Welcome to
Spring Into Action!

Illinois Action for Children’s
19th Annual
Public Policy Conference
and Day at the Capitol

March 8–9, 2016
Springfield, Illinois
Working together for quality child care and early learning

The members of the Child Care and Early Learning Division of SEIU Healthcare Illinois are proud to partner with Illinois Action for Children to protect the child care that working families depend on.

Together, we will win a bright future for Illinois.
Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The early care and education field – and community – is facing unprecedented challenges while also enjoying incredible opportunities on a local, state, and national level. As such, the need for true, thoughtful collaboration has perhaps never been greater than it is right now.

This year’s Spring Into Action Conference will take you out of your comfort zone, helping you look at the important work you do and how that work fits into the broader picture of supporting children and families. We should all be looking to create high quality early learning for every child but our work does not end there. We also need to create the environments that can improve outcomes for children.

We are thrilled to welcome Audrey Soglin, Executive Director of the Illinois Education Association as our keynote speaker. She will speak about trauma-informed care, which plays a vital role in improving the lives of young children who are too often impacted by a variety of toxic stresses, and the collective work being done to lessen the negative effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) on children throughout their learning continuum. This is an important topic as we all strive to have the most complete understanding possible of the many factors that influence the development of young children.

During a broad array of workshops and informational sessions offered throughout this conference, you will learn about the issues affecting children and families, participate in collaborative skill-building and thought-leading activities designed to help you think about your work in new and exciting ways, and finally take all you have learned to the State Capitol as you meet with your legislators in this most critical of times.

Over the next two days, embrace this opportunity to think creatively about your work, how it can improve the field, and how you can reach your legislators in new and impactful ways. Now more than ever, we need work to develop and support strong families and powerful communities where children matter most. Thank you for all that you do!

Sincerely,

Maria Whelan
President & CEO
Spring Into Action Conference Overview

Tuesday, March 8, 2016

10:00 a.m. Registration opens
11:00 a.m. Keynote Address: Audrey Soglin, Executive Director, Illinois Education Association (IEA)
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:30 p.m. Workshop Session I
2:30 p.m. Break
2:45 p.m. Workshop Session II
3:45 p.m. Break
4:00 p.m. Workshop Session III*
5:00 p.m. Break
5:30 p.m. Networking Reception

Dinner on your own

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

8:00 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Plenary Session
10:30 a.m. Break
10:45 a.m. Capitol Prep
11:30 a.m. Lunch
11:45 a.m. Buses begin shuttling attendees between the hotel and the Capitol
12:30 p.m. Capitol Visits
1:00 p.m. Tour of Capitol (optional, see IAFC staff to sign up)
2:30 p.m. Last shuttle bus departs from Capitol back to the hotel
3:00 p.m. Conference ends

*Workshop end times vary. Please see workshop descriptions for more details.
Spring Into Action Conference Schedule

Tuesday, March 8

10:00 a.m.
Registration Opens

11:00 a.m.
Keynote Address
Emerald

Trauma-Informed Care: Creating Safe and Secure Environments for Young Children
Audrey Soglin, Executive Director, Illinois Education Association (IEA)

Trauma-Informed Care plays an important role in improving the lives of young children who are too often impacted by “toxic stresses.” Attendees will gain an increased awareness of the collective work being done to lessen the negative effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) on children throughout their learning continuum.

12:00 p.m.
Lunch
Emerald

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.
Workshop Session I

An Introduction to Community Systems Development
Capital Room 2

Edna Navarro-Vidaurre, Senior Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children; Arealia Gavins, Director, Community Systems Development, Illinois Action for Children

What is community systems development? What is the ABLe Change Framework? Participants will build a foundation of community systems development and learn more about how local collaborations are creating systems change in Illinois. Come learn more about the ABLe Change framework and how you can be a systems thinker and leader.

