



The Mississippi Early Childhood Development Coalition (ECDC) is a statewide network of approximately 130 people from all parts of Mississippi's early childhood system (birth to age 5). ECDC members are committed to working together to improve the lives of our state's young children and families. The ECDC provides a platform where families and other stakeholders in early childhood service provision can share resources and expertise to co-create solutions that promote healthy early childhood growth and development.

[Here is a guide for how to talk about the ECDC with short elevator speeches for various audiences.](#)

1. What is our work trying to achieve?

We want the early childhood system in Mississippi to be responsive to families' needs in a timely manner. We believe the work toward this goal can happen at many levels. Our contribution is primarily on the grassroots level - by providing a space for families, community members, and decision-makers to make connections, share resources, and bring about change in everyday practices and decisions that shape the early childhood system in Mississippi.

2. Why is this work important?

We focus on improving the developmental health system for Mississippi's youngest children (from birth to age five), as this is the most critical time period of brain development. What happens in these earliest years lays the foundation for lifelong outcomes - including educational attainment, workforce participation, economic factors, social-emotional health, physical health, and more. The ECDC wants all families with young children (birth to five) in the state of Mississippi to be able to access relevant resources to support their children's development in a timely manner.

3. What will success look like?

Success looks like early childhood system members learning about policies and how to share their input in policy development; changing policies, practices, and behaviors to make the system easier to navigate; and learning about and sharing resources with one another that lead to better outcomes for families. Concrete examples include:

- A state agency changing items on their referral paperwork to make it easier for them to track which organizations refer families to them
- Making a Plan teams consulting Resource & Referral Centers and other early-childhood-focused supports when working with families with young children
- An increase in referrals to organizations that support families

- An increase in people contacting their legislators about policies that affect families & children
- Organizations increasing resources in their databases
- An increase in organizations partnering to work together
- An increase in resources being shared with families