



Building Stronger Early Childhood Systems for the PDG B-5 SMART Grant

Practical Approaches to Data, Technology,
and Systems Transformation

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Welcome and Introductions

Today's Speakers



Jennifer Tschantz



Betsy Mercier



Howard Morrison



Nicholas Ortiz

How SRI Supports States and Localities



Planning

- Needs assessments
- Readiness analyses
- Strategic planning
- Logic models



Measurement

- Evaluation
- Data analytics
- Dashboards
- Performance measurement



Implementation

- Implementation partner
- Technical assistance
- Communities of practice
- Coaching
- Continuous improvement

Results: Better decisions, better systems, better outcomes

Webinar Outcomes



- **Participants will:**

- Learn how states can use data and technology to improve systems, programs, and decision-making
- Consider how SRI's technical assistance can enhance your capacities



What We Will Cover



01

Building the
Foundation for
Data-Informed
Decisions

02

Improving
Program Data
Systems and
Integrated Data
Capacity

03

Connecting Data
and Operations
Across Programs

04

Creating
Actionable
Analytics and
Visualizations

05

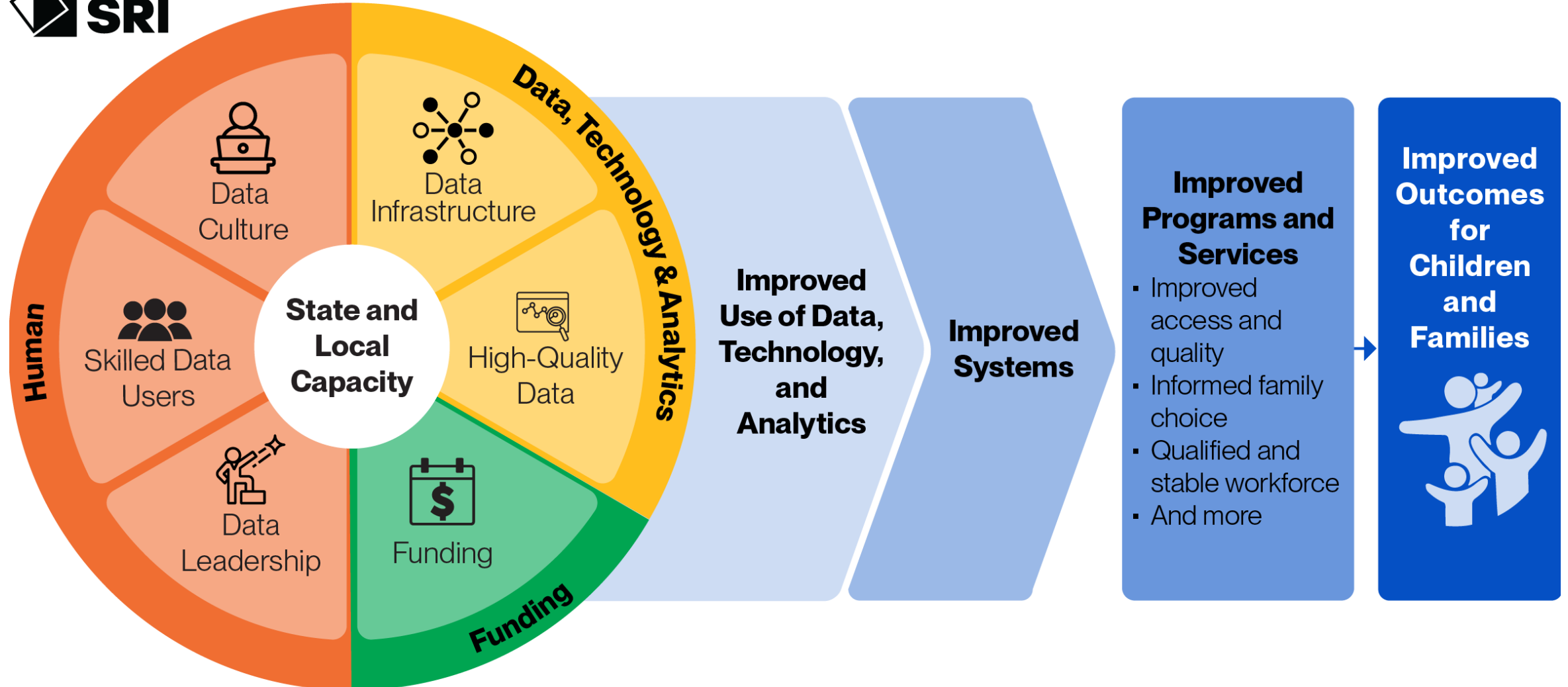
Harnessing the
Power of Data and
Technology



Building the Foundation for Data-Informed Decisions

**How can states strategically invest in technology,
data infrastructure, and capacity to generate
actionable information for decision-making?**

Conceptual Framework: Using Data, Technology and Analytics to Improve Early Childhood Systems





Improving Program Data Systems

How can states strengthen program data systems to generate more reliable, useful, and actionable information?

Some State Challenges

State early care and education agencies may:

- Rely on program data systems that are outdated and require modernization
- Lack critical data elements needed to address broader policy questions
- Need support to identify and address data quality challenges
- Have limited staff capacity to analyze data for internal reporting, public report, and evaluation



High-Quality Program Data Systems Provide Answers to Critical Questions



How many children are served?

How many programs have waitlists? What is the average number of children on the waitlists?

What percentage of children received developmental screenings?

How many children were suspended or expelled?

How does the average number of slots for licensed infant care vary across the state?

What is the average cost per child?

