

The Birth to Five Project, and this workplan, serve as the comprehensive plan for early childhood systems building in the state of Illinois. This workplan is comprised of the efforts of many partners in the state, both public and private. The Build Initiative, supported by the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, is the primary funder of the Birth to Five Project in Illinois. The Build Initiative is a multi-state partnership that supports efforts to make sure that children from birth through age five are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed in school

**Build Initiative
Illinois Birth to Five Project Work Plan
Goals and Objectives
January 1, 2007 - December 31, 2007**

Goal 1: Enhance Birth to Five Programs and Services

Enhance the quality and comprehensiveness of programs and services for children birth to five and their families in Illinois.

Objective	Strategies
1.1 Enhance the quality of existing early childhood education programs for young children and ensure high quality services are provided in education-funded birth to five programs.	1. Monitor adoption/implementation of recommended changes for more integrated training, technical assistance and program monitoring practices across Illinois early childhood education programs.
	2. Review and identify additional research-based models for 0-3 programs funded through ECBG
	3. Develop, implement and evaluate mental health consultation component of Preschool for All for children 0-3. Monitor roll-out of this component
	4. Assess the implementation of mental health consultation component of Preschool for All for children 3-5, and document lessons learned
	5. Develop enhancements to the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) in order to increase the units of geographic analysis beyond county level to provide sufficient data to inform policy making and resource allocation
	6. Building on recommendations from the Governor's Summit, develop strategies to increase quality to appropriately serve culturally- and linguistically-diverse children and families.
1.2 Develop systems-level program evaluation and MIS plans that support both individual children's learning and development and programs' continuous improvement.	1. Develop a management information system (MIS) for data collection in both 0-3 and 3-5 programs.
	2. Develop an RFP to design and lead the planning process to develop PFA program evaluation activities, and to conduct the evaluation.
	3. Complete systems-level evaluation planning process
1.3 Enhance the quality of child care programs in Illinois	1. Advocate for funding to annualize increase to Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) rates and support QRS.
	2. Advocate for funding to further expand the child care mental health consultation pilots
	3. Continue to monitor and evaluate existing child care mental health consultation pilots
	4. Actualize the Illinois Quality Rating System (QRS):
	a. Develop plan for implementation in license exempt FFN and licensed FCC home providers
	b. Develop plan for implementation for center-based providers
	c. Implement QRS in FFN and licensed FCC
	d. Evaluation implementation in settings above
	e. If additional funding is allocated by General Assembly, implement and evaluate for licensed center-based care
5. Ensure that QRS recommendations and standards are aligned with PFA	
6. Develop recommendations to improve and expand FCC Networks	
7. Offer training on the Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) for preschool programs and the Program Administration Scale (PASS) so that programs have tools to conduct self-assessments to prepare for participation in tiered reimbursement.	
8. Design a Child Care Assistance Program pilot project in a few communities that gives parents who work and/or attend school full-time during non-traditional hours the option of selecting full-time care during traditional daytime business hours	
9. Research new strategies (through PFA 0-3) for improving child care (centers, home-based, and FFN), and review DHS licensing standards	

