Welcome to Spring Into Action!

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

20th Anniversary

March 28-29, 2017
Springfield, Illinois
Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we gather for the 20th Anniversary Spring Into Action Conference, early care and education is undergoing unprecedented change at the local, state, and national level. As such, the need for real, thoughtful collaboration has perhaps never been more urgent than it is right now.

The primary focus of this Conference is to provide you with a deeper understanding of the importance of aligning the early care and education system with the K-12 education system. In this changing political climate in Illinois and nationwide, it is critically-important that we all take every opportunity to align ourselves with the education continuum to the extent that it is possible.

We are excited to welcome Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Senior Associate Director for Academic Affairs at the Illinois Board of Higher Education as this year’s keynote speaker. Through Dr. Bernoteit’s keynote – and throughout the conference – you will learn specific strategies for and the value of aligning your program with the primary education system in your area.

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 innovatively about our field, how you can connect to the other resources in your area, and how you can reach your legislators in new and impactful ways. These next two days are vitally-important as we all 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 and CEO
Illinois Action for Children
Spring Into Action Conference Overview

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

10:00 a.m. Registration opens
11:00 a.m. Keynote Address:
Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Ed. D., Senior Associate Director for Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education
Response Panel:
Dr. Erika Hunt, Ph.D., Senior Policy Analyst and Researcher, Illinois State University
Bryan Stokes, Vice President of Early Learning Programs, Illinois Action for Children

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 29, 2017

8:00 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Workshops
9:45 a.m. Break
10:00 a.m. Plenary Session
11:00 a.m. Break
11:30 a.m. Lunch
11:45 a.m. The bus begins 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. The shuttle bus departs from Capitol back to the Hotel
3:00 p.m. Conference ends
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.

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Spring Into Action Conference Schedule

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

10:00 a.m.
Registration Opens

11:00 a.m.
Keynote Address
Emerald

Alignment Across Early Childhood, K-12 and Higher Education: What can this look like and how do we get there?

Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Ed. D., Senior Associate Director for Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education

Dr. Bernoteit’s keynote address will focus on the importance of aligning the early care and education system with the K-12 education systems, attendees will gain an increased awareness and understanding of the value and opportunities for alignment between the two educational systems.

12:00 p.m.
Emerald

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.
Workshop Session I
Key Strategies for Supporting Children & Families Experiencing Homelessness
Capitol Room I

Carie Bires, Policy Manager, Ounce of Prevention Fund

This session will present strategies for advancing access to early care and education programs and services for young children experiencing homelessness. The presenter will provide an overview of child and family homelessness and relevant policies and legislative mandates, as well as share strategies for supporting better collaboration among key partners and best practices for working with the homeless population.

Pre-K Suspension through a Trauma-Informed Lens
Capitol Room II

Deb Chalmers, Director of Consultation Programs, Illinois Action for Children

The role that trauma can play in pre-k expulsion oftentimes goes undetected due to the focus on challenging behaviors the child may be exhibiting. This workshop will focus on how to be more trauma-informed with young children and their families. There will be a brief focus on the relationship based approach with children and families.

Opportunities within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Capitol Room III

Ben Boer, Deputy Director, Advance Illinois

Join us as we provide a breakdown of the Every Student Succeeds Act and then dive into the Illinois State Board of Education’s latest state plan to comply with ESSA. We will focus on the opportunities available under ESSA to enhance our state’s early education infrastructure.
How Did We Get Here?: Understanding the Budget and Revenue Issues in Illinois

Capitol Room IV

Mitch Lifson, Senior Policy Analyst, Fiscal Policy Center, Voices for Illinois Children
Luis Roman, Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children

Come learn how Illinois’ fiscal problems came to be what they are today, as we discuss what has caused the state budget impasse. We will go over possible revenue solutions being offered to move the state forward and how the early care and education field has been impacted.

2:30 – 2:45 p.m. Break

2:45 – 3:45 p.m. Workshop Session II

Insights and Tools for Strengthening Early Childhood Collaborations & School District Partnerships

Capitol Room I

Edna Navarro-Vidaurre, Assistant Director of Community Systems Development, Illinois Action for Children

Ensuring every child is safe, healthy, and ready to learn offers early childhood collaborations opportunities to collaborate with school districts. In this session, you will gain insights about how collaborations are engaging school districts in Illinois

Achieving Compensation Parity: Illinois’ Goal for the Field of Early Childhood Care & Education

Capitol Room II

Joni Scritchlow, Senior Program Director, INCCRRA and Administrator of Gateways to Opportunity
Laurie Rhodes, Director of Lincoln Land Community College Child Development Center & Co-Chair of Financial Supports Committee in the Professional Development Advisory Council

The gap in wages among early childhood and other professions is harmful to children’s development. Investment is necessary to ensure all children have access to high-quality programming. Come learn about the recommendations made by the Workforce Compensation Subcommittee within the Illinois Early Learning Council Program Standards and Quality Committee.
Spring Into Action Conference Schedule - Tuesday, March 28, 2017

**Early Childhood State Policy Update**  
*Capitol Room III*

Maria Estlund, Public Policy Associate, Illinois Action for Children

What’s happening under the State Capitol dome? Join us to hear updates on introduced legislation, IAFC’s policy initiatives, and the state budget situation. Participants will learn more about how these policy issues impact working families and the early childhood field.

**Federal Policy & Budget Update**  
*Capitol Room IV*

Mercedes González, Public Policy Associate, Illinois Action for Children  
Dan Lesser, Director of Economic Justice Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

With the new presidential administration, structural changes in federal programs are expected. Come learn about the proposed changes to nutrition, education, health programs and tax credit proposals. We will discuss the potential impact these changes may have on working families.

