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**State Update**

**Budget**

On July 6, the Illinois General Assembly passed a state budget--the first full-year, fully-funded budget since FY2014--with significant funding to early childhood programs including:

- \$50 million increase for Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative, Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) through the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)--total funding is now \$443,738,100--the highest it has ever been. (\*See the [News and Announcements section](#) below for more about Intent to Submit and Request for Proposals.)
- Restoration of home visiting programs in the Department of Human Services to their FY2014 levels of \$10,040,000 for Healthy Families and \$6,870,300 for Parents Too Soon.
- \$77 million increase over the expected FY2017 expenditures for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)--total funding is now \$476,790,900. (Previously, the governor's office said restoration of full CCAP eligibility would occur with a complete budget and advocates are working to gain clarity.)
- \$4 million increase over the expected FY2017 expenditures for Early Intervention--total funding is now \$96,691,900.

One important piece of the budget is still incomplete, with the governor's amendatory veto of SB1, the evidence-based school funding bill which would overhaul Illinois' K-12 funding formula. Without a statutory change to an evidence-based model, the state is unable to issue FY2018 payments to schools for K-12 programming. Lawmakers may return to Springfield as early as next week for further work on this issue. SB1 does not impact early childhood block grant dollars.

It will take some time for early childhood programs to rebound from the impasse, but with the General Assembly budget and revenue overrides, we are relieved that early childhood programs will be able to shift their focus to rebuilding their programs, providing vital services for children and families, and planning for the future of the children and families they serve.

Even with the budget and revenue, the significant backlog of bills that has built up over the past two years will take time to resolve. Early childhood providers should maintain contact

with their funding agency to be sure that providers have turned in the necessary paperwork to ensure payment. A [recent report](#) by the Chicago Foundation for Women notes the damage of the budget impasse.

## Session Recap

There were several pieces of legislation that passed during the FY2017 legislative session, all currently awaiting the governor's signature:

- HB2663 (Stratton; Lightford): Prevents preschool expulsions and provides protections for children in programs funded by the ISBE or those licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services and ensures children remain in the most beneficial early care and education setting. The bill also identifies trainings and topics needed to address the problem and asks state agencies to make this information available to programs, as well as calls for better tracking of expulsions to expand understanding how often and where they are occurring.
- HB3213 (Wallace; Hutchinson): Restores access to CCAP for families in non-TANF education and training programs.
- HB2426 (Currie; Aquino): Updates Chicago Block Grant statute regarding ECBG requirements which clarifies language by updating outdated terminology.
- HJR24 (Willis; Bertino-Tarrant): Establishes a Kindergarten Transitions Advisory Committee for the purposes of developing recommendations to improve connections and transitions between early learning programs and the early elementary grades (does not require the governor's signature).

Watch our [2017 Legislative Update webinar](#) for additional details.

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## Federal Update

### Budget

#### FY2017

Congress agreed to a federal omnibus spending bill for FY2017 that includes increases in funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (\$95 million), Head Start (\$85 million) and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships (\$5 million) while maintaining funding levels for Preschool Development Grants for FY2017.

This spending bill will fund the remainder of FY2017 which ends on September 30, 2017. [The First Five Years Fund](#) released a statement on the funding plan.

#### FY2018

The president released details of his FY2018 budget in May of this year. This budget, similar to the previously released "Skinny Budget", includes about an overall 10% boost to defense discretionary spending and proposes deep cuts to non-defense discretionary spending. The House has since begun work on its budget, which currently provides very small increases to Head Start (\$22 million), the Child Care and Development Block Grant (\$4 million) and level funding for Preschool Development Grants (\$250 million). While these programs fare better than many, these increases are also not enough to continue the program improvements required by recent reauthorizations. The federal budget process is very long and there will be many more developments to come, however, it is important for your members of Congress to hear from you about the importance of these investments in your community and their critical role in Illinois' early learning system.

#### Affordable Care Act and Medicaid changes

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) repeal failed as the Senate did not gather sufficient votes. This means that the current effort to both repeal the ACA as well as dramatically restructure

Medicaid is dead, however, advocates must continue their vigilance as future attempts to repeal the ACA and alter Medicaid are still likely.

Vigilance is necessary because Medicaid is a critically vital program for children and families. Nationally, Medicaid covers over 70 million, or 1 in 5 people. In Illinois, 1.4 million children rely on Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), known as "All Kids." Another 31,000 are covered by the Affordable Care Act marketplace plans.

