

Quick Take:

Fiscal Mapping & Analysis

Helping states and communities estimate the true cost of services for children

What is fiscal mapping and analysis?

Prenatal to five fiscal mapping and analysis is a process of identifying and cataloguing the available funding sources for programs and services for young children and their families. This includes detailing the source of the funds (federal, state, local, private, etc.) and the administering organization, the services, goals and population served, and the reach or capacity of the funding. Conducting fiscal mapping with related analysis of the results supports and guides you to answer questions related to policies and regulations of funding streams, levels of investments, and whether investments are successfully targeted at children and families who are the most vulnerable and at risk. The mapping process increases knowledge of funding in order to support decisions around how to leverage funding, where to focus efforts to address gaps in funding and where there may be possibilities to increase the efficiency of funding administration and implementation.

Why engage in fiscal mapping and analysis?

One of the most complex challenges raised in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2018 report *Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education* is the patchwork of different funding sources and financing mechanisms. The report underscores the issues that result from an uncoordinated patchwork, or nonfunctioning system, including inequities in access, quality, affordability, and accountability. These critical issues are most acutely felt by the children and families public early care and education is designed to serve. Funding sources and mechanisms vary in their implementation requirements and contract approach, and on their service requirements, quality standards, and accountability measures. These variances and the lack of common understanding of them across the birth to five system puts constituents at a disadvantage when attempting to develop policies or implement systemic changes which will result in efficiencies and economies that will benefit family access and program quality.

The fiscal mapping and analysis process

The first aspect of fiscal mapping is information gathering and investigation to fully understand the funding mix that supports the delivery of birth to five services to children and families in your specific community, region or state. To support this work, a common rubric tool is used to gather answers about the funding streams, entities and types of programming. The research and investigation, across systems and funding entities begins with reviewing written materials and documentation and is then augmented by interviews and direct correspondence with representatives from the systems and funding streams. The common rubric guides this process ensuring data is collected on ages served, types of services, eligibility (child, family, provider), policies and regulations associated with the funding, administering entity, payment method, qualifications of providers, areas of alignment or conflict across funding, and more. This investigation covers all relevant funding streams including federal, state, city, local, philanthropy, private payer, for direct service and system funding. The process generates profiles of each funding stream and a summary document laying out the full fiscal map of funds available to support children birth to five and their families.

How fiscal mapping and analysis can support a comprehensive P-5 system

This mapping and analysis approach will give you a fuller understanding of the current investments supporting both the prenatal to five system and individual programs in your state and community, including a clear tracking of the funds that serve families. The analysis can help you identify how these investments are -- or could be -- layered to maximize the potential of each funding source. Additionally, the fiscal analysis provides an intentional lens on the issue of access to services for the most vulnerable children and their families. By considering eligibility requirements, barriers to participation, and population served by various funding streams, the fiscal map can be used to better understand if the type of programming proven to deliver the positive outcomes needed for all children and their families are truly accessible to those who most need it. Embedding a fiscal mapping project within a larger comprehensive fiscal analysis can provide a strong foundation for other areas of analysis, providing a baseline of the current investments supporting the system, and how the requirements of each funding stream is impacted by and has an impact on governance and equity considerations.

For more information about how Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies can help you with fiscal mapping and analysis, please contact us at info@prenatal5fiscal.org