

## History

**1982**

Businessman and philanthropist Irving B. Harris founds the Ounce of Prevention Fund

**1984**

Becomes one of three Head Start grantees in Chicago

**1986**

Launches the Center for Successful Child Development (Beethoven Project), a comprehensive early childhood center in a Chicago public housing development

**1987**

Creates Kids Public Education and Policy Project (Kids PEPP) to advocate in Illinois on behalf of young children and their families

**1994**

Publishes *Head Start on Head Start*, which lays the groundwork for the development of the federal Early Head Start program

**1996**

Launches doula program to provide support to young, low-income mothers whose babies are most at-risk for health problems and school failure

Publishes *Starting Smart: How early experiences affect brain development*, one of the earliest summaries of the brain research that underscores the critical importance of every child's early years

**1997**

Successfully advocates for the Illinois Early Childhood Block Grant, which combines existing early childhood funding streams and requires a percentage of funding to go to birth-to-three programs

**1998**

Launches the Birth to Three Project (later renamed Birth to Five Project) to build a coordinated statewide system of programs, services, and policies for young children

**2000**

Opens first Educare school in Chicago's Grand Boulevard neighborhood

**2001**

Dr. James Heckman, the 2000 Nobel Laureate in Economics, speaks at first "It's Good Business to Invest in Young Children" luncheon

**2002**

Begins consultations with policymakers and advocacy organizations in other states on early childhood issues

**2003**

Successfully advocates for a \$90 million expansion of early education funding in Illinois

Staffs the new Illinois Early Learning Council, whose goal is to meet the early learning needs of all children from birth to age five and their families by establishing a high-quality, comprehensive, statewide learning system

**2004**

In partnership with the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, establishes the Bounce Learning Network (now known as the Educare Learning Network) to create Educare schools across the country

**2006**

Successfully advocates for passage of Preschool for All legislation in Illinois

Joins 10 organizations nationally in the Birth to Five Policy Alliance to help states develop a policy agenda and advocate for increased public investments for young children

**2007**

Launches the First Five Years Fund, which aims to focus nationwide attention and resources on comprehensive, quality early care and learning programs for children from birth to age five

**2008**

Successfully advocates for a \$32.4 million increase in state funding for the Early Childhood Block Grant

**2009**

Successfully advocates in Illinois for an increase in the percentage of early childhood funding spent on programs for infants and toddlers, and \$45 million to fund capital projects for early childhood programs

Along with the First Five Years Fund and other organizations, successfully advocates for a new \$4 billion federal investment in early childhood education

**2010**

Doubles the number of infants and toddlers served in the Ounce's Early Head Start program through partnerships with community agencies

Educare Learning Network grows to include 12 operating Educare schools across the country, with additional schools in development.

**2011**

Diana Rauner becomes president of the Ounce of Prevention Fund, succeeding Harriet Meyer, who served as president for 20 years.