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Real-Time Supply and Demand Data in Action: Early Learning Ventures

Welcome to the first issue of VOICES, a new e-newsletter from Opportunities Exchange (OppEx) that features work by partners and collaborating organizations across the US. This issue features work by [Early Learning Ventures \(ELV\)](#), a nonprofit organization that leads a Shared Service Alliance in Colorado and supports several other Alliances around the country via their Child Care Management System (CCMS), [Alliance CORE](#). ELV uses data from Alliance CORE to track supply and demand across sites they support.

In the new and unpredictable post COVID-19 world, understanding child care supply and demand, in granular detail, will be essential. Historical averages, or projections based on census data and the licensed capacity of programs, are likely far too general to be helpful in predicting enrollment in child care centers and

homes. These analyses cannot take into consideration parental concerns about safety or the impact of recent and sporadic unemployment or under-employment. In the near-term, and perhaps for the next several years, looking closely at what choices families actually make—in real time—will be essential. In parallel, we need to gather data on how the early care and education sector is responding to new health and safety guidelines and fluctuating demand by measuring, on a weekly, or perhaps even daily, basis the precise number of filled (and vacant) spaces in early childhood programs—by age of child, location, quality level, hours of operation, and more. As underscored in our recent issue brief [Reinvent vs Rebuild: Let's Fix the Child Care System](#), real-time data on supply and demand is step one in the OppEx proposed child care come-back plan.

Provider-based [Child Care Management Systems](#), like ELV's Alliance CORE make it possible to not only gather and analyze real-time data but also use it to inform decision-making. This blog highlights one recent example of how the ELV team is examining these data. No doubt, a deeper analysis will emerge over time. Stay tuned.

For more information on CCMS, why they matter and how to evaluate the pros and cons of various systems, go to the [business leadership](#) section of Shared Services Central or check out our [COVID-19 Responses and Resources](#) tab.

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