

A System of Data Management

With a growing emphasis on early childhood services and system building, there is an emergent need for Alaska to answer questions such as:

- Where are the gaps in services for young children, both geographically and programmatically?
- What strategies are most effective in preparing children for school success?

There is also a growing need for more information to be available to communities and the public about the status of young children in the state.

There are various data collection systems regarding young children in Alaska; however, there is no single entity that coordinates, compiles, and publishes comprehensive data about young children and services for them.

Some examples of entities that are doing this work and what data is collected are:

- *Kids Count*: Collects demographics on children across the state
- *Head Start*: Collects a wide range of demographic information on birth – age 6 population as well as child outcome data
- *State Child Care Program Office*: Collects information about families and children receiving child care assistance and numbers of licensed and approved facilities
- *Department of Labor*: Collects workforce statistics (includes early care and education profession numbers)
- *Early Childhood Professional Development Registry*: Collects information on the education progress for the early childhood workforce

As planning progresses for an early learning system in Alaska, there will be an increasing need to quantify and evaluate early learning services based on current research. This is true nationally as well. It is important for Alaska to remain aligned with national efforts in data management and collection to ensure consistency.