

Twelve Ways to Improve Learning

Invest in and Improve Early Childhood Education: Head Start and PreK

Definition and Source

Head Start – The federal Head Start program serves economically disadvantaged children ages 3 to 5. Data are for fiscal years 2001 and 2003 and display the number of funded slots available, not actual enrollment. County-level data for fiscal year 2004 are unavailable. Data are from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Branch.

PreK – The state PreKindergarten Program for Children at Risk of Academic Failure serves children ages 3 to 5. Eligibility is based on family income and other risks, such as having parents who are teens or having a chronic illness. Data are unavailable for Franklin, Perry and Williamson counties because they are part of a joint agreement with Jackson County. Coles, Edgar, Effingham and Shelby counties were in a joint agreement in 2001 but not in 2004, which explains the significant changes in enrollment. Data are from the Illinois State Board of Education.

Trends and Key Findings

More than 94,000 low-income Illinois children ages 3 to 5 participate in Head Start and preK programs. Enrollment is growing statewide – the preK program has seen an 11.3 percent increase from 2001 to 2004, during a time of increased funding. To be successful academically, children need not only healthy bodies and minds but early learning experiences that prepare them for school. Yet consider that one out of every three children entering kindergarten is unprepared for school and often doesn't catch up.¹ Years down the road, this can translate into poor test scores, troubling high school dropout

¹ "Creating a New System of Education and Care for Pre-School Children," Chicago Metropolis 2020, Jan. 24, 2000.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

	HEAD START SLOTS			PREK ENROLLMENT		
	2001	2003	% CHANGE	2001	2004	% CHANGE
Illinois	35,620	36,323	2.0	51,983	57,880	11.3
Adams	340	314	-7.6	450	479	6.4
Alexander	140	162	15.7	178	151	-15.2
Bond	32	32	0.0	154	194	26.0
Boone	34	32	-5.9	120	207	72.5
Brown	12	13	8.3	40	40	0.0
Bureau	22	23	4.5	281	327	16.4
Calhoun	18	20	11.1	39	78	100.0
Carroll	34	34	0.0	139	162	16.5
Cass	50	62	24.0	164	176	7.3
Champaign	418	435	4.1	633	592	-6.5
Christian	98	98	0.0	297	333	12.1
Clark	47	49	4.3	NA	82	NA
Clay	63	63	0.0	143	159	11.2
Clinton	49	36	-26.5	163	200	22.7
Coles	102	113	10.8	654	147	-77.5
Cook	20,222	20,406	0.9	25,379	20,436	-19.5
Crawford	46	44	-4.3	111	159	43.2
Cumberland	44	44	0.0	NA	54	NA
De Kalb	104	121	16.3	241	248	2.9
De Witt	34	32	-5.9	140	146	4.3
Douglas	34	34	0.0	NA	59	NA
Du Page	427	444	4.0	1,015	1,134	11.7
Edgar	59	61	3.4	111	184	65.8
Edwards	23	24	4.3	24	30	25.0
Effingham	117	134	14.5	80	190	137.5
Fayette	34	162	376.5	185	288	55.7
Ford	34	29	-14.7	NA	NA	NA
Franklin	148	161	8.8	NA	NA	NA
Fulton	152	125	-17.8	182	228	25.3
Gallatin	34	30	-11.8	33	42	27.3
Greene	57	66	15.8	89	149	67.4
Grundy	34	35	2.9	100	142	42.0
Hamilton	36	35	-2.8	80	67	-16.3
Hancock	30	33	10.0	168	169	0.6
Hardin	65	42	-35.4	20	20	0.0
Henderson	17	17	0.0	59	62	5.1
Henry	102	90	-11.8	312	323	3.5
Iroquois	52	54	3.8	228	202	-11.4
Jackson	205	222	8.3	774	1,028	32.8
Jasper	34	34	0.0	36	40	11.1
Jefferson	216	233	7.9	82	168	104.9
Jersey	20	28	40.0	168	163	-3.0
Jo Daviess	18	17	-5.6	210	229	9.0
Johnson	73	80	9.6	116	127	9.5
Kane	631	665	5.4	1,347	1,567	16.3
Kankakee	381	400	5.0	563	631	12.1
Kendall	34	34	0.0	138	160	15.9
Knox	147	226	53.7	321	359	11.8
Lake	658	698	6.1	1,501	1,595	6.3
LaSalle	316	305	-3.5	343	431	25.7
Lawrence	68	68	0.0	60	82	36.7

