

At a glance

How can we use the individual level data on child development age two contained in the Community Services dataset to understand trends and disparities?

What we hope to find out

We will quantify how much data on child development age 2 is available for use at a national level and how representative this data is. We will investigate why child development data is missing in the national dataset for data improvement.

Why are we doing this study

In line with policy focus on promoting child health and development in the early years of a child's life, there is increasing interest in what we can learn from the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ; 3rd Edition). The ASQ is a measure of child development. An adapted British version is used at the universal health review, which should take place for all children in England when they are aged 2- 2½ years. The intended function of the ASQ in England is to provide a population measure of child development that can be used to monitor trends and disparities, and evaluate policies and interventions. The ASQ data is collated nationally and held in the Community Services Dataset (CSDS), for research purposes.

Although the CSDS should hold ASQ data for every child in England who has had a 2- 2½ year review, we know from our [previous work](#) that the ASQ data in CSDS is likely to be highly incomplete. In other words, many children who have had their development assessed using the ASQ tool will have their ASQ data missing in CSDS. We anticipate that completeness of ASQ in CSDS will vary across local areas and we want to understand why this is to support improvements in data quality.

Why this is important

Our inquiry into the completeness of ASQ data in CSDS arose from [another study](#), where we used publicly available ASQ data, which is grouped for all

children in each local authority. We found that this aggregate data was insufficient to carry out our planned analysis. We concluded that any population-level inquiry into child development age 2 across England required the individual level ASQ data held in CSDS.

Investigating the useability of ASQ within CSDS is a foundational step for any further learning about child development age 2 in England.

What we will do

This is a mixed methods study using quantitative analyses of national data routinely collected from services (CSDS) and qualitative interviews with staff in local authorities. We will quantify and describe the completeness of the ASQ data in CSDS by comparing it to the publicly available data. We will produce a 'research-ready' subset of CSDS data for future work on child development. We will interview local authority staff to understand why some local areas have highly complete ASQ data in CSDS and to identify opportunities for improving CSDS data flows and completeness.

Project Team

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