

ILLINOIS: PREVENTION INITIATIVE

DECEMBER 2012

SUMMARY

The Illinois Prevention Initiative provides grants to home-based and center-based programs to expand access to the Early Head Start (EHS) model as well as other birth to 3 models. The goal is to serve additional children birth to age 3 and help grantees increase program quality. The initiative to expand access to EHS and other models was established by the Illinois State Board of Education in 2007, as recommended by the Illinois Early Learning Council. The initiative is funded through a 14 percent set-aside of the Early Childhood Block Grant (Infant Toddler Set-Aside) with state general revenue funds. The statute requires that all Prevention Initiative programs funded by the Block Grant serve infants and toddlers at-risk of school failure using a research-based program model. The Illinois State Board of Education contracts with the Ounce of Prevention Fund to provide ongoing training and technical assistance to help grantees work toward aligning their projects with state and federal standards.

ILLINOIS' APPROACH TO BUILDING ON EHS

- Increase the capacity of existing EHS programs to serve additional children and expectant mothers in both home-based and center-based settings.
- Develop partnerships between EHS and community-based child care providers to provide EHS services to additional children in child care settings.
- Provide resources to child care providers to help deliver services meeting EHS Standards.

STATE PROGRAM

What is the eligibility for children and their families?

- **FAMILY INCOME:** While there is not an income eligibility level for the initiative, children must be at risk for school failure as defined by the state, which includes an indicator for poverty. Programs that blend Block Grant funds with child care subsidy funds must also adhere to state child care income eligibility rules (200 percent of Federal Poverty Level). Programs that blend Block Grant funds with EHS funds must also adhere to federal EHS eligibility rules (100 percent of Federal Poverty Level).
- **PARENTAL WORK STATUS:** No requirement; however, programs that blend Block Grant funds with child care subsidy funds must also adhere to state child care eligibility rules, which require parents to be working or in a school or training program.
- **CHILD AGE:** Birth to age 3

- **OTHER RISK FACTORS:** Children must meet the state definition of “at-risk” as determined through a screening process, including low-income families, homeless families, families in which English is not the primary language, teen parent families, and families in which the parent(s) have not completed high school. “At-risk” is defined as those children who, because of their home and community environment, are subject to language, cultural, economic, and like disadvantages that can lead to academic failure. Children are deemed “at-risk” through screening procedures. Screening includes use of an approved instrument for children at risk of academic failure, parent interviews, vision and hearing screening, and where possible, inclusion of teaching staff in the screening process.
- **LENGTH OF ELIGIBILITY:** Children remain eligible until the age of 3
- **EXPECTANT MOTHERS SERVED:** Yes

Who are the eligible providers?

- Federal Early Head Start grantees
- Federal Early Head Start grantees
- Private for-profit child care centers
- Private non-profit child care centers
- Faith-based child care centers
- School districts
- Community agencies
- Local health Departments

Is there a co-pay?

- Programs blending child care assistance funds charge co-pays based on the child care assistance program.



NUMBER SERVED BY STATE INITIATIVE

The FY 2012 grant provided funding for services to 673 families and 748 children in Early Head Start Programs including center-based and home-based services

NUMBER SERVED BY FEDERALLY FUNDED EARLY HEAD START

Federally funded EHS served 4,797 children birth to age 3 and expectant mothers (according to federal Program Information Report data for 2011)

What are the program standards?

- **FEDERAL HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS REQUIRED?** Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards are required for Head Start/ EHS grantees that serve additional children, even when partnering with child care centers to provide EHS services. Child care centers that receive Illinois Prevention Initiative grants are not explicitly required to meet the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, although programs must meet relevant state licensing education and family support standards such as: group size and ratios; staff qualifications; curriculum; screening; assessment; parent education and support; and coordination of care.

- ARE THERE ADDITIONAL STATE STANDARDS? State child care licensing requirements.

Do other children besides those enrolled in the EHS model benefit when services are delivered in child care settings?

Yes, all children in the child care setting benefit from an increase of quality of care, even when not directly enrolled in the EHS model.

What is the length of the day/year?

Services are offered for at least 6 hours a day, full-year.

FUNDING AND SUPPORTS

What are the funding sources and budget for FY 2012?

\$2,831,654 in state general revenue from the Early Childhood Block Grant (14 percent set-aside for infants and toddlers) support Illinois Prevention Initiative programs in FY 2012.

