



GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY®
Illinois Professional Development System

Registry News



Spring 2022 Newsletter

You are receiving this email newsletter because you are a Gateways to Opportunity Registry Member. The Registry News will provide up-to-date information about programs and policy changes. Additionally, we always include something you can use in your classroom. Feel free to share this newsletter by printing a copy for your program, or forwarding it to a friend.

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INVEST IN YOURSELF

Schedule a PDA meeting today!

Have you been working toward accomplishing your Early Childhood career or educational goals and need some help getting to the finish line? The Professional Development Advisor Program can help!

A **Professional Development Advisor (PDA)** can assist you with achieving your career and educational goals by working alongside you to create a Professional Development Plan. Assistance from a PDA includes sharing:

- Career opportunities in the field
- Field related training and professional certifications
- Colleges and universities in your area that offer Early Childhood or other related coursework

Once your Professional Development Plan has been developed, a PDA will check in with you periodically to discuss your goals and any obstacles you maybe facing.

A PDA can work with you via phone or email, and now offering video chats!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/requestPDA>.

Data Bits and Bites

Nearly **\$40 million** has been distributed to over **4,600 licensed centers, homes, and group homes** through the **Child Care Workforce Bonus**. This money will be used to provide bonuses to more than **36,000 individuals** working in these programs!



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Find us on 

New Opportunities for Birth to Five Illinois

Birth to Five Illinois held their virtual, regional kick-off events February 1-5, 2022. Thank you to all who were able to attend! Birth to Five is excited to share new opportunities and resources to stand up 39 Birth to Five Action Councils and Family Councils across the State, currently excluding the City of Chicago.



Apply Now: Regional Action Council Manager

Birth to Five Illinois is in the process of hiring a [Regional Action Council Manager](#) in each of the 39 regions, currently excluding the City of Chicago. Each Regional Action Council Manager will be responsible for establishing and growing a Birth to Five Action Council to support expanding access to affordable, accessible, high-quality Early Childhood Education and Care services that meet the needs of families, especially those furthest from opportunity. The ideal candidate is comfortable in a “start-up” environment with the skills to learn in real-time, pivot quickly, and effectively engage a broad spectrum of community members.

Apply Now! - <https://inccrra.aaimtrack.com/jobs/>

Join Your Regional Action or Family Council!

Birth to Five Illinois is working to stand up one Birth to Five [Action Council](#) and one [Family Council](#) in each of the State's 39 regions, currently excluding the City of Chicago. Each region's Action Council will have around 15 members with a wide variety of experience. Each region's Family Council will have around 15 family members with young children and/or experience with Illinois' Early Childhood Education and Care services. Please visit their website for more information on both of these councils and to complete an Interest Form! The information and Interest Forms will soon be made available on their website in Spanish and Polish.

Learn More & Fill Out an Interest Form - <https://www.birthtofiveil.com/councils>

Additionally, Birth to Five Illinois invites you to view:

- The [regional Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map \(IECAM\) data](#) was shared during their kick-off events that highlight community characteristics and early childhood services in each region.
- Their [YouTube channel](#), where you can find Spanish and English versions of their kick-off event, welcome video, and animation describing their work to elevate regional and community voice.

Questions?

Both Spanish and English speakers can email info@birthtofiveil.com with any questions. Or feel free to fill out the Contact form on their website, available in [Spanish](#), [Polish](#), and [English](#). If you have questions specific to your region, you can also [contact your Area Coordinator](#) based on your region/county.

Beginning in March 2022, Birth to Five Illinois will be holding additional community engagement meetings to answer questions, meet the community, and share more about what the work of the Councils will be. [Visit their website](#) or follow them on social media for more information!



Illinois Cares for Kids - Ready4K

Illinois Cares for Kids is excited to offer all Illinois families [Ready4K](#), a FREE resource for helping your child, Birth through 5th grade, stay on track with their learning goals.

You will receive 3 texts/week with simple ways to bring learning into everyday moments. Families can get messages in Spanish, English, Arabic, Vietnamese, Chinese, or Russian.