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.  
**Break**

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

The Impact of Public Health Policies on Low-Income Families  
*Capitol Room I*

Nadeen Israel, Director of Policy, Ever-Thrive Illinois  
Daniel Rabbitt, Project Manager of Health Policy, Heartland Alliance  
Samir Tanna, Assistant Director of Public Policy, Illinois Action for Children

As state and federal legislators attempt to change health policies around the country, we’ll discuss the possible repercussions for families across the state. We will dive into the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare), Medicaid, and lead testing among other topics.

**Transitioning Children from Early Intervention**  
*Capitol Room II*

Maria Matticks, Training Consultant, Early Intervention Training Program

This workshop will dive into best practices for Early Intervention programs to further engage with their local school district. Successful collaborations are essential for a smooth transition for children to receive the necessary support services to be happy and healthy.
Parents as Advocates – Partnering to Influence Change  
*Capitol Room III*

Jill Bradley, Director of Family & Neighborhood, Illinois Action for Children  
Latisha Smith, Family Engagement and Support Services Manager, Illinois Action for Children

Family engagement is a critical component of the educational success of students and empowers parents as leaders and advocates in their schools and communities. This workshop will focus on utilizing family engagement frameworks to engage diverse populations as advocates for change.

Federal Policy & Budget Update  
*Capitol Room IV*

Mercedes González, Public Policy Associate, Illinois Action for Children  
Dan Lesser, Director of Economic Justice Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law

With the new presidential administration, structural changes in federal programs are expected. Come learn about the proposed changes to nutrition, education, health programs and tax credit proposals. We will discuss the potential impact these changes may have on working families.

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.
SAL Family and Community Services believes all children can reach their full potential if given a great start in high quality early care and education. We applaud Illinois Action for Children’s dedication to being the voice of children and families in our communities across the state.

SAL Family and Community Services

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.

Follow KID online:

INCCRRA is proud to partner with Illinois Action for Children in support of

Center-based and home-based child development programs, birth to age 16

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Educating, enriching, and empowering children and families on Chicago’s west side since 1976
Spring Into Action Conference Schedule

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

8:00 a.m.
**Breakfast**
*Emerald*

9:00 a.m.
**A Deeper Dive: Understanding IAFC’s State Legislative Priorities**
*Governor Room*

Maria Estlund, Public Policy Associate, Illinois Action for Children

This workshop is intended for participants with experience talking to their legislators but would like to focus more on key legislative bills and receive suggested talking points for Capitol visits.

**A Refresher: Nervous About Talking to Your Legislators?**
*Emerald*

Tommie Robinson, Community Engagement Associate, Illinois Action for Children

This workshop is intended for participants that want to learn more about how to talk to their legislators at the State Capital and receive tips in engaging their legislators.

9:45 – 10:00 a.m.
**Break**

10:00 a.m.
**Advocacy to Create Social Change Plenary**
*Emerald*

Join us in conversation with experts who have successfully advocated for changes in their community and field. Participants will gain insights on advocacy strategies that could advance your early childhood campaigns and causes.

11:00 – 11:15 a.m.
**Break**

11:15 a.m.
**Lunch**
*Emerald*

11:45 a.m.
**The bus will begin leaving for the Capitol**

The shuttle bus will be available to transport participants between the hotel and the Capitol. The bus 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.
Spring Into Action Conference Schedule - Wednesday, March 29, 2017

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 bus 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!

Thank you for your participation!
Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit serves as senior associate director for academic affairs at the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). In this capacity, she manages the agency’s review and authorization processes for institutions of higher education new to the State of Illinois and approval of degree programs for established colleges and universities, as well as various college success and workforce development initiatives. Dr. Bernoteit also serves as the IBHE liaison for P-20 initiatives, including work with the Illinois State Board of Education’s State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, the P-20 Council’s Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Committee, the Early Learning Council’s Quality Committee, the and the Early Childhood.

Professional Development Advisory Council’s Steering Committee. Under the State of Illinois Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, Stephanie led a multi-year grant program to support the state’s two- and four-year institutions of higher education in collaboratively redesigning their early childhood educator preparation programs. Over 70% of the state’s colleges and universities with programs in early childhood education participated in the grant, focusing their efforts on improving pathways for student transfer, attainment of Gateways credentials, and completion of degrees.

Prior to joining IBHE, Stephanie Bernoteit worked at Illinois State University in several capacities including executive director of alumni relations and co-director of the School of Education’s National Board Resource Center. A National Board Certified Teacher in Early Childhood from 1996-2016, Stephanie spent several years at the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards as staff liaison to higher education. She also worked as an early childhood and elementary classroom teacher in the West Des Moines Community School District in West Des Moines, Iowa. Stephanie holds a doctorate in education from Illinois State University, a graduate certificate in non-profit leadership from Georgetown University, a graduate certificate in fundraising management from Indiana University, a master’s degree in education from Drake University, and a bachelor’s degree in elementary education with an emphasis in early childhood education from Northwest Missouri State University.

Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit can be reach at bernoteit@ibhe.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 (in case it’s requested at security check)

How to find your legislator

Often times, 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.
Spring Into Action Conference - Day at the Capitol

**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.
Spring Into Action Conference

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.

Event Save the Dates

Advocacy Day at the Capitol
Springfield, Illinois
May 9, 2017
Contact advocacy@actforchildren.org with questions

Partner Plan Act Conference
Illinois Wesleyan University
1312 Park Street
Bloomington, Illinois
June 13, 2017
Contact partnerplanact@actforchildren.org with questions

Statewide Public Policy Caucus
Heartland Community College
1500 W Raab Road
Normal, Illinois
June 22, 2017
Contact advocacy@actforchildren.org with questions
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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INCCRA
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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 INCCRA adding your sessions to your Professional Development Record.

www.ilgateways.com