



Raising Illinois

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: 2023 Accomplishments & 2024 Priorities on Behalf of Expecting Families, Infants & Toddlers

This document provides a summary of Raising Illinois' top accomplishments from Fiscal Year 2023 and its key priorities for Fiscal Year 2024, across four policy-specific goals and eight interconnected strategies within the **Illinois Prenatal-to-Age 3 Agenda**. Together with partners and state leaders, the coalition advances policy change through federal, state and local budget advocacy, legislative advocacy, administrative and implementation advocacy and public awareness and engagement.

We encourage you to join us in advancing new and refreshed priorities, amplifying efforts and sharing information about our collective work. Visit www.raisingillinois.org/get-involved to join the Raising Illinois coalition and be a part of our robust and diverse advocacy efforts.

2023 Accomplishments

2024 Priorities

HEALTHY PARENTS & BABIES

Comprehensive Perinatal Supports

- \$38M in FY 2024 for Illinois Dept of Public Health (IDPH) to improve access to care in safety-net hospitals
- Passage of Access to Public Health Data Act to help local health departments better address adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes
- Awards totaling nearly \$5M to expand doula services through the Illinois Dept of Health Services (IDHS) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), which will serve an estimated 320+ children
- Ongoing implementation and expansion of Family Connects, reaching 7,200+ families statewide

- Passage of state legislation addressing maternal substance use and child welfare, prioritizing parent-child attachment and dyadic interventions
- Inform implementation of Medicaid coverage for postpartum care services
- Advance key strategies within the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Action Plan
- Continue raising awareness about maternal morbidity and mortality

Strengthened Home Visiting System

- \$18.75M increase in FY 2024 to the Prevention Initiative set-aside in the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) to fund and expand home visiting services
- \$5M increase in FY 2024 for IDHS home visiting programs, to serve an estimated 440+ families and increase provider salaries
- Federal reauthorization and expansion of MIECHV, investing a total of \$3.1B over five years
- Passage of legislation codifying the IDHS home visiting program and ensuring that future funds supplement current funds

- Increase the state line items in FY 2025 for home visiting programs funded through the ISBE by \$75M and IDHS by \$5M
- Uplift the recommendations of home visiting program staff in the development of the ECBG Request for Proposals for FY 2025
- Increase public understanding of home visiting and its benefits

HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

Accessible Family- & Center-based Early Learning & Care

- \$170M increase in FY 2024 to the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for child care system investments
- \$18.75M increase in FY 2024 to fund and expand center-based infant-toddler child care slots
- Passage of a permanent income threshold for eligibility to participate in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Increased award amount for infant-toddler classrooms in the proposed Smart Start Transition Grants, beginning in FY 2024

- Advocate for a \$75M increase in FY 2025 to ISBE's ECBG, with at least 25% of new funding allocated to Prevention Initiative
- Advocate for additional increases in FY 2025 to sustain the Smart Start program
- Advocate for Early Childhood Construction Grant eligibility to include community-based organizations
- Increase infant-toddler child care capacity at Early Head Start and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programs

Optimized Early Intervention

- \$40M increase in FY 2024 to the IDHS Early Intervention (EI) program
- Award of \$200K to the IDHS Bureau of Intervention to conduct multi-state research on EI models
- Launch of NICU-to-Home service delivery model, Project INITIATE
- Formation of the Illinois EI Grassroots Alliance

- Advocate for a significant increase in FY 2025 to the Early Intervention (EI) program
- Increase EI participation rates for children under age 1 and children who meet automatic eligibility criteria
- Reduce service delays by identifying tangible strategies to recruit providers and modifying and expanding models of service delivery



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2023 Accomplishments

2024 Priorities

FINANCIALLY SECURE FAMILIES

Family-friendly Work Policies & Income Supports for Families

- Passage of legislation increasing child support passthrough payments to 100% for households receiving cash assistance
- \$15M in FY 2024 for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to increase cash assistance grants to 5% above previous levels
- Implementation of the Illinois First Steps program starting in CY 2023
- Passage of the Paid Leave for All Workers Act
- Extension of the temporary rule permitting families to qualify for CCAP
- Advocate for increased appropriations in the federal FY 2024 budget for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Passage of a state child tax credit
- Support the launch of a statewide marketing campaign and mobile enrollment pilot to increase enrollment in WIC
- Passage of a state paid family and medical leave insurance program

STRONG INFRASTRUCTURE

Cross-system Preparation, Professional Development & Support and Strong State & Community Structures

- Commitment of \$2M in FY 2024 to IDPH to create a mental health training program for front-line workers in the pediatric field
- Increase of nearly 35% to the number of consultants in the Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (I/ECMHC) Database
- Continued administration of the ECACE scholarship program, awarding nearly \$12.8M to 1,438 students in its first 18 months
- Launch of a public awareness campaign on I/ECMHC through the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development
- Establishment of 39 regional Birth to Five Action Councils and Family Councils statewide
- Support the passage of legislation establishing a new state early childhood agency
- Collaborate with state partners to improve delivery of prenatal-to-three services and supports
- Uplift the Birth to Five Illinois Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessments



Our Mission

Together, we must address the root causes of disparities and create an equitable and cohesive early childhood development support system for expecting families, infants and toddlers and the communities in which they live. We believe race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or ability should not determine the opportunities and, ultimately, the success a child experiences in life.

Our Vision

Every expecting family, infant and toddler in Illinois should have equitable access to affordable high-quality learning experiences, health services and economic supports that they need during their most formative years—creating the strongest foundation for their success in school and life.