

National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs

NACCRRA

3101 Wilson Boulevard Suite 350
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 341-4100
www.naccrra.org
info@naccrra.org

© **Copyright 2002** National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA)

All rights reserved

Executive Summary

Resource & Referral (R&R) aims to improve the information infrastructure for early learning and school age programs through the establishment of a national standardized data set of valid, reliable, and comparable data for use at the local, state and national levels.

This infrastructure will be achieved through the collaborative efforts of the nationwide network of community-based R&R agencies that collect, report and share information on the diverse landscape of choices for families and communities. Concatenation of locally-collected data into a national database allows the collection, sharing, reporting and analysis of critical community-level information for use in programmatic and policy decision-making, and to address important research questions.

NACCRRRA and its network of local R&Rs have been working toward the goal of data standardization for many years. State by state, local agencies came together, often with the leadership of the R&R state networks, to standardize data fields. After years of hard work, the R&R field has produced a set of fields that constitute the **first ever nationally standardized data collection tool for use by R&Rs**.

A model in consensus building and collaboration, this tool will be the means of data collection for the National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs.

Development of the data collection tool was driven by field consensus and led to the development of an online data collection system for entering and storing the data. Dubbed “NACCRRRAware”, it is the newest and most powerful information management system for R&R. Today it used by 62% of all R&R agencies from the NACCRRRA Network and has been purchased by 47 states nationwide.

One of the cornerstones of resource & referral is the ability to enhance service delivery and quality through information. After years of significant efforts in consensus building and technological development, R&R is in a unique position to contribute to cutting edge research on early learning and school age programs and to be a key resource for decision-makers at the national, state and local levels.

The National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs is comprised of twenty-four supply (provider) data fields and twenty-seven demand (client) data fields.

Purpose

Accurate and consistent data are critically needed for local, state, and national decision-making on early learning and school age programs and for an expanded national research infrastructure. Such data collection is particularly important given the increasing demands for accountability. By collecting data on the performance of local systems, the policy community will have a better opportunity to understand the impact of various policies and program strategies, and this knowledge informs future program improvement.

In order to be effective, data collection must be accurate, consistent, timely, relevant and reality-based. Community resource & referral agencies (R&Rs) are ideally suited for this challenge. Early learning and school age services are very diverse in nature. They are offered by a multitude of different kinds of providers, ranging from large centers to family child care homes, to public schools and Head Start programs, to care provided in a child's own home. Data on these services must reflect local, often rapidly changing circumstances. Nationally, standardized data, collected locally by R&Rs ensure accuracy and consistency, and serve as the foundation for effective policy-making and research.

History

Local resource & referral agencies and NACCRRA have long aspired to create a national data set to report on the supply and demand of early learning and school age programs, and eventually, to measure key quality indicators. Interest in such a store of information has been building for decades as state R&R networks worked to build consensus locally, first on standardizing data elements, and then on state performance measures. As these tools came to fruition on the local level, ideas began to surface on ways to combine them to describe the national picture of the early learning and school age landscape.

At the same time, R&Rs across the country began to leverage technology as a way to improve local service delivery and share information. Continuing discussions at NACCRRA's annual regional conferences on ways to combine data led to a national discussion. In 1997, with strong support from the R&R field, the NACCRRA Board of Directors began the design of a national data set. After much discussion in 2000, the initial set of standardized data fields was approved and is implemented through the NACCRRAware R&R software program.

Development Steps

The first steps in the establishment of the National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs were made through the development of standardized data elements. These standardized elements were derived through consensus building in the resource & referral field on local, state and national levels, and was completed over a four-year period from 1997 through 2000. As finalized, these data elements include information that can be used to track trends in supply and demand for early learning and school age programs. As a result, the first ever *nationally* standardized data collection tool for R&R was created.

The next steps included the technological development, testing and implementation of on-line tools for collecting the standardized data set. The development of the on-line tools is now complete. It is licensed to 65% of the NACCRRRA network. It is currently in use or about to be employed statewide in 21 states including AZ, DC, DE, CO, IA, ID, IL, IN, KY, MA, ME, MI, MN, MS, MT, ND, NC, NH, OH, RI, TX, and UT. Altogether, 47 states have purchased licenses for the online solution for statewide use.

Internet Application

The National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs will be collected and the findings will be distributed using NACCRRRAware, the newest and most powerful information management program for resource and referral. NACCRRRAware utilizes web-based technology and runs under Microsoft Windows™ operating systems, as well as on Linux. Designed as an Internet application, it includes all the benefits of information collection and sharing provided by modern software technologies.

Developed and owned by NACCRRRA and the R&R field, NACCRRRAware was designed to respond to the strong desire on the part of local R&R agencies to use a standardized data tool and to contribute local data for national policy research and analysis. This web application will be the platform upon which R&Rs will build the National Data Set for Early Learning and School Age Programs.

