

[By All Means Community COVID-19 Data Dashboard:](#) Tracking the Provision of Essential Services, Supports, and Resources

As communities around the country grapple with the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, local Children’s Cabinets are swiftly coordinating the delivery of vital services, supports, and resources for children and families. Children’s Cabinets represent a powerful mechanism for spearheading these efforts. As convening bodies typically helmed by mayors, Cabinets bring together key agencies and organizations that support children’s comprehensive needs, both in school and out of school. The [Education Redesign Lab](#) (EdRedesign), based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, assists a network of *By All Means* communities in developing and strengthening Children’s Cabinets.

During this uncertain time, Cabinets are harnessing their expertise, experience, and cross-sector relationships to rapidly address children and families’ immediate needs. This includes overseeing the provision of meals and supplemental food, ensuring access to digital devices and broadband for virtual learning, and distributing diapers, formula, and other basic supplies. Cabinets are also working with partners to support health needs as well as adapt a range of programming and activities to engage children and families remotely.

In order to capture the broad array of supports, services, and resources that Cabinets are facilitating during the pandemic, the [Education Redesign Lab](#) at Harvard Graduate School of Education and the [Somerville Children’s Cabinet](#) in Massachusetts, particularly with the help of SomerPromise Coordinator Ruth Santos, co-created a customizable [Data Dashboard](#) available at no cost to communities (you can view a [mock dashboard](#) with fictitious data to get an idea of how your data could be graphically represented). This user-friendly template outlines a set of key categories of data—early childhood, school, food, among others—that can be tracked over time and displayed in multiple types of graphs. Cabinets can also insert additional categories of data that are already being collected in their communities (this [metrics table](#) on page 15 contains a robust set of options). The dashboard also provides a space to enter qualitative information.

How can Children’s Cabinets Use the Data Dashboard to Support their Work?

Children’s Cabinets can use the data dashboard for multiple purposes. First, the dashboard is a tool for systematically recording and monitoring the number of supports, services, and resources that children and families receive in their community. By regularly updating these metrics, Cabinets can document trends, set priorities, and adjust actions if necessary. They can also leverage the dashboard to advocate for additional funding to support particular areas of need.

In addition to providing a source of rich information to guide Cabinets’ overall work during the pandemic, the dashboard can be used to demonstrate the unique value of the Cabinet structure. Local coordinating bodies use a systemic approach to address the needs of vulnerable children and families, which are even more acute now. By using data to show their impact, Cabinets can help build strong public will to maintain and sustain their collective work during the current crisis and into the future.