

**2020 ADVOCACY ISSUES**

**Prevent Child Abuse Illinois** envisions an Illinois where all children grow up in healthy nurturing homes and communities free of abuse, neglect, or violence of any kind. Since 1990, PCA Illinois has provided leadership working in partnership with individuals, organizations, and communities through public awareness, education, technical assistance, and by advocating for effective public policies and services

to strengthen families and children.

**Prevent Child Abuse Illinois priority concern for this year is the continued growth of proven home visiting programs for new parents.** These are voluntary programs of intensive home visiting which assists parents of newborns through education, hands-on coaching, and access to community services. They are proven, evidence-based programs which promote positive parenting, maximize child health and development, and prevent child abuse and neglect. PCA Illinois has promoted and assisted the development of the Healthy Families Illinois home visiting program since its inception and collaborates with other advocates to support additional evidence-based programs as well. Our ultimate goal is for these programs to reach full scale in Illinois serving every young family where this support is needed.

**Prevent Child Abuse Illinois will also support issues raised by our child advocacy partners, including the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, The Ounce of Prevention Fund, Voices for Illinois Children, Children’s Home + Aid and others. In 2020 we will follow the lead of our advocacy partners legislative agenda regarding several key budget items supporting the wellbeing of children and families including:**

* **Increases, at a minimum, funding for voluntary home visiting programs** (Parents Too Soon and Healthy Families budget lines—Department of Human Services) **by $4 million,** funds to expand access to services, particularly during the prenatal period, and to raise wages for home visitors, many of whom earn salaries close to the state’s new minimum wage.
  + *Support HB3984, SB2317*
* **Increases, at a minimum, funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) by $150 million,** and dedicate at least 50 percent of the total appropriation to the Prevention Initiative (PI) program for infants and toddlers. These funds will make services available to more children while ensuring existing programs have the supports needed to better serve those facing the most challenges. The investment would also allow ISBE to increase workforce compensation, particularly for those working in community-based organizations.
* **Increases, at a minimum, funding for the Early Intervention (EI) program by $25 million,** funds to accommodate the state’s growing caseload, particularly those children with lead exposure; implement strategies to reduce service delay; increase provider reimbursement rates; decrease caseloads and increase salaries for service coordinators; and allow IDHS to update its data system, among other improvements.
  + *Support HB2191, SB1316*
* **Increases, at a minimum, funding for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) by $50-$100 million** to ensure the families who lost access to the program return, to support investment in programs so providers can continue to improve quality, and to increase staff compensation, particularly with the recent and upcoming increases to the state’s minimum wage.

**Additionally, PCA Illinois endorses and will advocate for the Ounce of Prevention Fund Legislative Agenda.**

**PCA Illinois staff will remain actively engaged in legislative issues at the local and state level.**

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