

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Updates

Bills Introduced Addressing Trauma/ACEs

A brief published by [Child Trends](#) reports that 45 percent of youth in the United States have experienced at least one [adverse childhood experience \(ACE\)](#). ACEs refer to a set of experiences, which can include abuse, neglect, and trauma, that are linked with negative health outcomes and behaviors. Several newly introduced bills on Capitol Hill address childhood trauma, social and emotional learning, and the role that afterschool programs can play in protecting against and addressing trauma, including the [RISE from Trauma Act](#), the [Mental Health Services for Students Act](#), and the [Success in the Middle Act](#). To learn more about these bills and how afterschool programs act as key partners in comprehensive and community-based approaches to trauma-informed care, [click here](#).

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

Trainings and Events

Webinar: IL-QPSA Sneak Peek!

ACT Now is facilitating a free introductory webinar on the [Illinois Quality Program Self-Assessment Tool \(IL-QPSA\)](#). The IL-QPSA is a free, online strengths-based self-assessment tool that enables youth programs to rate their performance based on the Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards. The introductory webinar will provide you an overview of the IL Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards, the benefits of utilizing the IL-QPSA, and the steps to get started! (*NOTE: You are not making a commitment to utilize the IL-QPSA with your participation in the webinar. This is just a chance to have a "sneak peek."*) This webinar will be held on **September 19th from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** To register, [click here](#).

Quality Standards Trainings

ACT Now is providing free trainings on the [Illinois Statewide Quality Standards](#) in order to help afterschool providers and staff continuously improve the quality of their programs.

Upcoming Trainings:

- **Chicago** September 25, 2019 - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ([Register here](#))
- **Bloomington** October 22, 2019 - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ([Register here](#))

Regional Community Schools Meetings

ACT Now will continue to hold meetings in 2019-2020 for community school providers to network with one another and learn more about the work of ACT Now in the Community Schools space. Participants will hear about policy updates, network with other providers, and receive professional development based on topics selected by community schools providers.

Upcoming Meetings:

- **Downstate (Bloomington)** September 11, 2019 - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ([Register here](#))
 - Additional Upcoming Downstate Meetings
 - November 20, 2019 (location TBD)
 - January 28, 2020 (location TBD)
 - April 16, 2020 (location TBD)
- **Chicago Suburbs (Skokie)** October 1, 2019 - 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ([Register here](#))
 - Additional Upcoming Chicago Suburbs Meetings
 - December 16, 2019 (West Chicago)
 - February 7, 2020 (Skokie)
 - April 22, 2020 (location TBD)
- **All City of Chicago dates and locations TBD. Stay tuned!**
To view ACT Now's calendar of events, click [here](#).

Youth Opportunities

Karma for Cara Microgrants

[Karma for Cara Foundation](#) is offering funds between \$250 and \$1,000 for students 18 years of age and under to complete service projects in their communities. Projects can include things like turning a vacant lot into a community garden, helping senior citizens ready their homes for the winter, and more! The **deadline to apply is October 1st**. To learn more, [click here](#). **For an archive of our previously listed Youth Opportunities, click [here](#).**

Opportunities for Providers

FAFSA Symposium

You are invited to join the Illinois Student Assistance Commission for an opportunity to strengthen youth supports in completing the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application and to increase overall FAFSA completion rates for all youth populations. FAFSA novices and experts alike are encouraged to share and learn at the FAFSA Symposium. The symposium will be held at **Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills on August 29th from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.** [Registration](#) to attend the [FAFSA Symposium](#) is \$15. *For an archive of our previously listed Opportunities for Providers, [click here](#).*

Funding Opportunities

Elevate the Plate Challenge

No Kid Hungry and Kellogg's are proud to present the [Elevate the Plate Challenge](#), which **will go live October 1st!** Complete the challenge for a chance to win a \$5,000 grant to help your school increase its school meals participation. Any school that currently participates in at least one of the following programs is eligible to apply: The National School Breakfast Program, the National School Lunch Program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Ten winners will be selected. Sign up [here](#) to pre-register and to receive a reminder when the challenge begins!

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

Resources for Providers

Safety, Health, & Nutrition

Report: Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation

The Food Research & Action Center released [Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: Summer Nutrition Status Report](#). The report finds that too many kids across the

country are missing out on the nutrition they need during the summer months. [Click here](#) to learn more about the report findings by state, as well as missed opportunities and opportunities for improvement.

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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](#).

Do you find the ACT Now newsletter to be a quality resource for your program? If so, please consider making a contribution to ACT Now so that we may continue to provide free resources to afterschool program providers, and, in turn, create a brighter future for the state of afterschool programs in Illinois!

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