



Maintain crucial prevention programs for kids, families & communities

The Governor's FY2010 budget plan includes a number of proposed cuts that would hurt children and families who already suffer from the effects of the recession compounding their unmet needs. We should carefully avoid cutting prevention-oriented programs that help avoid problems that are far more expensive – both fiscally and socially – in the long run.

Children are young only once; today's wasted opportunities are tomorrow's wasted potential, appearing in statistics on high-school dropout rates, juvenile-detention figures and other social woes. **We should raise the revenues necessary to meet the needs of kids and families more adequately – and protect these and other vital programs from cuts:**



Child care: Working parents need dependable, educational environments for their kids to learn and grow. Child care programs help to fill in the blanks, forming a critical component of young children's education and their parents' work supports. However, the IDHS budget proposal targets child care for \$50.6 million in cuts.

“Parent-coaching” programs: New moms and dads often seek help in learning how to best support the healthy development of their at-risk infants and toddlers. Voluntary, home-visiting programs such as Healthy Families Illinois and Parents Too Soon provide assistance, but cover as little as 7 percent of needs. The proposed IDHS budget would cut about \$1.8 million (10 percent) from these important, voluntary programs.

Children's mental health: Only about one in five children who need mental health services ever receive them, underscoring the importance of the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership. The ICMHP helps support prevention, early intervention and treatment efforts to strengthen kids' social and emotional well-being. Yet the FY2010 proposal would cut more than \$350,000 (or 12 percent) from its IDHS funding.

After-school programs: Available funding could support only half of applications for Teen REACH resources this year, meaning thousands of youth went without safe, enriching, after-school experiences such as tutoring and mentoring. Still, Teen REACH is slated for a cut of more than \$2 million, about 10 percent of its IDHS funding. And the proposed budget eliminates ISBE's \$9.7 million funding for after-school efforts.

**Protect our children. Preserve vital programs.
Prevent tomorrow's problems.**

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