Session # <u>B-7</u>

Title: <u>Using Data to Track and Promote Outcomes for Children and Families</u>
    Moderator: Susan Jekielek, Ph.D., Social Science Research Analyst, OPRE
    Heather L. Rouse, Ph.D., KIDS Research Director, University of PA
    Kathy Hebbeler, Ph.D., Program Manager, SRI International
    Sue Wilson, Ph.D., Child Health and Development Institute
    <u>**Responders:**</u>
    Ann Reale, M.P.A., Commissioner, MA Department of Early Education and Care
    Jim Bates, M.A., Subsidy Analyst, State Child Care Administration, Wisconsin

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SUMMARY PRESENTATION

<u>Kathy Hebbeler</u> spoke on the Early Childhood Outcome Center (ECOC). The goal of the center is to promote the development and implementation of child and family outcomes measures for infants, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities.

Expect 2 outcomes form the ECOC:
        1) Data on outcomes for children with disabilities
        2) Regular use of outcome data for documenting program effects

It is the result of a collaboration of several research institutions (e.g. SRI Intl, FRPG).

The need for child outcome data is driven by the federal government and the PART. It is also used for state level accountability and program improvement.

Reporting Requirements included the percent of children who demonstrate improved:
1) Positive social emotional skills
2) Acquisition of use of knowledge and skills and communication and
3) Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

Formulated Reporting Categories to track the progress of children over time (5 total):
    1) did not improve functioning
    2) improved functioning no change in trajectory
    3) moved near functioning comparable to age peers
    4) achieved functioning comparable to age peers
    5) maintained functioning comparable to age peers (small number)

Kathy then reviewed what states are doing in relation to assessment. Each state is doing a summary form to do measurement for Part C Child Outcomes:

40 states using the Child Outcome Summary Form
8 states using 1 assessment tool statewide
3 states using on-line assessment system

Challenges in collecting quality data:
More than 30 states in preschools and in part C reported that they are working on improving their data systems to have the capacity to store and analyze child outcomes. Many states with initial systems in place need to train others to collect data and maintain the datasets.

<u>Heather Rous</u>-

Municipal data system (called KIDS) in the city of Philadelphia. Integrated information on children aged 0 to 21. KIDS provides GIS based data for policy analysis, community planning and research. With the system can look at individual outcomes or those related to areas of the city. The data system is a true collaboration between university researchers, public service and local foundation.

KIDS integrates data from several agencies including:
Human services
Vital stats
Dept of health
Dept of behavioral health
Homeless shelter
Judicial systems

WHY USE ADMIN DATA?

1) Infrastructure exists to collect it and maintain it.
2) Can be used to inform decisions at multiple levels
3) To build comprehensive models
4) Promote dialogue across agencies
5) Can make risks and protective factors visible with the overall goal being how can we strategically target resources

**Critical aspects of this design is to establish partnerships that provide capacity in order to answer important data questions

Challenge of Collaboration

Often Researchers and Policy makers have different goals. Collaborations needed to be established by memos of understanding with state and policy officials. It also became necessary for city of Philadelphia to review what was being done by researchers with access to this data. Legal issues over this arrangement were discussed over a period of three years before the project even left the ground.

<u>Susan Wilson</u>- Director of the Early Childhood Data Program

"Using data to track and promote outcomes for children and families: the Connecticut experience"

The emerging environment of accountability in states (increasing demand)- if SA haven't put energy into yet, they will need to.

- but child outcomes not in our language- what we mostly have is program data- pushes agencies to develop outcomes
-policy makers have desire to know and state agencies have desire to give them what they want and there's a lack of infrastructure for generating this data
-Developing indicators (looking at the whole child)
-Framing our plans with results-based accountability (RBA) or other structure
-push us to do tracking systems and accountability (e.g. population outcomes and performance measurement on programs, like PART C) where we usually measure effort now we're being measured to outcomes to that population.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Critical Questions:

Audience member (AM): MA has limited quality data and it is difficult to make a case for getting this data. How can we get visibility on this issue and get policy makers to see the value of it.

Panel member (PM): Need to engage policymakers in the process; need to be trained with asking the right questions.

AM: What are some of the challenges you've come across to work across agencies and the policy and research arena?

PM: In WI quality data is not integrated. On the other hand, they do get a lot of information from other depts. through more traditional approaches. But each of the agencies has a sense of their data as being proprietary so it may be difficult to collaborate across agencies.

PM: In KIDS program in Philadelphia relationships across areas and in the city sustains partnerships despite political will.

AM: In efforts to collect information and buy in from agencies- do you describe it more as a repository of information or also as a source for them to get the information they need?

States differ tremendously on who is the user. Other states see the user as the person closest to the child. Part of the issue is you get the absolute best data when the user is also the person who collects it.

CN is struggling with who collects Kindergarten assessment data and how they will use data. Those kinds of issues are rampant.

How much are integrated datasets a case management tool vs. research tool?

Needed something at the Kindergarten year that would say something about where kids are. State legislation thought they were going to get a number; Dept of Ed thought that they were going to get an instructional assessment.

AM: Also will Philadelphia KIDS project be able to sustain project in spite of soft money?

PM: Much of the funding to answer specific questions is often answered by researchers to answer questions. Funding for KIDS system is relatively inexpensive. Separate from other datasets held- drops costs considerably.

KEY POINTS

Collaborative partnerships can be key to setting up quality datasets; however, these partnerships can be challenging if measures are not taken to ensure the proper use of the data.

Integration of data across agencies can by very illuminating and other audience members were interested in understanding how to set up such a system in their own states.

Getting buy-in from the state for the importance of using data to achieve child and family outcomes is challenging but is becoming increasingly necessary as accountability becomes a more pressing issue at the state and federal level.