

## ILLINOIS EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATION INITIATIVES (August 2022)

**Illinois Early Childhood Vision:** We envision Illinois as a place where every young child – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language, geography, ability, immigration status, or other circumstance – receives the strongest possible start to life so they grow up safe, healthy, happy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn.

Initiative	Overarching Purpose	Goals/Objectives for Community Systems include:	Systems Strategies include:	Funding	Geography
All Our Kids (AOK) Networks	<p>All Our Kids Early Childhood Networks (AOK Networks) is an initiative to promote healthy pregnancies and the positive growth and development of all children birth to five and their parents/caregivers by assuring a well-coordinated, easily accessible, equitable and just system of services and supports that engages parents as partners in making the system work for them. AOK Networks use a data-driven approach to understand disparities and root causes of locally identified priority issues. The goal of the initiative is to improve outcomes for children and families through the implementation of evidence-based strategies that promote an effective local early childhood system.</p> <p>AOKs are contract driven.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build Network Capacity</li> <li>• Improve Local Service Delivery</li> <li>• Positively Impact Systems                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Access to quality services</li> <li>○ Coordination of efforts</li> <li>○ Equitable and just system</li> <li>○ Parents as partners in making the system work for them</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Positively Impact Children                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Babies are born healthy</li> <li>○ Young children are safe, healthy, and developing positively</li> <li>○ Children are kindergarten ready</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Identification</li> <li>• Public Information &amp; Education</li> <li>• Information &amp; Referral</li> <li>• Coordination of Care</li> <li>• Service Needs &amp; Utilization</li> <li>• Workforce Staffing &amp; Development</li> <li>• Local &amp; State Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illinois Department of Human Services' (IDHS) Division of Early Childhood (DEC)</li> <li>• Starting in SFY23 (July 1, 2022), the AOK Networks initiative will include funds for a full-time Network Coordinator AND a full-time Family Engagement Specialist whose role includes bolstering family engagement and recruitment.</li> </ul>	<p>Following communities will be eligible to apply for AOK Networks grant funding in SFY23. Twelve total awards are anticipated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cook and Collar Counties: Chicago South Side, Chicago West Side, Chicago Southeast Side, Cicero, DuPage, Kane, Lake, Will</li> <li>• Downstate Counties: Adams, Kankakee, Macon, McLean, Rock Island, Sangamon, St. Clair, Stephenson/Carroll/Joe Daviess, Tazewell/Peoria/Woodford, Vermilion, Wabash/Edwards, Winnebago</li> </ul>
Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&Rs)	<p>The Child Care Assistance Program provides working families of low-income with access to affordable, quality child care that allows them to continue working and contributes to the healthy, emotional and social development of the child. The 16 Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&amp;R) agencies perform the following services for parents and/or providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administer the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to determine family eligibility and</li> </ul>	<p>CCR&amp;R Agencies are contracted to provide: "Community Systems Development is designed to connect and coordinate programs and services for young children and their families. Participate in and/or assist community collaboration groups to provide coordinating services for families."</p> <p>Community Systems Development (CSD) CCR&amp;R shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Inform and receive input from the CCR&amp;R Board and/or Advisory committee regarding CSD contracted work, strategies and partners.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCR&amp;R workforce staffing and development</li> <li>• Working with and engaging representatives from multiple systems serving children and families</li> <li>• Provision of available aggregate data to local early childhood collaborations for planning and evaluation</li> <li>• Use of data to inform local strategies to assist families in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funded through the Illinois Department of Human Services (CCDBG, Federal CCDF)</li> <li>• No funding available for community collaborations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCR&amp;Rs are made up of 15 state-funded, community-based organizations that exist in every county in Illinois. Each has its own name, location and serves a certain group of counties, but all 16 are part of a larger system.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch">https://www.inccrra.org/about/sdasearch</a></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.inccrra.org/data-reports/2-uncategorised/142-child-care-resource-referral-system-ccr-r>