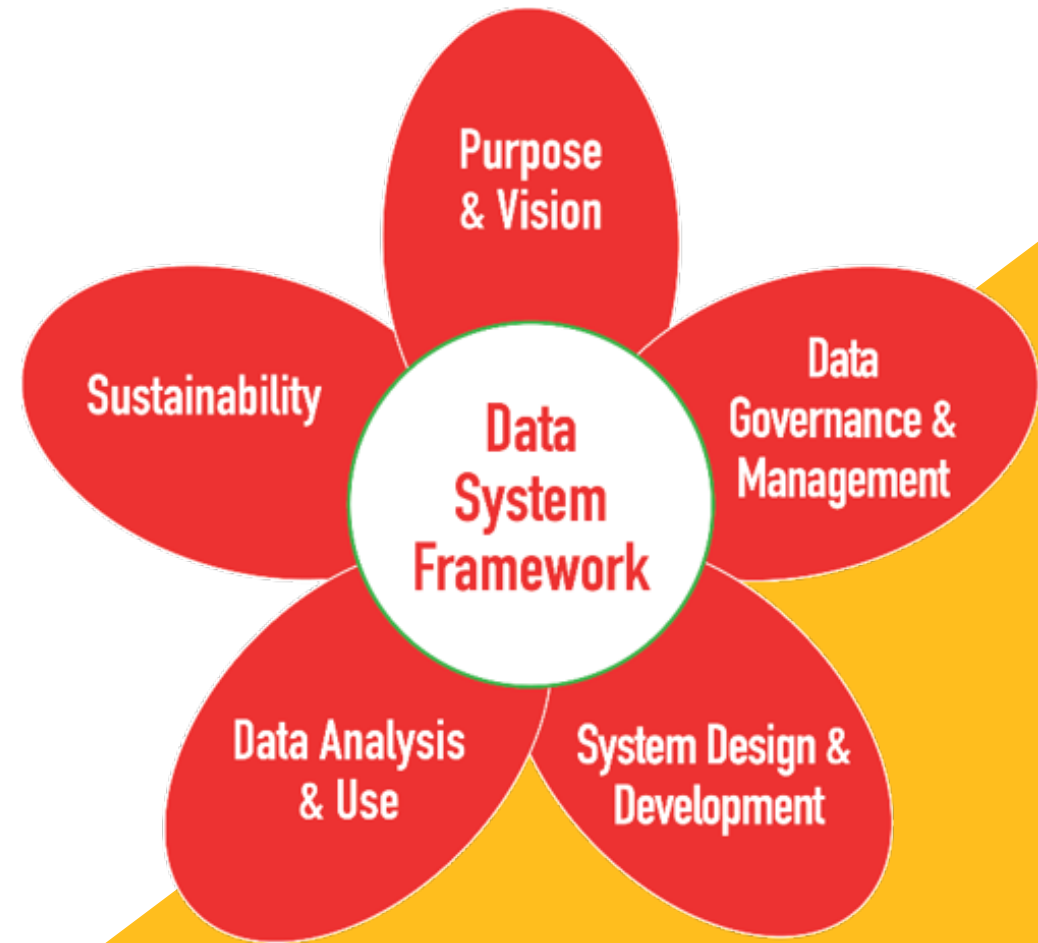
What percentage of centers are high quality?

What is the turnover rate for staff?

See, for example, [Critical Questions About Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education](#).



Does Your State Need to Improve These Components for Any of Your Program Data Systems?



[DaSy Data System Framework](#)

Opportunities for SMART Grant Investment



- Modernize or enhance program data systems to address priority information and reporting needs
- Use priority and program questions to identify targeted data system improvements and analytic use cases
- Strengthen governance, data quality, and data management processes to improve the reliability and usability of program data
- Expand analytic reporting capabilities to generate actionable information and results





How SRI Has Partnered with States

SRI has supported states in:

- Engaging stakeholders around visioning for purpose and scope of the data system
- Writing requests for proposal (RFPs) to enhance or develop a data system
- Developing data dictionaries
- Examining and improving data quality
- Developing and implementing policies around data governance, privacy, and confidentiality
- Improving data management





Improving Integrated Data Capacity

How can states strengthen integrated data capacity to answer questions that span programs and agencies?

Some State Challenges

- Siloed and fragmented early childhood data; lack of integration
- Inability to answer key policy questions across multiple program areas
- Legacy and varying infrastructure; lack of data system documentation
- Limited capacity and resources
- Complex cross-agency governance
- Limited understanding of the existing data landscape, including workforce data



How Integrated Data Systems Can Help Answer More Complex Questions

How many distinct children receive state-funded early childhood services?

How many children participate in multiple programs at the same time?