Supply (Provider) Data Fields

1. Provider ID Code

Purpose

To track providers over time. The best way to do that is with an ID code that does not change. This code will be held constant during merges of data.

Definition

This field contains a permanent, unique identification number assigned to the record by the computer program. This is an automatic system function.

2. SSN/FEIN

Purpose

SSN/FEIN is also used for tracking purposes. Having the SSN/FEIN also allows for linking to other databases that may have child care providers as a part of their universe, i.e. TANF office database.

Definition

This field contains the social security number/Federal Employer Identification Number of the provider. This field is an optional field. It does not have to be filled in, but is useful for research purposes.

3. Facility Name

Purpose

For a referral database, the name of the facility is essential. However, for aggregated national statistics, this field is less important. CCR&Rs will have an option to suppress (blackout or cover up) this field when sending their data to the national database.

Definition

Name as given by regulatory agency.

4. Facility Address

Purpose

May be used for mapping purposes, to show where child care is in relation to employment or transportation. May also be used for a referral database. CCR&Rs will have an option to suppress (blackout or cover up) this field when sending their data to the national database.

Definition

This field contains the street address of the location of the facility as it is received from the regulatory agencies.

5. Facility City/Town/Village

Purpose

This field will be useful for tracking and mapping providers in a given location. It also may be used for referral database work.

Definition

Refers to the city/town listed in the facilities' location address.

6. State

Purpose

This field will track the number of providers per state.

Definition

Refers to the state listed in the facility's address.

7. ZIP Code

Purpose

The ZIP Code will allow researchers to map child care providers. This will be helpful in showing supply issues within a specific geographic area (city, state, county, etc.)

Definition

Refers to the five-digit ZIP Code listed in the facility's address.

8. Plus 4

Purpose

Allows for mapping of smaller areas within ZIP Codes.

Definition

This refers to the four digit mailing code, which the US Postal Service is adding to the five-digit ZIP Code.

9. Latitude/Longitude

Purpose

To map the location of the provider and compare with the demand for care.

Definition

A longitude and latitude code generated by software.

10. Area Code

Purpose

This field will be used for the referral database.

Definition

Area Code as defined by local area (currently 3 digits).

11. Phone Number

Purpose

This field will be used for the referral database.

Definition

Use the phone number a parent would call to reach the provider.

12. County/Parish

Purpose

This field will be used to track providers by county and for the referral database.

Definition

This field refers to the county/parish where the facility is located.

13. FIPs Code

Purpose

This field will allow us to track providers by county as defined by the federal system. This will also allow us to link to other data collected based on this system.

Definition

Federal assigned number based on state and county/parish.

14. Type of Facility

Purpose

This field records the types of care available. Because many states have

types of care arrangements that are unique to their state, this is a way to generally categorize those options. The most basic way that child care programs differ is in where the care is given: in a facility that is a separate business or an in-home setting. These two categories capture that basic distinction. For local data collection purposes, multiple categories will still be used.

Definition

- a. **Family Child Care** – Care given to a child in the provider's own home. Family child care providers are licensed by regulatory agencies or are legally exempt. Use the state's definition.
- b. **Child Care Center** – Child care provided in a facility not in the providers home. Centers are licensed by regulatory agencies or are legally exempt. Use the state's definition.

15. Regulation

Purpose

For national statistics we want to know how many providers are regulated in some way by their state. For referral purposes, parents will want to know whether the caregiver is regulated or not.

Definition

Regulated/Licensed – Facility is regulated/certified/registered by state licensing agency.

Registered – Facility is registered with an agency such as the CCR&R, county or state government.

Exempt from licensing – Facility is exempt from licensing for various reasons unique to a state's laws.

16. Head Start

Purpose

It is important to know if a facility is a Head Start funded program for both local and national statistics.

Definition

Yes/No – Facility did or did not receive Head Start funding.

17. State Funded Pre-K Program

Purpose

It is important for researchers to know if the program is state-funded.

Definition

Yes/No – Facility is a State Funded Pre-K program.

18. Schedule Type

Purpose

To measure the availability of part-time and full-time care for children.

Definition

Use your state’s definition within these parameters.

- a. **Full-time** – Varies from state to state, but at a minimum 25 hours or more per week.
- b. **Part-time** – Varies from state to state, but no more than 34 hours per week.

19. Special Schedule

Purpose

To capture what care is available during non-standard time periods. For referral purposes, parents will want to know when a provider is available to provide care. In NACCRRAware, these will be collected from the hours and days the program is open.

Definition

For those not using NACCRRAware, collect the following fields.

