

# Cross-Program/Agency Data Linkages

## 5 Things for Part C/619 Stakeholders to Know

1

Electronic data are typically linked through a common identifier in both (or all) data sets/systems, such as a unique child identifier (UID). The most common ways that data are linked are between: 1) two programs or agencies (e.g., Part C linking with Part B 619); 2) multiple programs or agencies in the same sector (e.g., early childhood sector—Part C, Part B 619, Home Visiting, Head Start, and Child Care linking); and 3) multiple programs or agencies in different sectors (e.g., multiple early childhood programs linking with K-12 and public health programs).

2

Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems (ECIDS) and Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) are two types of statewide cross-program/agency data systems. There have been federal grant funds available over the past decade to support states with developing these data systems, including the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant Program. An ECIDS brings together data from multiple programs and agencies in the early childhood sector. An SLDS brings together data from numerous sectors, one of which is usually early childhood, across early childhood through post-secondary and workforce.

3

The data included in ECIDS and SLDS are related to the individual child, the child's family, the classroom/program, teacher/service provider, and other aspects of services for children and families. However, states only use aggregate data at one point in time or the same data at multiple time points to look at trends over time to inform broad program and policy decisions. Data from ECIDS and SLDS are not used to make individual child-level instructional/intervention decisions.

4

Some ECIDS data (potentially all in some states) are included in a state's SLDS to provide a longitudinal view of children as they progress from when they are babies and preschoolers through their schooling and into the workforce. In many states, these data systems are being designed simultaneously, so it is important to establish the distinct purpose of each system, leverage commonalities, and share best practices and lessons learned.

5

Families have the right to know and understand what information an IDEA program is collecting and sharing or linking with other programs/agencies. They also have a right to know how that information is being used when it is shared or linked.