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## This Issue: New Year's Advocacy Resolutions



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Happy New Year, early learning advocates! In this issue of eAdvocate, we share some helpful tips for being an even better advocate for children and families in 2019. We also discuss what to be on the lookout for early on in the new legislative sessions both in Springfield and Washington.

## New Year's Advocacy Resolutions



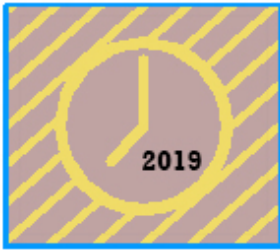
Looking back on 2018, there were a lot of policy accomplishments that the early learning advocacy community can be very proud of. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the work each of you did throughout the year to make your voices heard.

Last January, we put together a list of advocacy tips ([https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2019-01-11/52g74/471011/44723/2018\\_Advocacy\\_Tips.pdf](https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2019-01-11/52g74/471011/44723/2018_Advocacy_Tips.pdf)) to become better advocates for children and families in 2018. This year, we encourage you to pick a few different actions from this list to expand your advocacy toolbox.

One goal to highlight is the resolution to meet your new legislators. The midterm elections this past November brought many new faces to the policymaking process. In Washington, there are 111 new members of Congress, including three from Illinois, while Springfield has a new Governor, a new Attorney General, and 38 new legislators—an abnormally high number of elected officials, who may be new to policy issues related to early childhood care and education. This is an excellent opportunity to build relationships with your representatives and demonstrate the importance of having quality early childhood programs and services available to children throughout their district.

For more details on the midterm election results and the new elected officials this term, check out IAFC's Midterm Election Results Breakdown ([https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2019-01-11/52g6q/471011/44713/2018\\_Midterm\\_Election\\_Results\\_Breakdown.pdf](https://go.actforchildren.org/l/471011/2019-01-11/52g6q/471011/44713/2018_Midterm_Election_Results_Breakdown.pdf)). And please don't hesitate to contact us, if you are interested in meeting your new legislator or having him or her tour your program!

## What to Expect in 2019?



## Federal Policy

Since the 2019 federal fiscal year began last October, the federal government passed several Continuing Resolutions (CRs) allowing current funding levels to continue temporarily, with the hopes of reaching a budget agreement by the deadline. However, the most recent deadline passed on Dec. 21, 2019, without an agreement being reached. This triggered a partial government, with 25 percent of the government still waiting to be funded.

While funding for programs like the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Head Start was renewed in previous legislation last fall, critical anti-hunger programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women (SNAP), Infants, and Children (WIC), and school meal programs still require a funding renewal. More than 800,000 federal workers are currently not getting paid, of which 350,000 remain on the job without pay. While SNAP benefits continue to be issued with the remaining funds available, estimates indicate that the program will have to cut benefits for millions of Americans if the government is not reopened by the end of January. Other government services that will be closed or could see limited operations include National Park services, State Department services, and Environmental and food and drug inspections.

The shutdown is due to an impasse between Congress and President Trump over funding for a wall along the U.S. - Mexico border. With the new Democratic majority in the House, a deal will require a funding agreement that will satisfy congressional Democrats and the president — a feat that's proven challenging thus far. This will be the first major hurdle for legislators in the 116th Congress and for President Trump, who will now have to govern with a divided Congress.

## State Policy

Governor J.B. Pritzker's inauguration took place just days ago, on January 14. The various transition committee reports are expected to be released in the coming days, including the Healthy Children and Families Committee and the Educational Success Committee. These reports will provide a window into the policies that the new administration will prioritize.

As always, IAFC will be in Springfield advocating for public policies that support children, working families, and the early childhood field, and our policy team will keep you informed of what's happening under the dome. Stay tuned for information on IAFC's policy priorities and webinar opportunities for policy and budget updates.

## Save the Date!



Join Illinois Action for Children's Policy and Advocacy team for our annual Spring into Action Conference on April 2-3, 2019. This conference brings together statewide early care and education providers, educators, parents and advocates. Attendees will have an opportunity to participate in timely policy-oriented workshops, networking, and visits to the state capitol.

- **What:** Spring into Action Conference
- **When:** April 2-3, 2019
- **Where:** The State House Inn  
101 E. Adams Street  
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Stay tuned for additional information on registration, workshops, and presenters! As you start planning for Spring into Action 2019, please note there will be limited scholarships available to waive registration costs. More information will be available soon.

### **IAFC Policy Agenda Webinar**

Join IAFC's Public Policy team for a webinar on February 22, where we'll be discussing our early childhood policy priorities in the 2019 legislative session.

- **What:** IAFC Policy Agenda Webinar
  - **When:** Feb. 22, 2019 from noon to 1 p.m.
  - **Where:** Online (register here (<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5260786402599446019>))
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