

Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning: What's Data Got to Do With It?

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SRI Early Childhood State Systems Building Webinar Series

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Part 1:

Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Early Childhood: What's Data Got To Do With It?

Wednesday, March 15, 2023; 12 PM – 1 PM EST



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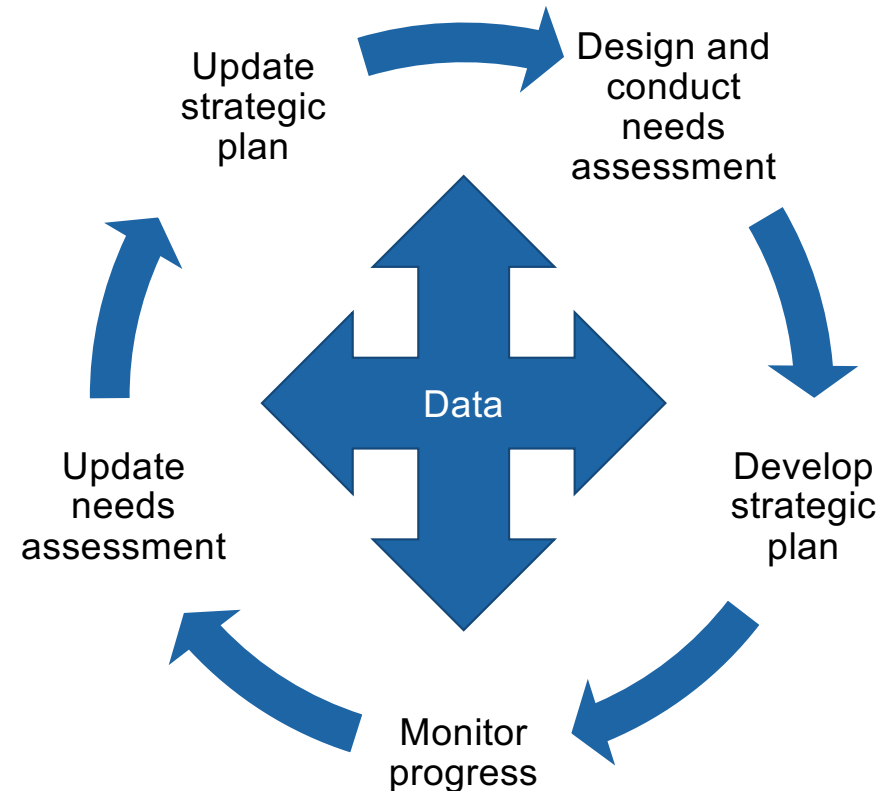
Welcome & Introductions

- Share your name and role
- In the chat: What is one question you hope we cover today?

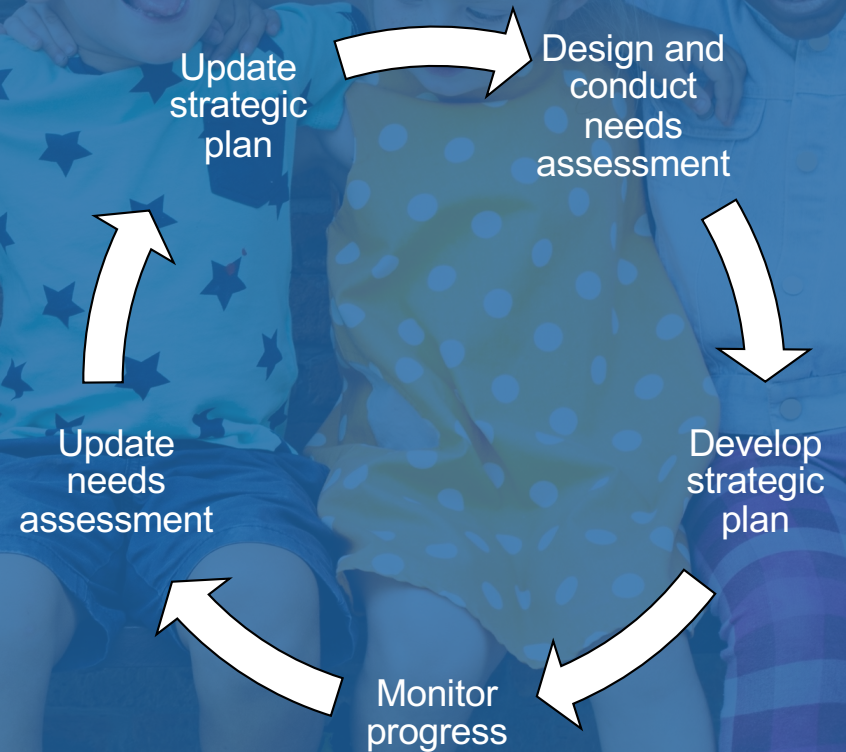


Our Focus Today

- Strategies for gathering comprehensive data to better understand your state landscape
- Leveraging your “updated” understanding to build consensus about priorities for the updated strategic plan