Ch-ch-ch-changes!: Guiding You Through the Reauthorization of CCDBG
Capital Room 3
Gail Nourse, Director of Illinois Policy, Ounce of Prevention Fund

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) was reauthorized by Congress in 2014 with the overarching goal to raise child care program standards, specifically in regards to quality, health, and safety. Learn more about Illinois’ Child Care and Development Fund Plan that describes how the state plans to implement the CCDBG law, compliance dates, and how it may affect providers and families.

A Deeper Look into Pre-K Expulsions and Trauma
Governor Room
Deborah Chalmers, Director of Consultation Programs, Illinois Action for Children; Elysia Aufmuth, Assistant Director of Consultation Programs, Illinois Action for Children

The role trauma can play in pre-K expulsion oftentimes goes undetected due to the focus being on challenging behaviors the child is exhibiting. This workshop will look at trauma informed processes for young children, their families and the classroom. There will be a brief focus on the relationship based approach with children and families.
In 3 easy steps, you can help keep your children safe from unsafe products.

Learn about KID’s 3 steps to safety and get more information at www.KidsInDanger.org. Sign up for our monthly alerts to have the latest information and resources delivered right to your inbox.

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SAVE THE DATE!

May 5, 2016
Rally at the Capitol
Springfield, Illinois

June 28, 2016
Statewide Public Policy Caucus
Normal, Illinois

INCCRA is proud to partner with Illinois Action for Children in support of ExceleRate ILLINOIS Preparing Children for Success

the quality recognition and improvement system.

Visit www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com for more information

Contact advocacy@actforchildren.org with questions
Tuesday, March 8

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.
Workshop Session I (continued)

Unraveling Illinois’ Budget Crisis
Illinois Room

Dan Lesser, Director for Economic Justice, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law; David Lloyd, Director, Fiscal Policy Center, Voices for Illinois Children; Luis Roman, Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children; Samir Tanna, Assistant Director of Public Policy, Illinois Action for Children

Participate in the panel conversation on the current economic and financial climate in Illinois. The panelists will dive into the Fiscal Year 2016 budget impasse, which has left many human services unfunded. Panelists will then discuss how to best engage with legislators to have them consider solutions to benefit working families.

2:30 – 2:45 p.m.
Break

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.
Workshop Session II

Advocacy 101: Making a Difference for Children and Families
Capital Room 1

Tommie Robinson, Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children

Are you intimidated by talking to legislators or need practice developing your message? Are you new to advocacy? Come and learn advocacy basics to develop your own message and gain tips, strategies, and the confidence to be an advocate for children and families.

An Introduction to Community Systems Development
Capital Room 2

Edna Navarro-Vidaurre, Senior Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children; Arrealia Gavins, Director, Community Systems Development, Illinois Action for Children

What is community systems development? What is the ABLe Change Framework? Participants will build a foundation of community systems development and learn more about how local collaborations are creating systems change in Illinois. Come learn more about the ABLe Change framework and how you can be a systems thinker and leader.

Strengthening Bonds: Opportunities for Communities to Engage in Children’s Lives
Capital Room 3

Cary Rositas Montemayor, Ph.D., Early Childhood Project Manager, Catholic Charities of Chicago

Why should the highest needs families understand the importance of family and community engagement? This workshop will describe the importance of family and community engagement in an early learning program as well as provide some tips when working with highest needs families in a culturally responsive and empathetic way.
Spring Into Action Conference Schedule

**Tuesday, March 8**

2:45 – 3:45 p.m.
**Workshop Session II (continued)**

**Saving Money through Facility Improvements**
*Capital Room 4*

Elizabeth Nevarez, Executive Director, Spanish Community Center; Mario Perez, Executive Director, El Hogar Del Nino; Eric Woods, Director of Facilities and Procurement, Chicago Commons; Dara Reiff, Project Lead, Elevate Energy

Are you tired of paying high utility bills? Wish there was a way to lower your center’s overhead expenses? At this session, discover how improving your center’s energy efficiency can be a practical, affordable way to save energy and money. You’ll hear firsthand from three childcare centers that are improving comfort, decreasing maintenance, and lowering overhead costs. Find out what improvements they’re making and how you can do the same for your center.