Check all that apply:

- a. Evening (after 6pm – 12am)
- b. Overnight (12am – 6am)
- c. Weekends (Saturday and/or Sunday)
- d. None of the above

20. Number of Months

Purpose

To capture what care is available at certain times of the year. For referral purposes, parents will want to know when a provider is available to provide services during the year.

Definition

This field indicates the number of months a facility is available to provide care.

Check only ONE:

- a. Full Year – 12 months (minus scheduled vacations)
 - b. School year only – 9 months
 - c. Summer only – 3 months or less
- * If a facility hosts multiple programs, use the highest number of months care available.

21. Ages

Purpose

To measure what care is available for children of varying ages. Parents will need this information to find appropriate care.

Definition

- a. **Ages from** – Youngest age (years and months) of children the facility is legally able to care for.
- b. **Ages to** – Oldest age (years and months) of children the facility is legally able to care for.

22. Licensed Capacity

Purpose

To capture the number of children providers are able to provide care for. For research purposes, it is essential to estimating supply. For referral purposes, parent will want to know how many kids will be or can be in a provider’s care at the same time. We recognize that providers are sometimes legally able to care for a certain number of children, but in practice only care for a smaller number. However, even with these caveats, this field is the best option to measure capacity.

Definition

This field contains the total number of children the facility is legally able to provide care for.

- a. Family Child Care – Total capacity
- b. Child Care Centers – Capacity by age

23. Fees

Purpose

To describe the fees charged by providers.
Research purposes of this field include:

- a. Market rate surveys
- b. Community needs analysis
- c. State and national statistics on the cost of care. For referral purposes, this field is important to include so that parents can consider cost in their decisions between various care options. We chose to allow providers to report their fees however they charge so we can avoid conversions that might skew the price of care.

Definition

Report highest fees charged – [by week, hourly, monthly, daily - list however providers publicize them, i.e. do no conversions]

- Age groups as state defines, i.e. infant, toddler, preschool, school age
- Rate as defined by state
- "No Fee" category

24. Language

Purpose

To reflect the languages spoken by the provider or center-based staff.

Definition

Options reflect Census 2000 questions.

25. Ethnicity/Race

Purpose

To reflect the ethnicity and race of providers or center-based staff.

Definition

Options reflect Census 2000 questions.

Demand (Client) Data Fields

1. Unique Client ID

Purpose

The best way to track client change over time is with an ID code that does not change. This code will be unique and held constant during merging of data.

Definition

This field contains a permanent, unique identification number assigned to the record. This is an automatic software function.

2. Agency ID

Purpose

To track which Agency generated the client record.

Definition

An ID tag, assigned by NACCRA, to identify the agency.

3. Location Address (Street Number and Street Name)

Purpose

May be used for mapping purposes, to show where demand is in relation to employment, transportation, and/or available care.

Definition

These fields contain the home street address of the client.

4. Location City/Town/Village/Municipality

Purpose

This field will be useful for tracking and mapping demand in any given regional location.

Definition

Refers to the city/town/village/municipality listed in the client's home address.

5. Location State/Providence

Purpose

This field will track the number of clients per state.

Definition

Refers to the state listed in the client's home address.

6. Location ZIP Code/Postal code

Purpose

The ZIP Code will allow researchers to map the clients of child care resource & referral. This will be helpful in showing the demand issues within a specific geographic area (city, state, county, etc.).

Definition

Refers to the five-digit ZIP Code listed in the client's home address.

7. Location ZIP plus four

Purpose

Allows for mapping of smaller areas within ZIP Codes.

Definition

This refers to the four digit mailing code, which the US Postal Service is adding to the five-digit ZIP Code. This should be a separate field from the five-digit code.

8. Latitude/Longitude

Purpose

To map the location of the client and compare with the supply of care.

Definition

A longitude and latitude code generated by software.

9. FIPs code

Purpose

To track users by counties as defined by the federal FIPS system. This will also link to other data collected based on this system.

Definition

Federal assigned number based on state and county/parish.

10. Number of children

Purpose

To accurately reflect the number of children served by the CCR&R. This number will be reported to show impact.

Definition

The total number of children for which a client is seeking care.

11. Age

Purpose

To reflect the ages of children served by the CCR&R. This number will be reported to show the demand for child care by age category.

Definition

The age of child at the time care is needed, in years and months, determined by inputting the age or date of birth for each child and the date care needed.

12. Type of Care

Purpose

This field will help determine demand for the various types of care. Because states have types of care arrangements that are unique, it is helpful to have a way to categorize care options in general. The most basic way that child care programs differ is in where the care is given: in a facility that is a separate business or an in-home setting. For service matching and local data collection purposes, multiple categories will still be used.