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

	HEAD START SLOTS			PREK ENROLLMENT		
	2001	2003	% CHANGE	2001	2004	% CHANGE
Lee	73	88	20.5	84	68	-19.0
Livingston	78	68	-12.8	342	309	-9.6
Logan	66	76	15.2	77	81	5.2
Macon	378	378	0.0	477	603	26.4
Macoupin	158	151	-4.4	380	494	30.0
Madison	780	797	2.2	1,063	1,341	26.2
Marion	217	221	1.8	40	73	82.5
Marshall	18	18	0.0	75	72	-4.0
Mason	51	54	5.9	73	93	27.4
Massac	90	90	0.0	200	213	6.5
McDonough	73	58	-20.5	146	159	8.9
McHenry	235	251	6.8	436	593	36.0
McLean	239	264	10.5	355	441	24.2
Menard	16	32	100.0	151	144	-4.6
Mercer	40	28	-30.0	53	60	13.2
Monroe	17	20	17.6	63	127	101.6
Montgomery	52	52	0.0	414	374	-9.7
Morgan	143	140	-2.1	151	213	41.1
Moultrie	34	34	0.0	NA	93	NA
Ogle	83	86	3.6	160	190	18.8
Peoria	670	670	0.0	692	755	9.1
Perry	97	120	23.7	NA	NA	NA
Piatt	19	19	0.0	66	83	25.8
Pike	67	66	-1.5	167	202	21.0
Pope	15	26	73.3	23	24	4.3
Pulaski	90	97	7.8	101	101	0.0
Putnam	17	18	5.9	50	59	18.0
Randolph	177	168	-5.1	157	144	-8.3
Richland	68	68	0.0	127	119	-6.3
Rock Island	501	317	-36.7	537	800	49.0
St. Clair	1,368	1,478	8.0	1,578	1,487	-5.8
Saline	125	152	21.6	219	227	3.7
Sangamon	459	479	4.4	1,154	1,284	11.3
Schuyler	11	15	36.4	60	80	33.3
Scott	11	7	-36.4	39	39	0.0
Shelby	52	52	0.0	43	108	151.2
Stark	17	18	5.9	59	59	0.0
Stephenson	172	173	0.6	NA	NA	NA
Tazewell	303	352	16.2	284	329	15.8
Union	100	93	-7.0	246	233	-5.3
Vermilion	328	348	6.1	378	492	30.2
Wabash	42	32	-23.8	105	116	10.5
Warren	185	136	-26.5	88	116	31.8
Washington	16	18	12.5	59	59	0.0
Wayne	54	53	-1.9	157	180	14.6
White	28	36	28.6	124	123	-0.8
Whiteside	164	176	7.3	336	383	14.0
Will	673	693	3.0	668	775	16.0
Williamson	211	211	0.0	NA	NA	NA
Winnebago	557	591	6.1	1,872	2,217	18.4
Woodford	17	16	-5.9	183	230	25.7
Chicago	NA	NA	NA	19,256	20,206	4.9

numbers and high juvenile crime and teen pregnancy rates. Yet Illinois has traditionally spent only about 2 percent to 3 percent of its education budget on early learning. High-quality early learning programs are crucial for all children, especially those at risk of academic failure.

Action Steps

Early childhood education in Illinois is built on a foundation of child care, preschool, Head Start and preKindergarten programs. High-quality care gives children the early learning experiences they need to help them succeed in school.

