

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS (ECCS) PROGRAM EVALUATION

2017 BASELINE PARTNER REPORT: COLLABORATION ANALYSIS FOR THE ECCS STATE LEADERSHIP NETWORK



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Introduction

The Early Comprehensive Childhood Comprehensive (ECCS) Impact Project, implemented by the Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions, Inc. in 2016 with funding from the federal Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA), seeks to improve the developmental health of infants and young children in two Florida communities using the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (CoIIN) approach. An evaluation team at the Chiles Center located within the College of Public Health at the University of South Florida will evaluate the Florida ECCS Impact project.

The strategy used by the ECCS Impact project is improving early childhood comprehensive systems within Florida by fostering collaboration and coordination in two place-based community initiatives, the Miami Children's Initiative in the Liberty City neighborhood and Jacksonville's New Town Success Zone in the New Town neighborhood. Thus, the evaluation assesses implementation, processes, and community networks at the state and community levels. The community partner evaluation describes linkages between family support programs or services and the extent of those relationships.

Purpose

This baseline report documents the preliminary findings of the partner network analysis of state-level early childhood agencies participating on the Florida ECCS State Team and Advisory Group. The analysis assessed the network structure, level of collaboration, and partner perceptions of potential outcomes of the Florida ECCS Impact Project. The community team structure, organization, and systems building evaluation component seek to understand:

How are coordination and partnerships among organizations at the state and community level occurring?

- a. How well do the partners represent all sectors of the system, as well as the diversity of the region?
- b. To what extent do network size, density, interagency trust, contribution, and collaboration evolve throughout the ECCS project?
- c. What strategies work best to facilitate the ECCS project?

This baseline report sets forth a foundation of Florida's ECCS development, growth, and progress in creating a collaborative, integrated network of community and agency partners critical to meeting its goals and objectives of improving developmental screening and referral, promoting child development, and supporting family well-being.

Throughout the ECCS initiative, the evaluation team will collect and analyze data to disseminate findings as they relate to the research questions above.

Methods

The quantitative measurement of collaboration among agencies, organizations, and groups was completed by the evaluation team using the Program to Analyze, Record, and Track Networks to Enhance Relationships (PARTNER) Tool (<http://www.partnertool.net/>). The PARTNER Tool,

developed by the Center on Network Science at the University of Colorado Denver, sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, collects data by administering an online survey to the identified stakeholders. This social analysis software is designed to measure the collaboration process by linking connectedness, trust level, and resource exchange among agencies. To fit the needs of the Florida ECCS evaluation, the evaluation team altered the survey with feedback from the ECCS leadership team. Following the revisions, the finalized survey was then sent to the identified list of state-level stakeholders through the PARTNER Tool software. The analysis was conducted using PARTNER Tool and SPSS 24.

Results

Participants

The Florida ECCS project lead identified state-level stakeholders to participate in the PARTNER survey. This report depicts the responses of fourteen of the seventeen stakeholders who responded to the request to complete the survey (response rate of 82.35%).

Level of Collaboration

Level of collaboration is an important indicator that measures the types of collaboration between the partners required to reach the goals of ECCS. With one question, “*What kinds of activities does your relationship with this organization/ program entail?*”, the state leadership team identified their agency’s level of collaboration with other state partners. The stakeholders selected from the following answer choices:

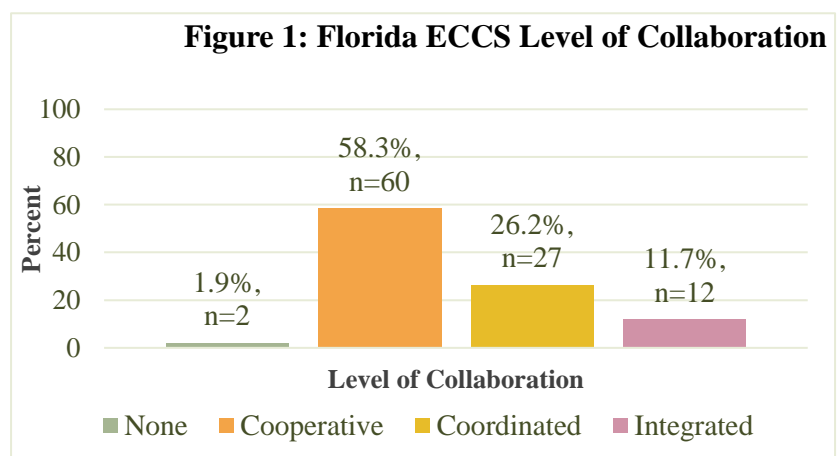
None

Cooperative activities: involves exchanging information, attending meetings together, and offering resources to partners (example: informs other programs of RFA release)

