

Parent Quote Archive

Fall 2023 Survey

We asked parents open-ended questions about what their biggest challenges and concerns are, what is helping them the most, what makes them proud of their child, what are their hopes for their child, and what they want policymakers and elected officials to know.

Below are some of the messages from Illinois parents from our first survey:

(Please note: The following are responses of individual parents in our Illinois Parent Survey and do not necessarily represent the views of Illinois Action for Children or its Board.)

What makes you most proud of this child?

- “She’s interested in the world around her. She questions everything. Her imagination is the best thing about her.”
- “He is very smart. He knows his colors, talks a lot, and is trying to count.”
- “He’s very helpful and eager. He loves to learn and read.”
- “She is so smart and funny. She can brighten the worse day with a giggle and smile.”
- “Watching him grow and be self-sufficient. Seeing him happy when he’s learned something new and shows me!”
- “She’s well-spoken, articulate, and well mannered.”
- “She is so sweet and cares so much about her family.”
- “He is so smart and sweet boy.”
- “His willingness to learn.”
- “It makes me proud that is growing up healthy and everyday trying to learn new things.”
- “He’s so cute and adorable, I love him.”
- “He amazes me at his learning ability to catch on quickly also imitate rather fast... he just shocks me with his level of understanding.”
- “The love he has for others.”

- “How smart she is, and how she absorbs everything like a sponge, and retains knowledge.”
- “How intelligent and curious he is.”
- “She always points out colors, numbers, and animals when she sees them.”
- “She has the purest heart. Always willing to help others.”
- “Everything. He’s the biggest cuddle-y love bug.”
- “He keeps pushing forward, no matter how hard it gets.”
- “Developing news skills, learning new things.”
- “He’s curious and excited to learn about his environment.”
- “I’m proud of that they try to do new things even if they are nervous.”
- “She makes me proud of her silliness and kindness.”
- “How brave she is, smart and goofy, playful.”
- “We went through a tough delivery in the labor room, but my baby made it. My baby is resilient.”
- “Even though he struggles with communication he tried really hard despite his challenges.”
- “Es sociable, amoroso, aprende rápido y le gusta leer mucho.” (He is sociable, loving, learns quickly and likes to read a lot.)
- “Su inteligencia y tenacidad.” (His intelligence and tenacity)
- “Todo, en especial su inteligencia y que es muy amoroso.” (Everything, especially his intelligence and that he is very loving.)
- “Que aprende rápido.” (He learns quickly)
- “Que es independiente.” (That he is independent)
- “Es inteligente, ingenioso, amigable y sano.” (He is intelligent, witty, friendly and healthy.)
- “Que es una niña amorosa de buen corazón.” (That she is a loving girl with a good heart)

What is one of your hopes for your child this coming year?

- “That he learns some of his A, B, Cs”
- “Continue to grow and breastfeed as much as possible.”
- “Slow down and focus more on guided play.”
- “For her to develop her speech more and have a great first year in kindergarten.”
- “What I most hope for is to keep my baby healthy and safe.”
- “For him to listen and be more attentive.”
- “That we can find an activity so he can relieve all his energy in a healthy and productive matter.”
- “She will get adjusted to kindergarten and the rest of the school grades - to actually enjoy them.”
- “To start articulating his needs through language.”
- “Flourish as a child and exceed milestones.”
- “We hope she could be able to sleep through the night and in her own crib.”
- “He feels secure and loved during his development.”
- “Being able to fully communicate verbally or through ASL.”
- “Ability to make a 4–5-word sentence.”
- “That she will be successful in life.”
- “I hope he starts walking and talking and completing his baby milestones. I’m grateful he is such a healthy and happy baby.”
- “I hope that she makes lots of friends and learns a lot in pre-k.”
- “To continue to thrive socially and meet her milestones on time or early.”
- “I hope that my child will start crawling soon and eat solid foods and also have a good sleep cycle.
- “To start to pronounce words more identify colors and numbers and become fully potty trained”
- “To continue to grow their vocabulary and learn to express themselves”
- “To be developmentally ready for kindergarten”
- “Continue progressing in speech and learn to control emotions appropriately.”