Recommended action steps include:

- Adopt the Illinois Early Learning Council's "Preschool for All" proposal that calls for creating a better system of early childhood education. "Preschool for All" will improve child care, preK and Head Start programs by creating uniform quality standards and expanding access to reach more 3- and 4-year-olds, especially those at risk of school failure. That means parents will be able to choose where their child receives early learning and be assured that the quality is the same in every setting. The proposal also includes a funding set-aside for services to at-risk families with children from birth to age 3.
- Increase early childhood funding by \$30 million, fulfilling the Governor's pledge to increase funding by \$90 million by fiscal year 2006.
- Address children's social and emotional growth by adopting and funding the recommendations of the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership, which has proposed a coordinated system that meets the mental health needs of children birth to 18.

Twelve Ways to Improve Learning

Invest in and Improve Early Childhood Education: Child Care

Definition and Source

Child care homes must be licensed by the state if the provider cares for three to 12 children, including the provider's own children. Child care centers care for more than 12 children and must be licensed. Some providers accept state subsidies that help low-income parents afford child care. Accreditation is a voluntary process that means a provider has met national standards of quality. Accreditation is provided by the National Association of Family Child Care, National Association for the Education of Young Children or National Early Childhood Program Association. Data on subsidies and accreditation are for licensed centers and homes only. Data are from the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

Trends and Key Findings

The number of licensed child care centers and homes in Illinois increased 12.8 percent from 1999 to 2004. Most providers are located in homes; there are 9,790 licensed homes compared with 2,835 licensed centers. Not every county experienced an increase in child care availability – 24 counties lost more than 10 percent of their licensed child care, with several losing more than one-third. Urban areas tended to gain the most.

Statewide, 80.4 percent of licensed child care providers accept subsidies, an increase of 14.9 percent since 1999. Providers can choose to accept state subsidies in order to help low-income parents afford child care. In 13 counties, less than two-thirds of providers accept subsidies: DeWitt, Douglas, DuPage, Gallatin, Kendall, Macoupin, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Piatt, Sangamon, Scott and Stark. This means low-income families in those counties have fewer choices for affordable child care.

Just over 5 percent of licensed child care providers are accredited, a sign of program quality. Sixty-one counties have