#### [MIECHV reauthorization](#)

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) is scheduled to expire September 30, 2017. MIECHV reauthorization bills have been introduced by both the Republican and Democratic leaders of the Human Resources subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee. In June, HR2824 was introduced by subcommittee chair Rep. Adrian Smith (NE) and ranking minority member Rep. Danny Davis (IL) introduced a bill in late July. Conversations have also begun in the US Senate. Advocates continue to make the case for a 5-year reauthorization without program changes and with increased investments. Stay informed on the latest [MIECHV reauthorization news](#).

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## Resources, Reports and Other Publications

### **Guide to Trauma-Informed Human Services**

The Administration for Children and Families, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations, the Administration for Community Living, the Offices of the Assistant Secretary for Health and the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation developed a [Guide to Trauma-Informed Human Services](#). The guide is intended to provide an introduction to the topic of trauma, a discussion of why understanding and addressing trauma is important for human services programs and a "road map" to find relevant resources.

### **WIC Works: Addressing the Nutrition and Health Needs of Low-Income Families**

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities released a policy brief, [WIC Works: Addressing the nutrition and health needs of low-income families](#), which reviews the extensive research noting the cost-effective investment of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program.

### **Early Childhood Two-Generation State Policy Profiles**

The National Center for Children in Poverty recently updated its [Early Childhood Two-Generation State Policy Profiles](#), which provide a two-generation view of current policies affecting children birth to age 8, nationally and state-by-state, in the areas of early care and education, health and parenting/family economic supports.

### **Research Briefs on Families Experiencing Homelessness**

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and the Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation issued a [series of research briefs](#) on the homeless families using the Family Options Study data to look at families' experiences in the 20 months following a shelter stay.

### **Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion**

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes released the policy report, [Information and Resources to Assist States in Developing Policy on Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion](#), which includes a review of current research on the impact and prevalence of suspension and expulsion in early childhood programs and a summary of key federal and

national policy on suspension and expulsion in early childhood programs. It also provides an overview of emerging state policy, descriptions of effective approaches for prevention, and considerations for states in developing policy in this area.

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### **Media and Young Minds**

A policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), [Media and Young Minds](#), addresses the influence of media on the health and development of children from birth to 5 years of age. The AAP statement reviews the existing literature on a variety of traditional and new technologies, their potential for educational benefit and related health concerns for young children.

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### **State Fact Sheets on Early Learning Programs**

The Center for American Progress released in-depth [fact sheets](#) to look at both the need for and current state of early learning programs in the 50 states and Washington, DC. The fact sheets include state-specific costs of children, percentages of child care providers participating in the state quality rating and improvement system, and descriptions of state-funded preschool program.

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### **KIDS COUNT Data Book**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation released its annual [KIDS COUNT Data Book](#), which highlights state trends in child well-being. Overall, the Data Book shows the child poverty rate in 2015 continued to drop and children experienced gains in reading proficiency and health insurance for children is on the rise. Yet, data shows high levels of children living in poverty.

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### **Workforce Parity**

NIEER has partnered with the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment on two policy briefs, [In Pursuit of Pre-K Parity: A Proposed Framework for Understanding and Advancing Policy and Practice](#), and [Teacher Compensation Parity Policies and State Funded Pre-K Programs](#), to look at the landscape of compensation parity policy for pre-k teachers.

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### **Young Fathers--Their Children and Families**

The Center for the Study of Social Policy's newest policy report, [Changing Systems & Practice to Improve Outcomes For Young Fathers, Their Children & Their Families](#), highlights the need to support young fathers by providing recommendations for child welfare system policy and practice change. Research shows that the relationship between fathers and their children is essential to the well-being of families and the healthy development of children.

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### **Position Statement on Challenging Behaviors**

The Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children released a [position statement](#) on challenging behaviors from birth to age 8. It is important for adults who care for and teach young children to be prepared to address challenging behavior in positive and instructive ways by preventing and addressing underlying causes of the behavior and teaching social-emotional skills.

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## **News and Announcements**

### **ISBE RFP for PFA-Expansion and Intent to Submit for PI**

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) released a [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) for the Preschool for All-Expansion and is due **September 18 at 4pm. In order to gain access to the system, applicants MUST submit an [Intent to Apply](#) by September 8.**

The Notice of Intent to Submit Proposals for the [Prevention Initiative](#) programs for FY2018 is available.

If your program previously completed the Intent to Submit survey, **please note that a new submission is required.** This is the first time in several years that this funding is open to new entities, as well as current grantees. The Intent to Submit Proposals and RFP resources can be found on the [ISBE Early Childhood RFP website](#) along with the latest news on the RFP process.

Questions may be directed to the Early Childhood Division at 217.524.4835 or [earlychi@isbe.net](mailto:earlychi@isbe.net).