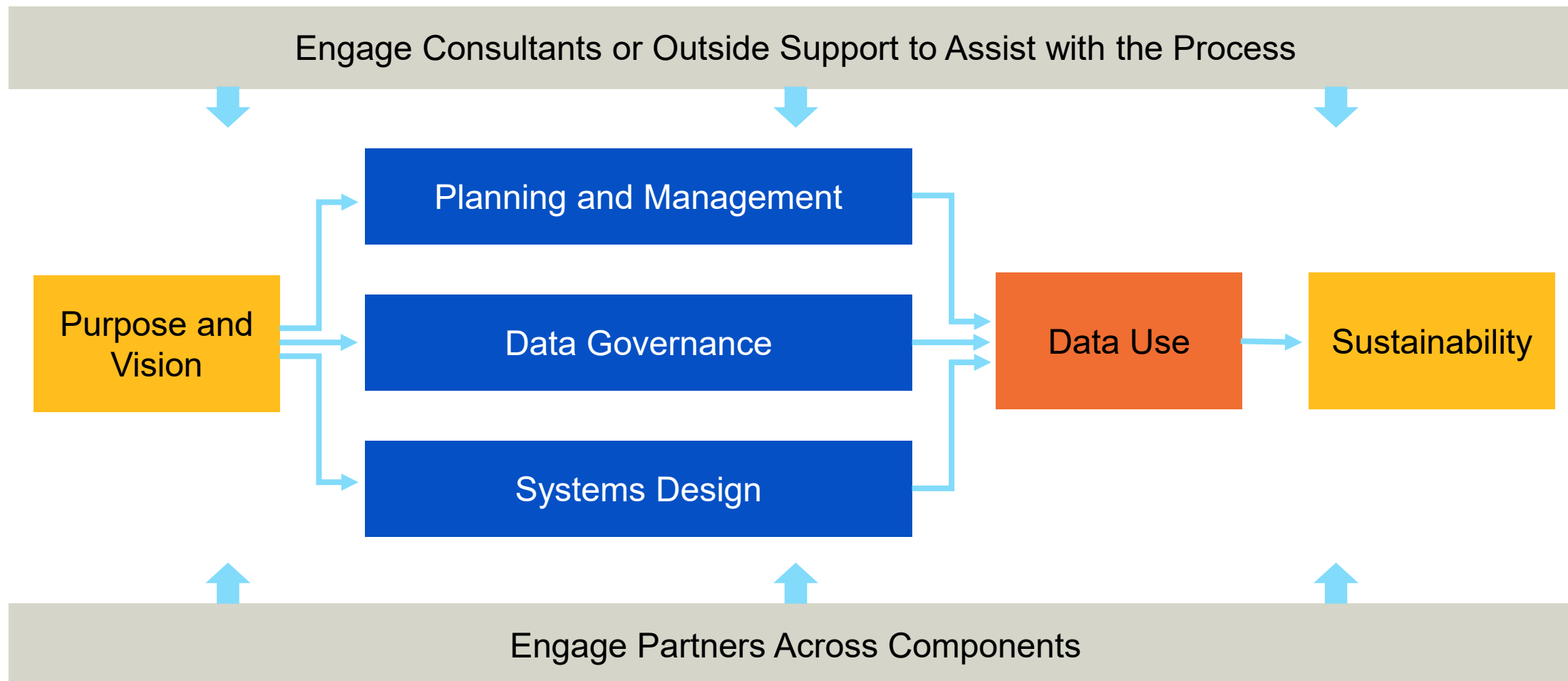
What proportion of eligible children have access to high-quality, full-day, year-round care?

How effectively do early childhood programs connect eligible families to health, mental health, and social services?

How is participation in early childhood programs related to children's later outcomes



ECIDS Development/Expansion Is an Opportunity



Note. Adapted from [Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems Toolkit](#), 2021, by SLDS State Support Team



Opportunities for SMART Grant Investment

- Determining a shared purpose, mission, and vision for data integration
- Identifying, prioritizing, and implementing use cases
- Building or enhancing an early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS)
- Creating data sharing mechanisms
- Developing and/or enhancing data governance
- Building or expanding data analytics
- Building in evaluation for continuous improvement





How SRI Has Partnered with States

- Developed roadmaps from planning to implementation
- Developed strategic planning documents
- Facilitated stakeholder engagement to identify state and local data needs and priorities
- Developed and implemented use cases and prioritization processes
- Created state examples showcasing various ECIDS implementation approaches, with key insights
- Established data governance plans and approaches





Connecting Data and Operations Across Programs

How can technology improve family access, informed choice, and experience of navigating early childhood services?

Some State Challenges

- Fragmented information and entry points
- Different eligibility and enrollment processes
- Disconnected data and technology
- Limited cross-agency governance
- Uneven capacity across communities



What Is CEE and Why Implement It?



- Coordinated eligibility and enrollment (CEE) is a system-building strategy that states and local communities can use to build a more robust and interconnected support system for children and families.



**Improve Family
Access**



**Strengthen
Collaboration**



**Use Resources
Efficiently**

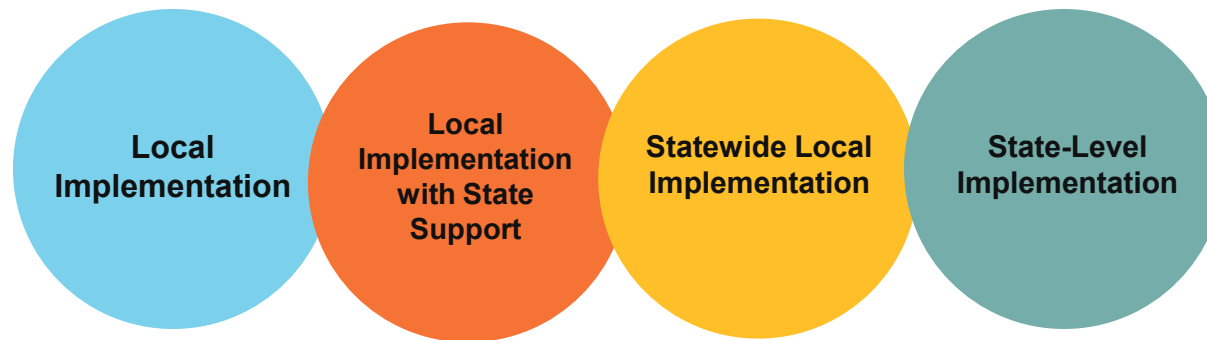
[CEE 101: An Introduction to Coordinated Eligibility](#)