**A Deeper Look into Pre-K Expulsions and Trauma**
*Governor Room*

Deborah Chalmers, Director of Consultation Programs, Illinois Action for Children; Elysia Aufmuth, Assistant Director of Consultation Programs, Illinois Action for Children

The role trauma can play in pre-K expulsion oftentimes goes undetected due to the focus being on challenging behaviors the child is exhibiting. This workshop will look at trauma informed processes for young children, their families and the classroom. There will be a brief focus on the relationship based approach with children and families.

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.
**Break**

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
**Workshop Session III**

**Advocacy 201: Using Social Media for Advocacy Messaging**
*Capital Room 4*

Megan Donahue, Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children; Eric Keeley and Dara Reiff, Elevate Energy

Framing and messaging are important ways to influence how people think about a policy or social issue and what they can do. Attend this workshop to learn insider strategies and tips for how to advance critical campaigns through social media. Participants will also learn the importance of social media in communicating messages to the public.

**Federal and State Policy Update**
*Illinois Room*

David Lloyd, Director, Fiscal Policy Center, Voices for Illinois Children; Maria Estlund and Mercedes González, Policy Associates, Illinois Action for Children

Join the discussion as participants will hear updates on state and federal programs, proposed legislation, and the potential impact these policies may have on working families across the state.
Tuesday, March 8

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Workshop Session III** (continued)

Bolstering Early Learning Supports Through Systems Change
Governor Room

Janice Moenster, Greater East St. Louis Race to the Top-Innovation Zone Coordinator; Cary Rositas Montemayor, Ph.D., Early Childhood Project Manager, Catholic Charities of Chicago; S. Mayumi Grigsby, Staff Counsel and Polikoff Gautreaux Fellow, BPI

Hear from three Innovation Zones across Illinois – Pilsen and Little Village, Greater East St. Louis, and Altgeld-Riverdale—as we take a deeper dive into the successful implementation of community systems change. During this workshop, the Innovation Zones will discuss how communities are coming together as collaborations to strengthen early childhood systems by using data and collective impact strategies.

Federal and State Policy Update
Illinois Room

David Lloyd, Director, Fiscal Policy Center, Voices for Illinois Children; Maria Estlund and Mercedes González, Policy Associates, Illinois Action for Children

Join the discussion as participants will hear updates on state and federal programs, proposed legislation, and the potential impact these policies may have on working families across the state.

**The following “Workshop Session III” options will take place from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Best Practices in Child Care for Healthy Children
Capital Room 1

Yvette Alvarado, Development and Training Specialist, Illinois Action for Children

You have heard that childhood obesity rates are on the rise. One in three children is overweight and at risk for becoming obese. What can providers do to reverse the trend of growing body mass index (BMI)? This training is designed to assist you with creative ideas in promoting a healthy lifestyle for children in your care. Not only will you learn about nutrition, but also ways to keep your children moving and tips for working with parents as partners for healthy children.

Changing Pathways to Early Childhood Careers
Capital Room 2

Joyce Weiner, Policy Manager, National and Illinois Policy Teams, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Cathy Main, University Illinois at Chicago; Cristina Pacione-Zayas, Erikson Institute; Stephanie Berneiteit, Associate Director, Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education

In this workshop, participants will learn how the Early Childhood Educator Preparation Program Innovation (EPPI) Grants are creating new opportunities for early childhood staff to advance their education and careers. Panelists will discuss how community colleges and 4-year institutions are partnering to redesign their early childhood curricula to provide easier access toward a degree.
Spring Into Action Conference Schedule

**Tuesday, March 8**

**Workshop Session III** *(continued)*

**The following “Workshop Session III” options will take place from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.**

**Early Intervention: What Do You Need to Know?**

*Capital Room 3*

Karen Berman, Assistant Director of Illinois Policy, Ounce of Prevention Fund; Amy Zimmerman, Director of Chicago Medical Legal Partnership for Children, Legal Council for Health Justice; Susan Conner, Illinois Early Intervention Training Program

What are Early Intervention (EI) services and why are they so important for the infants and toddlers in your care? This session will give you the information and tools you need to help children obtain EI services and to use best practices in your program to partner with EI providers.