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### **ISBE Emergency Rules on Teacher Qualifications**

ISBE issued [emergency rules](#) related to the teacher shortages, effective July 28. The emergency rule would allow for an increased supply of early childhood teachers by allowing teachers with an Early Childhood Education (ECE) endorsement to receive a short-term approval for ECE teaching if they have 9 credit hours of ECE or pass the ECE content test. The short-term approval would allow teachers 3 years to complete the requirements for the endorsement. A [Summary of Action](#) is available online.

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### **Illinois Early Childhood Court Team**

The pilot project of the [Illinois Early Childhood Court Team](#) launched July 1. Led by Judge Patricia Martin, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, and public and private stakeholders, this initiative focuses on supporting families who have infants and toddlers under the age of 4 in child welfare services. The pilot goals include changing local systems to improve outcomes and prevent future court involvement in the lives of very young children, by exposing and addressing the structural issues in the system that prevent families from succeeding.

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### **City Colleges of Chicago: Early Childhood Education programs**

As the demand for early childhood educators grows, City Colleges must prepare more Chicagoans to meet this need. The future of Chicago's children depends on our ability at City Colleges to prepare the next generation of qualified early childhood educators. The great news is that City Colleges will continue to offer accessible coursework in our communities. City Colleges offers child development coursework at six of our seven colleges. Help Chicago's children by [enrolling](#) in Child Development coursework at the City Colleges of Chicago today and become an early childhood educator!

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### **Free Help for Parents of Newborns**

Illinois Family Connects is a new service available to parents who live in Stephenson and Peoria Counties. This program allows parents of newborns to set up a home appointment with a highly-trained nurse who can: perform health screenings; offer advice on feeding and sleeping; provide connections to childcare; suggest community resources, and much more!

Home visits happen approximately three weeks after the baby is born, but parents can schedule this appointment before or after the baby's birth. To learn more about Illinois Family Connects, visit [ILfamilyconnects.org](http://ILfamilyconnects.org).

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### **L.E.A.D Early Childhood Clearinghouse**

[The Leadership Education for Administrators and Directors \(L.E.A.D.\) Early Childhood Clearinghouse](#) launched in response to the need for better data on the early childhood

leadership workforce. The Clearinghouse, created in partnership with multiple organizations, is a new source for information about early childhood program leaders and will feature cross-sector statistics related to those leaders serving young children birth through age 8.

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## Medicaid Resources

Read the latest commentary on the federal health care bill by visiting the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) and [Protect Our Care Illinois](#).

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## Events

### Delivering on the Promise: Initiative to End ECE Suspension and Expulsions

The National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) will host a webinar, [Delivering on the Promise of Early Childhood Education \(ECE\)](#), on Monday, August 21 from 2-3pm. The webinar highlights strategies at program and system levels to address suspensions and expulsions in ECE that disproportionately affect Black children. The webinar also signals the launch of NBCDI's campaign to promote inclusive early learning environments and end harsh disciplinary practices that exclude children.

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### Illinois Health Care Coverage Conference

The Arc of Illinois will host its annual health conference, [Illinois Health Care Coverage Options and Benefits Information for People with Disabilities](#), on September 14 at the Doubletree Hotel, Alsip, IL. CEUs are available and limited stipends for families are also offered.

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## Parent and Teacher Resources

### Parent Toolkit

Arizona First Things First created a [digital Parent Kit](#) to help new parents support the healthy development of their infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The virtual resource provides information on child development, health and safety, how to choose high-quality child care, family well-being and school readiness.

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### Developmental Milestones

Talking is Teaching released a developmental milestones quick [reference guide](#) for families to learn more about and watch for important developmental milestones from birth to the age of 5.

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### Protecting Children from Extreme Heat

The summer months can produce extreme heat that can negatively impact children. Healthy Children [provides tips](#) for parents on how to protect children from the heat as much as possible and how to spot effects of extreme heat.

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### Resource Guide for Cultural Responsive Approaches

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families created a [Resource Guide for Community-Based Organizations on Developing Culturally Responsive Approaches to Serving Diverse Populations](#). Community-based service organizations reduce disparities in

access and use of important social services especially as communities become more culturally and linguistically diverse. The guide identifies easily accessible resources on cultural competency that organizations can use to become more responsive to the needs of their targeted populations, and to help attract funds to support their important work.

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### **Two-Generation Tools**

The Aspen Institute released the [2Gen Tools to Help Families and Children Thrive: A Resource for Staff Implementing Federal, State and Local Government Staff Programs Serving Children and Families](#) to support federal, state and local staff at all levels to embed a two generation approach in funding opportunities, program design, initiatives and priorities as well as technical assistance.

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