CEE Can Vary in Scope and Implementation Approach

1 SCOPE OF COORDINATION

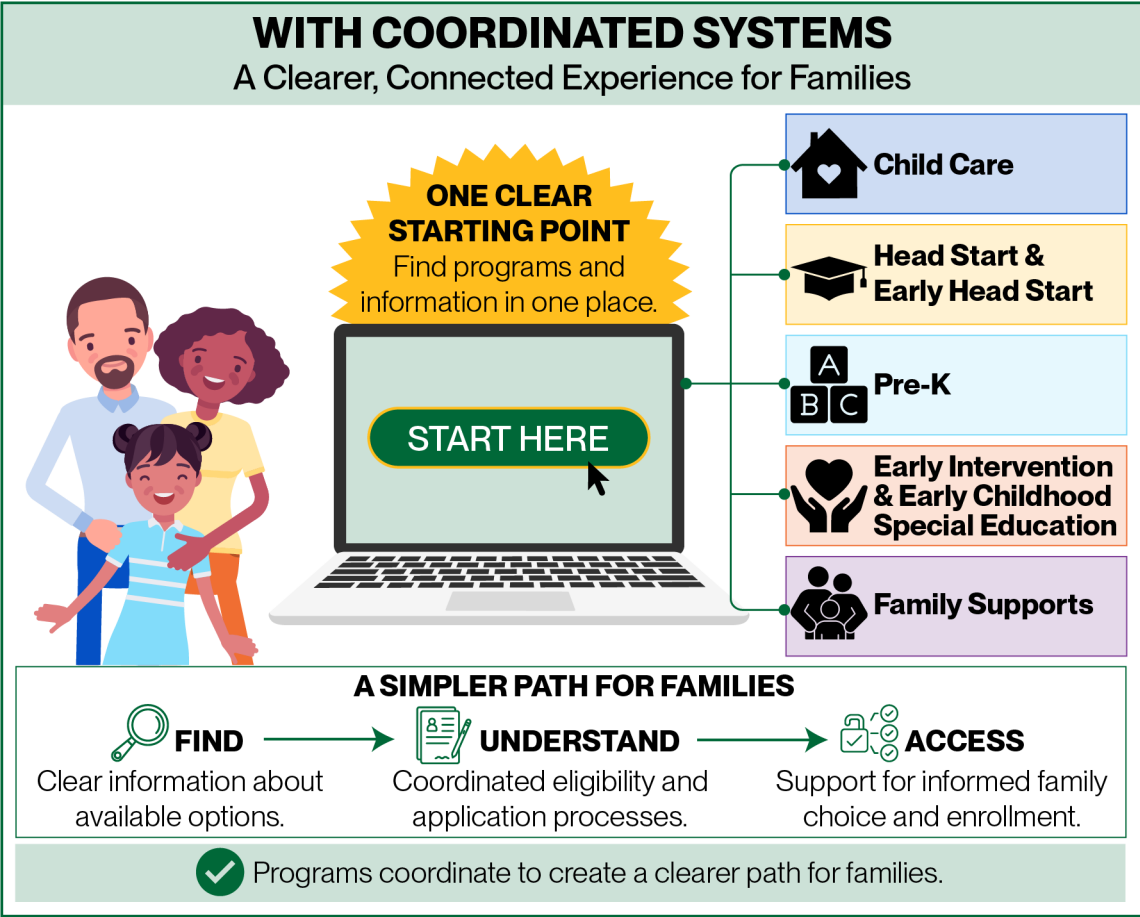
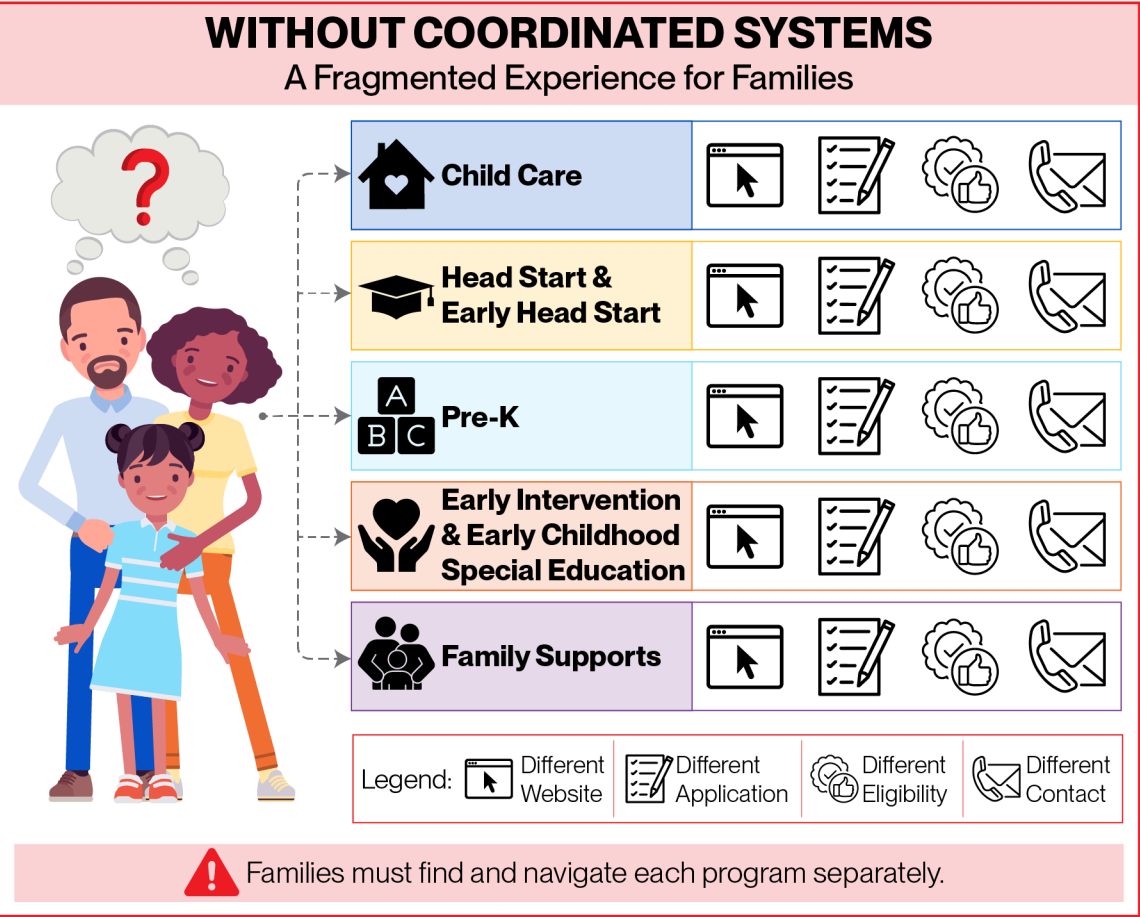


