



Illinois  
Collaboration  
on Youth

# ANNUAL REPORT

*December 2019 to December 2020*

# 2020

## HIGHLIGHTS

**1**

Acted as COVID-19 clearinghouse, disseminating critical operational & funding information from state agencies, & elevating provider questions to state decision-makers for clarification.

**2**

Rapidly transitioned all training & workshops online, hosting 7,900+ total attendees, to continue bringing information, knowledge, & capacity to the youth-serving field during COVID-19.

**3**

Advocated for & secured increased dollars in the state FY21 budget for child welfare providers & several youth-service programs (e.g. CCBYS, CYS, Teen REACH, & Youth Homelessness).

**4**

Joined state-wide initiative to develop strategies for building trauma-informed schools, & trained educators & administrators on trauma-informed practices

**5**

Worked as lead grantee to continue research on an innovative program model that keeps families experiencing parental drug abuse together safely.

**6**

Rebranded with a new logo, tagline, & website to better communicate our mission & collective voice to lawmakers & stakeholders.



**MISSION:** To promote the safety, health, & success of Illinois' children, youth, & families by acting as a collective voice for policy & practice, & by connecting and strengthening the organizations that serve them.

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

This past year has posed astonishing challenges for us as individuals, as organizations, and as an association. Responding to a world-wide pandemic and confronting systemic racism has stretched us far beyond our comfort zones and challenged us to rethink our foundational concerns for safety and security. We are reimagining ourselves and what we owe to each other to achieve a healthy society where everyone has the potential to thrive.

Sometimes that has meant that we are collaborating to create and innovate at the speed of light, finding new ways to serve children and youth while protecting them and our workforce from exposure to a deadly disease. Sometimes it means that we are engaged in hard conversations about the ways the systems we work in, the organizations and missions we serve, and the careers we have built for ourselves, are themselves built on systemic racism that devalues children and families of color.

Collaboration is in our name, and collaboration is what's needed if we are going to create a society in which Black and Brown lives matter as much as White lives do. We must be willing to take risks, be vulnerable, trust one another, and change. And that also means changing how we advocate, and what we advocate for.

As an association of community-based organizations, service to members has been a top priority, helping you solve problems and ensuring you have the resources you need to do your work. That transactional advocacy is the bread and butter of membership associations. Now we are leaning into transformational advocacy, and asking ourselves important questions about how we can use our collective voice to fundamentally challenge and alter systems to better serve children, youth, and families.

Today, we are engaged in a generative dialogue about how we can confront the systemic racism built into our foster care system. Family separation – forcible family separation – has its roots in slavery. That injustice has left a legacy of trauma and suffering that continues to this day. Over the course of child welfare history in Illinois, there have been significant concerns about loss of cultural identity and family ties, a continuing struggle to hire and keep a bilingual workforce, and many other challenges. We know that Black children are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system, and that their outcomes are disproportionately worse. Youth who age out of the system are far too likely to lack the tools, skills, resources, and relationships needed to be successful as adults. And our entire human services infrastructure is inadequate in meeting family needs before a hotline call is ever made. We must address this.

Confronting systemic racism means that we also must address the issue of who we are, as leaders, and as a coalition. Who our staff and Board members are. Who the children and families we serve are. These conversations are not easy or brief. And they must shape our advocacy going forward. I am beyond grateful to have your partnership as we forge our way forward together.

**Andrea Durbin**  
Chief Executive Officer

# ICOY MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT IN 2020

ICOY members are part of a large & growing coalition of human service organizations that collectively represent a huge force in Illinois.

## SIZE OF COALITION



101

MEMBERS &  
PARTNERS



7

NEW MEMBERS  
IN 2020



16,684

FULL-TIME  
STAFF & EMPLOYEES

## IMPACT & SCALE OF COALITION



1.5M

CHILDREN &  
INDIVIDUALS SERVED



\$2B

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
IN ILLINOIS

## WHY BE A MEMBER?

Being a member of ICOY offers the following key benefits:

### ADVOCACY

- ICOY advocates within the legislative & executive branches on behalf of members.
- Help shape practices & policies that improve outcomes for children & youth.

### REPRESENTATION

- ICOY attends meetings & serves on committees, acting as a voice for members working with the child welfare/juvenile justice systems & homeless/runaway youth.

### NETWORKING

- ICOY hosts member-exclusive events attended by high ranking state officials, politicians & peer organizations from across the state.

### LEARNING

- Receive emails with breaking news, analysis, funding opportunities & resources.
- ICOY offers 30% off customized trainings for your staff.

### VISIBILITY

- ICOY amplifies members' news & job openings via our website & social media.

