



Raising
Illinois

RAISING ILLINOIS, FY2025 PROGRESS REPORT

This document outlines Raising Illinois' accomplishments for FY 2025, from July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025, across the coalition's four priority areas and eight interconnected strategies within the Illinois Prenatal to-Three Agenda. As organized in this document, work was done through budget advocacy, legislative advocacy, administrative and implementation advocacy and public awareness, engagement and mobilization.

September, 2025

PERINATAL SUPPORTS

Budget

- Appropriation of **\$118 million** in FY 2026 for the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to support **safety-net hospitals** in serving more uninsured and underinsured residents **(Supporter)**
- Appropriation of **\$40 million** in FY 2026 (60% over FY 2025) for the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to increase payment system rates for **Federally Qualified Health Centers** that treat uninsured and underinsured residents in outpatient settings **(Supporter)**
- Appropriation of **\$8 million** in FY 2026 (100% over FY 2025) for IDPH to extend community-based grants through the **Birth Equity Initiative** **(Supporter)**

Legislation

- Passage of HB 2464, **prohibiting private insurers from charging out-of-network rates** on emergency services provided to an infant in any **neonatal intensive care unit** **(Supporter)**
- Passage of HB 2517, requiring health care professionals who provide maternal health care services to complete a **training on maternal health risk factors for marginalized racial or ethnic groups with increased maternal mortality rates**, as part of an existing implicit bias training requirement **(Supporter)**
- Passage of HB 2688, facilitating **expanded access to out-of-hospital birth services in a licensed birth center and home birth services** provided by a certified nurse midwife **(Supporter)**
- Passage of SB 73, mandating manufacturers to **test baby food products for arsenic, cadmium, lead and mercury** at least monthly, report the results to IDPH and disclose testing information to consumers **(Supporter)**
- Passage of SB 1346, requiring health insurance plans other than Medicaid, in an annual statement of all basic health care services covered by the plan, to **include those services mandated by any newly enacted law or rule** **(Supporter)**
- Passage of SB 2437, requiring hospitals and birthing centers to develop policies to **allow a Medicaid-enrolled doula of the patient's choice to be present before, during and after labor and childbirth**, and for the doula to not count against the patient's guest quota **(Partner)**

Administration & Implementation

- Expansion of **Family Connects Chicago**, a Universal Newborn Support Services (UNSS) model, offering in-home visits to nearly **9,800 families** across 10 hospitals **(Partner)**
- Continued implementation of **Family Connects in Peoria and Stephenson counties**, offering in-home visits to nearly **2,200 families** combined **(Partner)**

- Implementation of **Medicaid coverage for doula services and lactation support services**, as directed under the Improving Health Care for Pregnant and Postpartum Individuals Act (SB 967; Pub. Act 102-665) **(Partner)**
- Disbursement of **\$50 million** from HFS under the **Safety Net Obstetrical Supplemental Payment Program** for safety-net hospitals that maintain perinatal designation from IDPH to preserve or enhance maternal health services **(Supporter)**
- Disbursement of **\$13.5 million** from HFS under the **Critical Access Hospital OB and Other Treatment Services Supplemental Payment Program** to strengthen maternal health and other services provided by critical access hospitals **(Supporter)**
- Federal award of **\$17 million** over 10 years for HFS to participate as one of 15 states in the **Transforming Maternal Health Model (Supporter)**
- Federal award of **\$11 million** over six years for the University of Illinois to establish the **Maternal Health Research Center of Excellence (Supporter)**
- Federal award of **\$1.5 million** over six years for the University of Illinois to lead the statewide **Maternal Health Innovation Program (Supporter)**
- Award of a **\$3.3 million** from the City of Chicago's Community Development Grant program to support the ongoing development of the **Chicago South Side Birth Center (Supporter)**
- Completion of **recommendations for establishing a statewide system for UNSS**, as part of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems project **(Partner)**

Public Awareness, Engagement and Mobilization

- Launch of a campaign organized by the Chicago Department of Public Health to raise **public awareness of 12-month continuous postpartum coverage** under Medicaid **(Supporter)**
- Engagement of parents statewide through the **Maternal and Child Health Family Councils** in support of IDPH's **Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Action Plan (Supporter)**
- Facilitation by EverThrive Illinois of six **birth equity listening sessions**, reaching nearly **100 participants** statewide **(Partner)**
- Creation of **provider awareness and technical assistance materials**, led by the Illinois Public Health Institute, to promote Medicaid coverage of lactation support services **(Partner)**

HOME VISITING

Budget

- Appropriation of **\$748.1 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to administer the **Early Childhood Block Grant**, including Prevention Initiative–Home Visiting **(Partner)**
- Appropriation of **\$27.9 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) for the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to administer the **Maternal and Child Home Visiting Program (Partner)**