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	<p>process childcare provider payments;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide parents with consumer education and referrals to child care;</li> <li>• Deliver training, consultation &amp; assistance to providers to improve quality of care and assist them with achieving/maintaining an ExceleRate Circle of Quality;</li> <li>• Help develop new childcare resources in communities where they are needed;</li> <li>• Assemble and maintain an accurate childcare database to provide up-to-date information to parents; and</li> <li>• Record and analyze data on childcare supply and demand to support community capacity building.</li> </ul> <p>CCR&amp;Rs are contract driven.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Work collaboratively with representatives in local communities from multiple systems serving children and families including but not limited to: physical and mental health, early care and education, family and social services, early intervention, home visiting, school districts, local and state agencies.</li> <li>3) Incorporate CSD work into all CCR&amp;R staff positions.</li> <li>4) Designate a minimum of one management staff to be knowledgeable in CSD philosophy and work strategies.</li> <li>5) Ensure all CCR&amp;R program management, and Core and CCAP staff directly serving customers will complete the approved Basic CSD training. For new staff within one year of hire.</li> <li>6) CCR&amp;R shall provide aggregate data available to assist local early childhood collaborations in planning and evaluation of CSD work. Data can inform the development and implementation of local strategies to assist families in accessing services and measure progress toward outcomes.</li> <li>7) CCR&amp;R staff shall input CSD data in standardized and computerized format of the statewide CCR&amp;R system within 5 working days of the event.</li> </ol>	<p>accessing services and to measure outcome progress</p>		

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		<p>CCR&amp;R Agencies are required to report quarterly on performance metrics related to CSD:</p> <p>“Number of contacts made/meetings attended with early childhood community collaboration Groups.”</p>			
<p>Early Intervention (EI) / Child and Family Connections (CFC)</p>	<p>It is the policy of the State to enhance the development of all eligible infants and toddlers to minimize developmental delays and maximize individual potential for adult independence. It is the need of the State to implement, on a statewide basis, locally based, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency, Early Intervention (EI) services for all eligible infants and toddlers. The EI Program is a statewide program for the evaluation and assessment of infants and toddlers ages birth to three, as well as the provision of services for those who have a qualifying disability or diagnosis, a 30 percent delay in development in one or more of the five developmental domains, or who are at risk of developmental delays. Children and families access EI services through one of 25 Child and Family Connections (CFC) offices. CFC offices are the regional intake entities defined in state statute (325 ILCS 20) and rule (89 IL Admin. Code 500) as IDHS's designated entity responsible for implementation of the EI Program within its designated geographic area.</p> <p>CFCs are statutorily directed.</p>	<p>The CFC office shall provide service coordination activities, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct intake meetings</li> <li>• Assist any and all parents of infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities in equitably obtaining access to needed EI services and other services identified in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)</li> <li>• Coordinate the provision of EI services and other services</li> <li>• Coordinate initial evaluations</li> <li>• Facilitate and participate in the development, review, and evaluation of IFSPs</li> <li>• Conduct referral and other activities to assist families in identifying available and culturally reflective EI providers</li> <li>• Coordinator, facilitate, and monitor the delivery of EI services</li> <li>• Conduct follow-up activities</li> <li>• Communicate monthly with the family</li> <li>• Inform families of their Part C rights, procedural safeguards and</li> </ul>	<p>EI State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement effective training for Leadership Teams and EI providers that focuses on infant/toddler development and the Child Outcomes Summary Process, and make related changes to state policy and guidance documents, so that EI teams implement the Child Outcomes Process as desired.</li> <li>• Implement effective training for EI providers that focuses on evidence based, family capacity- building practices and make related changes to the local support structure by creating leadership teams, providing consistent technical assistance, and revising state policy and guidance documents, so that EI teams utilize practices that encourage the active participation of families in the intervention process by embedding intervention strategies into family/caregiver routines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funded through Illinois Department of Human Services</li> <li>• State funding utilizing general revenue funds, Medicaid Reimbursements, IDEA Part C funds and family fee collections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://eitp.education.illinois.edu/Files/Resources/CFCListing.pdf">https://eitp.education.illinois.edu/Files/Resources/CFCListing.pdf</a></li> <li>• Same as Local Interagency Councils (LICs)</li> </ul>

