



FY21 ICOY LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

OVERVIEW | 2021

Priority Areas in Illinois General Assembly and United States Congress

In FY2021, the Illinois Collaboration on Youth (ICOY) had several priorities that we pushed during the legislative session to ensure that children and youth have the tools and skills needed to thrive, and that the organizations serving them have the capacity and resources needed to serve young people and their families effectively. Some of these priorities were ones in which ICOY was the leading partner, or champion, and others were priorities in which we worked as allies in coalition with other partners. As always, there are emerging issues that arise throughout the year with which ICOY will engage when they align with our mission, vision, and values.

Some of these priorities were carried over from the last legislative session, which was curtailed by the coronavirus pandemic. We took a new look at them in light of the long-overdue racial reckoning to correct embedded systemic racism and promote justice and equity.

We will respond to budget proposals as they develop and will advocate for adequate resources and investment needed to ensure that children, youth, and families have a strong foundation.

Below are our priority areas:

ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Medicaid Technical Assistance Center (MTAC) (Passed & Signed by GOV) *Champion*

HB1950 & SB341, also HB158

- Pass enabling legislation that establishes a Medicaid Technical Assistance Center within the State's Medicaid infrastructure, with the purpose of assisting community-based providers to successfully participate in Medicaid managed care, so that people may have access to behavioral health care in their communities, from providers they trust, and who understand and appreciate their culture, language, and life circumstances.

Child Welfare Reform Package *Champion*

Racial disparities and inequities are present throughout the child welfare system. ICOY had three bills designed to begin to address those disparities. Those bills include:

1. Child Welfare Reimbursement Methodology (**Re-referred to Rules**)
HB3288 & SB2313
- Establish a standardized annual process that includes adjustments for the cost of doing business as measured by the Consumer Price Index for evaluating and setting the reimbursements for child welfare services to ensure sufficient resources to obtain the



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appropriate outcomes for children, youth, and families involved in the Illinois child welfare system. Children and families suffer, and children and families of color suffer disproportionately, when the child welfare system is inadequately funded to meet their needs.

2. Implicit Bias Training for Mandated Reporters (**Passed Both Houses**)

HB3100 & SB2503

- Update the required training for mandated reporters to address implicit bias. Mandated reporters, who include people in health care, education, law enforcement, athletics, social service and mental health, crisis intervention services, the clergy, childcare, and funeral services, are responsible for approximately 65% of all calls to the abuse and neglect hotline. It is imperative that these mandated reporters be aware of implicit bias when they are determining whether to make a call to the DCFS Hotline. Racial bias by mandated reporters has been identified as one of the factors in the disproportionality of families of color in the child welfare system.

3. Child Welfare Racial Disparities Report (**Passed Both Houses**)

HB2914 & SB2406

- Require DCFS to produce an annual report and analysis of the following data de-aggregated by race and ethnicity for children and families involved in the child welfare system including education success, health, housing, jobs/economic justice, criminal justice, and other key metrics that serve as indicators of child wellbeing. The report and analysis will also look at children and families involved in a safety plan, instances in which DCFS took protective custody, investigations of each allegation of abuse and neglect per DCFS Procedure 300 Appendix B, findings of such investigations, and number of court cases DCFS recommended to be filed in court for each allegation type. The initial report will serve as the baseline and then year-over-year analysis will allow us to examine progress toward eliminating racial disparities.

Host Home Licensing for Comprehensive Community-Based Youth Services *Champion*

HB692 & SB206 (**Re-referred**)

- Establish new licensing and monitoring criteria for host homes serving youth age 11-17 who are experiencing a crisis and in need of a temporary alternative care model. CCBYS deflects young people from the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Host homes licensed under this act shall not be utilized for a child who is a youth in care of DCFS.

Juvenile Competency to Stand Trial (**Incomplete**)

Champion

- Create a new standard to determine whether minors are competent to stand trial that considers age, developmental maturity, trauma, and disability. Include provisions to evaluate competency and processes to remediate or dispose of the case when incompetency is found. Current law applies the same standard to adults and children alike. Children and youth of color are



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disproportionately involved in the justice system; Black children especially experience “adultification”. ICOY and the Illinois Justice Project will lead the effort to advance this legislation, which was developed in collaboration with the Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership.

Parity within the State’s Indemnification Act (Incomplete)

Champion

- Address the lack of parity among the State of Illinois and its other contractors and vendors, and the child welfare providers, in the State’s Indemnification Act.
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Certification for Women or Minority-led Nonprofit Organizations (Re-referred)

Ally

- Establish a stand-alone certification in Illinois state law for nonprofit organizations that are minority, disabled, and/or women-led, allowing eligible organizations to receive preferences in state contracting, similar to the preference established in the Illinois Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women and Persons with Disabilities Act (30 ILCS 575). This will expand opportunity and investment for community-based nonprofit organizations. ICOY is working in partnership with Elevate Energy to advance this legislation.
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Child Welfare Racial Disparities Task Force (Passed Both Houses)

Ally

- Establish a task force to examine racial disparities in the child welfare system and make recommendations for addressing those disparities. The Child Welfare Racial Disparities Report legislation (above) will provide the necessary data to inform the work of this Task Force. ICOY is working in partnership with the Shriver Center on Poverty Law to advance this legislation.
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Ban Detention of Young Children Under Age 13 (Re-referred)

Ally

- Prohibit detention of children under age 13 and make recommendations for adequate resources and systemic responses are available to meet the needs of young children who come into contact with the justice system. Children and youth of color are disproportionately represented in the justice system; this disparity is even more pronounced for the youngest children who interact with the system. ICOY is working in partnership with the Juvenile Justice Initiative to advance this legislation.
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Earned Income Tax Credit (Re-referred)

Ally



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- Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to make it eligible for workers 18-24 years old, and for those over age 65. This would reduce the regressive nature of Illinois' flat tax, which disproportionately hurts low- and moderate-income individuals and families. ICOY is working in partnership with the United Way of Illinois and other advocacy groups to advance this legislation.

FY22 ILLINOIS STATE BUDGET

FY22 Illinois State Budget

Champion

ICOY is a fierce advocate to ensure that community-based providers have adequate resources to support children, youth, and families to reach their potential and contribute back to their communities.

1. Unified Approach to Health and Human Services Budgeting
 - a. Resolutions in the House and Senate around the Guiding Principles
 2. Rate Reform for Behavioral Health Services
- Ensure that rates paid to community-based providers for behavioral healthcare services are sustainable and adequate to meet the needs of the individuals and families that they serve. ICOY is working in coalition with the Community Behavioral Healthcare Association, IARF, and the Illinois Association for Behavioral Health to advance this legislation.

Ally

UNITED STATES CONGRESS

Legislative Proposal to Exempt QRTPs from IMD Definition

Ally

- Work in coalition with other state and national advocates to push for a budget proposal that would prevent Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) from being considered as Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMDs)
 - Ensure continued Title IV-E reimbursement for Medicaid coverage for children in foster care while placed in that QRTP.

Funding in the FY21 Federal Budget to Increase HHS, HUD, & Dept. of Ed. Appropriations

Ally

- Work in coalition with other human service advocates to ensure that children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness have access to services, housing, and education.



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