

FAQs: ECHILD dataset briefing

ADR UK Research Fellowships 2025 funding opportunity

The following frequently asked questions were compiled from questions raised during a dataset briefing webinar on the ECHILD (Education and Child Health Outcomes from Linked Data) – England dataset, which was held to support the applications for the 2025 round of ADR UK Research Fellowships.

- [Find out more about the ADR UK Research Fellowships funding opportunity](#) – open for applications until 26 February 2026.
- [Find out more about the ECHILD dataset.](#)
- Watch the [recorded webinar](#) about ECHILD and access the [slide deck](#).

Dataset Coverage & Content

1. What is the earliest birth cohort included in the mother–baby linkage within the ECHILD dataset?

The earliest birth cohort included in the mother-baby link is for financial year 1997/98-1998/99. However, linkage quality is better for 2002/03 onwards (after NHS Numbers for babies was brought in). More details of the Mother-Baby link can be found [here](#) or in our Data Resource Profiles under [Data resources – ECHILD: Education and Child Health Insights from Linked Data](#).

2. Does the maternal link allow identification of siblings in social care data?

The mother-baby link allows us to flag children that are born to the same mother and is based on linkage of hospital delivery and birth records. Using this, you could then link each sibling to their social care data to understand sibling trajectories. However, children who only have contact with children’s social care services prior to school age cannot be linked to their health records in ECHILD, and so data for these children would not be available through the [mother-baby link](#).

3. Are all research publications listed on the ECHILD website based on this dataset?

Yes, peer reviewed papers, protocols and conference Abstracts are listed under [Publications](#). Other outputs such as blogs are found under [News](#).

Access & Permissions

4. Are there any costs associated with accessing ECHILD data or linked datasets such as Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) and Mental Health Services Data Set (MHSDS)?

Access to ECHILD is currently free. If you wish to access health data only such as HES or MHSDS, please get in touch with [NHS England](#), who will charge a fee to any data request.

5. Should the data access process (permissions and contracts) begin before an ADR UK Fellowship starts to avoid delays?

As soon as your application is successful, please contact us at ich.echild@ucl.ac.uk to start your project approval process which includes ECHILD approval, the submission to the Office for National Statistics Research Accreditation Panel and the sublicense agreement signature by your institution.

6. Should applicants contact the ECHILD/UCL team before submitting a Fellowship application for feasibility checks?

It is not mandatory, but the team is happy to be approached if there are questions about the data or anything else.

Technical Support

7. Are there data management or analysis guidelines available for Stata users?

Our "[How to](#)" guides include generic guidelines and support for users of any statistical software packages. The associated code is currently only available in R.

Research Guidance

8. How can applicants ensure their proposal is novel given existing research using ECHILD?

You can check the ECHILD website to learn about [ongoing research studies](#) and also check our [publications list](#) for published protocols. You can also chat with the ECHILD team via ich.echild@ucl.ac.uk to check whether we have been approached by other researchers with similar ideas.

9. Do applicants need to collaborate with UCL researchers to access ECHILD or apply for funding?

No need to have a UCL collaborator, if all requirements are met (full accredited researcher accreditation, employed at a UK institution, assured organisational connectivity in place or access to a SafePod). UK based researchers can apply for access to ECHILD. No specific funding is required for access. Details on how to apply for access to ECHILD data are found on our website under [Data Access](#).