2 IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH



Increasing Family Access and System Coordination
Through Coordinated Eligibility and Enrollment

CEE Makes Services Easier to Navigate



Ensuring Success of Your Technical Solution



Supporting Factors

- Strong relationships across programs and agencies
- Shared goals and agreement about what to coordinate
- Supportive leadership and local champions
- Sustained funding
- Family and community engagement
- Clear communication and outreach
- Staff capacity to lead and maintain the work

Podcast: [Improving Access to Early Care and Education Through Coordinated Eligibility and Enrollment](#)

Opportunities for SMART Grant Investment



Build a process for coordinated eligibility and enrollment.

- Develop and implement a plan to engage stakeholders to determine state and local community needs
- Establish a clear goal, purpose, and vision
- Develop a phased implementation timeline that identifies the initial programs participating and how CEE can be expanded, layering additional programs over time
- Create a data governance and management approach
- Build an implementation approach
- Define and evaluate success indicators and use findings for continuous improvement



How SRI Has Partnered with States



- Supported the development of a systems-building strategy to center the family experience
- Facilitated community engagement (community needs, interviews or focus groups)
- Created implementation planning resources (timeline, phased approach, staffing, technology needs)
- Developed data management planning documents (technology specifications and options)
- Consulted during recurring team, regular program, and technical team meetings





Creating Actionable Analytics and Visualizations

How can states transform information into actionable insights?

Some State Challenges

- States have data but may lack the means to turn the data into actionable information
- Staff may need training in how to interpret data and use data tools
- Data visualizations have been built without specific audiences in mind

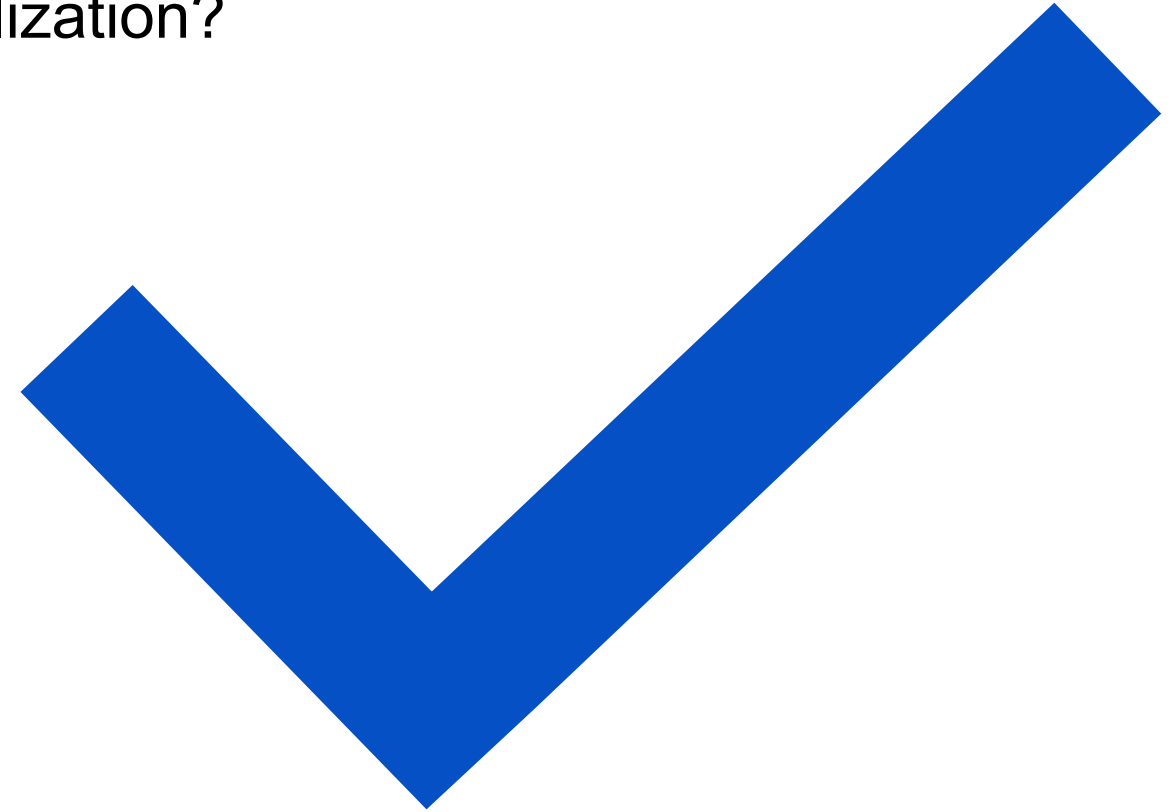


Clear Data Visualization Is a Powerful Strategy for Conveying Insights



What makes for clear, effective data visualization?