Coordinated activities: include cooperative activities in addition to intentional efforts to enhance each other's capacity for the mutual benefit of programs (i.e. separate granting programs utilizing shared administrative processes and forms)

Integrated activities: in addition to cooperative and coordinated activities, this is the act of using commonalities to create a unified center of knowledge and programming that supports work in related content areas (example: developing and utilizing shared priorities for funding effective prevention strategies; funding pools may be combined)

As shown in Figure 1, the Florida ECCS state partners most commonly identified their level of collaboration with one another as “cooperative” or “coordinated”. The number of interactions (101) includes all possible interactions among all partners.



State-Level Network

Community Networks

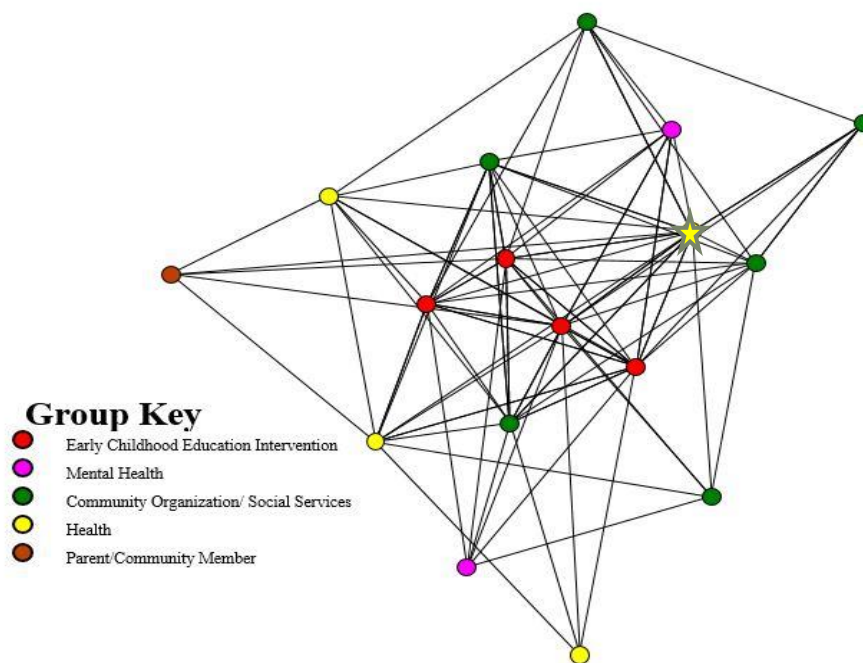
Network maps illustrate collaboration within a community. Based upon information provided from the completed surveys, the network map (Figure 2) visually represents the connections among state partners in Florida. The fourteen stakeholders who participated in the survey are represented as colored dots in the network, depending on their agency's service sector, including:

- Community Organization/Social Service (Green)
- Health (Yellow)
- Early Childhood Education/Intervention (Red)
- Mental Health (Pink)
- Parent/Community Members (Brown)

The line between two dots signifies a connection or a relationship between two agencies, and each agency can have more than one connection (up to the number of community partners). Density and trust scores are also described in the community network. The density score represents the number of connections in relation to the total number of possible connections within the state leadership network. In order to achieve a density score of 100%, all community partners must have a connection with each agency. A trust score measures the level of trust among state partners. The results of the network map, including the density and trust score, are presented below.