1.4 Strengthen the role of primary health care providers in comprehensively addressing the unique needs of perinatal women and children 0-5	1. Monitor the implementation of the Primary Care Case Management model to ensure inclusion of approved objective screening tools to measure developmental and social emotional delays, with required periodicity schedule.
	2. Monitor implementation of All Kids, the Governor's universal health care plan for Illinois children
	3. Analyze and respond as appropriate to Perinatal Task Force plan update presented to General Assembly regarding perinatal outcomes
	4. Monitor and participate in governmental and coalitional efforts related to pregnant women, young children and their families, including: oral health, lead screening, smoking cessation and birth-related data systems
	5. Continue to expand the delivery of comprehensive developmental assessments, appropriate referrals and parent education on developmental issues in primary care practices throughout the state <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide training to 30 physician practices, to effectively provide comprehensive, developmentally-oriented primary care b. Provide training to directors of pediatric and family practice residency directors, and directors of nurse practitioner and physician assistant training programs to reinforce developmentally-oriented care best practices with residents and trainees c. Provide technical assistance to practices to implement training and resource development within their communities d. Conduct evaluation of the curriculum, technical assistance and monitoring efforts of the practice-based trainings. e. Identify issues related to referral and service delivery systems, and document lessons learned. If appropriate, develop advocacy plan to address issues identified.
1.5 Promote strategies to increase women's access to perinatal depression screening, assessment and treatment services	1. Continue to advocate for the formal inclusion of perinatal depression in the DHS Division of Mental Health's target population
	2. Monitor implementation of recommendations from the Governor's Perinatal Depression Task Force
	3. Continue to develop and implement a coordinated system of services in communities to address perinatal depression, to include training, technical assistance, resource development and coordination
1.6 Enhance the child welfare system's provision of services to wards birth to five, and strengthen their efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect	1. Improve access to stable early care and education opportunities for wards birth to three years old , and continue to improve access to preschool for wards three to five
	2. Through the Strengthening Families Initiative, work with child care centers and child welfare staff to prevent child abuse and neglect and promote health and well-being of children and families <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assist child care centers in concentrating their efforts to identify existing programmatic components that build protective factors b. Integrate promising practices and systems infrastructure supports to build resiliency in children and adults c. Build awareness of Strengthening Families initiative among licensed child care centers, front-line child welfare staff and a broader statewide audience d. Encourage collaboration between child care centers and child welfare agency staff in pilot communities to promote health, well-being and resiliency of all young children e. Infuse Strengthening Families ideas and practices into state-level decision making on early childhood f. Explore with advocates the introduction of legislation to infuse family strengthening principles into early childhood programs and services statewide, and formalize the next phase of the project.
	3. In compliance with IDEA/CAPTA reauthorization, continue to collaborate to ensure that all children with founded cases of abuse and neglect are screened for developmental delays
	4. Monitor implementation and the outcomes of the statewide Integrated Assessment Program (IAP), and explore possibility of expanding IAP to non-custodial cases

Goal 2: Expand 0-5 Programs and Services

Expand programs and services for children birth to five and their families in Illinois.

Objective	Strategies
2.1 Expand access to high-quality preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds, and programs for 0-3 year olds, serving at-risk first.	1. Continue to advocate for expansion of the Early Childhood Block Grant to include the phase-in and increase in funding for Preschool for All
	2. Analyze and monitor distribution of funding for PFA to ensure that policy-making and resource allocation is based on data.
	3. Develop strategies to appropriately serve children birth to five of specialty populations in preschool settings (homeless, bilingual, special needs, etc.)
	4. Raise awareness of ECBG as a funding stream for center-based child care
2.4 Expand social emotional prevention, intervention and treatment services for children 0-5 and their families	1. Lead the Early Childhood Committee of the Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership and monitor the implementation of the early childhood portion of the Children’s Mental Health Strategic Plan
	2. Advocate for expanded funding for mental health treatment and consultation services for children birth to five, at the local level through pilot projects led by CMHP, DMH, and DCFS.
	3. Work with the Dept. of Human Services Early Childhood Mental Health State Plan Workgroup to identify gaps, barriers and opportunities to collaborate and coordinate mental health policies and services to young children.
	4. Explore Medicaid financing strategies for birth to five mental health treatment services. Research other state models, collaborate with state agency leadership, and consider developing set of recommendations.
	5. Monitor and assess the implementation of the social emotional component and consultants in the Child and Family Connection (CFC) sites, and develop strategies to increase the level of sophistication in addressing mental health needs of children 0-3
	7. With the Government Interagency Team, revisit the social emotional screening and referral system, and develop a plan for sustainable quality in referral system. Monitor system and problems identified.
	8. Implement the plan for developing and rolling out the training and adoption of the Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood (DC: 0-3) crosswalk and implement strategies to increase the use of the DC: 0-3 as an assessment tool (training and technical assistance)

Goal 3: Coordinating 0-5 Programs and Services

Improve coordination between 0-5 programs and systems at the local and state levels.

