

# IMPACT

EVALUATING HOW **GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION** AFFECTS INDICATORS OF CHILD, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

## GaFCP Supports Effective Data Use

Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP) supports the Georgia Family Connection statewide network and Collaboratives in all 159 counties working to improve child and family well-being by:

- providing technical assistance and training;
- collecting, compiling, and interpreting data, which also supports partners and decision-makers; and
- convening and connecting partners at the local, state, and national level.

GaFCP teams equip Collaboratives with the knowledge and specific skills they need to maximize their efforts to improve outcomes

for children, families, and communities in the areas of communications, data, community support, evaluation and results accountability, public compliance, strategy, innovation, and engagement.

GaFCP's Outcomes Team reviewed data from FY22 – FY24 collected during Collaboratives' Annual Plan cross-team meetings held in February and March to review plans for the following year, along with data use surveys distributed annually to Collaboratives following those meetings.

The statewide network identified three specific ways GaFCP supports effective data use:

- increasing resources to support data driven decision-making;
- providing technical assistance and training to help Collaboratives expand and improve their data use; and
- increasing local awareness of GaFCP's efforts to develop, maintain, and expand state-level partnerships.

This edition of *IMPACT* explores GaFCP's role in helping Collaboratives increase their opportunities for success by promoting effective data use.

## Increasing Resources to Support Data-Driven Decision-Making

As Georgia's designated KIDS COUNT® grantee, GaFCP compiles high-quality data on child and family well-being for all 159 counties, which are fundamental for understanding the conditions of families, children, and communities in each county.

GaFCP produces data tools and reports designed to help Georgia Family Connection Collaboratives understand and utilize community population data and identify key issues to help develop and implement strategies that reflect each Collaborative's work. These interactive tools include:

- summaries and visual displays of county population data;
- data comparisons to other counties and the state; and
- summaries of data disaggregated by race and ethnicity.

GaFCP provides training and technical assistance on how Collaboratives, community members, partners, legislators, and anyone working toward measurably better outcomes for all our children, families, and communities can use these data to explore specific indicators of child and family well-being.

GaFCP also monitors each Collaborative's planning, accomplishments, use of data, and overall functioning through surveys and interviews, including the annual Self-Assessment, Collaborative Vitality Survey, Annual Plan cross-team meetings, and Data Use Survey.

Each Collaborative receives county-specific reports generated from these sources, including a Partner Engagement Matrix, Strategy Implementation Report, and Collaborative Vitality Survey Trend and Annual Report.

## How Collaboratives Are Using Data

**99%** of Collaboratives reported in each of the **3** fiscal years examined that they used **at least 1** of the data tools and reports GaFCP provided.

**90%** of Collaboratives in 2024 reported using data tools they obtained locally or from partners—a **5% increase** from 2022.

# Empowering Communities Through Data

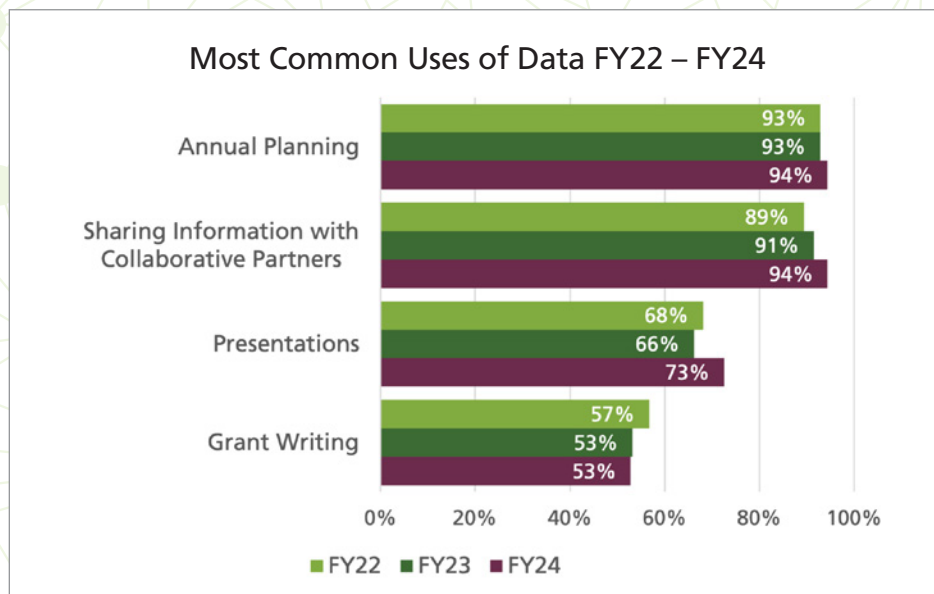
The data tools and reports Collaboratives rated as most helpful were County Profiles, Birth to 21 Snapshots, Collaborative Vitality Surveys, and County and Emerging Trends Profiles.