- “That he feels confident and safe to be himself.”
- “To get rid of her pacifier, become potty trained, and to begin head start by January 2024”
- “For her to start school and develop emotional connections with others.”
- “Que se convierta en buena hermana y que siga un buen desarrollo.” (That she becomes a good sister and continues her good development)
- “Que aprenda a controlar mejor sus emociones.” (For him to learn to better control his emotions)
- “Que se mantenga aprendiendo nuevas cosas.” (For him to keep learning new things)
- “Que conviva más con niños de su edad.” (Let him socialize with more children his age)
- “Que able mas.” (That he can speak more)
- “Que pueda avanzar un año de escuela.” (That he can advance a year of school)
- “Que mi hijo aprenda mas lenguaje expresivo y le de el uso correcto.” (For my son to learn more expressive language and use it correctly)
- “Que aprenda a controlar su temperament.” (That he learns to control his temper)

What are the biggest challenges and concerns for you and your family right now?

- “To find a better job, I need to go to school. I would have to work and go to school, but I would be missing out on time with my daughters. If I stay where I am, making the little that I do, we'll still hardly survive the month. I don't know where to start.”
- “Feels like we are not spending quality time with our family. End of day, I feel I worked and gave good results for my company, but what about my family?”
- “Being able to be financially stable and free. The cost of living had made everything worse and harder for single parents.”
- “Financially making it day by day the cost of living is extreme, and my money isn't enough to cover all my bills.”
- "Making enough money to pay for everything and having enough time in the day to enjoy my children."
- "That with inflation and prices going up, that we can continue to pay our bills and live comfortably."
- “The biggest concern is that our economy is not getting any better. Everything is going up and I might lose my home. Bills are expensive and having 6 kids is hard to maintain them.”
- “Making rent payment.”
- “That we may lose our home.”
- “Affording better living conditions.”
- “Finding an apartment with a private landlord because ... I been denied more then 10 times when I apply to apartments.”
- "I need to work more or find a better job to have more money coming in."
- "I need to increase my income so I can get myself reliable transportation and my own home for Me and my child"
- "Finding a good paying job to support my son and I"

- “Not having enough food. Not being able to pay for childcare. Not having transportation due to vehicle issues and no money to pay for auto repairs. Not being able to pay for gas”
- “Working full time and being a student, stressing out financially, and time management.”
- “My biggest challenges are to get my kids on time to and from school. I’m working full-time and a full-time parent with no help from the father. It’s hard to manage my time.”
- “Staying financially stable and helping my son through his speech delays.”
- “The price of things just keeps going up, trying to potty train my 1-year-old so I can stop spending money on diapers.”
- “Paying for everything as a single parent, times are getting a little hard, but I manage.”
- “I’m worried about my living situation.”
- “Finding good childcare so that I can find different employment options. Finding Housing. Mental Health.”
- “Monthly income not meeting monthly expenses.”
- “To find childcare so I can find work around my children's school schedule.”
- “In the process of moving into our own place. Having two children with disabilities and not being able to work like I want.”
- “ Getting to a stable place where I can get income to provide for our needs and rely less on outside help financially.”
- “Getting my 3-year-old to reach her developmental milestones. And being able to work and spend time with my family outside of work and still be able to afford the cost of living.”
- “Major challenges my family face today are broadly divided into two categories: external and internal. External problems are those coming from outside the family and affect all members of the family equally. These include poverty, violence, discrimination, unemployment.”
- “The rising costs of food make it hard to stay afloat financially and provide healthy foods for myself and kids.”

