FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS
COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA
ILLINOIS

Illinois law enforcement leaders' FY21 crime-prevention priorities

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS ILLINOIS is an anti-crime organization of more than 330 Illinois police chiefs, sheriffs, and state's attorneys. To help prevent future crime and violence, we urge adoption of the following state budget and policy priorities.

Early childhood education

High-quality preschool and birth-to-3 programs can help dramatically reduce future crime. While our state has made real progress in support of these programs, we still have a long way to go before all families have access to a quality preschool program for their 3- and 4-year-olds. The effects of this underinvestment are seen as early as kindergarten, when only one in four kindergartners is deemed "ready" for school by their teachers. The consequences can continue all the way through school and into adulthood, including reduced high school completion and, for too many, encounters with our criminal justice system. Illinois has an opportunity with the FY2021 budget to take a significant step toward a much better future for young children and our communities, through an additional $150 million investment in the Early Childhood Block Grant.

Budget line & agency	*FY19*	*FY20*	*FY21 request*
Early Childhood Block Grant (ISBE)	$494 million	$544 million	$694 million

Home-visiting programs

Voluntary home visiting provides "coaching" for new parents of very young, at-risk children. These community-based programs are among the most effective strategies for reducing exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and have also shown success with helping addicted parents achieve sobriety. Funding for these highly effective programs has remained stagnant for nearly a decade and we continue to reach only a fraction of the families who could benefit. *We support HB3984/SB2317's call to appropriate an additional $4 million for these vital programs in the Department of Human Services (IDHS) in FY21.*

Budget line & agency	*FY19*	*FY20*	*FY21 request*
Healthy Families Illinois (IDHS)	$10.04 million	$10.04 million	$12.41 million
Parents Too Soon (IDHS)	$6.87 million	$6.87 million	$8.49 million

After-school programs

Youth-development programs can help effectively deal with "prime time for juvenile crime" in the out-of-school hours. Law enforcement leaders support restoring funding for Teen REACH in the FY21 IDHS budget to a level that can provide support for more of our communities that need safe and enriching places for our young people in those risky after-school hours – a level of support these programs used to enjoy. We also support a request by the ACT NOW Coalition to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to fund after-school programs in our lowest-performing school districts.

Budget line & agency	*FY19*	*FY20*	*FY21 request*
Teen REACH After-School Programs (IDHS)	$13.8 million	$14.2 million	$19.6 million

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Redeploy Illinois (juvenile justice)

Redeploy Illinois cuts recidivism and saves money by contracting with counties to provide support and accountability for juvenile offenders in their home communities, instead of sending them to a Department of Juvenile Justice prison facility. This highly effective initiative continues to recover from the state budget impasse, with many counties reluctant to reengage in an effort that suffered greatly when bills were not being paid. IDHS reports some progress this year and we urge them to continue outreach and reengagement with counties.

Budget line & agency	*FY19*	*FY20*	*FY21 request*
Redeploy Illinois (IDHS)	$5.37 million	$6.37 million	$6.37 million

Child Care Assistance Program

State child care assistance for low-income, working families has long helped parents find reliable, educational settings for children's care while on the job and remains an essential component of the early learning system. Illinois' Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), administered by IDHS, helps the working families of more than 130,000 children - up to age 12 - to afford care. However, several administrative decisions in 2015 cut eligibility sharply and CCAP enrollment dropped by about 50,000 children statewide. Although eligibility cuts have been restored, actual enrollment has been slow to rebound and continues to lag tens of thousands shy of where it once was. Recent action has greatly strengthened CCAP access and quality. These moves include doubling eligibility determination periods to 12 months, reflecting federal standards; increasing program-entrance income eligibility to 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), from 185 percent; and reducing co-payments to no more than 9 percent of a family's gross income. This FY21 CCAP request will allow for continued implementation of quality enhancements and an increase in the number of working families getting help in paying for child care expenses.

*Budget line & agency**	*FY19*	*FY20*	*FY21 request*
Child Care Assistance Program (IDHS)	$402 million	$432 million	$482 million

** This is the appropriation from state general revenue funds (GRF). CCAP also receives funding from federal sources (Child Care Development Block Grant and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families). GRF funds are usually just over one-third of the overall expenditures.*

Children's mental health/social-emotional learning

We continue to promote strategies to provide more resources to early childhood programs (preschool and child care programs) for initiatives increasing mental health consultations and classroom-management supports. These efforts build on legislation passed in 2017 to reduce suspensions and expulsions in early childhood settings. Together, these policies can help guard against our most at-risk children being left behind at a very young age.

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