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		<p>available advocacy services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the funding sources for EI services required</li> <li>• Facilitate the development of a transition plan to preschool, school, or if appropriate, other services</li> </ul> <p>The CFC office shall establish/maintain Local Interagency Council(s) (LIC).</p>			
<p>Early Intervention (EI) / Local Interagency Councils (LIC)</p>	<p>The Early Intervention (EI) Program is a statewide program for the evaluation and assessment of infants and toddlers ages birth to three, as well as the provision of services for those who have a qualifying disability or diagnosis, a 30 percent delay in development in one or more of the five developmental domains.</p> <p>The Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention advises and assists the Lead Agency, Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention, in the development, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive early intervention program for birth to three infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities and delays and their families.</p> <p>The LIC shall assist the CFC through the development of local needs assessments and planning efforts. CFC offices must identify a LIC coordinator(s) responsible for ensuring that each LIC is established and maintained. The LIC Coordinator, with assistance from the CFC, will participate in</p>	<p>LICs are designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and resolve local access issues;</li> <li>• Conduct collaborative child find activities;</li> <li>• Coordinate public awareness initiatives;</li> <li>• Coordinate local planning and evaluation;</li> <li>• Assist in the recruitment of specialty personnel;</li> <li>• Develop plans for facilitating transition and integration of eligible children and families into the community; and</li> <li>• Facilitate conflict resolution at the local level.</li> </ul>	<p>EI State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) strategies are:</p> <p>In order to meet the SSIP strategies, LICs and Leadership Teams will work collaboratively (may share membership) and support each other through training, improving workforce quality and capacity, enhancing community collaborative efforts around child find, public awareness of the EI System and shared vision for improved outcomes for families and children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://eitp.education.illinois.edu/Files/Resources/CFCListing.pdf">https://eitp.education.illinois.edu/Files/Resources/CFCListing.pdf</a></li> <li>• Same as Local Interagency Councils (LICs)</li> </ul>

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	<p>reporting of activities on an IDHS-approved template on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Governing federal statute: Individuals with Disabilities Act, Subchapter III. Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities, Section 1441. Governing state statute: 325 ILCS 20/Early Intervention Services System Act, Paragraph, 4154, Section 4.</p> <p>LICs are statutorily directed.</p>				
Regional Offices of Education (ROE)	<p>ROEs are charged with coordinating and delivering state and local services, the Regional Superintendent acts as an advocate for education by providing positive leadership and disseminating information for educators, school districts and the community.</p>	<p>The primary role of the ROE is to monitor, assess and evaluate regional learning outcomes.</p> <p>Specific duties of the ROE and Superintendent are stated in the School Code and can be summarized in two major areas, service, and assurance to the public.</p> <p>Service components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissemination of information on education legislation, legal issues, cooperative management, research, and administration,</li> <li>• Provide information to citizens about state and local programs that will help meet the needs of their children.</li> <li>• [the Superintendent shall] have the specific skills necessary to serve as an intermediate agent who brings together people, concepts, and resources to provide educational services.</li> </ul> <p>The ROE and the Superintendent shall exercise supervision over all school districts in the region, act as the official advisor and assistant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Superintendents are elected every four years. They are accountable to their local school board.</li> <li>• They report up to the ISBE/Superintendent of Schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three state agencies (Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Corrections, and the Illinois Department of Human Services) accounted for 98% of the total State funding to ROEs and ISCs.</li> <li>• The responsibility for monitoring programs and funding provided to ROEs/ISCs is decentralized at ISBE.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://iarss.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/iarss_roes_areas_2015c.jpg">https://iarss.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/iarss_roes_areas_2015c.jpg</a></li> </ul>

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		<p>of the school officers and teachers in his region and carry out the advice of the State Superintendent of Education</p> <p>The ROE is responsible for coordinating and delivering state and local services, [the superintendent] acts as an advocate for education by providing positive leadership and disseminating information for educators, school districts and the public.</p> <p>Assurances to the public cover areas such as fiscal responsibilities, local school performances, life safety, certification, supervision, and curriculum. In these areas legislation places enforcement responsibilities on the Regional Superintendent to guarantee that certain minimums are met, and legal parameters followed.</p>			
<p>Birth to Five Illinois</p>	<p>In 2019, the Governor established an Early Childhood Funding Commission charged with studying and making recommendations on funding goals and funding mechanisms that provide equitable access to high-quality early childhood education and care services for all children birth to age five. The resulting <a href="#">report to the governor</a> and a companion <a href="#">primer</a> made a set of recommendations to ensure all families in Illinois regardless of race, ethnicity, home language, ability, and social circumstance have the services needed to prepare their children for school.</p>	<p>Values/Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Voice: Through this transformation centered on authentic family and community engagement, we will address the inequitable distribution of resources and services and rebuild our State’s Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) systems.</li> <li>Racial Equity: In an effort to move our Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) systems to one where racism no longer impacts a child’s success, we will work to dismantle barriers that have limited access to high-quality services for minoritized children in every corner of our State.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the first year, Birth to Five Action and Family Councils are being asked to focus on enrollment into ECEC programs and services per the State’s goals. Council members will be led through a process to develop a Regional Scan that provides a qualitative and data driven report on ECEC service provision in the region. These reports (with the input of many stakeholders) will help Councils and local, regional, and state leaders understand service barriers and expansion needs.</li> <li>Over time, the Birth to Five Action Councils in each region will:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GEER II funding administered by ISBE for year 1 and part of year 2.</li> <li>CCBDG funded administered by IDHS for year 2 and year 3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birth to Five Action and Family Councils will be set up in each of the State’s <a href="#">39 regions</a>, based on the ISBE Regional Office of Education (ROE map).</li> <li>Councils will share the geographic boundaries (and work as partners) but operate independent of ROEs.</li> </ul> <p>For more information on Birth to Five Illinois and to learn more about how you can get involved with your community, visit: <a href="https://www.birthtofiveil.com/">https://www.birthtofiveil.com/</a></p>