- “Child care, utilities, gas, diapers, food running low at the end of month, toiletries, car repairs, my car on its last limb and it not reliable and other necessities.”
- “Make enough money, it’s a struggle to buy winter stuff for kids like coats and shoes. We don’t really go anywhere kids are not participating in any activities. There’s no money for that.”
- “Financially - I can't afford to move out of my parent's house with my child because of childcare cost.”
- “Costos de comida, salud de nuestros niños.” (Food costs, health of our children)
- “Los precios altos en la comida y el transporte para mi hijo que está en high school.” (High prices on food and transportation for my son who is in high school)
- “Encontrar un empleo y cuidado para mi niño.” (Finding employment and care for my child)
- “Administración con el dinero.” (Management with money)
- “Situación financiera complicada, esperando otro bebé y con término de contrato de renta sin posibilidad a renovar.” (Complicated financial situation, expecting another baby and with the rental contract ending without the possibility of renewing)
- “Apoyar a nuestros hijos con sus terapias.” (Support our children with their therapies)
- “Tener un lugar donde vivir solo mis hijos y yo.” (have a place where just my children and I can live)

What is helping you and your family the most right now?

- “A big help for us right now is being able to get formula for my baby through WIC. Sometimes we use the food pantries. That helps us a lot.”
- “We have a huge family. We are all very close and help each other. We would be lost without them.”
- “The only thing that is been helping my family is my son disability check and SNAP benefits.”
- “Child care assistance program. SNAP. LIHEAP. Support from my parents.”
- “The state has helped with food and medical insurance.”
- “My children’s faces, so I can get up and work.”
- “My mother is a big help whenever I need to get things done.”
- “Being together and spending family time together.”
- “Help from my aunt and friend with bills.”
- “Therapy and medication help with my worrying thoughts. Staying present with my child so I can be a part of his developing world. My husband is a great support.”
- “The love that we have for each other.”
- “Food pantry & food banks”
- “Prayers. I pray about everything I hope everything goes smoothly.”
- “The fact that I do have a job and secured income.”
- “The Daycare where I take my kids ... has a flexible schedule and the teachers are so caring and loving.”
- “Nothing I’m trying to get as much help as possible.”
- “I think just me always having hope and at least having a routine of bed time.”
- “For my son getting early intervention.”
- “We don't go out to eat and buy the most important items.”
- “By staying home I am able to take care of my children. I am also able to take them to any appointments that are scheduled.”
- “Government assistance, I wish to be more self-dependable soon.”

- “Being a support system to each other. And finding organizations that offer free activities.”
- “The state has helped with food and medical insurance. YWCA has helped with childcare costs. The state is also helping with paying for my schooling. A crisis center is working with my children and I to help us through this tough time.”
- “Being around each other and loving each other and supporting one of each other!”
- “Having two jobs to try to stay afloat.”
- “Having grandparents help with child care.”
- “Mantenernos en familia y apoyandonos. Viendo las cosas de forma positiva.”
(Remaining united as a family and supporting each other. seeing things positively.)
- “Los programas donde nos dan comida, pañales, la biblioteca que nos da cupones y el WIC [son los que nos están ayudando más en este momento].” (The programs where they give us food, diapers, the library that gives us coupons and WIC)
- “Estar juntos y tener trabajo.” (Being together and having a job)
- “Recibir las estampillas de comida es mucha ayuda para nosotros en este momento.”
(Getting food stamps is a lot of help for us right now)
- “Mi esposo y yo emos estado muy unidos emos platicado mucho de nuestros sentimientos.” (My husband and I have been very close, we have talked a lot about our feelings.)
- “Una trabajadora social y terapias.” (A social worker and therapies)
- “Recursos para la comunidad gratuitos o a muy bajo costo.” (Free or very low-cost community resources)

What would you like your elected officials or other policymakers to know about how your family is doing or what you need during this time?