States are in various stages of the cycle



Systems building starts with needs assessment

- **Context:** Analyze policies, collect data on funding streams (where the money comes from), gather perspectives from policy and political leaders.
- **Components:** Collect data on program quality, program impact.
- **Connections:** Collect data on how programs align and integrate referrals, enrollment, eligibility, professional development, data, and gather perspectives on families' ability to navigate resources and services.
- **Infrastructure:** Collect data on funding distribution (how the money is spent) by program, geography, for quality initiatives, workforce supports (professional development, incentives, career pathways), and analyze governance structures and functions (administration, rules, procedures).
- **Scale:** Conduct a landscape analysis of equitable distribution of resources.

Adapted from [A Framework for Evaluating Systems Initiatives](#), by J. Coffman, 2007, BUILD Initiative.

TOP 5 REASONS TO UPDATE YOUR NEEDS ASSESSMENT



5

We have gaps in our data!



4

We need a complete picture of ALL aspects of our system.



3

We need to build a shared understanding about the landscape with new staff.



2

We completed our current needs assessment before the COVID-19 pandemic.



1

PDG B-5 is providing us a great opportunity to update our needs assessment!





What is a needs assessment?

- Provides an understanding of the needs of young children and their families, including:
 - How they are being served
 - What services and resources are in place
 - What gaps exist
- A process to gather, analyze, report and use data and information to inform your strategic plan



Data sources that could inform the calculation of the number of children being served by the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) system