CHILD CARE

	Licensed centers and homes			Accept subsidies (%)			Are accredited (%)		
	1999	2004	% change	1999	2004	% change	1999	2004	% change
Illinois	11,190	12,625	12.8	70.0	80.4	14.9	5.1	5.6	9.8
Adams	196	207	5.6	88.8	92.3	3.9	2.0	1.0	-50.0
Alexander	12	16	33.3	75.0	87.5	16.7	0.0	0.0	N/A
Bond	15	16	6.7	73.3	87.5	19.4	0.0	6.3	N/A
Boone	62	51	-17.7	79.0	84.3	6.7	0.0	0.0	N/A
Brown	17	12	-29.4	82.4	66.7	-19.1	0.0	0.0	N/A
Bureau	32	32	0.0	71.9	87.5	21.7	3.1	0.0	-100.0
Calhoun	1	1	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Carroll	22	29	31.8	59.1	72.4	22.5	4.5	3.4	-24.4
Cass	26	27	3.8	88.5	96.3	8.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
Champaign	443	449	1.4	70.1	78.0	11.3	1.1	1.6	45.5
Christian	32	27	-15.6	81.3	77.8	-4.3	0.0	0.0	N/A
Clark	28	32	14.3	78.6	90.6	15.3	0.0	0.0	N/A
Clay	22	29	31.8	77.3	86.2	11.5	0.0	0.0	N/A
Clinton	65	55	-15.4	70.8	78.2	10.5	0.0	0.0	N/A
Coles	124	82	-33.9	77.4	79.3	2.5	3.2	2.4	-25.0
Cook	3,019	4,058	34.4	72.6	84.2	16.0	12.8	11.1	-13.3
Crawford	29	21	-27.6	86.2	90.5	5.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Cumberland	25	22	-12.0	60.0	77.3	28.8	0.0	4.5	N/A
De Kalb	112	143	27.7	49.1	76.2	55.2	1.8	2.1	16.7
De Witt	26	21	-19.2	69.2	57.1	-17.5	0.0	0.0	N/A
Douglas	39	40	2.6	59.0	57.5	-2.5	0.0	0.0	N/A
Du Page	685	560	-18.2	41.3	59.3	43.6	6.6	11.1	68.2
Edgar	42	40	-4.8	78.6	87.5	11.3	0.0	0.0	N/A
Edwards	9	10	11.1	77.8	80.0	2.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
Effingham	72	76	5.6	73.6	84.2	14.4	0.0	0.0	N/A
Fayette	33	33	0.0	78.8	84.8	7.6	3.0	3.0	0.0
Ford	38	43	13.2	84.2	69.8	-17.1	0.0	0.0	N/A
Franklin	43	39	-9.3	81.4	87.2	7.1	0.0	0.0	N/A
Fulton	16	25	56.3	56.3	76.0	35.0	0.0	4.0	N/A
Gallatin	3	5	66.7	100.0	60.0	-40.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Greene	18	16	-11.1	66.7	81.3	21.9	0.0	0.0	N/A
Grundy	30	27	-10.0	60.0	81.5	35.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
Hamilton	6	5	-16.7	83.3	100.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Hancock	69	61	-11.6	81.2	90.2	11.1	0.0	0.0	N/A
Hardin	3	5	66.7	66.7	80.0	19.9	0.0	0.0	N/A
Henderson	11	10	-9.1	90.9	90.0	-1.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Henry	67	77	14.9	71.6	74.0	3.4	1.5	0.0	-100.0
Iroquois	71	69	-2.8	59.2	79.7	34.6	0.0	0.0	N/A
Jackson	58	53	-8.6	77.6	92.5	19.2	3.4	3.8	11.8
Jasper	25	27	8.0	88.0	92.6	5.2	0.0	0.0	N/A
Jefferson	46	55	19.6	97.8	96.4	-1.4	0.0	1.8	N/A
Jersey	34	29	-14.7	76.5	69.0	-9.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
Jo Daviess	31	36	16.1	83.9	80.6	-3.9	0.0	0.0	N/A
Johnson	9	9	0.0	77.8	100.0	28.5	0.0	0.0	N/A
Kane	248	249	0.4	47.2	68.3	44.7	3.6	5.6	55.6
Kankakee	173	178	2.9	85.0	91.0	7.1	0.6	1.1	83.3
Kendall	48	43	-10.4	58.3	60.5	3.8	0.0	7.0	N/A
Knox	72	81	12.5	62.5	75.3	20.5	0.0	0.0	N/A
Lake	435	585	34.5	55.4	75.7	36.6	8.0	7.4	-7.5
LaSalle	77	79	2.6	67.5	70.9	5.0	0.0	2.5	N/A
Lawrence	22	23	4.5	81.8	82.6	1.0	4.5	4.3	-4.4