- “We need cheaper housing, affordable childcare, and more Snap Benefits. We need more help to get on our feet. We need healthier food and water.”
- “Middle class is suffering. It’s discouraging to know that we cannot turn to state or government officials to help. The cost of living has increased but everything else has stayed the same.”
- "Single moms ... are just trying to somehow find a way to raise our kids in a world whose expenses are growing exponentially."
- "We all need help financially. Rent keeps getting raised, food keeps getting raised, everything goes up in price except for the money we make. This needs to be addressed ASAP"
- "We are living paycheck to paycheck with no additional money for anything else. We need an increase in pay and a decrease in living costs. We shouldn't have to worry about feeding our families and working just to get by."
- "We need more help financially, raise the minimum range without raising the cost of living."
- "They need to re-evaluate and make new guidelines for the eligibility for free and reduced lunch ... every school to have free or reduced lunch (universal)."
- "More opportunities for low income families. Offering better wages. Providing more programs for housing."
- "I need more reliable childcare. Facilities I can trust. Transportation for my kids to and from school."
- "To raise the income limits on certain government assisted programs. Like EBT and housing assistance."
- "More assistance with making food needs accessible and affordable."
- “Make things a bit more affordable or create more programs for hard working mothers who are trying to live decently and take care of their kids.”

- “Providing fresh produce for families that are struggling financially.”
- “We need affordable and accessible health insurance for kids AND parents and affordable child care costs or options.”
- “A lot of families are falling on hard times and we need help and little to no help is offered to us.”
- “We struggle with paying for simple things due to high prices and taxes.”
- “For them to continue funding Head Start because it’s the reason I can go to school and work to provide.”
- “Need more resources in poverty-stricken communities.”
- “Stipends and higher minimum wages.”
- “Single mothers should have more support. The qualifying income for assistant programs is way too low and unrealistic.”
- “Not everything is about money. Sometimes just take a stand in what's right and do right by people.”
- “Lower taxes, prices are going up but wages are staying the same. The money that was enough a year or two ago isn't enough today.”
- “My major concern is the safety for the children in our community/home. There aren’t a lot of activities for the children after school or during the summer. Also, the neighborhood isn’t as safe as it used to be.”
- “Work should be 4 days or 6 hour days especially for parents who are trying their best to work and have small kids. More parental leaves not just with childbirth but throughout when until kids become a little independent.”
- “More help for families with children with autism.”
- “That the minimum income to receive things from the state is not a great reflection on being able to support a family. I make less than \$40,000 a year and am only given \$167 in EBT a month.”
- “Childcare rates need to be lowered for working parents. SNAP benefits need to be considered by the amount a person brings home after takeout not before.”
- “We need to have lower food and gas prices so families can sustain themselves.”

- “We need more job availability that will work with parents to create a feasible schedule.”
- “We need CTC [child tax credit] back, inflation is high we don’t make enough money. Families like mine need more financial support so kids won’t grow up in a poverty.”
- “Provide more funding and have more licensed teachers in daycares to accommodate kids with special needs. Special needs moms also need to work.”
- “The economy needs to go down. Families are suffering and can barely feed their family.”
- “Que nos den el asilo para poder trabajar y aportar a este pais.” (that they give us asylum to be able to work and contribute to this country)
- “Necesitamos que los requisitos para compradores de casa no sean tan difíciles.” (We need the requirements for home buyers to not be so difficult)
- “Precios muy altos de las cosas necesarias para vivir.” (The cost of living is too high)
- “Necesito encontrar un trabajo que me acomode con el cuidado de mis hijos.” (I need to find a job that accommodates the childcare needs of my children)
- “Que bajaran los precios en la comida y gasoline.” (That the prices of food and gasoline need to drop)
- “Apoyos económicos y más programas para crecimiento de mi hijo.” (Financial support and more programs for my son's development)
- “Apoyo para estabilizarnos económicamente.” (Support to stabilize ourselves economically)
- “Apoyo para conseguir un trabajo fijo y tiempo completo.” (Support to get a permanent, full-time job)