

STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT ALL YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Collaborative Improvement & Innovation Network

WHY DO WE NEED STRONGER EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS?



Research clearly demonstrates responsive, nurturing relationships in safe, engaging environments throughout the earliest years of life (starting prenatally) are at the foundation of healthy development and lifelong success. An early childhood comprehensive system is defined as an organized, purposeful partnership of interrelated and interdependent agencies/organizations, representing health, mental health, social services, families and caregivers, and early childhood education, collaboratively coordinating effective systems of care for children from birth to kindergarten entry.



WHAT IS THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS COLLABORATIVE IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION NETWORK?



The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (CoIIN) is a strategic effort to identify ways to accelerate improvement in early childhood systems, resources and coordination across sectors so that all children can achieve optimal and equitable early childhood developmental health outcomes. In partnership with the ECCS CoIIN Coordinating Center, 12 states and 28 local communities work to both improve systems, processes, structures and norms and generate innovative solutions. The ECCS CoIIN initiative is funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau and informs and contributes to this national effort, as well as advances state and local early childhood system coordination efforts.



WHAT APPROACHES ARE BEING UTILIZED IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS COLLABORATIVE IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION NETWORK TO STRENGTHEN EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS?

Develop and maintain partnerships and network

How: Expand the breadth of partners working to advance collaboration, foster effective collaborations, and promote contribution and impact towards a common vision of optimizing child developmental health

Provide backbone support & mechanisms for connections and communication between State and community

How: Provide state-level support to community leaders and organizations to innovate, test and spread improvements resulting in a more efficient and coordinated system that supports optimal child development

Implement capacity building efforts to promote and support early childhood

How: Use national resources, like the CDC's milestone tracker mobile app, to engage families and communities about child developmental health, the importance of developmental screening, and ways to support their optimal development

Create early childhood systems infrastructure, improvement and sustainability

How: Improve processes between, and across, early childhood providers to allow for seamless connection to services and optimal coordination that support the healthy development of all children

Advance policies and mobilize funding to sustain systems improvement

How: Work with community partners to identify the trainings and resources needed to develop and implement policies that will solidify, institutionalize and formalize responsive early childhood systems

Strengthen family partnerships

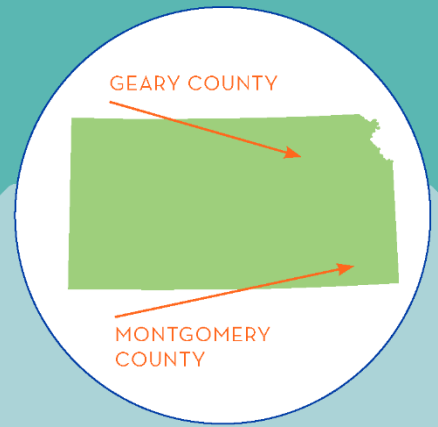
How: Involve family members from the start as experts and equal partners in co-design processes, programs and services that support and promote child developmental health.



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EARLY CHILDHOOD IN KANSAS



CAPACITY-BUILDING EFFORTS

Promoting & Supporting Early Childhood Development

- Project staff utilize a technical assistance (TA) model to help build community capacity. This capacity-building consists of training and TA on developmental screening, referral and linkage, and on facilitating collaboration. Project staff have worked with local community champions to expand local coalition partnership to include partners from many sectors. For the sake of sustainability, local PBC teams have been imbedded in longstanding coalitions to ensure continuation after the funding period. These local coalitions aim to improve outreach, referrals, and engagement in services.
- ECCS communities have implemented a coordinated outreach and referral system to improve linkages and ensure timely and appropriate follow up. The implementation and scaling of Integrated Referral and Intake System (IRIS), a web-based communication tool and referral network, in both communities is ensuring warm handoffs among community partners and enabling providers to track all referral activity in one place. IRIS aims to help community partners strengthen collaborations, grow their network of referral sources, and apply data-informed decision making. Spread of the IRIS system continues in Geary Co. and Montgomery Co.



EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

Infrastructure, Improvement, and Sustainability

Assisting Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) to implement a statewide ASQ Enterprise System that allows any organization to participate in their community's ASQ Enterprise System that links to the larger statewide hub.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

One of the largest parts of Kansas ECCS's sustainability plan was to include the scalable successes experienced by Kansas ECCS into the ["All in For Kansas Kids" Early Childhood Strategic Plan](#) in an effort to spread these best practices statewide. The implementation of the All in For Kansas Kids Strategic Plan is funded through the Preschool Development Grant.

Other policies include:

- Community organizations changed internal policies with regard to developmental screening and referral
- Policy created that will provide statewide ASQ Enterprise access
- ECAC was reestablished by the Governor in February 2020
- Communities establish a shared referral form and community standards regarding IRIS use
- Each organization in IRIS creates a new referral policy regarding IRIS use
- Unbundling of the Medicaid EPSDT code for well-child visits and allowed for billing specifically for developmental screening



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