CHILD CARE

	Licensed centers and homes			Accept subsidies (%)			Are accredited (%)		
	1999	2004	% change	1999	2004	% change	1999	2004	% change
Lee	39	58	48.7	61.5	86.2	40.2	0.0	0.0	N/A
Livingston	47	48	2.1	78.7	68.8	-12.6	2.1	0.0	-100.0
Logan	38	40	5.3	73.7	70.0	-5.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Macon	134	98	-26.9	57.5	69.4	20.7	0.0	1.0	N/A
Macoupin	47	59	25.5	66.0	50.8	-23.0	4.3	0.0	-100.0
Madison	257	234	-8.9	81.7	90.6	10.9	3.1	4.7	51.6
Marion	58	69	19.0	94.8	94.2	-0.6	1.7	0.0	-100.0
Marshall	10	11	10.0	80.0	72.7	-9.1	0.0	0.0	N/A
Mason	16	17	6.3	68.8	76.5	11.2	0.0	0.0	N/A
Massac	14	15	7.1	78.6	93.3	18.7	0.0	0.0	N/A
McDonough	37	36	-2.7	70.3	80.6	14.7	2.7	2.8	3.7
McHenry	235	245	4.3	51.1	72.2	41.3	5.5	5.3	-3.6
McLean	236	244	3.4	66.1	71.3	7.9	4.2	5.7	35.7
Menard	23	28	21.7	78.3	67.9	-13.3	0.0	0.0	N/A
Mercer	14	25	78.6	92.9	88.0	-5.3	0.0	0.0	N/A
Monroe	21	21	0.0	61.9	61.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Montgomery	29	28	-3.4	69.0	60.7	-12.0	0.0	3.6	N/A
Morgan	65	94	44.6	80.0	58.5	-26.9	3.1	1.1	-64.5
Moultrie	21	15	-28.6	61.9	80.0	29.2	0.0	0.0	N/A
Ogle	71	91	28.2	52.1	79.1	51.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
Peoria	189	230	21.7	73.5	85.2	15.9	0.5	4.3	760.0
Perry	14	20	42.9	78.6	75.0	-4.6	0.0	0.0	N/A
Piatt	67	41	-38.8	43.3	41.5	-4.2	0.0	0.0	N/A
Pike	52	44	-15.4	78.8	84.1	6.7	0.0	0.0	N/A
Pope	0	1	N/A	0.0	100.0	N/A	N/A	0.0	N/A
Pulaski	14	17	21.4	78.6	88.2	12.2	0.0	11.8	N/A
Putnam	7	10	42.9	57.1	70.0	22.6	0.0	0.0	N/A
Randolph	34	25	-26.5	79.4	88.0	10.8	2.9	0.0	-100.0
Richland	27	31	14.8	77.8	77.4	-0.5	0.0	3.2	N/A
Rock Island	184	227	23.4	71.7	84.6	18.0	2.2	1.8	-18.2
St. Clair	374	434	16.0	84.5	91.5	8.3	1.6	3.2	100.0
Saline	29	30	3.4	86.2	90.0	4.4	0.0	3.3	N/A
Sangamon	347	329	-5.2	78.4	65.3	-16.7	0.6	1.8	200.0
Schuyler	16	21	31.3	81.3	95.2	17.1	0.0	0.0	N/A
Scott	10	12	20.0	90.0	50.0	-44.4	0.0	0.0	N/A
Shelby	22	21	-4.5	68.2	81.0	18.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
Stark	11	8	-27.3	81.8	62.5	-23.6	0.0	0.0	N/A
Stephenson	119	120	0.8	89.9	90.8	1.0	0.0	2.5	N/A
Tazewell	120	130	8.3	59.2	84.6	42.9	0.0	0.8	N/A
Union	17	12	-29.4	64.7	75.0	15.9	0.0	25.0	N/A
Vermilion	164	191	16.5	59.8	74.9	25.3	1.2	0.0	-100.0
Wabash	19	11	-42.1	94.7	81.8	-13.6	0.0	0.0	N/A
Warren	35	49	40.0	51.4	79.6	54.9	0.0	0.0	N/A
Washington	18	11	-38.9	94.4	100.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	N/A
Wayne	16	12	-25.0	87.5	91.7	4.8	0.0	0.0	N/A
White	10	10	0.0	60.0	80.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	N/A
Whiteside	47	81	72.3	70.2	80.2	14.2	2.1	1.2	-42.9
Will	354	445	25.7	68.6	80.2	16.9	3.1	3.4	9.7
Williamson	67	61	-9.0	89.6	90.2	0.7	1.5	1.6	6.7
Winnebago	533	571	7.1	81.1	88.8	9.5	1.5	0.9	-40.0
Woodford	20	36	80.0	70.0	72.2	3.1	0.0	5.6	N/A
Chicago	1,653	2,543	53.8	82.7	89.3	8.0	10.6	11.7	10.4

no accredited child care. Accreditation is a voluntary process that means a provider has met national standards of quality.