Figure 2: State-Level ECCS Community Network Map

Density: 57.4%, Trust: 88.3%



Aspects of Collaboration

Stakeholders could also select all aspects of collaboration that contribute to their perceptions of the progress and success of the Florida ECCS Impact Project to date. Of the fourteen stakeholders that completed the PARTNER Tool survey, *exchanging information/knowledge* (18.7%, n=14), *bringing together diverse stakeholders* (16%, n=12), and *having a shared mission* (13.3%, n=10) were reported as the most important aspects of community collaboration contributing to the Florida ECCS Impact project's progress. Table 1 documents the aspects of collaboration that were reported as contributing to Florida ECCS's progress.

Table 1: Aspects of collaboration that contribute to Florida ECCS's success:*

Aspects of Collaboration	(n = 14)
Exchanging information/knowledge	18.70% (14)
Bringing together diverse stakeholders	16.00% (12)
Having a shared mission/goals	13.30% (10)
Sharing resources	12.00% (9)
Collective decision-making	12.00% (9)
Informal relationships created	12.00% (9)
Meeting regularly	8.00% (6)
Formal relationships, MOUs	8.00% (6)

*Participants could choose all that apply



Potential Outcomes of ECCS

The potential and most important outcomes of the Florida ECCS Impact project were assessed through two survey questions. As with the aspects of collaboration, stakeholders were able to choose all of the potential outcomes that they believe could apply to state-level efforts. Respondents also were asked to choose which they believed would be the most important potential outcome of the initiative.

Stakeholders selected *increased knowledge sharing* (6.9%, n=13), *innovation in service delivery* (6.4%, n=12), *improved services for children and families in high-need communities* (6.4%, n=12), *improved resource sharing* (6.4%, n=12), and *improved communication among agencies and organizations interested in the health and well-being of children and their families* (6.4%, n=12) as the top five potential outcomes of Florida ECCS's efforts (Table 2). Table 3 displays stakeholders' opinions of the most important potential outcome of the Florida ECCS Impact project. Half of the state partners reported *improving services for children and families in high-need communities* (50%, n=7) as the top most important potential outcome of the project; the remainder selected other potential outcomes.

Table 2: Potential Outcomes of the Florida ECCS Impact Project:*

Potential Outcome	(n = 14)
Increased knowledge sharing	6.90% (13)
Innovation in service delivery	6.40% (12)
Improved services for children and families in high-need communities	6.40% (12)
Improved resource sharing	6.40% (12)
Improved communication among agencies and organizations interested in the health and well-being of children and their families	6.40% (12)
Support, leadership in Collective Impact	5.30% (10)
Reduction of health disparities	5.30% (10)
Public awareness of issues related to the health and well-being of children and families	5.30% (10)
Increased coordination and referrals for other community resources	5.30% (10)
Improved school readiness	5.30% (10)
Experience, expertise in implementing evidence-based interventions	5.30% (10)
Community support for the health and well-being of children and their families	5.30% (10)
Support, expertise in using Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)	4.80% (9)
Resources for professional development	4.80% (9)
Development of local systems for coordinated intake and referral	4.80% (9)
Expertise in using data to drive service delivery	4.30% (8)
Health education services, health literacy, educational resources	3.70% (7)
Policy, law, and/ or regulation	2.70% (5)
New sources of data	2.70% (5)
Access to federal resources	2.70% (5)

* Percentages may add up to more than 100% because respondents could choose all that apply.

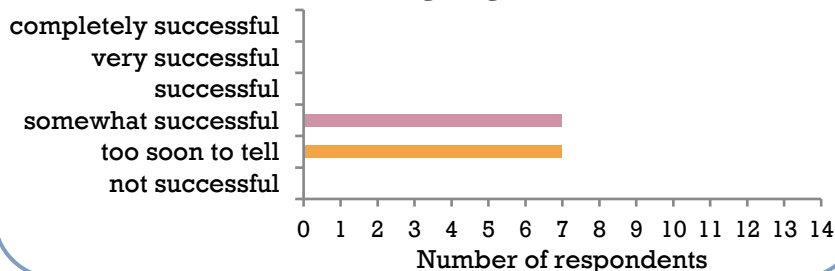
Table 3: Most Important Potential Outcome of Florida ECCS Impact Project:*