- ✓ Portrays data accurately and clearly
- ✓ Facilitates understanding
- ✓ Is engaging and attractive
- ✓ Promotes data use
- ✓ Is accessible



[Data Visualization Toolkit](#)

High-Leverage Principles of Effective Data Visualization



- 1 Know your audience and purpose
- 2 Be intentional about design
- 3 Ensure accessibility
- 4 Iterate and improve

Opportunities for SMART Grant Investment



- Provide state and local staff with professional development on data analytics and data use
- Add capacity for sophisticated data visualizations, mapping, and network analyses at the state and local levels
- Develop custom dashboards for focusing resources, training, or coaching



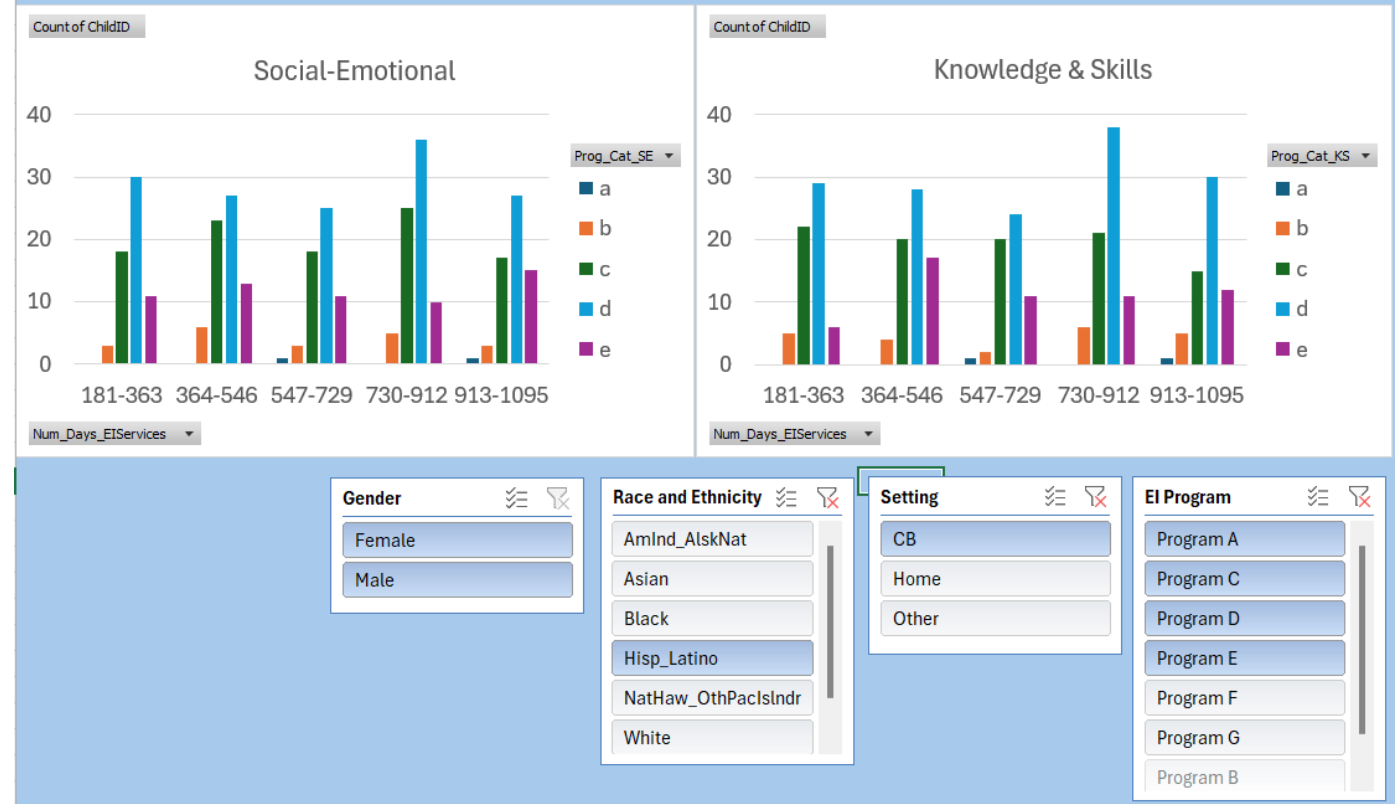
Dashboards Are a Powerful, Sustainable Data Visualization Method for Explaining and Exploring Data



Interactivity generates more:

- Data use
- Accessibility and transparency
- Fun with data

Child Outcomes Progress Categories by Days of EI Services

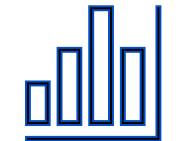


From [Early Childhood Data University YouTube tutorial](#) on creating basic dashboards