Action Steps

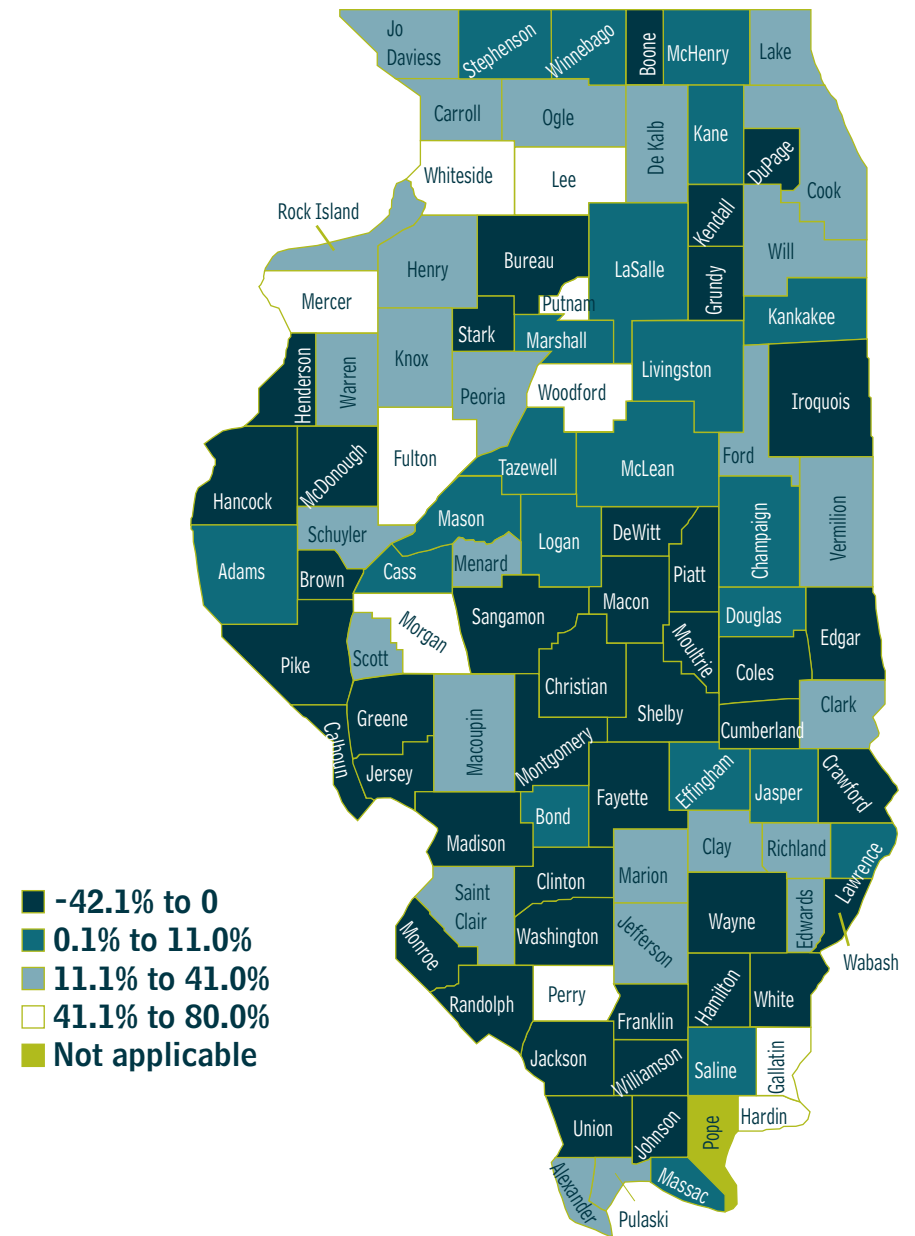
Early childhood education in Illinois is built on a foundation of child care, preschool, Head Start and preKindergarten programs. High-quality care gives children the early learning experiences they need to help them succeed in school.