Most Important Potential Outcome	(n = 14)
Improved services for children and families in high-need communities	50.00% (7)
Experience, expertise in implementing evidence-based interventions	14.30% (2)
Reduction of health disparities	7.10% (1)
Improved communication among agencies and organizations interested in the health and well-being of children and their families	7.10% (1)
Community support for the health and well-being of children and families	7.10% (1)
Improved school readiness	7.10% (1)
Support, leadership in Collective Impact	7.10% (1)
Policy, law, and/ or regulation	0.00% (0)
Public awareness of issues related to the health and well-being of children and families	0.00% (0)
Increased coordination and referrals for other community resources	0.00% (0)
Health education services, health literacy, educational resources	0.00% (0)
Support, expertise in using Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)	0.00% (0)
Resources for professional development	0.00% (0)
Development of local systems for coordinated intake and referral	0.00% (0)
Access to federal resources	0.00% (0)
Innovation in service delivery	0.00% (0)
Expertise in using data to drive service delivery	0.00% (0)
Improved resource sharing	0.00% (0)
Increased knowledge sharing	0.00% (0)
New sources of data	0.00% (0)

*Participants could only choose one answer option

At baseline, seven stakeholders believed that it is too soon to tell if progress has been made towards reaching the goals of Florida ECCS. On the other hand, seven stakeholders thought that a small or fair amount of progress has been made.

Figure 3: How successful has Florida ECCS been at reaching its goals?



Discussion

This preliminary analysis reflects the baseline results of the ECCS leadership network’s structure, collaborative processes, and expected outcomes of the Florida ECCS Impact Project. The initial network of partners reflects diverse engagement from a number of service sectors (social services, health, early childhood education and early intervention, mental health, and parents/community members). These stakeholders, along with new state partners engaged throughout the initiative, will be asked to complete the PARTNER survey periodically through the five-year grant.

Network maps were created to evaluate the frequency of interactions of these stakeholders with the use of the PARTNER tool social analysis software. The number of interactions varied resulting in a density score of 57.4%. The density score is expected to increase as the leadership group undertakes system development using both the CoIIN and Collective Impact Framework approach. As the implementation of the ECCS initiative is in its first year, it is expected that most stakeholders would report cooperative and coordinated partnerships, with the potential for greater integration of services among some partners as the initiative progresses. *Exchanging information/knowledge, bringing together diverse stakeholders, and having a shared mission* are aspects of collaboration that partners perceive most contribute to the progress of ECCS achieving its goals. There is a fairly high level of trust (88.3%) among this baseline group of stakeholders.

The stakeholders’ perceptions of the Florida ECCS Initiative’s potential outcomes include *increased knowledge sharing, innovation in service delivery, improved services for children and families in high-need communities, improved resource sharing, and improved communication among agencies and organizations interested in the health and well-being of children and their families*, and of the twenty outcome choices, the most important reported potential outcome of the Impact Project was *improved services for children and families in high-need communities*.

It is important to note the variation of the responses noted from the stakeholders. *Increased knowledge sharing* was the most reported potential outcome of the initiative yet when asked about the most important outcome of the initiative, *improved services for children and families in high- need communities* was noted as the most important. Thus, the team will be working towards strengthening systems towards the end goal of improving services for children and families. At baseline, half of the stakeholders believed there has been a fair/small amount of

progress while the remaining stakeholders believed that it is too soon to tell if they are making progress towards their goals.

Next Steps

This network analysis of the state-level partnerships contribute to an understanding of the state's structure, organization, and current system through the lens of multiple stakeholders and aims to document their efforts and positive impacts Florida.

The next step for the evaluation team is to gather qualitative data through focus groups to further understand the collaboration activities of the child development and well-being agencies in Florida. Additional evaluation efforts to measure how state agencies are progressing according to indicators identified by the state and local needs through Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) data, public and program data, and focus groups will be conducted to improve ECCS systems and outcomes. Moreover, through data collected from PDSAs, PARTNER Tool, and focus groups, the evaluation team will be able to assess how Florida is developing and implementing plans to meet the needs of the state.

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FL ECCS Evaluation: <http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/chiles/eccs>

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