Tools GaFCP was unable to update during FY22-FY24 were less frequently rated as “helpful” or “very helpful.” However, at least 58% of Collaboratives rated nearly all tools highly.

In addition to updating these tools for FY25, GaFCP provides practical guidance on incorporating them into coordinators’ work through efforts like a new training focused on using data to effectively tell a story and a new Lunch-and-Learn series designed to help Collaboratives get the most out of KIDS COUNT® data tools.

Usage of five tools increased from FY22 to FY24:

- Partner Engagement Matrix use **increased by 10%** to 44%.
- Data Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity use **increased by 18%** to 24%.
- Comparable Counties use **increased by 9%** to 30%.



- Strategy Implementation Reports use **increased by 8%** to 29%.
- Interactive Map use **increased by 4%** to 18%.

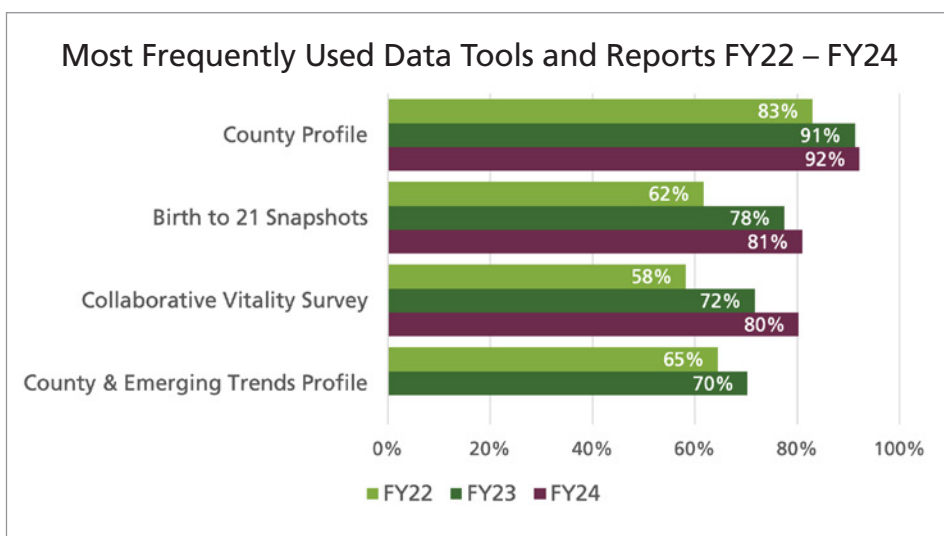
Usage of the Indicator Explorer and Indicator Improvement Calculator decreased (16% in FY22 to 15% in FY24 and 8% in FY22 to 6% in FY24, respectively) because these tools weren’t updated during this timeframe due to data disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Collaborative coordinators in annual planning interviews frequently shared how data that GaFCP provides informs their work. For example:

- “The disaggregated data has been helpful in writing grants and helping to tell the story of various populations.”
- “All our Strategic Action teams and many of our partners use Georgia KIDS COUNT® and other GaFCP tools. We especially appreciate the equity addition and disaggregation of data.”

The most common uses of data include annual planning, sharing information with Collaborative partners, presentations, and grant writing. Less than 50% of county Collaboratives reported using data for community needs assessment, sharing on social media, identifying specific populations, or geographic areas, and sharing with legislators and policymakers.

GaFCP works with Collaboratives to strengthen all aspects of data use to ensure they fully leverage every strategy available to build stronger communities. GaFCP offers trainings designed to help target specific populations, and legislative outreach support includes new promotional materials to easily share a county’s data story. To encourage sharing data on social media, GaFCP continues to develop a suite of customizable infographics for Collaboratives.



## Lanier Family Connection Leverages GaFCP Data Tools to Address Low Birthweight

Lanier Family Connection Executive Director Amy Griffin said she regularly relies on GaFCP's robust data tools to inform strategic decisions and drive program improvements in Lanier County.

"I utilized the disaggregated race and ethnicity data last year to evaluate low birthweight trends among infants," said Griffin. "This revealed a concerning rise in low-birthweight births among African American babies over the past three years. To better understand this trend, I used the Comparable Counties tool to review data and identified Charlton County as our closest match. Their low-birthweight rate, according to the Georgia Profiles dashboard, was significantly better than ours."

Griffin reached out to Charlton County Family Connection Executive Director Waldron Hamilton and discovered their success was largely due to partnering with

the Perinatal Health Program—which also serves Lanier County. Griffin engaged them to join the Collaborative's strategy team to proactively address this issue.

