



Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessment **ADDENDUM**

Region 34
(Lake County)



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Introduction

In 2021, the Illinois Commission on Equitable Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Funding issued a report with findings that highlighted the inequities in ECEC funding in Illinois and the need to create a better statewide infrastructure to support ECEC professionals, expand services and programs for families and caregivers, and increase enrollment in ECEC programs. The report focused on the importance of addressing racial inequities and the need to include local voices in the conversation funders and decisionmakers were having about ECEC.

The experiences and knowledge families, caregivers, and Early Childhood professionals gain while navigating the complexities of the State's ECEC system is valuable, and understanding their lived experience in the local context is vital for decisionmakers to ensure communities have access to the programs, services, and supports they need. To this end, Birth to Five Illinois was created to harness family and caregiver voices in ECEC and serve as a bridge between the communities and policymakers so family, caregiver, and professional experiences can guide the decisions made to expand or enhance services across the State.

Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessments

Between August 2022 and May 2023, Regional Teams throughout the State met with their local Action Council and Family Council to talk about Early Childhood data and hear about their experiences with ECEC programs and services. They also conducted focus groups, interviews, held community listening sessions, and conducted surveys to gather additional feedback from caregivers, ECEC professionals, and priority populations in their Region. A community report, the Early Childhood Regional Needs Assessment, was completed in June 2023. However, recognizing that not all community members had a chance to provide their feedback on data or share their experiences in the original Regional Needs Assessment, additional feedback was collected through community events and meetings, and this Addendum was created to complement the existing report. The new information provided by community members, agencies, organizations, and other community stakeholders is listed below.

Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) Programs

Some new data was provided by community partners.

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago reported that 207 of their 278 slots have been allocated for funded enrollment.

A new before and after-school program for students in pre-K through second grade opened for the 2023-2024 school year in Zion Elementary School District #6.

Additional Head Start enrollment data was provided by the YWCA.

Table 1: Head Start Enrollment Data, by Program (as of 8/15/2023)

Center	City	Funded Capacity	Enrolled
Granny Betty's	Zion	30	20
Maggie's Place	Waukegan	20	15
One Hope United	Waukegan	40	27
One Hope United	Waukegan	40	27
Peppermint Stick	Round Lake	40	24
Peppermint Stick Grayslake	Grayslake	13	10
Step by Step	North Chicago	60	39
Totals	-	207	135

Source: YWCA Metropolitan Chicago
Created by: Birth to Five Illinois

One note about the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) was provided by a community member. They said that CCAP is not just based on income; rather, if someone is looking for work or schooling, they are eligible for three months of child care assistance.

Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC) Workforce

Some additional data on Early Childhood Education training was provided by community partners.

The College of Lake County program, which offers Spanish-led instruction, provided updated enrollment numbers. Twenty-seven students started in the spring semester of 2023, 25 started in the fall semester of 2023, and 25 are scheduled to start in the spring semester of 2024.

The Early Childhood Advocacy Center (ECAC) has a program that offers two years of free schooling for a person who is currently working or who has worked in a child care program.

Next Steps

As Regional Teams continue their conversations with caregivers, ECEC professionals, and community stakeholders, their stories and experiences with ECEC programs and services will be recorded and shared with state and local agencies, legislators, funders, and decisionmakers. We hope our work will contribute to reimagining an Early Childhood system that is more equitable for all families and support the incredible work ECEC professionals do every day.