

# ACTNOW!

## ACTNOW!

Afterschool for Children and Teens

*Upcoming  
events &  
trainings*

### *February*

**2/5**

ACT Now SEL Webinar #2: Responsible Decision Making

**2/12**

Downstate Community Schools Training

**2/22**

Suburbs Community Schools Training

**2/23**

Chicago Community Schools Training

# Policy Updates

## Federal Policy

### President Joseph Biden: American Rescue Plan Overview

On **January 15, 2021**, President Joseph Biden publicly announced his comprehensive "[American Rescue Plan](#)" which includes more than \$400 billion for vaccine production and distribution, another round of stimulus checks for individuals, increased unemployment benefits, \$350 billion in aid for city and state governments, and child care subsidies. The funding for vaccine production and distribution is part of the President's goal of reopening k-8 schools across the United States within 100 days of his inauguration.

Education-related funding is as follows:

- **\$130 billion for Elementary and Secondary Education**, which is almost twice what Congress has already allocated in K-12 education relief funding. These dollars may be used to cover a variety of costs to make in-person education safe, including technology, offer counseling and address social and emotional learning (SEL) needs, create smaller classes, provide Personal Protective Equipment, pay for transportation and cleaning costs, and other new costs associated with the public health crisis. There are also requirements that states use this funding to support low-income communities and areas most-impacted by the pandemic. Afterschool and summer learning opportunities may be an allowable use for this funding and have been recipients of these dollars in previous COVID-19 aid packages.
- **\$5 billion for the Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund**, which has language for supporting the education of student populations that have been hardest hit by COVID-19. These funds can be used for Pre K-higher education, and afterschool and summer learning.

Federal aid for child care includes:

- **\$15 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)** to help millions of families and parents return to work. In Illinois, CCDBG dollars are used for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).
- **\$25 billion for an emergency stabilization fund for child care providers.**

The plan also calls for the expansion of child care tax credits for one year, and the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit for one year.

Congress is expected to start work on a new COVID-19 relief bill this month which will be informed by President Biden's American Rescue Plan. Now is the time to weigh in with your members of Congress. To read the Afterschool Alliance's full brief on the plan and to take action in support of more funding for afterschool and summer learning, click [here](#).

### **United States Department of Agriculture and President Joseph Biden: Illinois P-EBT Implementation Plan for School-Aged Children Approved and Increase to P-EBT Benefits**

On **January 15, 2021**, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved Illinois's Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT) implementation plan for school-aged children. This means that families with children on free or reduced price school meals will soon be able to receive a food benefit for the days that their students are participating in remote or virtual instruction. To read the full plan, click [here](#).

On **January 22, 2021**, President Joseph Biden issued an executive order to allow states to increase the value of P-EBT benefits by 15%, making this benefit even more valuable for the families afterschool programs and community schools serve. To read more about the increase to P-EBT benefits, click [here](#).

## **State Policy**

### **ACT Now: FY22 Budget Advocacy Alert to Legislators**

Afterschool programs and community schools are an extremely effective resource in solving many of the problems exacerbated by the outbreak of COVID-19. As the nation continues to respond to the pandemic and the State of Illinois faces projected budget cuts to health and human services, it is imperative that we come together to support our youth and most marginalized communities by funding afterschool programs and community schools in Illinois.

**ACT Now** is asking that the Illinois General Assembly approve the following line items proposed in Governor Pritzker's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget:

- Restore the Teen REACH line item to the funding appropriated in FY18, at \$19.6 million
- Allocate a minimum of \$270 million from U.S. Congress' Child Care Stabilization Fund for CCAP via Child Care Restoration Grants. We ask that there be flexibility in the use of dollars and eligibility for license-exempt providers.