Recommended action steps include:

- Adopt the Illinois Early Learning Council's "Preschool for All" proposal that calls for creating a better system of early childhood education. "Preschool for All" will improve child care, preK and Head Start programs by creating uniform quality standards and expanding access to reach more 3- and 4-year-olds, especially those at risk of school failure. That means parents will be able to choose where their child receives early learning and be assured that the quality is the same in every setting. The proposal also includes a funding set-aside for services to at-risk families with children from birth to age 3.
- Increase early childhood funding by \$30 million, fulfilling the Governor's pledge to increase funding by \$90 million by fiscal year 2006.
- Improve the reimbursement rates paid to providers who accept state child-care subsidies that help low-income, working parents afford the cost of care. The current low reimbursement rate means providers may not accept them, leaving parents with fewer options for care. Low rates also make it difficult for providers to pay competitive salaries in order to hire and retain qualified professionals.
- Address children's social and emotional growth by adopting and funding the recommendations of the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership, which has proposed a coordinated system that meets the mental health needs of children birth to 18.

Changes in Licensed Child Care Availability, 1999 to 2004

The number of licensed child care centers and homes in Illinois increased 12.8 percent from 1999 to 2004. Most providers are located in homes – there are 9,790 licensed child-care homes compared with 2,835 licensed centers. Not every county experienced an increase in child care availability – 24 counties lost more than 10 percent of their licensed child care, with several losing more than one-third. Urban areas tended to gain the most. High-quality child care, part of Illinois’ system of early childhood education, enhances learning by addressing young children’s intellectual, social, emotional and behavioral needs.



Source: Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Illinois' Business Community Should Prioritize "Preschool for All"

*By Harrison I. Steans, Chairman
Financial Investments Corporation*



Harrison Steans with his wife and grandchildren.

As Governor Rod Blagojevich restructures the Illinois State Board of Education and Mayor Richard Daley and Chicago Public Schools CEO Arnie Duncan implement the Renaissance 2010 program, Illinois should also implement Preschool for All. Young Illinois children are fortunate to have Voices for Illinois Children, Erikson Institute, Action for Children, Chicago Metropolis 2020 and the Ounce of Prevention Fund championing the "Preschool for All" proposal that would create a high-quality system of early childhood education that reaches more 3- and 4-year-olds.

The business case for "Preschool for All" is indisputable. At a recent Illinois early childhood development symposium, Art Rolnick, Senior Vice President and Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, presented

"Early childhood development is economic development, with a high public rate of return. We clearly need to fully fund these programs."

Preschool programs deliver their most dramatic results for at-risk children. All children benefit when their classmates are better prepared in kindergarten.

his analysis of longitudinal early childhood studies that found a 16 percent real rate of return on early childhood programs as compared to a 6 or 7 percent return for long-term stock market investments. As Art says, “Early childhood development is economic development, with a high public rate of return. We clearly need to fully fund these programs.”

If Illinois is going to maximize the educational benefit of a “Preschool for All” program, research indicates the following three principles should direct implementation:

- **Serve at-risk children under age 3 in the program.** Preschool programs work because they reach children early. Learning begins at birth, so we must reach at-risk children in the earliest days of their lives.
- **Support high-quality teachers and low child-teacher ratios.** Preschool program-work when teachers are well qualified and well compensated. Illinois has to invest in quality teachers in small classrooms if we are going to realize promised results.

■ **Prioritize at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds while providing “Preschool for All.”**

Preschool programs deliver their most dramatic results for at-risk children. All children benefit when their classmates are better prepared in kindergarten.

As parents, teachers, business leaders, state elected officials and communities work toward consensus on quality education in Illinois, our children’s advocates have presented a clear path toward better results. I ask you to meet their bold challenge with your voice, support, and encouragement as “Preschool for All” becomes a reality for Illinois children under 5.

Harrison Steans is the chairman of Financial Investments Corp. and the Steans Family Foundation. Along with his wife Lois and three daughters, Steans created a family foundation in 1986 after being inspired by the “I Have a Dream” program in which a family adopted a class of students with the goal of getting them into college. Financial Investments Corp. was formed in 1994 to make private equity investments and to serve as the Steans Family Foundation’s offices. Today, the Steans Family Foundation is eight times its original size and works exclusively within the North Lawndale community. Steans has also served as chairman of NBD Illinois, Inc. and LaSalle National Bank. Steans is affiliated with many non-profit organizations, including chairman of the I Have a Dream Foundation/Chicago, trustee of Leadership for Quality Education and chairman of the Education Committee of the Civic Committee.

