concludes with a discussion of the need for additional research on alignment, coordination, and equity. The synthesis can answer several questions, for example:

- What are the requirements on the five key program elements?
- Where are the program element requirements articulated—in statutes, regulations, or guidance documents?
- How do the means-tested eligibility thresholds compare across programs with such thresholds?
- How many programs require that needs assessments engage families and participants and what are examples of such engagement?
- How many programs are required to report data to the federal government on well-being measures, such as children’s psychological and social development, child health and functioning, or family socioeconomic well-being?
- Which programs have specific measures of equity and what are those measures?

V. Note on Coding

The catalog and crosswalk entries and synthesis findings are representative of the information included in the reviewed statutes, regulations, and guidance documents. Therefore, the absence of information on any element does not necessarily mean the program does not address the element. Rather, documents that were not reviewed might have captured that information.⁴ Additionally, any overarching statutes or regulations that would affect implementation of these programs were not reviewed and are not reflected in the catalog, crosswalk, or synthesis.

⁴ For information on how statutes, regulations, and guidance were identified for this review, see the [Overview of methods for the Early Childhood Systems Collective Impact Project catalog and crosswalk of federal programs supporting expectant parents, young children, and their families.](#)