

Early Childhood Block Grant - Infant Toddler Set-Aside

Illinois is embracing the research and real life experiences that have proven that readiness for school depends as much on characteristics formed during infancy and toddlerhood as skills acquired during the preschool years.

The Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) Early Childhood Education Block Grant (ECBG) funds a continuum of services for children from birth through age five and their families. A portion of the Block Grant funds, currently 11%, are set aside exclusively for programs serving families with infants and toddlers at-risk of school failure. Block Grant programs set the stage early, promoting comprehensive healthy child development to lay the foundation for success in school and life.

School districts and a broad range of other entities (e.g., family support and parenting programs, child care providers, local health departments, Early Head Start programs) are funded through the Block Grant. Services are delivered in a variety of settings, including homes, child care centers, licensed family child care homes, libraries, schools and community agencies. All programs funded through the Infant Toddler Set-Aside, which serve at-risk children under three, use a research-based program model such as Baby TALK, Early Head Start, Healthy Families or Parents as Teachers. Enhancements to research-based models including doula services or infant mental health services may also be funded.

Additional Information:

- Illinois' Infant-Toddler Set-Aside: What It Is and How It Works (http://www.ounceofprevention.org/downloads/publications/Infant_Toddler_setaside.pdf)
- Illinois State Board of Education Early childhood Home Page (<http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/Default.htm>)
- Ready for School: The Case for Including Babies and Toddlers As We Expand Preschool Opportunities –Ounce of Prevention Fund Publications