



Reflections on the Use of Data in a State Strategy to Reduce and Prevent Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood

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TYPES OF DATA TO CONSIDER

1. Prevalence

- What are the rates of expulsion and suspension across a state's communities, consider collecting by program characteristics (type, ratios, group size, length of program day, QRIS rating, participation in PD, access to ECMH consultation, work conditions, etc.), and children characteristics (age, gender, race, home language, special needs, behavior concerns)
- Rates may not capture exclusionary practices that include "soft expulsion;" therefore, contacting parents when they leave programs
- Use to answer the questions: Are rates of exclusionary practices changing over time? What are our trends on what increases the likelihood of expulsion?

2. Program

- Assess if the program-level situation is about lack of (a) developmentally appropriate practices (schedule, routines, transitions, learning centers, toys, curriculum, building relationships), (b) teaching social-emotional skills and responding to common behavioral challenging that are developmentally typical, or (c) supporting children and families with more significant behavior and emotional concerns.

3. Process

- Measure what supports were delivered, by who, and to whom, e.g. number of referrals, where the referral came from, who were they assigned, status of case completion, dose of intervention, etc. Was the intervention delivered as intended?

4. Progress

- Are the supports making a difference? How do we improve the effectiveness of supports to programs and families over time?
- Program and staff outcomes, e.g. changes in program policies and practices, staff knowledge and skills, staff well-being and satisfaction, extent of communication and partnerships with families, maintaining and support children in the program, etc.
- Child and family outcomes, e.g. changes in social-emotional knowledge and skills, changes in presenting behaviors, connections to additional supports and services, and if transitioned out of the programs, changes in type and quality of care

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO COLLECT DATA

1. Administrative

- Due process documentation
- Use of incidence reports or normal reporting procedures used within child care, schools, etc.

2. Survey

- Director/provider/teacher surveys
- Focus groups with families and teachers
- Often lead by neutral or trusted organization

3. Local Communities

- May be collecting their own data, e.g. a local council, Project Launch, etc.

4. Families

- Follow-up with families when they leave a program, or reach out to families who change programs multiple times
- Consider CCDF requirement to communicate to families re: state policies, procedure requirements and expectations of programs, etc.
- Potential role of CCR&Rs/211/Help Me Grow

5. Supports Being Offered

- Track requests for help from your supports, e.g. ECMH consultation, QRIS specialists, Pyramid Model, related professional development providers, licensors, etc.

STATE CONTEXT IMPACT ON DATA COLLECTION

High Stakes

1. Can programs share that they have or plan to expel or suspend children?
2. Are they asking for help? What kind of help?

Due Process

1. Is the state requiring due process before expulsion?
2. How are programs required to document and submit evidence of due process?
3. Where is the due process requirement – in licensing, part of subsidy, in a grant requirement?

Extent of Established Reporting

1. Do programs already report key data points?
2. How does the location impact collection, e.g. licensing, subsidy, school district, etc.?

Reach of Supports

1. What supports are being offer to programs?
2. What is the reach and depth of those supports?
3. Is the timing of those supports before a program makes up in mind?

TIPS FROM OTHER STATES

1. How the questions are asked matters
2. Success of surveys is built on good relationships with programs and being clear on the purpose
3. Who is requesting the data impacts the response rate
4. If investigating supports, measure breadth, depth, and timing to understand the impacts

EXAMPLE FROM NCCP HOW TO ASK ABOUT EXLUSIONARY PRACTICES IN A SURVEY

- In the past 12 months, **how many parents have removed their child/ren** from your class or family child care as a result of concerns about the challenging behavior of *other* children.
- In the past 12 months, how many children with challenging behavior left your class or family child care because **parents told staff** the program could not meet the child's needs.
- In the past 12 months, how many children with challenging behavior left your class or family child care because **staff told the parents** the program could not meet the child's needs.
- In the past 12 months, how many children with challenging behavior left your class or family child care for **parents and staff agreed** the program could not meet the child's needs.

- In the past 12 months, estimate the number of children with challenging behavior who left the program/family child care setting under the following circumstances:
 - ✓ Another program for the child was found, and seemed a better fit
 - ✓ Another program for the child, but did not seem well equipped to meet the child's needs
 - ✓ No other program was found
 - ✓ I do not know whether a placement was found
- When children with challenging behaviors leave your program and move to other programs/settings, what percentage of the programs are regulated, higher-quality care?

DATA OPTIONS INCLUDED THE SCBC EXPULSION PREVENTION POLICY STRATEGY TOOL

Strategy 1. Clear Goals and Progress Monitoring; Section 2. Goals and Data to Track Improvement

A. Goals

A1 policy: Establish **goals for state-level improvements** in reducing and preventing expulsion.

Resource: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education [Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings](#) provides examples.

B. State Roadmap

B1 policy: Develop a **state roadmap** to connect goals with strategies and data-driven monitoring.

C. Data Questions

C1 policy: Establish **key questions** that the data collected will assist in answering and monitoring.

Resource: The fourth webinar in the ACF series [Reducing Suspension and Expulsion Practices in Early Childhood Settings](#) offers sample questions: Who is asked to report? How will the data capture soft expulsion? What program, teacher, child, and family characteristics will be reported? How will the State capture racial, age, and gender disparities? What supports are being offered? Is the issue becoming better or worse over time?

D. Data Collection

D1 policy: Identify what data are already being collected as part of existing efforts through administrative sources or workforce surveys.

D2 policy: Identify barriers to collecting data about expulsion and suspension and how that may affect data collection methods chosen. For example, a no-expulsion policy may mean that programs will not report their practices if their identities are connected to the data.

D3 policy: Identify data to collect that represent all children across all settings and all the reasons children leave programs.

D4 policy: Identify data that will enable you to hear from families that have been affected by expulsion, and require data to be disaggregated by race, gender, age, child's first language, etc.

D5 policy: Modify workforce data system to enable an assessment of the reach of education, training, and coaching opportunities for all early educators, across settings and disaggregated by race, language, and the like, as it pertains to reducing expulsion and suspension.

D6 policy: Identify measures that can inform the supports used to reduce expulsion and suspension in early learning programs.

D7 policy: Collect data on the availability and impact of services for children and families who need additional supports, such as special education and EI, health, and mental health.

E. Data Alignment or Integration

E1 policy: Coordinate efforts to collect data from the data systems that serve across all early childhood programs to enhance tracking progress, reduce duplication, and so forth.