- Develop a new \$15 million line item to support Community Schools in the state
- Include \$3.44 million for After School Matters
- Include \$20 million in direct funding for ISBE's After School Programs line
- Allocate funding for afterschool and Community Schools from the federal COVID-19 relief package

**ACT Now & ADVOCATE**

Click [HERE](#) to send our advocacy alert

**Tell your legislators to Fund Afterschool and Community Schools NOW**

**Count Me In**



## **Chalkbeat Chicago: Chicago Public Schools' Teachers Vote Not To Return to In-Person Instruction**

**Yesterday, January 25, 2021**, a majority of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) educators, clinicians, and paraprofessionals voted to reject the school district's orders to report to school buildings in preparation for reopening for elementary school students. The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) has expressed that teachers plan to continue teaching virtually. To allow more time for negotiation, district leaders stated that they would push back the date teachers return to buildings to **Wednesday, January 27, 2021**. Pre-K and special education teachers and staff have already returned to in-person instruction and some will continue to do so. To learn more about this issue, click [here](#).

## **Illinois State Board of Education: January Board Meeting Recap**

On **January 22, 2021**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) met for its monthly meeting. During the public comment period, participants discussed vaccination distribution, charter schools, and early childhood learning. The Board also setup a committee to replace former board member and current State Senator Cristina Pacione-Zayas. The ISBE Student Advisory Council presented on its goals for the year. The goals include developing ways to respond to post-COVID 19 achievement gaps, creating a diversity, equity, and inclusion framework; ensuring the safety and emotional well-being of students; and addressing the teacher shortage, especially in regards to diversifying the teacher workforce. **The ISBE Board also discussed its budget recommendations for FY22. These recommendations include funding for afterschool programs and After School Matters, but not for community schools. The Illinois General Assembly will review these recommendations in creating the final budget. The Board also voted to release a new RFP for 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Programs interested in applying for this funding should review former applications and start gathering the necessary information now. ACT Now expects the release of a new RFP in the coming weeks.** The ISBE Board also discussed its spring up legislative priorities, which include remote learning opportunities for students, educator misconduct, education equity, and cleaning up the school code. The Board will meet again on **February 18, 2021**. You can find the information from this Board meeting and future Board meetings [here](#). *You can also follow along on our [Twitter](#) feed during Board meetings for updates!*

## **Criminal Justice Information Authority: Restore, Reinvest, and Renew Grantees Announced Publicly**

On **January 22, 2021**, the Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) publicly announced the full list of nonprofits and community-based organizations (CBOs) that will receive the first round of funding from the Restore. Reinvest. Renew. (R3) Grant Program. Funding for this grant program comes from revenue from adult-use cannabis sales and totals \$31.5 million. The program aims to support organizations working in communities most-impacted by the failed war on drugs. Initiatives surround the principles of youth development, violence prevention, legal aid, and re-entry services. To access the press release and review the full list of grantees, click [here](#).

**ACT Now** would like to congratulate our partner organizations that have received this historic first round of funding. We are here and ready to support your youth development initiatives with our free resources and services!

### **Restore, Reinvest, and Renew. Grant Program Board: January Board Meeting Overview**

On **January 21, 2021**, the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew. (R3) Grant Program Board met for its monthly meeting. The Board reviewed the R3 grant application process and highlighted all the work done in the last year to get to the point of approving grantees for the first round of R3 funding. The Illinois Criminal Justice Authority (ICJIA) then shared a list of 77 of the highest scoring applicants for funding and recommendations for the R3 Board to consider with regard to three remaining applicants. **ICJIA representatives stated that the ICJIA Board will meet to approve the list of 80 grantees on January 27, 2021. The organization will begin informing grantees on January 27, 2021, of their grant requirements and provide technical assistance throughout the grant cycle. Grantees will receive the full 12 months of funding that they have been awarded even if initiatives begin after the February 1, 2021 date.** The Board then heard public comment on the issue of Latinx communities and community-based organizations (CBOs) being underrepresented in the grantee list. There were also questions as to how "equity" is defined, and whether the next round of funding should be limited to 70% or 80% of organizations' asks in order to be able to fund more than the highest 80 applicants. Finally, the R3 Board stated that there are timeline for the next round of R3 funding but that board members are working with ICJIA to assess the grant process, amend it to be more equitable, and provide a new Request for Proposals (RFP) as soon as possible. To access the R3 Board meeting materials, click [here](#).

