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State Update

Ounce of Prevention Fund 2018/FY2019 Legislative Agenda

This spring, the Ounce will pursue a number of budgetary and legislative objectives.

It is imperative that the governor and Illinois General Assembly pass a full-year, fully funded budget that increases and protects early childhood funding, which:

- Increases the Early Childhood Block Grant by \$50 million.
- Provides level funding for voluntary home visiting programs (Parents Too Soon and Healthy Families budget line - Department of Human Services).
- Rejects proposed cuts to the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) in order to implement federally-required 12-month eligibility.
- Increases funding for Early Intervention (EI) services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays.

Legislative measures we will be pursuing include:

- Ensuring that any school funding reform legislation includes provisions to correctly account for preschool English language learners and preschool special education in calculating districts' evidence-based funding levels.
- Re-appropriating Early Childhood Construction Grants that have gone unfunded during the budget impasse by supporting SB2227/HB5828.
- Improving investments in and remove barriers to more early childhood practitioners entering the field and moving toward increased credentials and the Professional Educator License.

State Budget Address

Governor Rauner presented his [FY2019 budget address](#) on February 14 with small increases and level funding for some early learning programs and a significant cut to CCAP. The FY2019 budget included the following programs:

- \$10.5 million increase to the Early Childhood Block Grant--significantly less than what the Illinois State Board of Education included in their proposed budget.
- \$96.1 million decrease in funding to CCAP.
- Level funding for Department of Human Services (DHS)-funded home visiting.
- \$3 million increase to funding for EI.

Funding for CCAP, voluntary home visiting services and EI programs are critically important as these programs are still recovering from the cuts made during the previous budget impasse, which devastated children, families and the human service infrastructure.

- CCAP serves 30,000 fewer children today than before the period of restricted eligibility.
- While many DHS-funded home visiting programs have restored full services, others

- have closed and all have been level-funded for multiple years.
- EI is still hampered by payment delays and serves far fewer children than research shows are eligible today.

This [budget](#) also proposes to cut health care, mental health, housing, and substance abuse programs and services that, along with early learning, are vital to Illinois' families and communities. Additionally, the governor's call for a \$1 billion reduction in state revenues will only compound the state's inability to fund its stated priorities and serve its residents. Read the [joint press release](#) on the budget address from the Ounce and Illinois Action for Children.

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Federal Update

Federal Budget

Earlier this year Congress passed two continuing resolution (CR) bills, one in January and in February, which included reauthorization of and funding to several early childhood programs:

- Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting was reauthorized for five years.
- Children's Health Insurance Program was reauthorized for six years in January's CR and extended in February's CR for another four years, totaling ten years.

Additionally, the package included a budget framework for Federal FY2018 and FY2019. That framework included an agreement to provide significant additional Child Care and Development Block Grant funding to states. Unfortunately, the budget bills did not include legislation to address immigration.

The February CR continued federal spending into late March, at which time the plan is to pass an omnibus budget bill covering FY2018 and FY2019, built on the budget framework passed in February. Congress must take action before the current CR expires in order to continue federal spending and avoid another government shutdown.

Around the same time, Trump released his budget proposal for FY2019. The fate of his proposal is unclear, given the differences between Congress' budget framework and the president's proposal, particularly on domestic spending on social safety net and human services. Trump's proposal outlines spending cuts to and work requirements for programs that assist working families:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly food stamps)
- Medicare
- Housing subsidies

Further, the budget proposal includes a 21% decrease in funding to the Department of Health and Human Services where programs like Head Start and child care are housed. The budget suggests eliminating preschool development grants altogether which have largely allowed states to expand preschool programs. Read the analysis on this budget's impact on education by [New America](#) and [The Center for American Progress](#).

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Resources, Reports and Other Publications

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) report

Child Trends released, [The Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences, Nationally, by State, and by Race or Ethnicity](#), based on the 2016 National Survey of Children's Health. Child Trends estimated the national occurrence of eight specific ACEs and compared the frequency across states by race and ethnicity.

Housing Instability Negatively Impacts Health

A [new study](#) from Children's HealthWatch demonstrates that when families have unstable housing, they are at risk for poor health outcomes and food insecurity. Based on a survey of 22,000 families, about one third of low-income renters reported unstable housing which negatively impacted their health.

Harmful Effects of Immigration Policy on Young Children

The Center for Law and Social Policy released two reports, [Our Children's Fears: Immigration Policy's Effects on Young Children](#) and [Immigration Policy's Harmful Impacts on Early Care and Education](#), which examine the effects of immigration policies to children in immigrant families and describes how professionals who care for young children are coping. Professionals from six states, including Illinois, were interviewed.

Key Considerations for Policymakers on Child Well-Being

A [report](#) from the US Government Accountability Office explores the state of child well-being in the United States and experts' views on policy considerations. Child well-being includes various factors such as a child's family, physical and social environments, health and education. Poverty, especially early in life, can have long-term negative consequences on a child's life.

Preschool Teachers Paid the Least

An article by the *New York Times*, ["Why Are Our Most Important Teachers Paid the Least?"](#), outlines the financial hardships faced by early childhood educators. The story chronicles the day of two preschool teachers in Massachusetts and New Jersey and the challenges of financial compensation, education and work schedules of early childhood programs.

