

(<https://www.actforchildren.org/champion/join-movement/e-advocate>)

This Issue:

In this month's issue of eAdvocate we focus on preparing for the November election in these unprecedented times. We want to make sure you are registered to vote and have the information you need to ensure others are registered as well. Make sure to sign up for our Voter Registration webinar!

Voting in 2020



Election Day is 75 days away! Join us on Monday, September 21 from 12 – 1 p.m. CT for our Voter Registration Webinar

(<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4802016287543222542>). We will make sure you know how to vote by mail, check the voting registration status for friends and family, and understand what is on the ballot this November.

It's easy to check (<https://ova.elections.il.gov/RegistrationLookup.aspx>) if you are registered to vote in Illinois and if you aren't, you can register online (<https://ova.elections.il.gov/Step0.aspx>) today!

Join us in the Illinois Early Childhood Funding Coalition!



Equitable access to critically important resources is necessary for Illinois' children and families to thrive. Stable, transparent, full funding for early childhood programs is the goal of the Illinois Early Childhood Funding Coalition, and we are looking for new members! Join more than 100 statewide advocates and community supporters in this unique opportunity to make a difference.

Sign up for our action alerts here (<https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2020-07-23/nnp8m>), and follow on social media using #AllInForEarlyEd !

Join the Family Advisory Committee (FAC)



Calling all parents! The Family Advisory Committee (FAC) will help you raise your voices up to the state level where important decisions are made that affect you and your children. As part of the Early Learning Council, the FAC will be a parent-led committee that will advise early childhood policy development and work to increase family engagement in early learning systems across Illinois. Please see English

(https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2020-08-18/p7m7f/471011/113954/FAC_Flyer_APPLY_FINAL_7.31.20.pdf) and Spanish

(https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2020-08-18/p7m7k/471011/113958/FAC_Flyer_APPLY_FINAL_SPANISH_7.31.20.pdf) flyers to learn more, and apply today

(<https://www.surveymogizmo.com/s3/5700285/Family-Advisory-Committee-Membership-Application>)!



Survey from the Illinois Early Childhood Funding Commission (available in English and Spanish)

The Illinois Commission on Equitable Early Childhood Education and Care Funding (also known as The Funding Commission) is studying and making recommendations to establish funding goals and funding mechanisms to provide equitable access to high-

quality early childhood education and care services for all children birth to age five, and advising the Governor in planning and implementing these recommendations. The Commission is seeking input and feedback from families, providers, and community members on how to best fulfill this charge. This survey is available in English (<https://www.surveymogizmo.com/r/HYXSSCQ>) and Spanish (<https://www.surveymogizmo.com/r/8KT27ZT>).



Provider Spotlight: Beverly Cavanaugh, Joliet Junior College, Early Childhood Center

1. In what ways has COVID-19 affected your business the most?

We closed and that was devastating. It is for everyone [who has had to close]. We're a college so we came back from spring break on March 16th while [simultaneously] making transitions and telling our children and families we'd see them in the Spring, but we didn't in the end. It was difficult not to be able to have that closure with our families. We're a pre-school, and some of kids are aging up; we didn't get to say goodbye like we normally would, and that's been difficult for staff and families. And obviously, there's the financial devastation this has done to every small business.

2. What creative solutions have you seen that have helped children and families during this time?

One thing that warms my heart is seeing the outpouring of help from the community. The local food pantries, micro pantries—they've been such a help, as well as the continuation of the school lunch program. There have also been many resources for professionals. For example, Dr. Becky Bailey (Conscious Discipline) offered free webinars for teachers to help children understand the increased stress. NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offered their basic training classes for free. I took advantage of all of those things!

There have been car parades for the graduates and parades for prom; it was wonderful to see the celebration of these students. It's emotional for me. We had graduates, communions, and seven birthdays within the month of March alone!

We created a YouTube channel of read aloud stories, we did "How To" videos on activities to do on your own for kids. I did a video on "How to peel a hard-boiled egg" and showed them it's a healthy snack, we showed them "How to get your own breakfast when Miss Janice isn't with you." We did a handwriting campaign and staggered the deliveries, so each staff member wrote a letter to every child and each week the children would receive a letter from a different staff person.

3. What are your biggest concerns regarding the re-opening of child care or back-to-school plans?

I'm beginning to write the new opening plan and, of course, there are so many caveats. My first concern is health and safety for staff and families. This is paramount and has to be considered with every written word that goes into this new plan. How is health and safety being monitored? That's my biggest concern, but I have other concerns, too: how do you keep a mask on a 3-year-old? How do we function in this job when it's all about building relationships in early childhood? We can't show them our smile, and we have to tell them to stand 6 feet away.

But we have to keep the relationships. With every stroke of my pen, I'm thinking about this.

4. How are you staying connected with families about the Census or voter registration?

Because we just received information that [the Census] is going to end early, there is a big concern. We're going to make sure we remind people with information in their welcome packets, and we'll remind them that if they have challenges or need support that we're a resource for both [the Census and voter registration information].

5. What have you been doing for self-care during social distancing?

The NAMI resources have been helpful, and I journal. I'm staying connected with my grandkids, I have 18 of them-- they are the joy of my life! I read (I don't get to do that a lot in my normal work life), and so I grabbed a couple of books this summer and gave myself the time for that. Journaling has been relaxing and staying connected with family has been important. We did birthday caravans and drove by houses with signs and balloons to make sure that child felt they were still thought of.

And like everyone else, I've done that deep cleaning stuff at home that helps give my life a more linear look for the day. I connect each week with my professional friends, and with our cocktail of choice, for an hour we commiserate, brainstorm, and share resources. We tell silly jokes too—it's very healing.

Complete the Census TODAY! New Deadline is Sept. 30, 2020



(<https://my2020census.gov/>)



Count me in.

#2020Census

¡Cuenta conmigo!

(<https://my2020census.gov/>)

Complete the Census, today!
 (<https://my2020census.gov/>)

It only takes 10 minutes yet the results will affect you and your community for 10 years!