Data for calculating
number of children
served by ECCE system

0

Child care Subsidy

Total births

Preschool enrollment

Under 6 w/working parents

IFSP/IEP

Vision/hearing screening

EHS/HS

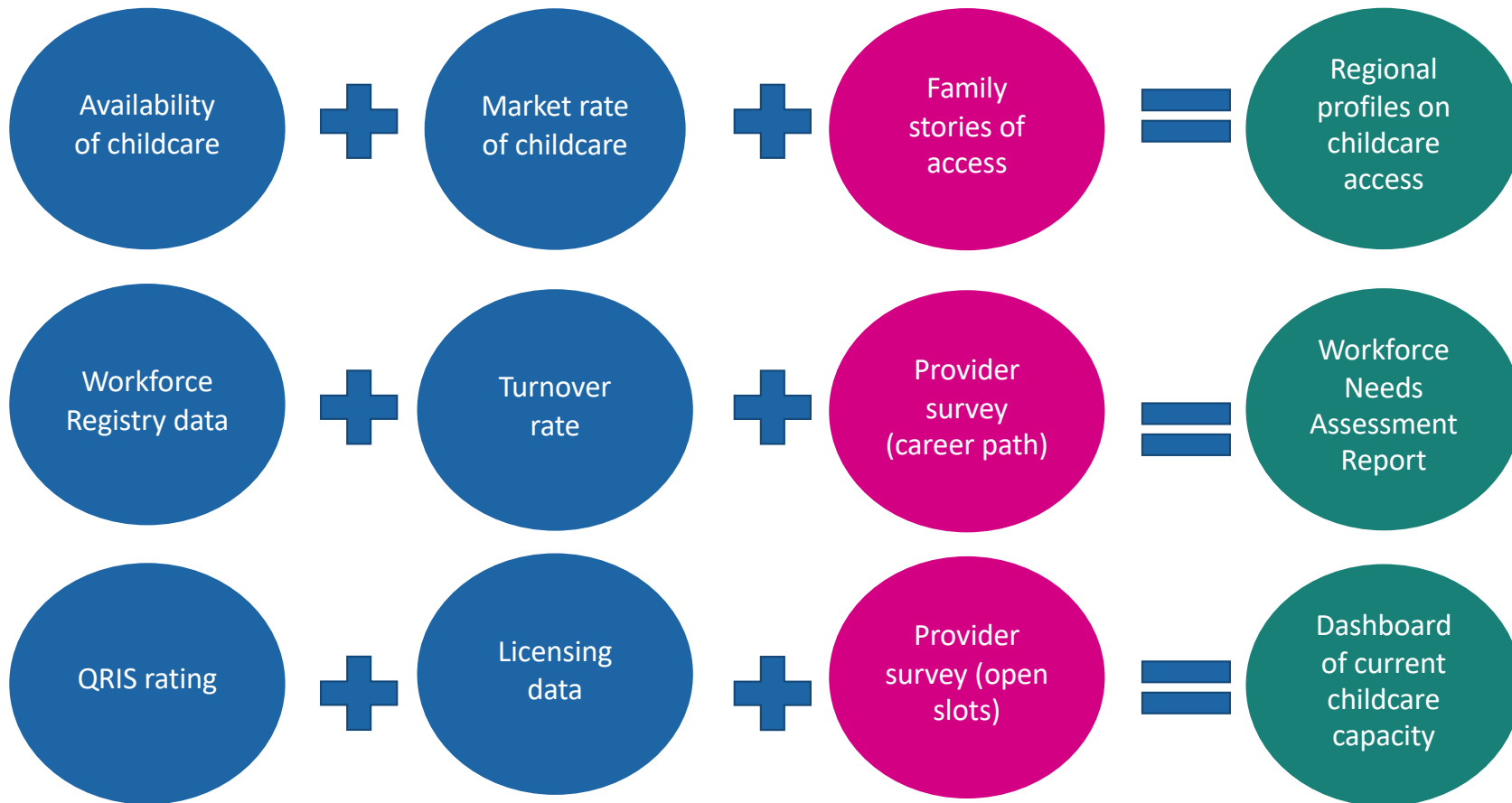
Families receiving public
assistance

GAME
SHOW

Information and data sources that are likely available

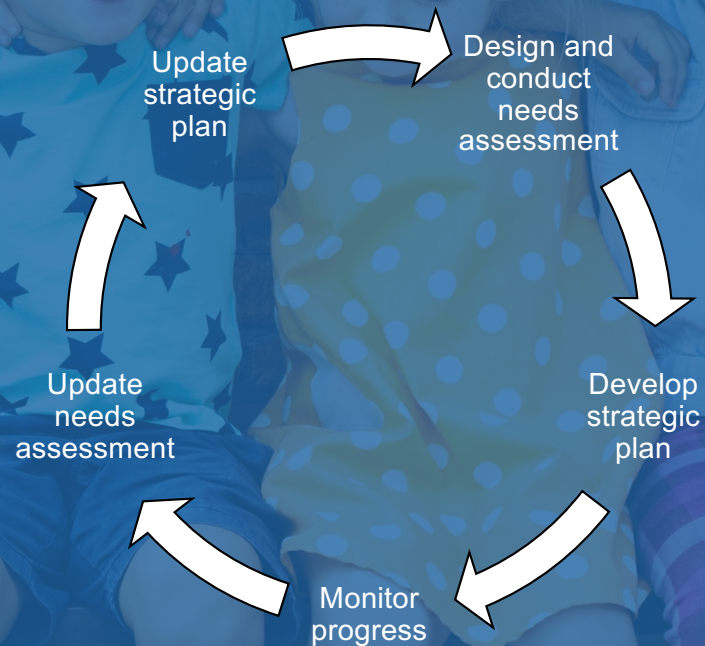
Category (Data Sources)	Types of Information	Potential data gaps
Access (ECIDS, Licensing data, K12 state data system, Part C data, Part B 619 data, childcare subsidy data, SLDS)	Number, location, and type (e.g., center, family) of childcare providers, childcare deserts, preschool enrollment, early intervention (EI) enrollment, early childhood special education (ECSE) enrollment, home visiting participation, Head Start/Early Head Start enrollment	Children enrolled in childcare that do not receive a subsidy, suspension and expulsion
Affordability (Market Rate Survey, cost of care analysis, return on investment (ROI) study, childcare subsidy data, socio economic data)	Monthly price of full-time childcare (by infant, toddler, preschool), average family income level, subsidy rates, market rate	Cost of quality care
Quality (Licensing data, QRIS case management system)	Quality rating of ECCE programs, program participation rates in QRIS	Quality of programs not participating in QRIS, family definition of quality
Workforce (State ECE workforce registry data, K12 personnel data, labor data)	ECE workforce demographic information, turnover rate, number of teachers, compensation (by role and education level), professional development offerings	Intentions regarding continued employment, reasons for departure, mental health, workforce conditions
Health and well-being (Immunization Registry, Department of Labor, Kids Count)	Immunization rates, unemployment rate, children in poverty, number of families with health insurance, children under age 5 with parents in the workforce, low-birth weight, children with substantiated reports of abuse or neglect	Birth and immunization records of children who moved into the state, children who have never received a developmental screening

How to bring it all together



Leveraging the data to support strategic planning

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Why develop a strategic plan?