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	<p>As part of these transformation efforts, the State has partnered with the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) to launch Birth to Five Illinois with the goal of creating Birth to Five Action Councils and Birth to Five Family Councils in each of <a href="#">39 regions</a>, built upon the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Regional Offices of Education (ROE) statewide structure but operating independently. The Birth to Five Action Councils will include parents and families, community members, early childhood educators and providers, advocates, local elected officials, and other stakeholders who will be tasked with identifying service needs in each region. The Birth to Five Family Councils will be comprised of diverse families from each region; they will serve as an advisory body to the Action Council and ensure family voice is centered and prioritized in the data collection/needs assessment process. Information gathered by these Councils will be provided to the State in hopes of informing policy around birth-to-five programs over the next decade, and beyond. In addition, Birth to Five Councils can serve as regional advocacy bodies to influence local policy, including funding opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collective Impact: Birth to Five Illinois will build a system that harnesses knowledge directly from families and providers and encourages decision-makers to ensure new and/or expanded services are created to meet community needs. This community-driven framework will directly influence policy/funding at the local, regional, and state level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify gaps in early childhood and make recommendations to expand services (based off the Regional Scan)</li> <li>○ Systematically amplify the voices of families</li> <li>○ Work closely with local coalitions to support state and community goals</li> <li>○ Communicate regularly with families, providers, teachers, communities, policy makers, and legislators about this work</li> <li>○ Connect early childhood systems with support services such as housing and health systems</li> <li>○ Create an annual report</li> <li>• Birth to Five Illinois looks to work in partnership with existing local community collaborations, providers, ROEs, and all other ECEC entities to advance high-quality ECEC opportunities throughout each region across the State.</li> <li>• Birth to Five Illinois is contracting with Illinois Action for Children to provide each regional Birth to Five Council with support that builds upon Community Systems best practices and ensures ECEC alignment.</li> </ul>		

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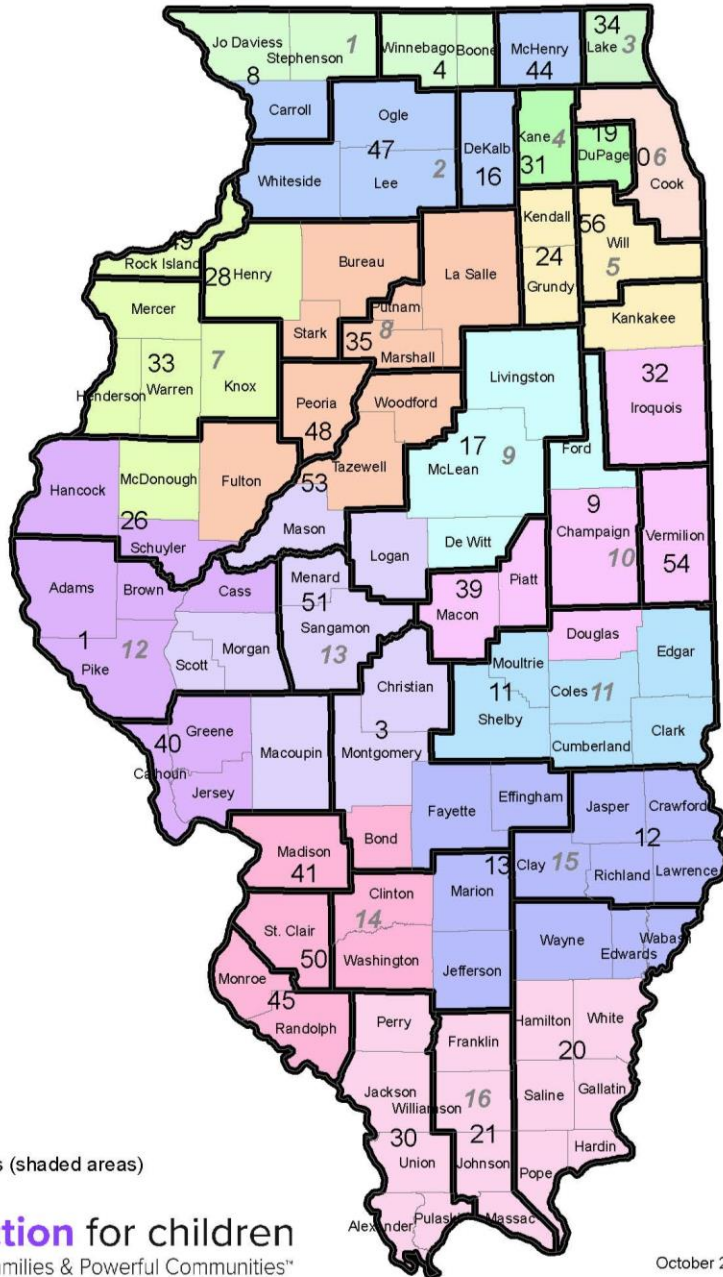
Initiative	Overarching Purpose	Goals/Objectives for Community Systems include:	Systems Strategies include:	Funding	Geography
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Birth to Five Illinois is working with IECAM to highlight data on the regional level that will help members of the regional Birth to Five Action and Family Councils understand more about the strengths, challenges, and gaps within the region.</li></ul>		