5:30 p.m.

**Networking Reception**

*Plaza H*

Join us for a light reception and a chance to meet new people, receive resourceful information from various organizations, and participate in a fun activity. Prizes will be raffled!

**Dinner**

Dinner is on your own. See the enclosed list in your conference packet for local restaurant options.

**Wednesday, March 9**

8:00 a.m.

**Breakfast**

*Emerald*

9:00 a.m.

**Plenary**

*The Human Impact of Living in a State without a Budget – A discussion with Mark Brown, Chicago Sun-Times Columnist*

*Emerald*

**Panelists**

Mark Brown, Columnist, Chicago Sun-Times; Cerathel Burnett, Chief Executive Officer, Carole Robertson Center for Learning; James Runyon, Executive Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Governmental Affairs and Grants, Easter Seals Central Illinois; Bill Legge, Executive Director, Boys and Girls Club of Central Illinois

**Moderated by:** Maria Whelan, President & CEO, Illinois Action for Children

While Illinois has gone for over eight months without a state budget, the impact on families, children and communities is devastating and real. Join us for a discussion with Mark Brown, Chicago Sun Times’ Columnist, joined by human service advocates about the realities of living without a state budget and how to shape powerful stories that move public policy and the public toward action.
Wednesday, March 9

10:45 a.m.  
**Capitol Prep**  
Emerald

Does the thought of meeting with your legislators in the Capitol give you butterflies? You aren’t the only one! Illinois Action for Children’s public policy team is here to help you prepare for your visits. Conference attendees will hear about pressing policy issues to discuss with elected officials and get tips from staff and other advocates before heading to the Capitol.

11:30 a.m.  
**Lunch**  
Emerald

11:45 a.m.  
**Buses begin leaving for the Capitol**

Shuttle buses will be available to transport participants between the hotel and the Capitol. Buses will depart the hotel from the main entrance and drop off (and pick up) from the Capitol at the north side.

12:30 p.m.  
**Capitol Visits**

Visit your legislators either with a group or on your own.

1:00 p.m.  
**Tour of Capitol (optional)**

Sign up early! The tour is limited to 25 people. See an IAFC staff person to reserve your place.

2:30 p.m.  
**Last Shuttle Back to the Hotel**

Meet the buses on the north side of the Capitol to return to the hotel.  
**The last bus will leave the Capitol at 2:30!**

3:00 p.m.  
**Conference Ends**

*Have a safe trip home!*
About Our Keynote Speaker

**Audrey Soglin** is the Executive Director of the Illinois Education Association (IEA). Audrey received her Bachelor’s in Education from Northern Illinois University and did graduate work at Loyola University in Chicago. She taught in Evanston, Illinois, for 25 years. Ms. Soglin started her career teaching self-contained special education students and after eight years, moved to regular education where she taught kindergarten, first, second, fourth and fifth grades. During her career, Audrey was the president of the association and has served on local bargaining teams.

Prior to becoming the Executive Director of the Illinois Education Association, Audrey was the Director of the Center for Education Innovation for IEA and the Executive Director of the Consortium for Educational Change.

Audrey has done a great deal of staff development work during her career and has been featured in staff development videotapes by Everyday Math and Teachscape. She has developed a particular expertise in the areas of mentoring, teacher evaluation, formative assessment, and observation. She works closely with Charlotte Danielson and is a member of the Danielson Group. Audrey has worked with many joint committees to develop comprehensive standards based evaluation systems and trained principals and teachers to successfully use such systems.

Audrey has also facilitated training and workshops in the areas of school and union leadership, data analysis, formative assessment, and school improvement. She has worked closely with large urban districts, suburban districts, small rural districts, regional offices of education, and association leaders.

