

The NCCP Pathways Project and Tools were developed by Taniesha Woods, PhD, with the assistance of Melissa Christie. Woods has also developed and implemented the process for completing the tools.

USER GUIDE: *ECC MAP TOOL*

Background on the Tool. The Early Childhood Coalition Monitoring and Assessment of Progress Tool (ECC MAP) is designed to help coalitions assess and track their progress in building effective early childhood systems. Specifically, the ECC MAP assesses and monitors coalitions' clarity of vision, specificity of goals, involvement of stakeholders, and whether these components have been translated into a long-term strategic plan.

The ECC MAP supports coalitions in the following ways:

- helps coalitions to better articulate their vision and goals and whether the vision is linked to measurable outcomes;
- provides information about coalition functioning and where the coalition is in the process of building an effective early childhood system;
- tracks progress on coalition functioning and stakeholder engagement efforts; and
- generates ideas for strategic planning.

To accomplish these goals, the ECC MAP measures progress in five areas: (1) coalition history and background; (2) coalition vision; (3) data use to measure progress towards the coalition's vision; (4) internal relationships; and (5) external relationships.

- **Coalition history and background** – This section examines how long the coalition has been in existence and how long coalition members have been involved.

- **Coalition vision** – This section assesses whether a coalition has a shared understanding of the coalition's purpose and goals for the future – both of which are important for guiding a coalition's short- and long-term work. A coalition's vision statement will answer the question, "Why are we here?" Further, it will represent the coalition's purpose even if the community's political, economic, or social contexts change. The vision statement should do the following: provide clarity about the coalition's purpose, describe the outcomes that the coalition aims to effect, explain the coalition's goals for the future, and be engaging and memorable. This statement is typically one or two sentences. Examples of vision statements are listed in Box 1.

Discussion questions about the coalition's vision statement might include (Derived from Bryson & Alston, 2011):

1. What are the coalition's core values and guiding beliefs?
2. If a vision statement currently exists, what is it? What does it say about why the coalition exists and what it hopes to accomplish?
 - What are the service and program needs that the coalition can address by implementing targeted strategies?
 - What is the coalition's role in addressing these service and program needs?

- **Data used to measure progress toward the coalition’s vision and goals** – This section examines whether a coalition has tied measurable indicators and outcomes to its vision.
- **Internal relationships** – This section measures coalition communication and decision-making processes, and how well the coalition membership reflects the socio-demographic diversity found within the community.
- **External relationships** – This section examines the involvement of key, external stakeholders who support the coalition’s work.

Directions for Completing the ECC MAP

Coalition members will complete the tool by selecting the response that best matches their belief about the coalition’s status or performance. Coalition members may find that no one response exactly matches his/her belief and in this case the coalition member should select the response that most closely matches his/her belief about the coalition’s status or performance.

The ECC MAP includes two types of questions:

- **Multiple-choice questions.** For these questions, coalition members should select the response that best describes their beliefs about the coalition’s work.
- **Five-point scale questions.** For these questions, coalition members should select the number on the scale that corresponds to their belief. (1) No evidence exists in the specified area, (2) Very little evidence exists in the specified area, (3) Some evidence exists in the specified area, (4) Growing body of evidence exists in the specified area, and (5) Well-developed evidence exist in the specified area.

- For some questions, there is space for coalition members to write additional details about their beliefs regarding the coalition’s work.

After Completing the Tool. After all participating coalition members complete the ECC MAP, aggregate results will be available and the coalition coordinator can facilitate a discussion about the clarity of vision among members, specificity of goals, and key stakeholders that are engaged in the coalition’s work. This discussion should occur with the full coalition, be used to guide strategic planning, and efforts to improve coalition functioning. The ECC MAP should be completed on an annual basis so that the coalition can monitor progress toward achieving their goals. ECC MAP discussions are a starting point for strategic planning and will help orient the coalition to dynamics that can be improved (for example, members’ knowledge of the vision), stakeholder engagement, and gaps in strategic planning (for example, coalition vision linked to measurable outcomes). Completing the Programs and Services Mapping Tool and Demographic and Community Data Tool are important next steps as the coalition identifies an outcome(s) that they will address through the development and implementation of an evidence-based strategic plan. Coalitions should keep in mind that using the Pathways tools may help them identify multiple outcomes where improvements can be made; however, it is unlikely that all outcomes can realistically be improved at once. Thus, we recommend coalitions identify a manageable number of outcomes that they would like to address first (e.g., focus on one or two outcomes).