

Using a Collective Impact Model, between September 2022 and June 2023, we led our Action and Family Councils through data discussions to identify gaps and needs for children and families. We coordinated focus groups, interviews, and surveys to gather input from community members across the Region.



8,870

Number of children ages 0-5 without Early Childhood Education and Care slots in licensed and license-exempt child care centers and homes.

"Working families are desperate to find care and place their children on every waiting list available in hopes of being in the lucky 40%. Facilities are full or at maximum capacity for the number of staff employed. How can we make child care accessible to every family that needs it?" - Child Care Director

Data from the Illinois Network of Child Care Research & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) & Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) using Census reported categories.

After identifying the most common and pressing Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) needs of their communities, Regional Councils made recommendations for how best to meet them.

## **REGION 51 NEEDS**

 Understanding of what programs/services are available and how to be referred to them

2. More home visiting services to pregnant parents before and after the child is born

4. Increased ECEC capacity and more ECEC professionals

## **REGION 51 RECOMMENDATIONS**

 Increase capacity in ECEC programs via workforce recruiters in high schools and ECEC programs to keep the ECEC staff connected to scholarships and grant opportunities
Invest in home visiting programs to help pregnant persons and develop resources to pass out to hospitals, doctors' offices & ECEC programs to recruit more home visiting advocates
Launch a 211 campaign through United Way with a social media, community outreach, and enrollment in the 211 system
Coordinate with the healthcare sector to learn how to implement a Community Navigators program.

"The amount of children missing out on quality early childhood education is unbelievable. Finding an opening is so hard that parents can't even begin to worry about the "quality" of the care, it is just about finding a spot for our kids." - Family Council Member