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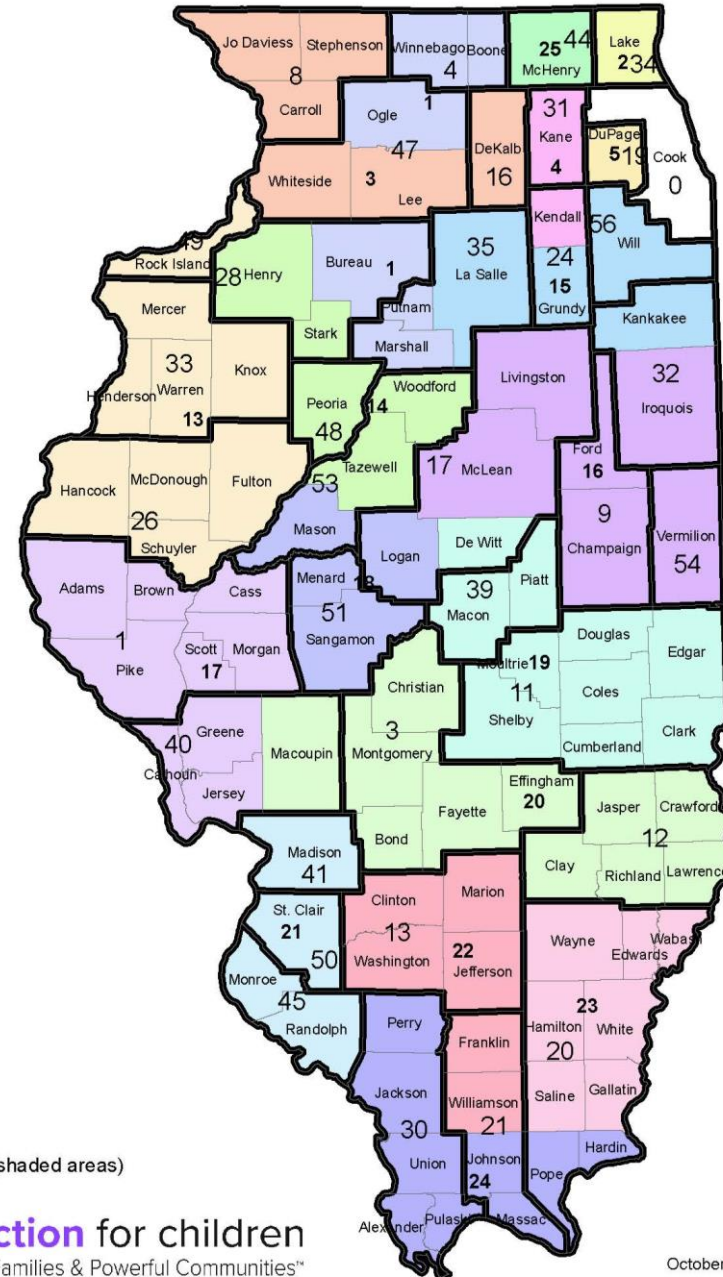
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**Illinois Service Area Boundaries**



- Legend**
- ROE boundaries
  - CCR&R boundaries (shaded areas)

**Illinois Service Area Boundaries**



- Legend**
- ROE boundaries
  - CFC boundaries (shaded areas)