Administration & Implementation

- Administration of **\$27.9 million** in general revenue funds for the IDHS **Maternal and Child Home Visiting Program**, serving nearly **3,500 families** across all models **(Partner)**
- Grants from ISBE totaling **\$6.85 million** awarded to 15 programs for **Prevention Initiative (PI)**, with capacity to serve an estimated **512 additional infants and toddlers**, reaching over **12,600 children** through PI–Home Visiting **(Partner)**
- Additional FY 2025 award increases for Prevention Initiative programs to **raise compensation** for home visitors and supervisors **(Partner)**
- **Promotion of the Notice of Funding Opportunity** for the IDHS Maternal and Child Home Visiting Program, including provider education regarding the program cost model, in collaboration with public partners **(Partner)**

Public Awareness, Engagement & Mobilization

- Launch of the Home Visiting Impact Awards, a new **home visitor appreciation campaign** to raise awareness and boost staff morale **(Leader)**
- Mobilization of **five parents and providers to testify at a public hearing** in favor of increased funding in the FY 2026 budget for PI’s prenatal–to–age–three programs **(Leader)**

EARLY CARE & LEARNING

Budget

- Appropriation of **\$777.1 million** in FY 2026 (12.3% over FY 2025) for the Illinois Department of Human Services to accommodate caseload growth in the **Child Care Assistance Program (Partner)**
- Appropriation of **\$748.1 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to administer the **Early Childhood Block Grant**, including Prevention Initiative–Center Based **(Partner)**
- Appropriation of **\$200 million** in FY 2026 for the Illinois Department of Human Services to award **Smart Start Workforce Grants**, including \$90 million in new state spending to replace expired federal funding and adjust provider contract rates **(Partner)**
- Appropriation of roughly **\$46 million** in FY 2026 to the Illinois Capital Development Board for **Early Childhood Construction Grants**, reappropriated from remaining prior-year funds available **(Partner)**
- Appropriation of **\$7 million** by the City of Chicago for **cost-per-child salary increases** for the early childhood workforce, raising wages by up to 10% for at least **3,000 educators (Supporter)**

Legislation

- Passage of HR 137, urging the new Department of Early Childhood to award the remaining funding for the **Early Childhood Construction Grant awards to community-based providers (Supporter)**
- Passage of HB 3439, improving basic child care licensing functions regarding **provisional hiring** and requiring **staff background checks** to be completed every five years instead of every three years **(Partner)**

Administration & Implementation

- Grants from ISBE totaling **\$6.85 million** awarded to 15 programs for **Prevention Initiative (PI)**, with capacity to serve an estimated **512 additional infants and toddlers**, reaching nearly **3,500** children through PI–Center Based **(Partner)**
- Additional FY 2025 award increases for four PI–Center Based programs to invest in **quality improvements (Supporter)**
- Awards to providers from **Smart Start Workforce Grants**, with increased compensation for educators who serve nearly **48,000 infants and toddlers (Supporter)**
- Launch of the new **online application for the Child Care Assistance Program** in three Service Delivery Areas, reaching families in **19 counties (Supporter)**

Public Awareness, Engagement & Mobilization

- Facilitation of a **focus group with 40 providers** to understand their concerns regarding the effective administration of the Smart Start Workforce Grants and publication of findings to inform future advocacy **(Leader)**
- Mobilization of **five parents and providers to testify at a public hearing** in favor of increased funding in the FY 2026 budget for PI's prenatal-to-age-three programs **(Leader)**
- Launch of **family storytelling campaign** to advocate against federal budget cuts to Early Head Start **(Leader)**

EARLY INTERVENTION

Budget

- Appropriation of **\$161.9 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) to the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for Early Intervention, although \$10 million in separately accumulated Medicaid funds will support **rate increases of 5%-8%** for some service providers **(Partner)**

Legislation

- Passage of HB 3327, requiring **hospitals to provide written information on the Early Intervention (EI) program to any parent or guardian whose child is admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit** and, if the child is eligible, to **initiate a written referral** for EI services prior to discharge **(Partner)**

Administration & Implementation

- Adoption of administrative rule changes **allowing state complaints, due process hearing requests and mediation requests regarding EI to be filed electronically** with IDHS so that this process is more accessible to families **(Partner)**
- Publication of IDHS' **statewide cost model report** on EI, recommending an additional annual investment of **\$150 million for direct service and \$18 million for Child and Family Connections offices** to adequately meet need **(Partner)**
- Award of a private planning grant from the American Physical Therapy Association to develop the **NICU-to-home service delivery model** so that EI-eligible families are identified, provided with program information, and given their Individualized Family Service Plan prior to hospital discharge **(Supporter)**