To sign up, text “[IL4Kids](#)” to **70138**, or fill out the webform here: illinoiscaresforkids.org/ready4k.

Print and share this [flyer](#) with parents in your programs today!

Introduction to **The Gateways Scholarship Program** Video



New Division of Early Childhood

In 2019, Governor J.B. Pritzker declared his goal – “*To make Illinois the best state in the country to raise young children*” – and created the Illinois Commission on Equitable Early Childhood Education & Care Funding. **The Commission provided three major recommendations necessary to achieve the Governor’s vision:**

1. Improving programs’ quality and equity through the use of a long-term funding goal in early childhood policymaking
2. Better-coordinate the funding of such programs, whose resources are currently spread across multiple agencies
3. Centralize the administration of these birth-to-five programs in one state agency



To that end, in April 2021, Governor Pritzker announced the creation of a new Division of Early Childhood as part of the Illinois Department of Human Services.

The Division of Early Childhood will strengthen and centralize child care, home visiting, and early intervention services within IDHS through the following core programs:

- Child Care & Development Fund
- Home Visiting
- Early Intervention
- Migrant & Seasonal Head Start
- Head Start State Collaboration Office

You can learn more about the new Division and its inaugural director, Kirstin Chernawsky, [here](#).

IT'S YOUR TURN!

Make an extra **\$150 to \$1950** every six months!

- Great START rewards child care practitioners like you by providing you with extra money on top of what you are already making.
- Great START wage supplements are paid directly to you on a six-month schedule, based on continued employment at the same program.
- Great START wage supplements range from \$150-\$1,950 depending on your education and child care position.

Let the Great START program reward you!

Visit www.ilgateways.com and click on Great START to review eligibility requirements and download an application. If you need additional information, email gstart@inccrra.org.

Scholarship Funding for Early Childhood Educators

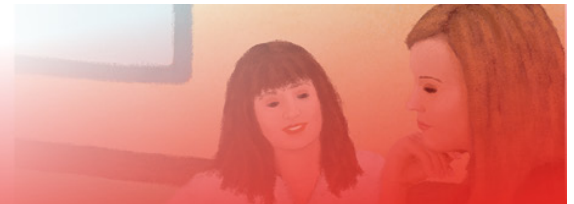
If you work or have worked in early childhood education and you're seeking additional credentials and/or a degree in early childhood education, you may be eligible for the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship Program. The program was created to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators by encouraging the pursuit of credentials and advancement of already-held degrees in early childhood education, with an aim toward building a strong, well-prepared workforce. Awards are available for undergraduate study at public and non-profit private 2- and 4-year Gateways-entitled and Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity member institutions and can cover tuition, books, fees, and other school-related expenses.



For more information about eligibility, a list of participating institutions, and to apply, visit <https://www.isac.org/ECACEscholarship>.

FREE Credential Applications!

School-Age and Youth Development Credential not included.



FREE Masks for Licensed Child Care Providers

IDHS, INCCRRA, and the CCR&R System are providing limited quantities of masks to licensed child care providers across Illinois.

Licensed centers, licensed family child care

Order masks through the webstore, now available with free shipping! The webstore will confirm that you are a licensed program by using the [DCFS Sunshine website](#). If your program is not listed on the DCFS sunshine website, you cannot order from the webstore.

Licensed centers

Order up to seven boxes of masks for free, shipping included.

Licensed family child care

Order up to two boxes of masks for free, shipping included.

Visit the webstore today at www.shopinccrra.com.



Resources for understanding, preventing, and fighting the flu.

Information guides for schools, early care, and education programs, and parents

- **How to Clean and Disinfect Schools to help Slow the Spread of Flu**
www.cdc.gov/flu/school/cleaning.htm
- **Keep Flu Out of School: A Resource Toolkit**
www.nfid.org/toolkits/keep-flu-out-of-school-toolkit/
- **The Flu: A Guide for Parents**
www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/family/flu-guide-for-parents-2018.pdf

A resource for teachers of young children

- **Teaching Children About the Flu: Lesson Plans and Activities for Child Care and Early Childhood Programs**
www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/updated/teachingchildrenflu.pdf



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