- Provides a clear and detailed road map for what you want to achieve
- Lays out the strategies and activities to achieve your vision and mission
- Allows you to build consensus around the plan and the steps you need to take to implement it

TOP 5 REASONS TO UPDATE YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN



5

New funding that supports additional goals



4

New data from needs assessment



3

Emerging opportunities and needs as priorities change

2

You met all the goals in the previous strategic plan



1


New and renewed partner commitment





An impactful strategic plan is:

- Data-driven
- Co-created
- Affordable
- Equitable
- Realistic
- Sustainable



I think my department funds a program that could reduce the gap in services for families!

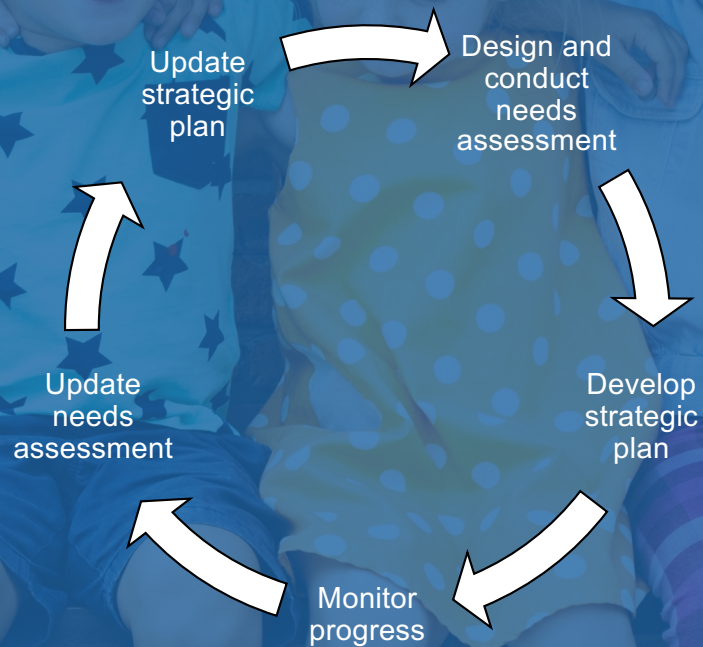
I can clearly see the difference between the experiences of families in these two communities when I look at that graph!

I wonder what it would look if we collected this data at the provider level?

Engage diverse perspectives:

- Data walks
- World cafés
- Listening sessions

Tips for Success





Hot tips!



Expand your capacity

- Engage a contractor to facilitate the process



Engage partners

- Engage multiple partners in the planning process

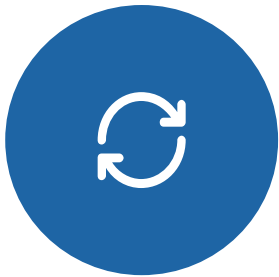


Build on strengths

- Set priorities
- Don't reinvent the wheel



Hot tips!



Keep it relevant and updated

- Create regular feedback loops
- Monitor changing needs



Communicate

- Post plan on website
- Keep data and references current



Plan

- Plan strategies with sustainability and flexibility in mind

A photograph of a dirt road winding through a forest. The road is light-colored and leads into the distance, flanked by tall grasses and trees. The trees are mostly bare, suggesting autumn or winter. The sky is overcast and grey. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

Have a bias toward action – let's see something happen now. You can break that big plan into small steps and take the first step right away.

Indira Gandhi

“ quote fancy

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Questions to ask about your strategic plan

- Data driven - are strategies informed by the needs assessment?
- Equitable - is it inclusive of populations in need of support based on the data?
- Partnerships - is it co-created by multiple partners, including family members?
- Impactful - will the strategies help us make progress toward our vision and goals?
- Realistic - what components of the plan will be challenging or require actions outside of our control?
- Affordable - do we have the resources to implement the plan?
- Sustainable - will it last?