Public Awareness, Engagement & Mobilization

- Collection of more than **3,500 signatures combined across two petitions**, including one authored by Raising Illinois Family Leaders, calling for increased EI funding **(Leader)**
- Engagement of families, providers and the public through the ***Babies Can't Wait: We Need EI* campaign**, reaching over **200 participants in a statewide virtual convening** and a combined **1,200 participants across nine community rallies** **(Leader)**
- Establishment of a new parent advocacy group, **Illinois Families for Early Intervention**, reaching nearly **700 EI families** **(Partner)**
- Publication of nearly **20 instances of earned media coverage** to uplift lived experience and bring awareness to the state's EI crisis **(Leader)**
- Mobilization of **parents and providers to provide public comment** about their experience at the Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention **(Supporter)**
- Facilitation of **"know your rights" trainings for parents and providers** to improve public awareness of families' procedural rights, including the right to file a state complaint **(Partner)**

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Budget

- Appropriation of **\$100 million** in FY 2026 (100% over FY 2025) for the **state-level Child Tax Credit**, doubling its value to 40% of the Earned Income Tax Credit **(Supporter)**
- Appropriation of **\$15 million** in FY 2026 (50% over FY 2025) to the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services for the **Medical Debt Relief Pilot Program** **(Supporter)**
- Appropriation of **\$1 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) to the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for the **Diaper Distribution Pilot Program** **(Supporter)**

Legislation

- Passage of HB 2978, the **Family Neonatal Intensive Care Leave Act**, entitling employees in a workplace with 16 or more employees to protected unpaid time off when a child of the employee is a patient in a neonatal intensive care unit **(Supporter)**
- Passage of SB 212, entitling employees to **reasonable break time that is compensated at their regular rate if they need to express breast milk** in the first year following a nursing infant child's birth **(Supporter)**

Administration & Implementation

- Completion of a **state strategic plan for promoting policy changes to Medicaid and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** that would

increase WIC participation, as part of a national cohort of states supported by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities **(Partner)**

- Integration with the **Internal Revenue Services' Direct File program** by the Illinois Department of Revenue, permitting some state residents to **file their federal taxes for free**, making it easier to receive available tax credits to which they are entitled **(Supporter)**
- Ongoing formal collaboration between IDHS and the Illinois Head Start Association to increase WIC participation by **coordinating referrals to WIC for families enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start programs** **(Supporter)**

Public Awareness, Engagement & Mobilization

- Launch of a **local outreach and mobile enrollment campaign for WIC in two pilot communities** in the City of Chicago, led by the Greater Chicago Food Depository in partnership with Raising Illinois, to improve awareness, challenge misperceptions and drive participation in WIC **(Partner)**
- Award of a public-private grant from the **WIC Community Innovation and Outreach Project** to the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago to establish the West Side WIC Alliance and connect more families to WIC benefits **(Partner)**
- Ongoing outreach and engagement campaign, led by Women Employed, to **raise awareness of the short-term paid leave laws** both in the City of Chicago and at the state level **(Partner)**

CROSS-SYSTEM WORKFORCE

Budget

- Appropriation of **\$21.9 million** in FY 2026 (54.5% over FY 2025) to continue establishing the new **Illinois Department of Early Childhood** **(Partner)**
- Appropriation of **\$6.25 million** in FY 2026 (25% over FY 2025) in total spending authority for the **Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program**, although the remaining funds available fall below FY 2025 **(Supporter)**
- Appropriation of **\$5 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) for the **Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE)** **(Partner)**
- Appropriation of **\$2 million** in FY 2026 (level with FY 2025) for **mental health training for the frontline pediatric workforce** **(Supporter)**

Legislation

- Passage of HB 3446, requiring the new Illinois Department of Early Childhood to **publish and update annually a comprehensive list of college early childhood courses** that child

care teachers and director candidates can take to meet required qualifications

(Supporter)

- Passage of HB 3528, the **Affordable Student Teaching Act**, prohibiting institutions of higher education from requiring student teaching for preservice teachers to be unpaid, which will reduce financial barriers for student teachers and help with recruitment and retention **(Supporter)**
- Passage of SB 406, directing the new Illinois Department of Early Childhood to establish an **Early Childhood Integrated Data System** that allows for cross-agency collaboration to simplify processes and inform decision making **(Supporter)**

Administration & Implementation

- Continued growth of the **statewide registry of Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health (I/ECMH) consultants**, with **206 consultants** (9% increase over FY 2024) across all 102 counties **(Supporter)**
- Establishment of the **Illinois Head Start Association Mental Health Consultant Network** to strengthen connections to I/ECMH consultation for Head Start and Early Head Start programs **(Supporter)**

Public Awareness, Engagement & Mobilization

- Launch of a **storytelling campaign**, led by We, the Village, to uplift provider perspectives, raise public awareness and **support increased funding for ECACE (Supporter)**



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