

While an important goal in its own right, children's health is also essential to education. Children learn better when they are healthy enough to attend school and have the proper nutrition needed to participate positively in the classroom. In an effort to address children's health needs, Illinois has widened children's health insurance coverage, introduced school health centers, and expanded and improved the quality of its school breakfast and lunch programs.

The state has made positive steps toward ensuring universal insurance coverage for its children. Between 2000 and 2007, the number of uninsured children in Illinois declined by 34 percent, and the number of children covered by Medicaid grew by half. Most notably, in 2006, the state launched All Kids, an ambitious effort to offer affordable, comprehensive health coverage to uninsured children regardless of income, health status or citizenship. While the state has made significant gains in health insurance coverage, almost 7 percent of all Illinois children were still uninsured in 2007.

Uninsured children have been aided by Illinois' \$50 million investment in school health centers since 1985. In FY2008, 13 percent of enrollees were children lacking insurance. School health centers are located inside or near the school building, increasing children's access to care and reducing burdens for their parents. The centers offer a range of services including medical care, mental and oral health services, and group health education.

Illinois has also worked to improve children's nutrition, in recognition of its importance for overall health as well as educational success. Illinois student participation in the national school breakfast program increased by 22 percent between FY2003 and FY2007, while over the same period, participation in the school lunch pro-

gram rose only 2 percent. However, in FY2007 there were still more than four times as many Illinois students enrolled in the school lunch program, compared to those participating in the school breakfast program. Moreover, Illinois is making efforts to improve the nutritional value of school meals by including more fresh fruits and vegetables.

Despite these efforts, research shows that nearly half of children are either obese or at risk of becoming obese. Obesity can have serious physical and social consequences for children, and obese children are more at risk of poor academic performance. There are many factors that researchers claim have contributed to the childhood obesity epidemic, some of which can be traced to the educational system, including school-prepared lunches that are high in fat and calories, a lack of fresh food, too little physical education, and limited recess opportunities.

While Illinois has made notable progress on health insurance coverage for kids, the state—and the nation—can do more to reduce obstacles to children's health and thereby help ensure success in school.



Health Insurance Coverage Status of Illinois Children Under 18

Year	All Children	Not Covered		Covered by Private or Government Health Insurance	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2000	3,139,000	318,000	10.1%	2,821,000	89.9%
2001	3,092,000	311,000	10.1%	2,781,000	89.9%
2002	3,312,000	358,000	10.8%	2,954,000	89.2%
2003	3,210,000	307,000	9.6%	2,903,000	90.4%
2004	3,242,000	342,000	10.6%	2,900,000	89.4%
2005	3,276,000	329,000	10.1%	2,947,000	89.9%
2006	3,188,000	302,000	9.5%	2,886,000	90.5%
2007	3,180,000	210,000	6.6%	2,970,000	93.4%
% Change	1.3%	-34.0%	—	5.3%	—

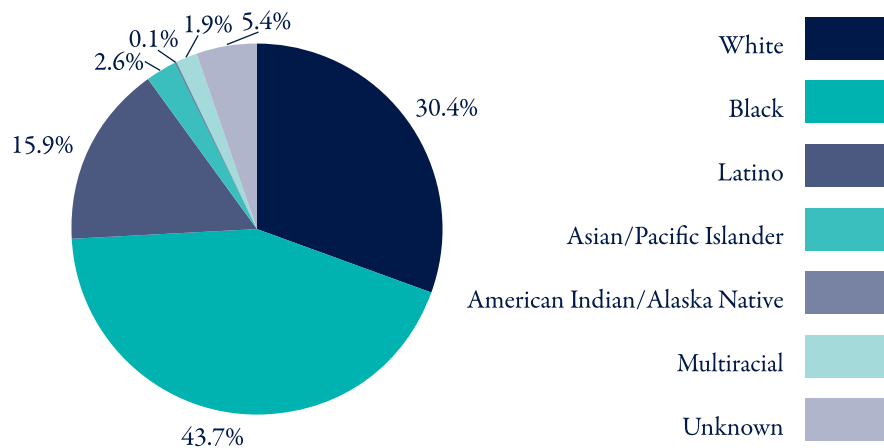
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements

