

eAdvocate Newsletter July



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A PHOTO

By HL Admin posted 12 days ago

This Issue: July eAdvocate

This month, we need your help to take action to protect critical ECE programs on the federal level! Don't miss other resources in this newsletter including available grants, scholarships, and advocacy opportunities.

CALLING ALL PROVIDERS OUTSIDE OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO!

IDPH Announces \$10 Million Program to Provide Air Purifiers to Improve Air Quality in Child Care Centers

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health announced on July 21 that the state is offering more than 20,000 HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) purifiers at no cost to child care centers in Illinois to help reduce the transmission of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19.

To receive air purifiers, plus a three-year supply of filters, child care providers must fill out an [online request form](#) by July 31. The federally funded offer is open to all licensed Illinois child care providers, outside Chicago.

Take Action, TODAY!

- **Protect Federal Funds that Support Early Childhood Systems Building in Illinois**

We need you to take action today to help ensure the [Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five \(PDG B-5\) program](#) stays funded through federal FY 2024! The PDG B-5 program is a \$315 million competitive federal grant designed to improve states' early childhood systems by building upon existing federal, state, and local early learning and care investments.

[In less than 2 minutes, you can send a letter to your Congressperson about the importance of this critical program by filling out this form.](#) Now is the time to call or email your congressional staff to ask them to protect and prioritize the PDG B-5 program before it is eliminated.

- **Protect Head Start & Early Head Start Federal Funding**

Currently, [the proposed FY 2024 budget](#) cuts funding for Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) by \$750 million from the previous year and puts the care of 80,000 children at risk who currently use HS or EHS nationwide. This has a significant impact on critical services for children and families. We need you to tell Congress not to cut Head Start Funding in FY24!

[Take two minutes to email your members of Congress asking them to oppose cuts to Head Start that would harm the children and families we serve.](#)

IAFC Advocacy & Provider Site Visit Interest Form

Are you interested in participating in more advocacy opportunities? Are you an early childhood provider interested in hosting a site visit with your state legislator? [Fill out this form](#) to tell us about your advocacy interests and to provide your information for a future site visit. Site visits are an excellent opportunity to show off your program to a state policymaker and encourage them to keep supporting families, young children, and educators. For questions or more information, contact Joselle (Josie) Escobar at joselle.escobar@actforchildren.org.

Smart Start Transition Grants



Applications for the first round of the Smart Start Transition Grants are now open until July 31! These grants are administered by INCCRRA and will transition licensed child care programs from the Strengthen and Grow Child Care grants to Smart Start Child Care in the future. Smart Start Transition Grants focus on providing stable and predictable funding to improve quality and support workforce development.

Go to the [website](#) for details, tip sheets, technical assistance videos, and more. If you have questions, you can email grants@inccrra.org.

ECACE Scholarship Applications: Open Now

If you work or have worked in early childhood education and you're seeking additional credentials and/or a degree in early childhood education, you may be eligible for the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship Program. ECACE scholarships are available for people with degrees or credentials in early childhood education and may cover partial or the total cost of attendance after other financial aid is received. Note: Costs include tuition and fees, transportation, room and board, and books and supplies. The scholarship program has been expanded to participants who are also seeking post-bachelorette degrees or credentials.

Apply by August 7 for priority access to funding! For more information, including full eligibility criteria, a list of participating institutions, and to apply, visit www.isac.org/ECACEscholarship.

In the News: Illinois State Senator Mike Simmons Advocates for Access to Child Care at the White House

On Thursday, July 20, Illinois State Senator Mike Simmons joined the presidential administration and state leaders from across the country at the White House to [discuss policies](#) that support the affordability, quality,

and supply of child care. We are proud to have a legislative champion of ECE uplift the issues most important to children and families in Illinois and nationwide.

“We must provide our families with solutions at all levels of government to ensure that now, and for generations to come, families live abundant lives, free from the stress of the inability to afford one of their most basic expenses,” said State Senator Mike Simmons

Presidential Administration Announces New Proposed Rules to Lower Child Care Costs & Support Child Care Providers

On July 17, 2023, Vice President Kamala Harris announced new proposed federal rules to deliver on the fight to lower the cost of child care and strengthen the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program. Some of these rules encourage states to cap child care copayments for working families at no more than 7% of a family’s income and waive copayments for families at or below 150% of the federal poverty level. The proposed rules also encourage states to streamline applications for families to access CCDBG funds and ensure child care providers can stabilize their finances through more timely payment processes.

Interested in taking action or providing comments? Anyone can submit comments to these proposed rules on [the website](#) before August 28.

Updates on the Federal Keep Kids Fed Act

In June 2022, Congress took action to pass the Keep Kids Fed Act (KKFA). Congress passed KKFA to respond to the ongoing fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic on child nutrition programs in schools and child care centers, but the essential provisions of the KKFA ended on June 30, 2023. Today, you can share information on the changes from the expiration of the KKFA, including changes to the Child Care and Adult Food Program (CACFP). [Use these tools](#) from the CACFP Roundtable to share these changes with your networks.

Back to School Family Fair hosted by State Senator Omar Aquino and State Representative Lilian Jimenez

State Senator Aquino (2nd District) and State Representative Jimenez (4th District) are delighted to invite anyone in the area to their highly anticipated [Annual Back to School Fair](#), taking place on **Saturday, August 5, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** The event will be held at Prosser Career Academy, located at **2148 N. Long Ave.** Please feel free to spread the word about the back-to-school fair to your friends, family, and neighbors. Make sure to RSVP [here](#).

ANNUAL BACK TO SCHOOL FAMILY FAIR

We will be distributing free book-bags with school supplies, free haircuts & braiding on site!

Activities

Outdoor Activities:

- Bouncy House
- Giant Connect Four
- Giant Jenga
- Arts and Crafts
- Face painting

Indoor Activities:

- Self-defense class
- Boxing lessons
- Basketball Activities

Resources

- Youth programing
- Housing
- Immigration
- Mental health
- Dental & Physical exams

Food & Drinks

- Hot dogs, snacks, & beverages

RSVP HERE

Saturday, August 5th
10:00am-2:00pm
Prosser Career Academy
2148 N. Long ave. Chicago, IL, 60639








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