# IMPROVING SYSTEMS & STRENGTHENING YOUTH-SERVING PROVIDERS IN 2020

ICOY envisions a state culture that invests in ensuring that *all* children, youth, & families are healthy, inter-generationally successful, & thriving toward their full potential. We believe that happens when children & youth have the tools & skills needed to thrive, & community-based organizations have the capacity & resources needed to serve them. **See efforts we led in 2020 to build & strengthen Illinois youth-serving' human services infrastructure:**

## COVID-19 Technical Assistance:

**We ensured providers had the resources, support, & guidance from DHS, DCFS, & other stakeholders to adapt services, prioritize safety, & secure relief funding:**



We served  
**3,310**  
individuals  
from **588**  
human service  
organizations!

5

webinars on PPP, CARES Act, & other COVID-19 relief efforts.

8

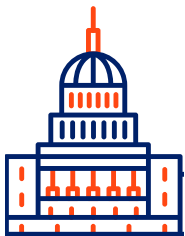
webinars to provide updates to DHS youth program providers.

10

Q&A addresses from DCFS Director Smith to child welfare providers.

23

calls to provide members with updated information on COVID-19 news & state & federal legislation.



## Policy & Advocacy

**To ensure all children, youth, & families have the tools to be successful, we advocated for policies & resources that achieved the following legislative successes:**

- Advocated for & secured increased dollars in the state FY21 budget for child welfare providers & several youth-service programs (e.g. CCBYS, CYS, Teen REACH, & Youth Homelessness).
- Worked with the Legislative Black Caucus & other advocates, drafting legislation to increase trauma support & restorative justice practices in K-12 schools.
- Led Child Welfare Workforce Taskforce in an effort to compile a report for the Illinois General Assembly on issues facing child welfare providers.
- Organized a Lobby Day with members at Illinois Capitol to build awareness & educate lawmakers on the needs of underserved youth.

## Capacity Building:

To ensure Illinois children, youth, & families received effective & reliable services — especially during the pandemic — we helped child welfare, juvenile justice, & other youth service providers & stakeholders strengthen their operational, financial, & programmatic capabilities in the following ways:



We provided training & technical assistance to DHS youth program providers to enhance opportunities for youth to gain skills, support, & resources to reach their full potential.

Starting in March, we transitioned all trainings online, hosting **100+ trainings** & reaching **1,650+** practitioners!

In 2020, we trained **41%** more people & **55%** more organizations than 2019.



We helped Illinoisans access behavioral health services by **supporting providers' ability to bill Medicaid managed care.**

- Hosted in-person & virtual *How to Bill Medicaid Managed Care* sessions.
- Acted as a Medicaid advocate, regularly attending committee meetings & providing comments on providers' behalf.
- Continued advocating for the Medicaid Technical Assistance Center (MTAC) to operate through HFS.

We worked to decrease Illinois' youth incarceration & improve reform efforts by **helping providers & jurisdictions obtain resources.**

- Provided technical assistance to the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission, Redeploy Illinois Oversight Board, & other youth-serving organizations.
- Hosted trainings for the field on best practices for working with youth who are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system.



We **strengthened the trauma-informed capacity of Illinois' human service organizations & systems** so they can recognize & respond to youth trauma & vicarious trauma in service providers.

- Led conversations with educators, school systems, & lawmakers on trauma-informed care — especially as it relates to discipline & remote learning — to help youth heal from trauma, reduce disparities, & prevent violence.

We delivered **90+** trauma trainings to **700+** youth service providers.

Developed **new COVID-19 trainings** to help providers navigate the pandemic in a trauma-informed way.



We led the Illinois Intact Family Recovery (IFR) Program, **continuing research on an innovative program model** that keeps families experiencing parental drug abuse together & **creates a potential national family recovery model.**

- Launched a new trial program in East-Central Illinois, replicating our ongoing trial in Northern Illinois.
- Engaged local & state organizations serving counties in Eastern & Northern Illinois, providing co-case management to families recovering from parental substance abuse & supporting the safety & stability of children & their families.
- Positioned Illinois to create a national model for Intact Family Services through the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

In 2.5 years, the Northern Illinois IFR trial has improved family recovery & stability, serving **132 families** — with **79%** of those who completed Substance Use Disorder treatment maintaining **1+ months** of sobriety & **79%** of children remaining in homes with their families.



## Equity & Access Fund

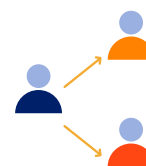
Last year, ICOY's Board of Directors took steps for us to be more proactive in addressing the exclusion of organizations lacking unrestricted funds from our coalition by establishing the Equity & Access Fund. This fund provides subsidized memberships for qualifying community-based organizations, ensuring our collective voice incorporates representation & experience from the wide range of providers serving children, youth, & families.

Over the year we asked all ICOY members to make an additional annual contribution to this fund. **With your help, we're making it possible for those who serve in isolated rural communities, or urban neighborhoods with a history of disinvestment, to be at the table with us!**

### THE RESULTS



**\$29,300**  
RAISED



**20**  
CONTRIBUTING  
MEMBERS



**5**  
SUBSIDIZED  
MEMBERSHIPS!



Illinois  
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on Youth

Partnering to build brighter futures