How SRI Has Partnered with States



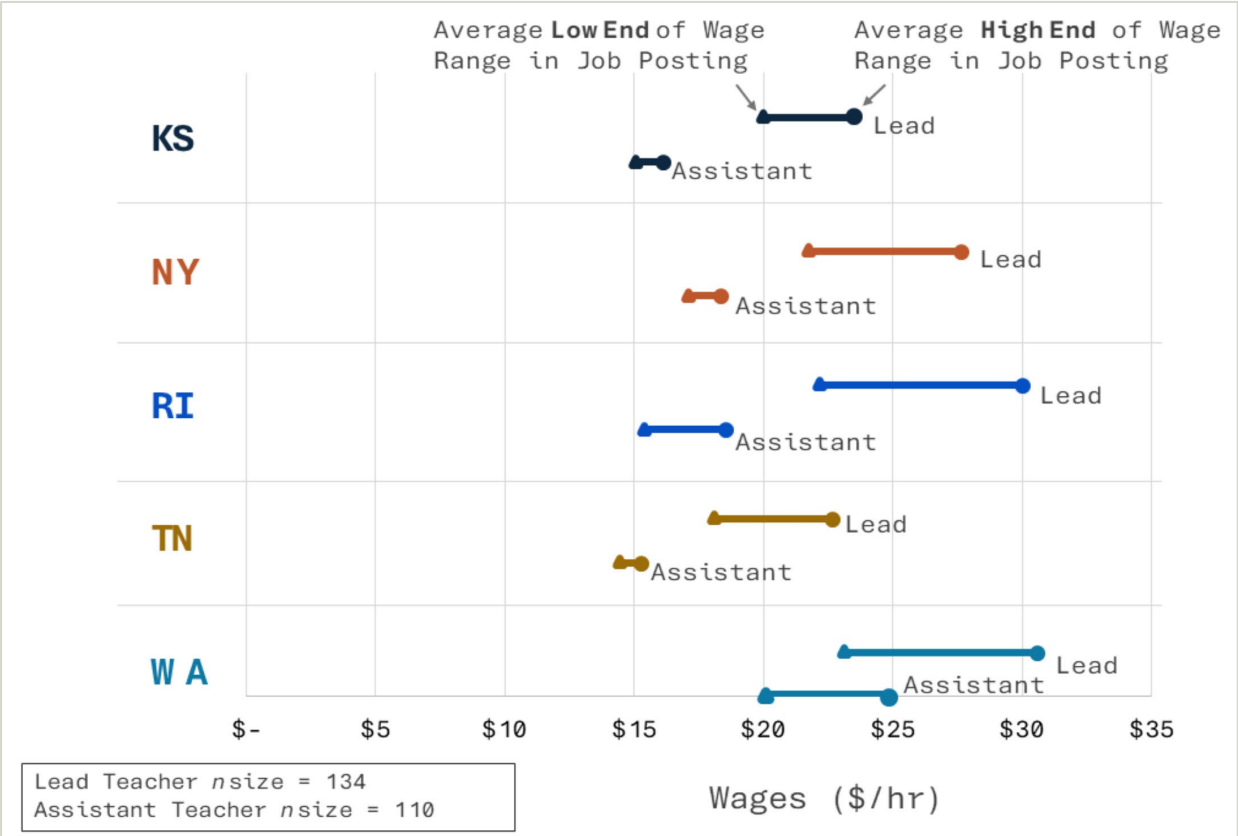
- Helped design an **interactive statewide dashboard** for preschool special education environment data
 - *Impact:* Local education agencies could easily dig into their data
- **Mapped applicants** for an early childhood educator benefit pilot project
 - *Impact:* Key partners could easily comprehend the breadth and representativeness of applicants to assess outreach
- **Geospatially analyzed transportation routes** between foster family homes and child care centers
 - *Impact:* Informed state investments in improving early care and education access for children in the foster care system
- **Charted and mapped differences in pay parity** between Head Start and kindergarten teachers in various regions
 - *Impact:* Shone a light on the wide disparity of pay within and across states