The Illinois State Board of Education granted additional dollars to the Ounce of Prevention Fund for a Training Institute to provide technical assistance to the grantees.

What support and technical assistance does the state offer?

Grantees receive ongoing training and technical assistance from the Ounce of Prevention Fund and from their Early Childhood Block Grant consultant at the Illinois State Board of Education.

What incentives are there for child care providers to participate?

Child care providers receive additional funding per child; access to professional development, training, and technical assistance from the Ounce of Prevention Fund; other support to align their programs with state and federal standards; and additional health and family support services for the children and families they serve.

GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

What state agency administers the funding for this initiative?

The Illinois State Board of Education

How does the funding flow to local providers?

Outside of Chicago, the Illinois State Board of Education issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to contract with providers. In Chicago, the Chicago Public School District issues an RFP to contract with local providers.

Can a child in the state initiative also have a child care subsidy?

Yes, participating children can also be eligible for a full child care subsidy.

Does the state coordinate with federally funded Head Start agencies to conduct any of the activities?

The Illinois State Board of Education meets regularly with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Region V office to discuss program selection, monitoring, technical assistance, and professional development, although these activities are currently conducted separately. Illinois State Board of Education staff are also part of the Good Start, Grow Smart team that includes the ACF Region V office, State Child Care Bureau, and the Head Start-State Collaboration Director.

Does the state coordinate with the Head Start-State Collaboration Office to conduct activities?

While activities are not directly coordinated with the Head Start-State Collaboration Office, Illinois State Board of Education staff are part of the Good Start, Grow Smart team that includes the ACF Region V office, State Child Care Bureau, and the Head Start-State Collaboration Director.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

What state agencies are responsible for monitoring, and how often is on-site monitoring conducted in a year?

The Illinois State Board of Education is responsible. Center-based programs are also monitored by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services for child care licensing. A final monitoring plan has not been adopted.

Are there specific measurement tools used to monitor services provided?

Not yet determined (see above).

Are programs monitored by federal agencies?

Yes, if grantees are also a federal Head Start or EHS grantee, they will be monitored by the Office of Head Start every three years using the federal review process.

Has the state evaluated the effectiveness of the state EHS initiative?

The Illinois State Board of Education has contracted with the Erikson Institute to evaluate the programs funded through the Early Childhood Block Grant.

Are state funded programs required to report data to the state?

Grantees are required to submit a year-end reporting form to the Illinois State Board of Education.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Interviewed in 2008 for original profile - [Karen Yarbrough](mailto:KYarbrough@ounceofprevention.org) (KYarbrough@ounceofprevention.org), [Nancy Shier](mailto:nshier@ounceofprevention.org) (nshier@ounceofprevention.org), and [Deanna Durica](mailto:ddurica@ounceofprevention.org) (ddurica@ounceofprevention.org), The Ounce of Prevention Fund; June 2007 (Updated July 2009). Reviewed by [Kay Henderson](mailto:HHENDERS@isbe.net) (HHENDERS@isbe.net), Early Childhood Division, Illinois State Board of Education; November 2007
- Interviewed in 2011 for updated profile - [Penelope Kathleen Smith](mailto:pesmith@isbe.net) (pesmith@isbe.net), Principal Consultant, Illinois State Board of Education, Early Childhood Education Division; June 2012, [Donna Emmons](mailto:demmons@isbe.net) (demmons@isbe.net), Principal Consultant, Illinois State Board of Education, August 2012, and [Cindy Zumwalt](mailto:czumwalt@isbe.net) (czumwalt@isbe.net), Division Administrator, Illinois State Board of Education, Early Childhood Education Division

ONLINE INFORMATION

- The Illinois Department of Human Services maintains a website for early childhood collaboration in Illinois, including the [Illinois Child Care Collaboration program](#), which also has the [Evaluation Report](#).
- The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) has individual [state profiles](#) analyzing the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) data from 2010.

AUTHORS: CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY (CLASP) AND ZERO TO THREE

This profile was updated in 2012. An earlier version was written in 2008 as part of the report, *Building on the Promise: State Initiatives to Expand Access to Early Head Start and their Families*.

CLASP develops and advocates for policies at the federal, state, and local levels that improve the lives of low-income people, focusing on policies that strengthen families and create pathways to education and work.

ZERO TO THREE is a national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in their efforts to improve the lives of infants and toddlers.



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