Pre-k Literacy: Rich Adult Interactions and Play

The International Literacy Association issued a report, [What Effective Pre-k Literacy Instruction Looks Like](#). The report outlines how children learn early literacy in a variety of ways, meaning teachers must adopt teaching strategies with both play-related activities, such as singing and drawing, and quality adult interactions.

Educational Opportunity in Early and Middle Childhood

A [study](#) by Stanford's Center for Education Policy Analysis found no correlation between a district's wealth and the average test scores of students. The study suggested student rate of improvement over time as a better measure of school effectiveness. The study tested common assumptions of school test scores coupled with wealth to measure school effectiveness. Test scores from 45 million students who represent approximately 11,000 schools districts were representative in the study.

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News and Announcements

Illinois College Students and SNAP

Beginning this year, full and part-time college students can apply for food assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly food stamps. The Department of Human Services issued the new rules expected to impact approximately 40,000 Illinois college students. Read the story by the [Public News Service](#).

Resources on Opioid Crisis

In response to the opioid crisis across the state, the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse created a [website](#) with resources

ranging from education, prevention and treatment. Illinois has also launched a 24-hour helpline 1-833-2FINDHELP to support those impacted by opioids in the state.

Child Death Rates Higher in the US than Other Nations

A report published in the Health Affairs journal, [Child Mortality in the US and 19 OECD Comparator Nations: A 50-Year Time-Trend Analysis](#), shows the US making the slowest gains in improving infant mortality. Compared to 19 other economically similar countries, the US spends more in health care per child, yet US infants are still 76% more likely to die when compared to their peers in other nations.

Preschool to 3rd Grade

The Education Commission of the States released two special reports, [How States Fund Pre-K: A Primer for Policymakers](#) and [Initiatives from Preschool to Third Grade: A Policymaker's Guide](#), to help advocates make the case for early learning initiatives in their state.

Immigration Announcement on DACA

On February 26 the [US Supreme Court announced](#) it will not take up the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) case and the case will move back to the court of appeals. Currently those with DACA status can apply for renewal, but no new DACA applications will be accepted. The following agencies are assisting with DACA renewals and providing resources:

- [Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights](#)
 - [The Resurrection Project](#)
 - [National Immigrant Justice Center](#)
-

Illinois Teacher Shortage

Advance Illinois conducted an [analysis](#) based on figures from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) on the teacher shortage facing the state. Based on the ISBE survey, both low-income and districts largely in communities of color are most likely to experience teacher shortages.

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Events

Early Childhood Advocacy Day

Join the Ounce and Illinois Action for Children for Early Childhood Advocacy Day (ECAD) on Tuesday, April 10 in Springfield. [Registration is now open](#). ECAD is an opportunity for advocates to speak with legislators on the importance of early childhood programs. All providers, home visitors, teachers, administrators, parents, students and supporters are welcome to attend.

Spring Into Action Conference

Join Illinois Action for Children for the annual [Spring Into Action Conference](#) on April 9-10 at the State House Inn at Springfield. This two-day conference brings together statewide early care and education providers, educators, parents and advocates. Attendees will have an opportunity to participate in timely policy-oriented workshops, networking and visits to the state capitol.

Immigration Policy's Harmful Impacts on Children & Early Care and Education

Join the Center for Law and Social Policy for their webinar [Immigration Policy's Harmful](#)

[Impacts on Children & Early Care and Education](#) on Tuesday, March 13 from 2-3pm to learn more about the two recently released reports that examine the effects of immigration policies on children in immigrant families and describes how professionals who care for young children are coping.

Statewide Day Care Open Forums

[Statewide Day Care Open Forums](#) from March 19-22. These forums are an opportunity to hear about day care licensing updates, policies and procedures. Meetings will be held in Aurora/Sugar Grove, Belleville, Chicago, Lake County, Rock Island, Rockford, Bloomington, Mt. Vernon and Springfield. RSVP is requested.

Session Recap Update

Join the Ounce on March 21 from 11:30am-12:30pm for the [Session Update Webinar](#). During the webinar you'll get a legislative update on what's been going on in Springfield and learn about ways to get involved.

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Parent and Teacher Resources

Back-and-Forth Exchange Boost Language Development

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology released a [study](#) that found the back-and-forth conversation between children and adults is more effective in eliminating the word gap than simply "dumping" words on children.

Self-Regulation Briefs

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation issued a [series of briefs](#) on self-regulation. The briefs include topics like self-regulation interventions, supports caregivers can provide children, and how trauma and stress can impact a child's self-regulation.

Briefs on 2-year-olds

The Hechinger Report released a [series of briefs](#) on 2-year-olds to explain why this age is so critical and supports needed for children in the US.

Resources in the Wake of a School Shooting

Child Trends compiled a [list of tips and resources](#) to help children cope with trauma, particularly in the wake of a school shooting.

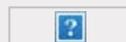
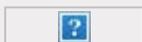
Essentials for Parenting Toddlers and Preschoolers

This [resource](#) from the Centers for Disease Control provides information to help family members and caregivers interact positively with children, specifically 2- to 4-year-olds.

Anti-Bias Considerations in Infant Toddler Programs

National Association for the Education of Young Children [provides considerations](#) for addressing bias in infant toddler programs. The post also provides self-guided questions and recommendations for early childhood professionals to consider.

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