

Welcome to a new day for healthy development for Illinois children and their families.

*"Finally!"*

*Now that our beautiful daughter, Tracy is getting the help she needs, it's made a huge difference everyday, not just for her, but for our whole family. We're learning how to manage our stress and how to be better parents."*



Tracy represents one of the growing number of Illinois children receiving more effective mental health care – earlier, easier and more economically. That's just one of the many improvements the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership is helping to create as part of a more comprehensive, more responsive children's mental health system. It's a new day for healthy development for Illinois children and their families.





In 2003, the passage of the Illinois Children's Mental Health Act created the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP).

The Partnership is a statewide group of agencies, organizations and individuals committed to improving the scope and quality of mental health programs, services and supports for Illinois children and their families, and reducing the stigma associated with mental health issues.

The goal is to build a comprehensive, better-coordinated mental health system that provides easier access to more effective programs and services. The Partnership envisions an innovative system that focuses on:

- promoting children's healthy social and emotional development
- intervening early when problems arise
- minimizing duplication of services and maximizing resources —

so that Illinois children and their families can live healthier, happier lives, and have a better chance at a brighter future.



# BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE

## **Our Children's Mental Health is an Urgent Priority.**

Teen suicides, school violence, bullying, criminal behavior, substance abuse, even toddler expulsions from child care due to behavior problems – almost everyday we hear about at least one of these situations. Equally troubling, if you happen to be a family seeking help for one of these problems, you will likely encounter challenges in getting appropriate, quality mental health services in a timely manner.

*Nationally, over 20% of children have a diagnosable mental health problem, and only one in five are receiving services.*

Historically, children's mental health programs and services have been highly fragmented, under-resourced, and limited in scope. Little emphasis has been placed on promoting children's social and emotional well-being, or in preventing mental health problems.

*Clearly, our children deserve better.*



We know from research that children's healthy social and emotional development is an essential underpinning to school readiness, academic success, health, and overall well-being. Prevention and early intervention efforts can improve school readiness, health status, and academic achievement. They are also economical because they can reduce the need for more costly interventions, such as long-term mental health treatment, grade retention, special education, and welfare supports.

## **Illinois Steps Up.**

With the passage of the Illinois Children's Mental Health (ICMH) Act of 2003, Illinois leaders marked the beginning of a new day for healthy development for Illinois children and their families. Among other key provisions, the ICMH Act created the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP), a statewide group of agencies and organizations representing families, children and youth, policymakers, advocates, and key systems including mental health, education, early childhood, health, child welfare, substance abuse prevention, violence prevention, and juvenile justice. Working together with unprecedented collaboration, the Partnership developed a Strategic Plan for building a comprehensive mental health system. The Plan emphasizes promotion of healthy social and emotional development, prevention, early intervention, and treatment for children from birth to age 18, as well as for youth ages 19-21 who are transitioning out of key public programs.

## **ICMHP Strategic Plan: A Roadmap for Success**

The Partnership developed a unified, short- and long-term Strategic Plan that recommends integrating proven effective programs and services, maximizing existing funds, and investing for the future. The Plan also identified the following principles as critical for achieving success:

- The system must engage and partner with parents and caregivers at every stage, from prevention to early intervention, and treatment.
- Prevention and early intervention efforts should start prenatally and continue throughout adolescence.
- Children and their families should have access to affordable, quality, family-centered, culturally competent interventions and services.
- Public and private resources must be maximized and coordinated, building on existing state and local systems and programs.
- To increase their effectiveness, Children's mental health services should be delivered in and across natural settings such as homes, primary care environments, early childhood programs, community programs, and schools.

# CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM FOR

## ICMHP Priority Goals:

The Partnership developed six core goals that identify key areas of need essential to reforming the Illinois Children's Mental Health System:

1. Develop and strengthen prevention, early intervention, and treatment policies, programs, and services for children.
2. Increase public education and awareness of the mental health needs of children.
3. Maximize current investments, and invest sufficient fiscal resources over time.
4. Build a qualified and adequately trained workforce with a sufficient number of professionals to serve children and their families throughout Illinois.
5. Create a quality-driven children's mental health system with shared accountability among key state agencies and programs.
6. Invest in research.

## It's Working! Current ICMHP

1. **Increasing investment in children's mental health by successfully advocating for new state funds** to support key Strategic Plan Priorities (described on the left), and securing private, public, and in-kind funds and services from Illinois state agencies, corporations, and foundations to further the work of the Partnership.
2. **Engaging schools in implementation of the Social Emotional Learning Standards** in partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) through the SEL Professional Development Project, and through grants to school districts.
3. **Conducting a statewide public awareness campaign to reduce the stigma of mental illness, and raise awareness of the importance of children's social and emotional development.** This collaboration with the Division of Mental Health (DMH)

includes a website that will provide information on mental health and well-being to policymakers, health and mental health providers, educators, family members, consumers, and the general public.

4. **Increasing the capacity of school districts to identify and meet the early intervention needs of students** in natural settings, and in coordination with existing mental health support programs through Mental Health Support Grants provided in collaboration with ISBE.
5. **Expanding mental health services for children age 0-5 through the Early Childhood Grants**, in partnership with DMH within the Department of Human Services (DHS).
6. **Improving the capacity of community mental health agencies to address the needs of children ages 0-7**

*Helpful information on children's mental health and well-being from the ICMHP*



(e.g., Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), and national organizations (e.g., National Governors

# ILLINOIS CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

## Strategic Plan Implementation Efforts

through implementation of an innovative Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project. This Project is one of the first of its kind in the nation.

children's mental health service system through Evidence-Based Practice grants provided by DMH.

**9. Promoting parent/caregiver leadership and support in the children's mental health system** through development of a regional support network that helps parents and caregivers recognize and understand their children's mental health needs, navigate the complexities of the CMH system, and serve as leaders in the local, regional and state-wide children's mental health system.

**10. Expanding the number of Illinois schools implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**, a prevention-based approach using data-based decision-making to promote positive behaviors in schools.

For more information, visit [www.icmhp.org](http://www.icmhp.org)

### What a New Children's Mental Health System Means for Illinois.

Illinois children and their families will have much easier access to more effective programs and services that can meet their mental health needs. The promotion of healthy social and emotional development will help our children better succeed in school and in life. Families will be encouraged to seek help for their mental health problems as readily as they now do for their physical health problems. Most importantly, children will have increased opportunities to lead healthier, happier lives, and enjoy brighter futures.



### THE EARLY RESULTS ARE IMPRESSIVE.

Illinois is beginning to serve more children at younger ages and in earlier stages of need. Community based mental health programs and services are less fragmented and more effective. Interagency collaboration has been enhanced. Now, by serving many children with community based mental health services instead of costly hospitalizations, Illinois projected savings of \$56.6 million over three years.

*"Say It Out Loud" public awareness campaign is available at [www.mentalhealthillinois.org](http://www.mentalhealthillinois.org)*



Association) and other states (e.g., Michigan and New York) for its leadership in improving children's mental health.



## Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership Members

Barbara Shaw, *Chair ICMHP*  
*Illinois Violence Prevention Authority*

Scott Allen  
*Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics*

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For more information, contact

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