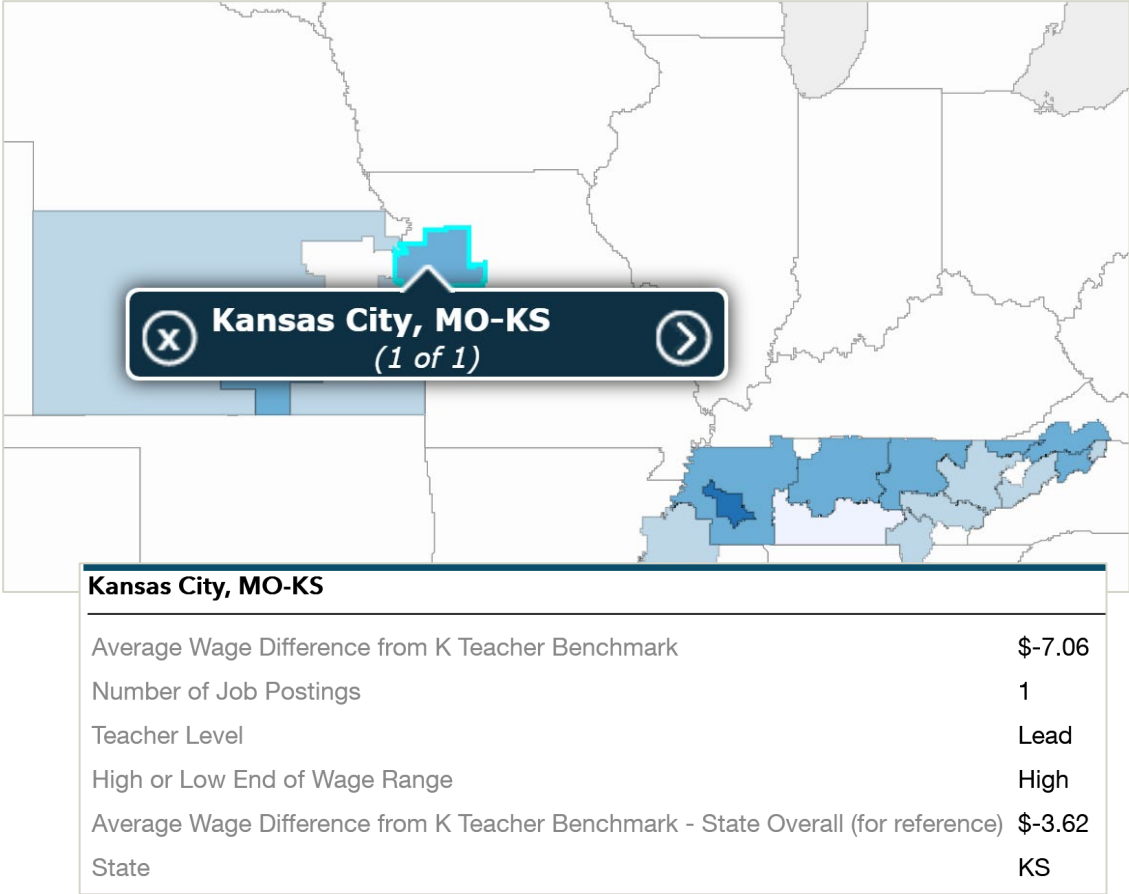
Example from Head Start



Finding: Head Start Teacher Pay Varies by State and Across Lead and Assistant Teachers



Interactive map

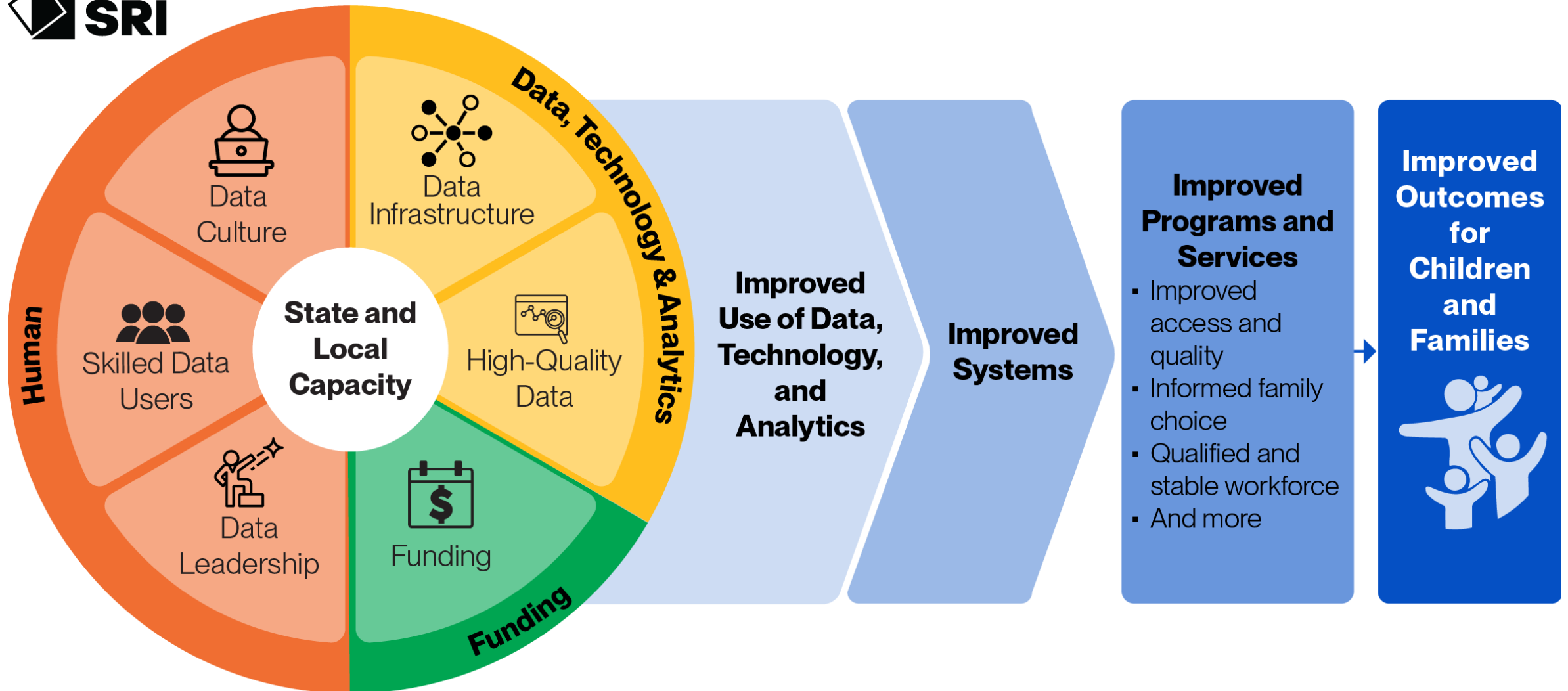


From [In Search of Fair Play: Designing Pay Parity for Head Start Teachers](#) (SRI)



Harnessing the Power of Data and Technology

Conceptual Framework: Using Data, Technology and Analytics to Improve Early Childhood Systems



Closing and Next Steps

- Check out the website, flyer, and resources



You Don't Need to Do This Alone



- We can partner with you in each and any of the topic areas
- We can build your individual and organizational capacity so that you can improve and sustain new methods
- Reach out to us to connect!



Thank you!



**For more information,
contact:**
Howard Morrison
Early Childhood Technical
Assistance Specialist
Howard.Morrison@sri.com