Ms. Soglin lives in Evanston, Illinois, and can be reached at audrey.soglin@ieanea.org
Day at the Capitol

Every year at the Spring into Action Conference, attendees make their way to the State Capitol to meet with their State Legislators. The advocates are encouraged to speak with their legislators about the importance of Early Childhood Education and what they can do during legislative session to best serve the children and families of their districts and Illinois as a whole. While attendees are experts in the early childhood field, navigating the Capitol may be the toughest part of the day. Below are some directions on how to find your legislator in the Capitol.

What you need for your day at the Capitol:

• The name of your Legislators
• Map of the Stratton Buildings
• Legislator Office list
• 3 sets of Fact Sheets – one for you, your State Representative and your State Senator
• Business Cards
• Pen
• Photo ID (just in case requested at security check)

When entering to the Capitol, you will need to go through a security check that involves an x-ray machine and a metal detector. Be sure to remove any objects you may be wearing that could set off a metal detector and place on the x-ray conveyor belt. It helps to have a bag for your belongings.

How to Find Your Legislator

Oftentimes, the House and the Senate are in session, meaning they are in their respective chambers voting on legislation. Both chambers are located on the 3rd floor of the Capitol and it is quite easy to meet your legislator.

Finding Your State Representative

When you reach the 3rd floor of the Capitol, you will notice 2 sets of large, wooden doors; one on the south side of the Capitol and one on the north. The doors on the south side are for the House of Representatives. There is often a crowd of people standing near the chambers doors – which can give you a clue that it’s the State Representatives side of the floor.

To speak with your Representative, make your way towards the chamber doors. There will be a security guard outside of the chamber door. Hand the security guard your card with the name of your Representative on the back. The security guard will take the card into the Chamber to be given to your Representative. Your Representative will then come out to speak with you.
Finding Your State Senator
When you reach the 3rd floor of the Capitol, you will notice 2 sets of large, wooden doors; one on the south side of the Capitol and one on the north. The doors on the north side are for the Senate.

To speak with your Senator, you must proceed to the aisles on either side of the senate chamber. If the Senator you would like to speak to is a Democrat, proceed to the aisle to the left of the chamber. If your Senator is a Republican, proceed to the aisle to the right of the senate chamber.

Once there, hand the security guard your card with the name of your Senator on the back. The security guard will take the card into the Chamber to be given to the Senator. Your Senator will then come out to speak with you.

Repeat this process for all the legislators you would like to speak with.

What if I cannot speak to my legislators?
It is quite possible that your legislator does not come out to speak with you. Your legislator may be in a meeting, debating or voting on a bill or bills or not in attendance that day. In that case, you can go to their office and drop off your fact sheets.

While all Senate offices are located in the Capitol and most Representative offices are located in the Stratton Building, there are some exceptions. Please refer to you legislative offices list as a guide.

Ask someone for help!
Illinois Action for Children staff will be scattered throughout the Capitol and Stratton Building. We will have an information table on the first floor with more fact sheets, legislative visit reports and the ability to lookup your legislator. You can also ask the security guards and Capitol staff at the Information desks located on the 1st floor of the Capitol and the 2nd floor of the Stratton Building.

Videos and photographs taken at Illinois Action for Children’s Spring Into Action Conference may be used by Illinois Action for Children in any publication, multimedia production, display, advertisement or electronic/online publication. If you do not wish for your photo to be used, please contact a staff member.
Illinois Action for Children’s Public Policy and Advocacy Department

We are here for you! Please contact the Public Policy and Advocacy staff if we can help you in any way:

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**A REALLY BIG THANK YOU**

to our volunteer mentors, workshop presenters and volunteers. We couldn't do the conference without you!

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**Attention Registry members!**

- Be sure to place your session labels on the Gateways Registry Conference Form with your name, address and/or Member ID#.
- These will be collected at the end of the conference and sent to INCCRRA adding your sessions to your Professional Development Record.

*www.ilgateways.com*