

Childhood Integrated Longitudinal Data (CHILD) System

What is CHILD?

The ChildHood Integrated Longitudinal Data (CHILD) System is an integrated data resource for planning, monitoring, and evaluation to improve services to families in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Building on more than 30 years of work using administrative data, CHILD was developed with key funding from the Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood, the George Gund Foundation, and The Cleveland Foundation.

Development of CHILD

Studies involving the linkage of administrative records had been done by our center since the 1980s. In 1999, the center, under the leadership of Professors Claudia Coulton and Rob Fischer, began tracking the effects of the County's new early childhood initiative (now called Invest in Children) using records of birth, public assistance, child welfare, home visiting, early intervention, and publicly subsidized child care for the 0-6 population in Cuyahoga County. The system now includes early childhood mental health services, receipt of well-child care, exposure to high quality early learning (UPK pilot), public school attendance and proficiency test data, childhood lead exposure, homeless shelter use, public housing, juvenile justice involvement, and jail entry, along with records for older youth. Some children in CHILD now have records extending up to age 24.

CHILD's role

The CHILD system brings together records from a variety of public and private service providers. Currently CHILD contains records on more than 500,000 children that were born or have lived in Cuyahoga County since 1992. Using these linked records, the experiences and outcomes of groups of children can be examined to inform planning and action. These records can support point-in-time and longitudinal analyses of the experiences of children in the community. Studies based on data in CHILD make use of de-identified analysis files, and require their own IRB approval and funding. Data are maintained on a secure server, governed by data use agreements with providers and privacy procedures approved by the CWRU Institutional Review Board.

Through CHILD, the center is at the vanguard of work on integrated data to inform policy and practice. The center is a member site of the Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy network, a founding member of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, and a partner in the Ohio Education Research Consortium.

More information: povertycenter.case.edu/data-systems/child-data-system/