### **Governor Pritzker's Office: Illinois Begins Phase 1B in COVID-19 Vaccination Plan**

On **January 22, 2021**, Governor Pritzker announced that Illinois will move into the early stages of Phase 1B of the COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Plan beginning **yesterday (January 25, 2021)**. While federal vaccine shipments to states remain limited, the state

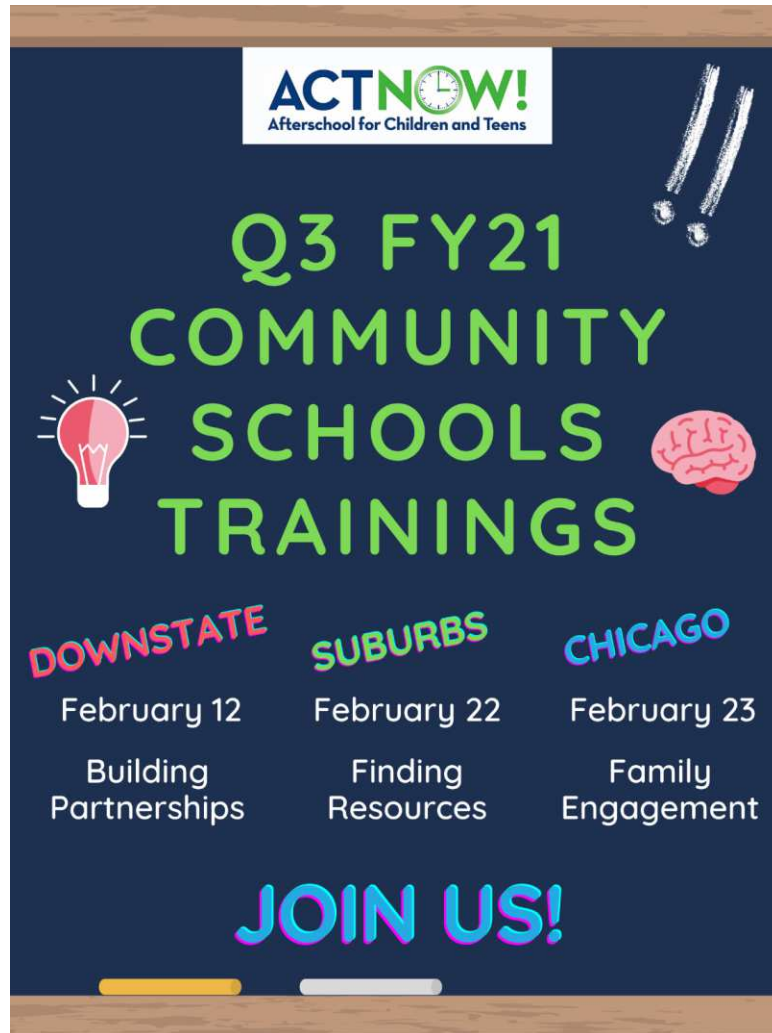
is aggressively building out provider capacity to ensure efficient distribution as soon as more vaccine becomes available. **The Governor reminded the public that Phase 1B includes all residents over the age of 65 and frontline essential workers, including educators and child care providers.** Illinois will begin vaccinating eligible residents by appointment only. To read the full press release, click [here](#).

