



Policy Updates

Public Charge Comments

On October 10th, the Trump administration officially announced a proposed rule that would make it harder to obtain visas or green cards for immigrants who use public benefits programs like food assistance and Section 8 housing vouchers. The 60 day **comment period will close on December 10th**. To submit a comment, [click here](#). To view ACT Now's sample comment, [click here](#). (Note: In order to be counted as an unique comment, comments must be at least 30% original content. If you plan on using direct language from ACT Now's comments, consider adding a personal story or anecdote about the community in which you serve.)

For a list of previously listed policy updates, click [here](#).

Trainings and Events

Public Charge Candlelight Vigil

With the hopes of increasing the awareness of the negative factors the proposed changes to the Public Charge rule can have on Immigrant families in our state and throughout the nation, The Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF) IL Coalition will be hosting a Candlelight Vigil at the **Federal Plaza in Chicago on December 5th from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM**. During the event, PIF-IL will be encouraging all attendees to submit their comments opposing the Public Charge rule. If you have the opportunity, ACT Now encourages you to attend this event to advocate against a rule that will negatively affect immigrant families and their children.

IAN Spring Conference

The Illinois Afterschool Network (IAN) is pleased to announce its 33rd Annual Afterschool Spring Conference Celebration! The annual conference will be held on **April 27th at the Sheraton Hotel in Lisle, IL**. Additionally, there will be a **pre-conference session on April 26th** to discuss STEM topics. For more information, [click here](#).

Youth Development, Programming, & Activities

Webinar: Engaging Men of Color in Conversations on Masculinity

In this webinar, MENTOR IL will present practical tips on how to support the development of cultures and relationships that encourage young men to explore expressions of masculinity and gender identity in service of healthy decision making, self-development, and care for others. This webinar will be held on **December 11th from 1 PM to 2 PM**. To register, [click here](#).

Creating Hands-On STEM Experiences

The Illinois Afterschool Network (IAN) is offering a training that will provide resources and best practices for creating fun and interactive hands-on STEM activities to inspire youth. This training will be held in **Chicago on December 13th from 10 AM to 12 PM**. (This training is \$15 for IAN members and \$30 for non-members.) To register, click [here](#).

To view ACT Now's calendar of events, click [here](#).

Youth Opportunities

BUILD: Winter Program

School is out! Winter Camp is in! Sign-up for fun activities with friends from **9 AM to 5 PM, December 26th through January 4th**. [Click here](#), or contact BUILD at build@buildchicago.org for more information.

"Hour of Code" Sessions

Celebrate Computer Science Education Week by signing up for one of the many coding sessions being offered for free at a local Apple Store. Apple customers can register for thousands of free Hour of Code sessions, available at all Apple Store locations around the world from **December 1st through December 14th**. To learn more, click [here](#).

For an archive of our previously listed Youth Opportunities, click [here](#)

Opportunities for Providers

NatGeoChallenge

Afterschool programs are invited to take on the 2018-19 GeoChallenge—Tackling Plastic! Teams of students (grades 5-8) will investigate the urgent issue of plastic pollution in our waterways. If your team is ready, you can **submit your solutions by January 15th** to join the national competition and win cash prizes. The [GeoChallenge is free to register](#) and download all of the activities you will need to help your kids engage, think, act, and impact! [Register for the upcoming webinar, December 5th at 12 PM](#), to discuss questions on doing the GeoChallenge and preparing a submission.

Attendee Works: Call to Action

The Illinois Attendance Commission would like to remind districts that Attendance Works has issued a call to action to superintendents to improve student attendance in early grades. Relevant guidance and technical assistance documents are also provided within the framework of prioritizing student attendance, mobilizing the broader community in support of attendance, and using data for decision-making and accountability. To sign up for the call to action or to access the associated resources, please visit the [Attendance Works website](#).

Body Confidence Training/Workshop

Creating a body confident environment in schools has never been more challenging. Adolescents' body image concerns affect their mental health and self-care objectives. Because of this, Denise Hamburger is working with the Illinois State Board of Education to help introduce positive body image curriculum to schools in Illinois. [Click here](#) to learn more about scheduling a Body Confidence training/workshop for your OST program.

For an archive of our previously listed Opportunities for Providers, click [here](#).

Resources for Providers

Youth Development, Programming, & Activities

Swift Coding Club Kit

To teach coding outside of the classroom, Apple developed a new Swift Coding Club kit that gives teachers, students and club mentors the tools they need to start their own coding clubs. The new kit gives students aged 8 and up the ability to collaborate, prototype apps and explore how coding can make a difference in their communities. To download the kit, click [here](#).

31 Days of STEM

Take part in the month-long fun of DeSTEMber with Girlstart! Beginning December 1st, Girlstart will highlight a fun and engaging STEM activity for kids to do at home or in the classroom. These activities are designed to show kids that STEM is everywhere. To learn more, [click here](#).

Administration

Program Management Software

Afterschool programs face many unique challenges when it comes to administering their programs. Many tasks are repetitive, time-intensive and prone to error, yet they don't have to be. [Click here](#) to see how integrating childcare management software could help.

Call for Resources

Do you have valuable resources, stories, or best practices to share with the afterschool field? Please click [here](#) to share your resources with ACT Now and we will disseminate them (via our newsletter and website) to other providers across the state! If you have any questions, please contact Faith Knocke (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate) KnockeF@metrofamily.org

NOTE: We are now sorting our trainings and resources by the Core Areas in the Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards to promote better understanding and implementation of the Standards. Dark blue headings denote a Core Area. To learn more about the Quality Standards, click [here](#).