Type of Health Insurance Coverage for Illinois Children Under 18

Year	Private Health Insurance				Government Health Insurance				
	Total		Employment-based	Direct Purchase	Total		Medicaid	Medicare	Military Health Care
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
2000	2,330,000	74.2%	70.1%	5.5%	638,000	20.3%	19.0%	0.9%	0.7%
2001	2,258,000	73.0%	68.8%	4.9%	637,000	20.6%	19.3%	0.5%	1.4%
2002	2,384,000	72.0%	67.7%	4.6%	650,000	19.6%	19.2%	0.2%	0.4%
2003	2,324,000	72.4%	67.0%	6.8%	727,000	22.6%	20.7%	0.4%	2.0%
2004	2,334,000	72.0%	65.9%	6.3%	744,000	22.9%	20.7%	0.8%	1.9%
2005	2,320,000	70.8%	67.1%	4.1%	771,000	23.5%	21.8%	0.3%	1.9%
2006	2,239,000	70.2%	66.2%	5.3%	784,000	24.6%	23.8%	0.1%	1.1%
2007	2,215,000	69.7%	65.9%	5.0%	972,000	30.6%	28.4%	0.9%	1.6%
% Change	-4.9%	—	-4.8%	-8.1%	52.4%	—	51.3%	7.1%	127.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements

Enrollment in School Health Centers by Race/Ethnicity, FY2008



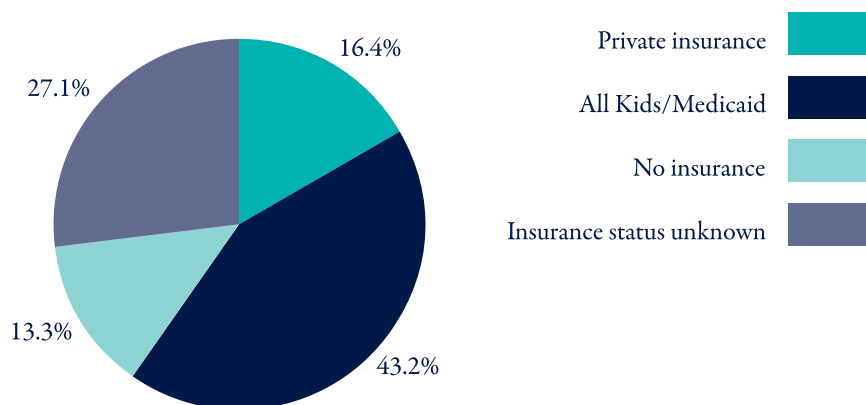
Source: Illinois Coalition for School Health Centers

Enrollment in School Health Centers by Age and Location, FY2008

	Illinois Total	Chicago	Suburban Chicago	Downstate
Total enrolled	79,677	18,350	11,693	49,634
Percent	100.0%	23.0%	14.7%	62.3%
Age 0-5	3.3%	1.5%	1.0%	4.5%
Age 6-11	17.0%	6.8%	2.5%	24.2%
Age 12-18	56.0%	63.6%	64.0%	51.3%
Age 19 and older	21.5%	22.6%	26.2%	20.0%
Unknown	2.2%	5.5%	6.4%	0.0%

Source: Illinois Coalition for School Health Centers

Enrollment in School Health Centers by Insurance Status, FY2008



Source: Illinois Coalition for School Health Centers

Illinois had 50 school health centers in FY2008, with 23 in Chicago

Percentage of Immunized Illinois Students for Public and Non-Public Schools, 2007-2008

	Polio	Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis	Measles	Mumps	Rubella	Varicella/Chicken Pox	Hepatitis B	Hib*
Total Reported Enrollment, All Schools	2,318,138							
Protected and in compliance	98.1%	97.5%	98.2%	98.4%	98.4%	97.7%	98.3%	97.7%
Unprotected and in noncompliance	1.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%	0.7%	1.1%
Total Reported Enrollment, Public Schools	2,072,830							
Protected and in compliance	98.1%	97.4%	98.2%	98.5%	98.5%	97.7%	98.3%	98.2%
Unprotected and in noncompliance	1.1%	1.4%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%	0.7%	1.1%

* Hib is *Haemophilus influenzae* type b

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

Illinois Participation in the School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	% Change
School Lunch						
Participation	1,097,467	1,079,949	1,104,595	1,104,942	1,121,027	2.1%
Total Lunches Served	180,938,624	182,394,616	184,229,116	184,464,011	185,615,746	2.6%
Cash Payments	\$255,785,208	\$265,962,870	\$276,945,871	\$286,320,552	\$296,751,381	16.0%
School Breakfast						
Total Participation	219,069	215,446	229,463	259,216	267,878	22.3%
Total Breakfasts Served	37,423,942	38,172,693	39,774,340	44,542,977	45,532,458	21.7%
Cash Payments	\$41,845,492	\$44,001,871	\$47,455,181	\$57,818,800	\$61,376,542	46.7%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service