

## Acknowledgements

Voices for Illinois Children dedicates this report to all the people who make an impact on the lives of children, including parents, teachers, friends, family members, volunteers, advocates — and all who help children cross the bridge to adulthood through examples of caring, patience, creativity and humor.

“Invest in Our Future: Strengthening Families by Building Assets” is an Illinois Kids Count report that was funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank them for their support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of Voices for Illinois Children alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of these foundations.

The Illinois Kids Count project is directed by Brenda Baker (bbaker@voices4kids.org) and Julie Parente (jparente@voices4kids.org). This report was written by Lauren Seemeyer and Julie Parente. We would like to thank Ricardo Estrada of Erie Elementary Charter School, Dory Rand of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Rudi Morales of Curie High School, Cassandra Kaufman of United Way of Greater St. Louis, Brenda Baker of Voices for Illinois Children, and Toni Frazier of Children’s Home and Aid Society for contributing essays. We also would like to thank the entire staff at Voices for Illinois Children and the Illinois Kids Count Advisory Committee for their guidance and input.

We would like to acknowledge the following people who helped us collect the data on the status of Illinois children and families and without whom this report would not be possible: Debbie Best at the Illinois Department of Revenue; Shuwan Chiu and Kalpana Desai at the Illinois State Board of Education; Pamela Compton at the Division of Child Support Enforcement; Judith Deane at the Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Branch; Sue Gansky at the Illinois Department of Public Aid; and Jennifer Parker at the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

This report was designed by Pinzke Design and printed by Sommers & Fahrenbach.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Voices for Illinois Children, *Illinois Kids Count 2004 - Learning: The Classroom and Beyond*, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Economic Policy Institute, *Basic family budget calculator*, revised data for 2005, Washington, D.C. (Available at [www.epi.org/content.cfm/datazone\\_fambud\\_budget](http://www.epi.org/content.cfm/datazone_fambud_budget))

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *May 2004 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates*. Washington, D.C. (Available at [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_1040.htm#b31-0000](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_1040.htm#b31-0000))

<sup>4</sup> CFED (the Corporation for Enterprise Development), *2005 Assets and Opportunity Scorecard*. (Available at [www.cfed.org/go/scorecard](http://www.cfed.org/go/scorecard))

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Leondar-Wright, Betsy, Meizhu Lui, Gloribell Mota, Dedrick Muhammad, and Mara Voukydis, *State of the Dream 2005: Disowned in the Ownership Society*, United For A Fair Economy, Boston.

<sup>7</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation, *2003 Kids Count Data Book*, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of the Tax Systems in All 50 States*, January 2003. (Available at [www.ctj.org/itep/whopays.htm](http://www.ctj.org/itep/whopays.htm))

<sup>10</sup> Himmelstein, D., E. Warren, D. Thorne, and S. Woolhandler, *Illness and Injury as Contributors to Bankruptcy*, Health Affairs, Market Watch, Feb. 2, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> CFED (the Corporation for Enterprise Development), *2005 Assets and Opportunity Scorecard*. (Available at [www.cfed.org/go/scorecard](http://www.cfed.org/go/scorecard))

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, *Out of Reach 2004*, Washington, D.C., December 2004. (Available at [www.nlihc.org/oor2004/](http://www.nlihc.org/oor2004/))

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, *Small Business Profile: Illinois*. Washington, D.C., 2005. (Available at [www.sba.gov/advo/research/profiles/05il.pdf](http://www.sba.gov/advo/research/profiles/05il.pdf))

<sup>15</sup> Work, Welfare and Families, *Transportation-to-Work fact sheet*, updated Aug. 5, 2005, Chicago. (Available at [www.workwelfareandfamilies.org/home/transportation.html](http://www.workwelfareandfamilies.org/home/transportation.html))

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Date, Maneesha, *Tax Reform: Improve Fairness and Adequacy in Illinois’ Tax System*, Budget & Tax Policy Initiative issue brief, Voices for Illinois Children, October 2003. (Available at [www.voices4kids.org/taxburden1003.pdf](http://www.voices4kids.org/taxburden1003.pdf))