3.1 Foster broad-based local collaboration and planning around early childhood in communities in Illinois.	1. Monitor the development of local collaborations on early childhood in Illinois communities
	2. Link early learning programs to other early childhood providers, programs and services to meet comprehensive needs of children 0-5 and their families (health care, Early Intervention, etc.)
	3. Work with Interagency Nutrition Council and other entities to link children, families and providers to other systems such as nutrition, physical activity and health services.
	4. Document the Illinois experience in conducting outreach efforts to connect children in license-exempt homes and their caregivers to preschool programs
	5. Share input from the All Our Kids Early Childhood Networks and other sources to identify new/ongoing cross-agency gaps and systems barriers
3.2 Align program requirements across early childhood programs	1. Explore issues related to streamlining administration of programs that blend funding streams, including identifying opportunities for coordinated or integrated program monitoring in programs

Goal 4: Workforce Development

Develop a statewide training and workforce development system to meet the present and future needs of practitioners and programs to serve young children and their families

Objectives	Strategies
<p>4.1 Implement the Gateways to Opportunity statewide professional development network, consisting of: 1) credentials, which are based on core knowledge, that recognize educational achievements; 2) a network of professional development advisors; 3) a registry to track individuals' attained training and education; and 4) a searchable website of information on early childhood careers and professional development opportunities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce cost estimates for the plan to implement Gateways to Opportunity career lattice and credentials 2. Begin to establish Gateway's core knowledge, skills, and dispositions as the framework for professional preparation, training, and development for all early childhood providers 3. Continue to develop a system for recognizing professional achievements and work to embed identified pieces in state government , including identifying, initializing, piloting and implementing each credential level, developing a plan for specializations (i.e. infant toddler specialization, a bilingual/ESL specialization, school age specialization), and revising and implementing Level 1 training and credentialing. 4. Begin to implement an early childhood career information system that includes a comprehensive registry of practitioners and systems to approve trainers and trainings, including development of policies and procedures for the registry, and determining which trainings will count as coursework, credentials, etc. 5. Promote the implementation of Gateways to Opportunity through marketing, public relations, policy implementation and community awareness, rolling out Phase II of the Gateways website and developing strategies to imbed the credentials in state government policies
<p>4.2 Improve access to professional preparation and development opportunities for current and future early childhood practitioners</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote the implementation of and applications for Associate of Arts in Teaching degree in Early Childhood Education (AAT-ECE). Work with 2 year and 4 year institutions to provide a forum to establish coordinated education requirements and coursework to increase 2. Develop and implement strategies to expand workforce capacity and encourage attainment of Type 04 certification. Activities to include working with higher ed institutions to provide support and preparation on Basic Skills Test and reducing barriers to student teaching experiences, such as paid student teaching experiences and expanding TEACH scholarship programs 3. Create more cohort degree targeted recruitment Programs for working early childhood professionals in order to produce more certified teachers in the following priority areas: bilingual, minority, geographic shortage areas 4. Implement strategies to attract certified teachers into community-based teaching positions, such as providing higher ed institutions with information about vacancies, new funding allocations, and raising awareness of growth in teaching jobs in their communities. 5. Develop recommendations for program administrator requirements in PFA programs 6. Pilot the Infant Toddler credential

Goal 5: Emerging Issues

Identify and develop solutions to new and emerging 0-5 systems issues not being addressed elsewhere

Objective	Strategies
5.1 Identify and address Part C - Early Intervention issues and barriers for children birth to three and their families	1. Convene and facilitate an ad hoc committee of the Birth to Five Project to further refine issues identified, and potential strategies to streamline referral process, service provision and communication. Include information collected by Voices in their special report on Part C.
	2. Report findings to Birth to Five Project leadership and ELC as appropriate
	3. Determine appropriate next steps for implementing recommended strategies
5.2 Identify and address Part B - Special Education issues and barriers for children three to five and their families	1. Research the role of special education in providing social emotional services, including current services provided and how financed.
	2. Research and examine Part B service delivery in CPS for children attending Health Start, PreK or Special Ed preschool classrooms.
	2. Research and make recommendations regarding appropriate delivery of and barriers to Part B services in Chicago Public Schools
	3. Report findings to ELC and Birth to Five Project leadership
	4. Monitor the federal Office of Special Education Programs' citations of Illinois' Parts b and C programs, make recommendations and advocate for remedies
5. Determine appropriate next steps for implementing recommended strategies	

Goal 6: Governance and Infrastructure

Maintain public-private governance structures to provide leadership, accountability and coordination for 0-5 systems-building efforts.

