



# Chief budget priorities for FY 2011

With a projected budget shortfall of more than \$13 billion, the state of Illinois faces incredible fiscal challenges in the coming fiscal year. Yet Illinois children, families and communities face great challenges every day: the need for high-quality education, decent health care, effective human services and basic economic security – all at a time when little security is to be had and when vital programs already have been painfully cut by more than \$1 billion in FY 2010.

**A more balanced, responsible approach is necessary in FY 2011. It is critical that we raise more adequate revenues to stabilize vital state services, and that we do so in a manner that’s fair to families.** A general tax increase, coupled with greater use of tax credits and exemptions, is the only common-sense option. And as state leaders assemble a budget plan for the next year, Voices for Illinois Children presents a snapshot of policy priorities we count among the most important to families and communities.

In the case of each of the programs listed below, we urge state leaders to:

- **Protect these services from further budget cuts;**
- **Restore the cuts they already have sustained in FY 2010; and**
- **Continue to work toward fulfilling the many unmet needs of kids and families that these programs represent, in as timely a manner as possible.**

Priority	Supports	FY 2010 funding	Change from FY 2009	Unmet needs include
<b>Early Childhood Block Grant Programs</b>	Preschool services for 3- and 4-year-olds; developmental services for at-risk infants and toddlers	\$342.2 million in ISBE	\$38.1 million cut (10 percent)	Tens of thousands of young children – from birth to age 5 – remain without access to high-quality early learning opportunities; We should devote at least 5 percent of the revenues from any general tax increase to early learning programs
<b>Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership initiatives</b>	Prevention, early intervention and treatment services to strengthen kids’ social and emotional well-being	\$2.7 million in ISBE \$2.38 million in DHS	\$300,000 cut (10 percent) \$558,600 cut (19 percent)	About 1 in 10 Illinois children suffer from a mental illness severe enough to cause impairment – yet up to 80 percent of children and youth who need mental health services do not receive them

<p><b>Home-visiting programs</b></p>	<p>Healthy Families Illinois (HFI) &amp; Parents Too Soon (PTS): “Parent-coaching” for new moms and dads of at-risk children from birth to age 3</p>	<p>\$10.1 million for HFI in DHS  \$10.6 million for PTS in DHS <i>(incl. General Revenue Funds and other sources)</i></p>	<p>\$1.1 million cut (10 percent)  \$771,100 cut (10 percent of program’s GRF; 7 percent cut overall)</p>	<p>Current funding levels allow home-visiting programs to reach fewer than 5 percent of the at-risk infants and toddlers who need help to ensure their optimal growth and safety</p>
<p><b>Child care assistance</b></p>	<p>State-assisted child care for low-income, working parents – an integral part of many children’s early learning experiences</p>	<p>\$641.2 million GRF in DHS  <i>(\$845.8 million total from all sources, incl. \$74 million in one-time ARRA funding)</i></p>	<p>Level GRF funding <i>(due to stipulations in federal ARRA funding*)</i></p>	<p>Provider reimbursement rates remain low in many areas, hurting families’ access to high-quality care; Many struggling parents cannot afford co-payments for care – fees that can claim up to 15 percent of their income. Infants and toddlers represent the most underserved population</p>
<p><b>Teen REACH after-school programs</b></p>	<p>Homework assistance, enrichment activities and healthy alternatives to the streets for children outside of school hours</p>	<p>\$15.7 million in DHS</p>	<p>\$3 million cut (16 percent)</p>	<p>Children and youths are left to risky behaviors – including violence, alcohol and drug abuse – during “prime time for juvenile crime”</p>
<p><b>Bilingual education</b></p>	<p>Second-language educational help for 190,000 children for whom English is not the first language</p>	<p>\$68.1 million in ISBE</p>	<p>\$7.6 million cut (10 percent)</p>	<p>A growing population of English-language learners left to struggle without the help they need to thrive both inside and outside the classroom – particularly as local schools are left to pick-up a large percentage of costs</p>

<p><b>Early Intervention</b></p>	<p>For children birth to 3 with diagnosed developmental delays; provides therapies, counseling, social work and other services</p>	<p>\$76.7 million GRF in DHS  <i>(\$170 million total, including all funding sources)</i></p>	<p>\$2.4 million cut (3 percent of GRF)  <i>(ARRA and other federal funding helped to blunt effects of cuts and increase “all-sources” total by \$20 million*)</i></p>	<p>Despite research showing early childhood is the most effective time to intervene for a child with developmental delays or disabilities, many young children to undiagnosed and untreated until they enter school</p>
<p><b>Medical assistance</b></p>	<p>Access to health care for more than 1.6 million children through Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and All Kids expansion in DHFS</p>	<p>\$6.9 billion in GRF funding in DHFS for all medical assistance recipients</p>	<p>\$659 million (9 percent) below the Governor’s FY10 recommendation  <i>(FY09 funding included payments Medicaid backlog, making FY10 recommended budget level a more appropriate baseline for comparison)</i></p>	<p>Long delays – often stretching for months – in payments to service providers, threatening to undermine progress in expanding access to high-quality health care for Illinois children</p>

*\*One-time, federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is not expected to continue in FY 2011*

*February 2010*