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

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## Trainings, Events and Webinars

### Administration



## ACT Now: Q3 FY21 Community Schools Trainings

Community schools are a robust framework of support for our young people and families in Illinois. We know that community schools providers are assessing the needs of their communities and providing integral services amidst the ongoing pandemic. To support the well-being and professional development needs of our community schools programs, **ACT Now** will continue to host training events during 2021. We will be facilitating these trainings virtually and encourage all community schools programs to join our engaging sessions on the following dates:

### Downstate Providers

**Theme:** Building Partnerships

**Date:** February 12, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To register, click [here](#)

### Suburbs Providers

**Theme:** Finding Resources

**Date:** February 22, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To register, click [here](#)

### Chicago Providers

**Theme:** Family Engagement

**Date:** February 23, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To register, click [here](#)

To access more information and resources relating to community schools, please check out our Community Schools Corner page, [here](#).

### **ACT Now: Statewide Quality Standards Trainings (QST) Update**

Due to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, **ACT Now** has decided to cancel all in-person Quality Standards Trainings (QST) at the 101 and 102 levels. As a result, additional opportunities have been added for afterschool providers interested in participating in virtual webinars. To register for QST 101 events, click [here](#). Please check our QST page for more information and in order to register for the upcoming QST 102 training by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions and or concerns regarding these trainings, please contact Emma Vibber at [VibberE@actnowillinois.org](mailto:VibberE@actnowillinois.org).

### **ACT Now and the Illinois Partners for Human Services: Advocacy Event**

**ACT Now** and the [Illinois Partners for Human Services](#) invite you to join us for a joint Advocacy Event in collaboration with more than eighteen associations and coalitions. This event is focused on telling our legislators to prioritize investment in health and human services. We are collaborating across service area and sectors to demonstrate the essential work of health and human service providers in our communities, and remind our leaders that we deserve their support. The event will take place via Zoom Webinar on **February 5, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.** To register for this event, click [here](#).

### **American Camp Association: ACA Virtual Town Hall - COVID-19 Planning for Summer 2021**

On **January 27, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.**, the [American Camp Association](#) (ACA) is hosting a town hall event for afterschool and summer learning providers. This town hall will cover recent developments on COVID-19 planning for camps, key takeaways from ACA's recent COVID-19-related research studies, and updates to the Field Guide for Camps. Confirmed panelists include medical professionals, public health professionals, research

scientists, and both day and resident camp professionals who successfully operated in summer 2020. To register for the webinar, click [here](#).

## Youth Development

### **ACT Now FY21 STEM Webinar Series: STEM Webinar #3 Recording Available and Upcoming Event**

On **January 21, 2021**, **ACT Now** hosted a webinar on Fitting STEM Curricula into OST Programming. To access the webinar recording, click [here](#). **ACT Now** will be hosting its final STEM Webinar on **March 24, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** on the topic of Connecting STEM To Everyday Life and Career Exploration. To learn more and to register for this event, click [here](#).

### **ACT Now FY21 SEL Webinar Series: Responsible Decision Making**

On **February 4, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**, **ACT Now** is hosting our second Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) webinar on Responsible Decision Making. ACT Now will review [CASEL's SEL Competencies](#) and provide an opportunity for afterschool providers to share how they are facilitating SEL curricula, amidst the pandemic and in a variety of environments, to support young people. To register, click [here](#).

### **National AfterSchool Association Webinar: No-Cost Digital Resources to Support Social, Emotional, and Physical Wellness**

[The National AfterSchool Association](#) is hosting a webinar on **January 26, 2021, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.**, for afterschool providers interested in accessing free digital resources for students' social-emotional and physical wellness. This event is sponsored by [Discovery Education](#) and aims to provide a walkthrough of the materials available to program providers. To register for the webinar, click [here](#).

### **National Center for School Mental Health and Central East MHTT Webinar: Addressing Systemic Racism - Creating Safe and Equitable Schools**

On **February 3, 2021, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**, the National Center for School Mental Health and the Central East Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) are hosting a webinar on school mental health. This particular webinar is focused on advancing high-quality and sustainable school mental health services, and utilizing trauma-informed practices. Participants will learn how to be culturally responsive when supporting students' mental health needs. To learn more about the webinar and to register, click [here](#).

