

## eAdvocate Newsletter – February



UPLOAD  
A PHOTO

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### In this Issue

In this month's issue of eAdvocate we are excited to share upcoming Spring into Action details, release of a new report, vaccination information, and a hello from our team!

### Spring into Action 2021 (Now – May 28)

Spring into Action 2021 kicked off last week! Be sure to join us for our virtual weekly presentations, Friday Action Hour, throughout the spring culminating in virtual Early Childhood Advocacy Day with Start Early at the end of the Illinois Legislative Session in May.

Participants have access to a variety of workshops presented by IAFC and our partner organizations. Topics include early childhood funding reform, COVID-19 updates, state and federal policy updates, workforce reform and much more!

February's Advocacy Hour Friday events:

- February 12: Illinois Budget & Policy Priorities
- February 19: Governor Pritzker's state of the state & budget address review
- February 26: ECE Workforce Challenges and Reform

### Illinois Early Childhood Educators Are Now Eligible to Receive the COVID-19 Vaccine.

On January 25, 2021, Illinois entered Phase 1B of the State's vaccination roll out plan. Phase 1B includes Education (Congregate Child Care, Pre K through 12th grade) – examples: Teachers, principals, student support, student aids, child care workers.

Those who are eligible for the vaccine should [visit the State's website](#) for the most current information.

Appointments are updated daily at 5pm CT and can be viewed by clicking the [vaccine location](#) icon and entering the required fields.

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development continues to provide COVID resources [on their website](#) for providers and families. You can also find information on [our COVID-19 website](#).

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## Join us for the release of Funding Priorities of Child Care Providers: Where Would Increased Investments Go?

Please [register](#) for our webinar on this survey on February 24 from 12 – 1pm.!

State funding determines much of how the Illinois' early childhood education and care (ECEC) system operates. This report presents findings from a survey with child care providers across the State. Topics included how they secure public funding, use funds, and what they would provide if funding were not an issue.

## Who's Who on Our Team!

We patiently await the days we can all gather again, but for now we come to you from our home working stations and share a little bit about ourselves!

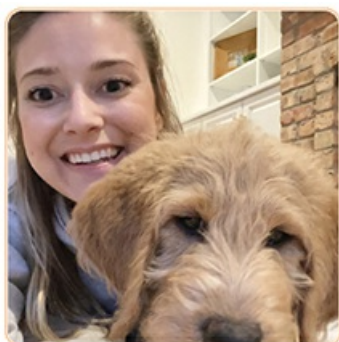
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### ★ DENA CHAPMAN, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ASSOCIATE



- **When did you join IAFC?** I started on Aug. 3, 2020
  - **Who or what inspires you to do what you do?** I LOVE being a parent, and I am a champion for ALL parents to own their voice and power!
  - **What do you like to do when you're not working?** When I'm not working, I love getting lost in the world of ballet
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### ★ MARIA ESTLUND, SENIOR POLICY ASSOCIATE



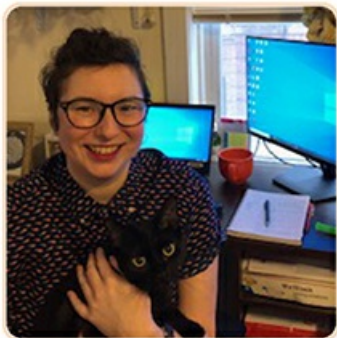
- **When did you join IAFC?** July 2015...the week that CCAP was cut by 90%. I had to learn a lot very quickly – and fell in love with the work and the early childhood community!
  - **What is something you always have on your desk?** A cup of coffee.
  - **If you had a magic wand, what policy would you pass to better help Illinois children and families today?** Adequate funding to compensate the entire early childhood workforce more competitively, with salaries and benefits that reflect their true value to society!
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★ LILIAN MATSUDA, POLICY ASSOCIATE



- **What has been your biggest adjustment advocating from home?** I really miss in-person interactions, especially rally days! I get a lot of energy and inspiration from my fellow advocates.
  - **If you had a magic wand, what policy would you pass to better help IL children and families today?** Free transportation for all child care no matter the hours of the day or day of the week!
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★ LIZ WILSON, PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY PROJECT MANAGER



- **What is something you always have on your desk?** You might notice a couple of pieces of art around my desk. I love having inspirational art pieces around me to give my eyes a break from the screen every once in a while!
- **What has been your biggest adjustment advocating from home?** My biggest adjustment is having two cute cats around me all the time! They are very distracting and refused to pose in my desk picture!

## We Want to Hear From You!

Our short, three-question [survey](#) will take less than 5 minutes and will help us improve our newsletters.

#eAdvocateNewsletter

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