Definition

Family Child Care – Care given to a child in the provider’s own home. Family child care providers may be licensed by a regulatory agency or may be legally exempt. Use state’s definition.

Child Care Center: Child Care provided in a facility not in the provider’s home. Centers may be licensed by a regulatory agency or may be legally exempt. Use state’s definition.

13. Days of Care

Purpose

To measure demand for care during the five-day work week (Monday – Friday) and on weekends.

Definition

Days client needs child care.

14. Start and End Times of Care

Purpose

To measure the hours care is needed and match against care supply.

Definition

Time selected for care to start and end as requested by the client.

15. Schedule

Purpose

To measure the demand for part-time and full-time care for children.

Definition

Use your state’s definition within these parameters.

Full time y/n – Varies from state to state, but at a minimum 25 hours or more per week.

Part time y/n – Varies from state to state, but no more than 34 hours per week.

For sites not using NACCRRAware

Definition – check all that apply

Evening – 6 PM – 12 AM

Overnight – 12 AM – 6 AM

Weekend – Saturday and/or Sunday

16. Number of Months/Year Schedule

Purpose

To capture what care is requested at certain times of the year.

Definition

This field indicates the number of months a client desires care provided.

Full Year – 12 months (less scheduled vacations).

School Year – Care needed only when school is in session.

Summer only – Care is needed only during summers or when school is not in session.

17. Special Needs

Purpose

To determine the requests for care provided to a child needing special accommodations.

Definition

If any field in the category titled Special Needs is marked, this will be counted as yes. If all of the fields in the special needs category are unmarked, this will be counted as no.

18. New Client/Previous Client, Previous Client-New Case

Purpose

To determine the number of clients, as well as the number of requests for child care referral, and to designate the number of referral requests completed during a child care search.

Definition

New Client – A client who has not previously used the service at all.

Previous Client – According to the state's definitions, generally a client who is in the process of a current child care search, and requesting additional referrals.

Previous Client-New Case – Generally a client who has used the service before, but according to the state's definitions, the search criteria changes constitute a new case.

19. Type of Case

Purpose

To indicate the number of clients contacting the CCR&Rs for services for referrals.

Definition

Referral – A client has requested a child care search and sent information on child care options.

20. Client Type

Purpose

To reflect the various sources of funding supporting CCR&R services.

Definition

Corporate – Client received services at a waived or discounted rate because the employer is paying for the services.

Fee waived – Client received services for free.

Fee paying – Client paid all or a portion of the fee to access CCR&R service.

21. Subsidy Client, Y/N:

Purpose

To reflect the number of clients who indicate they are currently receiving a government child care subsidy

Definition

The client is receiving a government subsidy.

22. Relationship to Child(ren)

Purpose

To reflect the diversity of clients, in terms of their relation to the child.

Definition

Father – Caller is the father of the child(ren) in need of care.

Mother – Caller is the mother of the child(ren) in need of care.

Grandparent – Caller is a grandparent of the child(ren) in need of care.

Guardian – Caller is the legal guardian of the child(ren) in need of care.

Other – Caller is not one of the above, or has no relationship to the child(ren) in need of care.

Local configuration – CCR&R has a configuration representing local community.

23. Employment Status

Purpose

To reflect the employment status of the caller, or a client if a social worker is calling on behalf of a caller, utilizing the CCR&R services.

Definition

Working – Client is currently employed.

Seeking employment – Client is not employed, and engaged in seeking employment.

At home – Client is not employed, and is self defined as staying at home.

Student – Client is a student.

24. Adult(s)/Household

Purpose

To reflect the number of single adult households seeking child care services.

Definition

Single adult – No other adults present in the home.

Two or more adults – Household contains two or more adults.

25. Child Health Field

Purpose

To reflect the number of clients using, aware of, and referred to the Federal Child Health programs.

Definition

Did not want information on child health – Client was asked and did not want information on Child Health related issues.

Child is fully immunized – Client indicated child is fully immunized.

Send immunization information – Client requested information on immunization.

Has health care provider for child – Client indicated they have a health care provider for the child(ren).

Has health insurance for child – Client indicated they have health care coverage for the child(ren).

No insurance, not aware of insurance options – Client indicated they do not have

health care coverage and are not aware of available programs.

Referred to insurance hotline 877-kids-now – Client referred to national CHIP number.

Referred to mental health consultation – Client referred to mental health consultation.

Referred to nursing (health and safety) consultation – Client referred to nursing consultation.

Referred to special needs consultation – Client referred to special needs consultation.

26. Language

Purpose

To reflect the languages requested for child care, may be child or parent need.

Definition

Options will reflect Census 2000 questions.

27. Ethnicity/Race

Purpose

To reflect the ethnicity and race of clients and children.

Definition

Options will reflect Census 2000 questions.