Objective	Strategies
6.1 Evaluate and remodel the state-level Birth to Five Project infrastructure	1. Through interviews and in-depth assessment, evaluate the structure of the Birth to Five Project in the wake of the creation of the ELC and the passage of Preschool for All.
	2. Convene and staff an annual meeting of the re-cast Birth to Five Project leadership committee to connect leaders of a variety of early childhood efforts.
	3. Convene and staff three meetings of the Government Interagency Team
	4. Identify next set of priority cross-agency issues for Government Interagency Team to address
	5. Convene and staff ad hoc working groups to address new and emerging issues, such as Part B-disabilities & special education, and Part C - Early Intervention
	6. Recruit new members to the Committees and workgroups as appropriate
6.2 Monitor progress of the development of an early learning system in Illinois	1. Collect follow-up data for the Birth to Five Project logic model
	2. Compare follow-up and baseline data and review progress made
	3. Work with the local evaluator to monitor progress, develop case studies, etc.
	4. Collect ongoing evidence of progress
6.3 Facilitate and support the work of the Illinois Early Learning Council with the Governor's Office	1. Provide support for the Co-Chairs of the Council
	2. Facilitate and support ELC strategic planning process to identify new issues, priorities and structure.
	3. Provide staff support for the Council and its committees
	4. Coordinate the work of the Early Learning Council with the Birth to Five Project and other systems building initiatives

Goal 7: Outreach and Communications

Serve as a clearinghouse of information for 0-5 programs and stakeholders about early learning in Illinois and systems development activities underway; and reach out to and mobilize key constituencies on behalf of early childhood issues.

Objective	Strategies
7.1 Provide information and resources about the early learning system in Illinois.	1. Write and disseminate a quarterly e-newsletter <i>Early Edition</i> to a wide variety of 0-5 programs and stakeholders in Illinois, other states and national partners about the issues and happenings in the early childhood community. 2. In conjunction with the launch of the new Ounce of Prevention website, develop and post updated Birth to Five Project web pages, including key resources and publications
7.2 Initiate a targeted public-awareness campaign about importance of first three years of life	1. Educate high-level targets: Policymakers, opinion leaders, business community about the importance of quality supports and services to children birth to three and their families 2. Educate early childhood stakeholders about the importance of quality supports and services to children birth to three and their families
7.3 Educate communities on policy and program recommendations re: Preschool for All and key early childhood systems issues	1. Continue to disseminate PFA materials to inform and involve communities in the policy-making process and PFA 2. Continue to deliver presentations to wide array of audiences, communities and organizations to involve them in PFA and the early childhood policy-making process.

Goal 8: Multi-state Build Initiative

Actively participate in the multi-state Build Initiative

Objective	Strategies
8.1 Share information about Illinois' systems building efforts	1. Ensure Illinois is represented at Build national meetings 2. Maintain contact with national Build staff about Illinois work 3. Disseminate Illinois' work through presentations at targeted local, state and national conferences and articles in local, state and national publications
8.2 Incorporate lessons learned from other states and national efforts	1. Participate in Build technical assistance calls and meetings on topics relevant to Illinois 2. Monitor new national efforts and trends related to early childhood systems building

Abbreviations

Advocate Health Care	Advocate Health Care, Healthy Steps for Young Children Program
AFC	Action for Children
CCAP	Child Care Assistance Program
CDPH	Chicago Department of Public Health
Chicago DCYS	Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services
CPS	Chicago Public Schools
DCFS	Department of Children and Family Services
ELC	Early Learning Council
GIT	Government Interagency Team
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region V
IAFP	Illinois Academy of Family Physicians
ICAAP	Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
DHS	Illinois Department of Human Services
IFF	Illinois Facilities Fund
HFS	Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (formerly known as Illinois Department of Public Aid)
ISBE	Illinois State Board of Education
OPF	Ounce of Prevention Fund
PDAC	Professional Development Advisory Committee
PFA	Preschool for All