*For an archive of our previously listed Trainings, Events and Webinars, click [here](#).*

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## Resources for Providers

### Administration

#### **American Camp Association Document: Updated Field Guide for Camps**

[The American Camp Association \(ACA\)](#) in partnership with the Environmental Health & Engineering, Inc. (EH&H) has updated and revised the Field Guide for Camps for afterschool and summer learning providers. There is a new chapter on vaccines that offers providers background information on the type of COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States. The document also offers insight into the potential impacts on camp operations. To read the updated guidance, click [here](#).

#### **Wallace Foundation Video: Partnerships for Social Emotional Learning**

[The Wallace Foundation](#) has released a video on building partnerships for social-emotional learning (SEL). The video highlights six communities across the country and explores whether and how children benefit when schools and out-of-school-time programs intentionally work together to build students' SEL skills. To learn more about this initiative and to watch the video, click [here](#).

### Youth Development

#### **eSchool News Article: Six Teaching Resources on the Presidential Inauguration**

[eSchool News](#) has curated a list of high-quality resources on civics and the history behind a President's inauguration. These materials can be utilized in programming for youth interested in learning more about the current political environment and the transition of power. They also may spark a conversation about the events leading up to President Biden's inauguration. To review these resources, click [here](#).

#### **Harvard Graduate School of Education Resources: Making Space for Difficult Discussions**

[The Harvard Graduate School of Education](#) has developed guidance and resources for afterschool providers and educators interested in structuring a conversation around the attack on the U.S. Capitol building. There are also resources on trauma-informed practices and on how to talk about racism and violence in a constructive and supportive matter. To access these materials, click [here](#).

### **National Girls Collaborative Project: Celebrate National Mentoring Month**

[The National Girls Collaborative Project](#) has compiled a list of resources for mentoring girls intrigued by the STEM sectors. While the month of January is concluding, the importance of fostering young peoples' development of identity and interest in STEM, remains. Research shows girls benefit from relationships with role models and mentors who can provide valuable information about STEM careers. To access the resources, click [here](#).

## **Safety, Health, and Nutrition**

### **National AfterSchool Association: The Afterschool Professional's Guide to Self-Care**

[The National AfterSchool Association](#) has written a guide on self-care practices for the afterschool field. The resource is free and provides a variety of activities for afterschool providers to utilize in order to manage stress and promote well-being. To review the guide, click [here](#).

### **Chicago Public Schools: Free Meals**

[Chicago Public Schools](#) is providing balanced and nourishing pick-up meals to any child ages 18 and under. The Nutrition Support Services department serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals, at select schools, **Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** To access more information regarding meals, click [here](#). To review the map of school sites, click [here](#).

### **Illinois Department of Public Health: Free Mobile COVID-19 Testing Sites Throughout Illinois**

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has released a list of sites where the Illinois public can access free mobile COVID-19 tests throughout the state. These tests will be provided starting this week and extending into the weekend.

- To review locations in Northern Illinois, including the City of Chicago, click [here](#).
- To review locations in Central Illinois, click [here](#).

- To review locations in Southern Illinois, click [here](#).

Please note that the site locations are subject to change. To review the most updated information regarding free COVID-19 test sites, click [here](#).

*For an archive of our previously listed Trainings, Events and Webinars, click [here](#).*

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# Opportunities for Providers

## Administration

### **Chicago Council on Global Affairs: 2022 Emerging Leaders Program**

[The Chicago Council on Global Affairs](#) is seeking applications for its 2022 Emerging Leaders Program. This leadership development program provides an opportunity for young leaders' in a variety of sectors to deepen their fluency in, and exposure to, global affairs and policy. **Applications are due March 8, 2021.** For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

### **National Summer Learning Association: Employment Opportunity**

[The National Summer Learning Association](#) is soliciting applications for its Program & Systems Quality Coordinator, who will assist in the implementation of initiatives focused on improving the quality of summer learning programs and systems. The Program & Systems Quality Coordinator will also conduct research, write reports, and support the logistics for staff site visits. Applicants must have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in education, statistics, public policy, business, and one to two years of work experience. Knowledge of and experience with youth development and Out-of-School Time (OST) is preferred. To read the full job description, click [here](#).