In addition to informing program strategies, Griffin consistently uses GaFCP's data tools to support grant writing.

"The Georgia Profiles data have provided credible, locally specific statistics that strengthen our applications and clearly communicate need," said Griffin, who noted that these data points have been invaluable in securing the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Grant, First Steps Grant, and a grant from Aldi. "By grounding our proposals in accurate county-level evidence and trend data, I'm able to present a compelling picture of community needs and the targeted solutions we aim to implement—ultimately increasing our competitiveness for funding opportunities."



## Engaging Collaboratives to Expand and Improve their Use of Data

GaFCP provides technical assistance to help Collaboratives maximize and expand their use of data for local decision-making.

Annual Plan Review interviews conducted in FY23 and FY24 included questions about Collaborative needs for data and evaluation technical assistance. Most interviews—87% in FY23 and 81% in FY24—identified at least one technical assistance need.

These percentages reflect an undercount of needs for technical assistance, because Collaboratives reporting no need frequently commented that:

- ongoing technical assistance relationships with GaFCP met all their needs,
- Collaboratives were in transition (e.g., hiring a new coordinator), or
- external evaluators and partners provided technical assistance support.

Collaboratives identified **428** technical assistance needs in FY23 and FY24, reflecting a **22% increase** during that timeframe.

The six most frequently mentioned technical assistance needs in FY23 interviews accounted for 47% of the total identified and include:

- developing an evaluation system (25%),
- logic model development (18%),
- assistance in using data collection tools (17%),
- annual data review (15%),
- strategy development (15%), and
- communicating results (12%).

The most cited technical assistance needs in FY24 interviews were:

- logic model development (25%),
- annual data review (16%),
- disaggregated/sub-county data (12%),
- general evaluation capacity (11%),
- community needs assessment (11%), and
- analyzing, presenting, and using evaluation data (11%).

These needs accounted for 67% of the total identified post-planning technical assistance for FY25, which reflects an increasing focus on evaluation and program planning and an increasing knowledge and sophistication of data use. These data inform GaFCP technical assistance plans with each county.



# How Collaboratives Can Use Data to Improve Community Outcomes

- Work with your Evaluation and Results Accountability (ERA) provider for technical assistance and training to enhance appropriate data utilization from various assessment and data tools for evaluation and planning purposes with your Collaborative. If you're not familiar with your assigned TA provider or have general questions about ERA, contact Valerie Hutcherson at [vhutcherson@bellsouth.net](mailto:vhutcherson@bellsouth.net).
- Reach out to Jacquan Jordan at [jacquan@gafcp.org](mailto:jacquan@gafcp.org) to provide training on GaFCP's robust KIDS COUNT® database tracking child, family, and community well-being to ensure that Collaborative members and partners gain a full understanding of the value and versatility of these data and the suite of data tools available to them.
- Access disaggregated data from sources like GaFCP's Interactive Map and Data Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity tool to better understand disparities, context, and opportunities to help ensure resources are delivered to the populations most in need.
- Visit [gafcp.org/data-tools](https://gafcp.org/data-tools) to craft local stories grounded in data. Utilize printable visualizations to share key insights with local- and state-level partners, investors, and legislators in person and via email, social media, and local media outlets to raise awareness and mobilize action.
- Engage the ERA Team to ensure available data are effectively built into strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation of each Collaborative's goals.
- Ensure Collaborative members are utilizing strategy implementation reports, Partner Engagement Matrix, and Collaborative Vitality Survey annual and trend reports to enhance planning and implement effective, robust strategies that improve results.
- Engage partners to explore and share your local data that can help inform strategy implementation and evaluation.

## Coming Soon in Fall 2025

The next installment of this two-part edition of *IMPACT* will focus on GaFCP's efforts to support and expand local- and state-level partnerships to improve the lives of all children and families in the state.

*IMPACT* examines how collaboration among our local- and state-level partners affects indicators of child, family, and community well-being. Each edition presents a snapshot of a finding taken from reports produced by GaFCP's Outcomes Team of researchers, including Metis Associates and Georgia State University.

GaFCP is a public-private partnership created by the State of Georgia and investors from the private sector to assist communities in addressing the serious challenges facing children and families. GaFCP also serves as a resource to state agencies across Georgia that work to improve the conditions of children and families.

Georgia KIDS COUNT® provides policymakers and citizens with current data they need to make informed decisions regarding priorities, services, and resources that impact Georgia's children, youth, families, and communities.

Reach out with any questions or feedback to Rebekah Hudgins of the GaFCP Outcomes Team at [rhudgins@anthroeval.org](mailto:rhudgins@anthroeval.org).



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