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

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# Youth Opportunities

## Youth Development

### **Chicago Public Library and My CHI. My Future Contest: Teen Winter Challenge**

[The Chicago Public Library](#) and [MY CHI. My Future](#) are hosting a Teen Winter Challenge and are encouraging Chicago teens to submit between one and three original pieces of art for the chance to win up to \$150 in art supplies! Submissions may also be featured in a virtual Teen Winter Gala exhibition and published in a catalog. To learn more about the contest, click [here](#). To submit your portfolio, click [here](#).

### **Illinois Council on Women and Girls: Girls Committee**

[The Illinois Council on Women and Girls](#) is chaired by Lieutenant Governor Julianna Stratton, and advises Governor Pritzker and the Illinois General Assembly on policy issues impacting women and girls in Illinois. The Council is inviting young women ages 14 through 18 to apply to join its new Girls Committee. Participants in the committee will have the opportunity to make a difference in issues affecting their lives and the lives of their peers. Girls Committee members will serve for one-year terms on the council, attend quarterly meetings, and participate in other standing committees (Gender-based Violence, Academic and Economic Opportunity, Leadership and Inclusion, or Health). **Applications are due February 16, 2021.** For more information and to apply, click [here](#). If you have any questions or experience any technical issues accessing or submitting the application, please contact council member Jackie Matthews at [jmatthew@isbe.net](mailto:jmatthew@isbe.net) or (312) 590-4327.

### **American Youth Policy Forum: New Youth-Focused Website Page**

[The American Youth Policy Forum \(AYPF\)](#) is featuring its [youth-focused section of its website](#), where the organization highlights artwork, resources, and tools created by and geared towards young people with experiences in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. AYPF is looking for young people interested in being part of its youth network. To learn more and sign up, click [here](#).

### **Collaboration: The Light**

[Collaboration](#) is seeking submissions of work 7 minutes or less in length of short plays, devised theatre, dance, and spoken word from young people 21 and under throughout the Chicagoland area. Collaboration is looking for young artists that use the arts for

advocacy initiatives. Each performance will conclude with a Crucial Conversation around the themes of the performances. **Submissions are due February 11, 2021.** To learn more about this opportunity and to participate, click [here](#).

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

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## Funding Opportunities

### Indoor and Outdoor Environments

#### The Andrew Foundation: New Grant Opportunity

[The Andrew Foundation](#) has announced new grant(s) of up to \$600,000 to community-based organizations (CBOs) that offer innovative solutions to issues facing under-resourced communities and the natural environment. The Andrew Foundation is looking to collaborate with one or two CBOs in order to resolve inequality and alleviate disparities in food access, affordable housing, high quality education, physical and psychological healthcare, and/or criminal justice. Applicants must have an annual program budget of \$1 to \$4 million. **Applications are due March 15, 2021.** To access more information on the requirements and to apply, click [here](#).

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

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## Call for Phenomenal Staff and OST Programming!

To celebrate afterschool and extended learning providers, and to shine a light on the integral role that program staff plays in restoring Illinois, ACT Now will continue to showcase staff members and programs on our social media platforms and in our weekly newsletter. We will also share your stories and experiences with legislators and state agencies to advocate on your behalf!

Please email Emma Spencer (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate) at [Spencere@actnowillinois.org](mailto:Spencere@actnowillinois.org). Please attach a photo, the name of the staff member or name of the afterschool program, and a caption for how this individual or program is working to support young people in the community.

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## ***Were you forwarded this email?***

***Click Here to Subscribe to the ACT Now Newsletter!***

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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 Emma Spencer (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate) at [Spencere@actnowillinois.org](mailto:Spencere@actnowillinois.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](#).

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