

ACT NOW!

NEWSLETTER

COVID-19

State Policy Updates

Governor Pritzker's Office: Suspension of Classes for the Rest of The Year

On **April 17, 2020**, Governor Pritzker announced that he was suspending in-person classes for the rest of the school year in Illinois. All K-12 institutions will *not* re-open this year and instead continue with remote learning curricula. Click [here](#) to read the full press release.

Events and Webinars

ACT Now: 21st CCLC Virtual Town Halls

Join ACT Now for another virtual conversation with 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs in regard to responding to the COVID-19 health crisis **on April 28, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** We will cover the latest policy updates, grant updates, resources, and highlight programs' diverse responses to the pandemic. Please [fill out our survey](#) beforehand and [register](#) for the Town Hall!

Office of the Lieutenant Governor: Online Conversations to Identify Causes of Trauma and Mental Health Conditions in Adolescents

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Juliana Stratton, will direct a series of online engagements that help identify the causes of trauma and mental health conditions in young people ages 13-24. The discussions will also focus on discrimination, violence, and community disruption/lack of opportunity and how these issues contribute to youth involvement with the criminal justice system. The first Town Hall will be held on **Saturday, April 25, 2020.**

- The Office of the Lieutenant Governor is looking for panelists. If you know of or are a young person between the ages of 13 and 24 who are interested in participating, click [here](#) to apply. **Applications are due Wednesday, April 22, 2020.**

National Human Services Assembly Webinar: Human Services Messaging During COVID-19 Crisis

The National Human Services Assembly is hosting a webinar on **Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.** on the topic of Human Service Messaging During the COVID-19 Crisis. Human service organizations are supporting constituents and combatting the challenges associated with the public health crisis. This webinar will offer participants guidance for relying on research-based communications strategies to make a strong case for supporting human service policies and programs going forward. Click [here](#) to register.

Additional Resources

Learning At Home Resources

IXL: Free K-12 Curricula for Educators

IXL is offering FREE access to their robust curricula for K-12 educators. Their lesson plans and activities cover core subjects such as Math, English, Spanish, etc. [IXL is also providing guides for teachers making the transition to distance-learning.](#)

Wings For Kids: Transitioning SEL Curricula Online

Wings For Kids promotes Social Emotional Learning skills in students and youth by developing activities teachers can use in their virtual classes. [Wings has digital resources, lesson ideas, and examples.](#)

Girls Who Code: Renew Your Clubs

Girls Who Code is offering ACT Now's membership the ability to renew their Girls Who Code Clubs for the 2020-2021 year. In the current climate, it is important to reinforce the relationships forged by participants through Girls Who Code Clubs. Click [here](#) to do so.

Resources for Providers

Children's Home and Aid: Start to Finish Coalition Youth Survey

Children's Home and Aid has reactivated its **Start to Finish Coalition** in order to support youth, and youth-serving organizations, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The coalition has developed a survey to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on youth and the unexpected challenges facing them. To complete the survey, click [here](#).

Resources for Parents, Families, and Youth

Mindheart: How to Talk to Your Children About COVID-19

Manuela Molina, through **Mindheart**, has released a book to support and reassure children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only is the book FREE and downloadable, it is in multiple languages! Click [here](#) to access it.

TechGirlz: Activities and Events Families Can Do At Home

As a result of COVID-19, **TechGirlz** has now moved into the virtual space by providing free, engaging virtual workshops and instructional webinars in the upcoming weeks for communities at home. To sign up for their weekly event newsletter, click [here](#). To access their even page, click [here](#). To download free curriculum for over 60 workshop topics, click [here](#).

Mental Health Resources

Mosaic Therapy: Free Virtual Therapy

Mosaic Therapy has created a Virtual Clinic to help support youth and families during the current public health crisis and challenges associated with it. Mosaic Therapy is offering 6 FREE virtual counseling sessions for both children and families. Click [here](#) for more information.

- **Call or text: 855-445-0636** for scheduling and information

For our full list of Mental Health Resources, click [here](#).

Policy Updates

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Administration

ACT Now's April 2020 Advocacy Campaign: ACT Now and Advocate!

This year, ACT Now is encouraging its coalition members to interact with state and federal legislators and advocate for:

- **The reinstatement of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) funding in the federal budget** after President Trump's FY21 budget proposal eliminated the program.
- **The Illinois General Assembly to put ISBE's lines in the state budget.**
- **Funding for Teen REACH in the state budget in the amount of at least \$19.6 million.**
- **The Illinois General Assembly to approve the Governor's proposed \$100 million increase for CCAP in the state budget.**

What Advocacy Actions Should You Take?

- **If you have 1 minute:** Send your legislators an action alert by clicking the buttons below and reviewing the toolkit!
- **If you have 5 minutes:** Find your legislators' contact info and call them! Encourage them to support your campaign!
- **If you have 10 minutes:** Post on social media about the need for out-of-school and summer programming using our fact sheets and templates and tag your legislators!
- **If you have more time:** Collect success stories from parents and youth in your program and share them with your local and federal elected officials!

Join Us! Our Toolkit provides guidance on our asks, hosts links to action alerts for **state** and **federal** elected officials, as well as highlights letter templates, best practices when communicating with policymakers, and sample social media to use during April. **To advocate alongside ACT Now, use our Toolkit!** Click [here](#) to download it.

Professional Development

ACT Now Webinar Series: Create a System for Ongoing, Meaningful Family Engagement

Based on data collected from our research-based Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards, ACT Now has developed a virtual three-hour series of family engagement training to improve family engagement in out-of-school time. You can register [here](#) for individual webinars or for the entire series. Each webinar is \$10. *Please contact Emma Vibber, VibberE@actnowillinois.org to inquire about group pricing.*

Part 2: Introducing a Family Engagement Framework and Recognizing the Importance of Language

- **Date: April 23, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

Part 3: Family Engagement Common Barriers and Tangible Resources

- **Date: May 4, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

We are also launching a Cultural Competency training series. ACT Now anticipates launching this in early May. If your program would like to start on this series sooner, please contact VibberE@actnowillinois.org now!

Forefront: 2020 Virtual Summit

Last week, **Forefront** announced its virtual summit titled: *Solidarity & Resilience in Illinois' Social Impact Sector*. This event will be held on **Wednesday, June 24, 2020**. The summit is FREE for all operating nonprofits in Illinois, and will feature diverse participants from across the sector. To register, click [here](#).

Youth Development

National Girls Collaborative Project and SciGirls STEM Webinars: Three Unique Opportunities

- **Recognition: The Key Piece of Identity Development Framework** will be held on **April 29, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.** to help participants understand their crucial role in students' STEM identity development and sense of belonging and success in the sector. To register, click [here](#).
- **Making STEM Meaningful for Girls** will be held on **May 6, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.** which aims at highlighting the research and practices that can increase girls' interest in STEM. Click [here](#) to register for the webinar.
- **Equity in STEM Education: The Connection to Culture** will be held on **May 27, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.** to promote research-based best practices on cultural responsiveness, a powerful approach that spans the cultural divide that often exists between educators and students, and allows educators to improve STEM engagement and equity. Click [here](#) to register.

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

Opportunities for Providers

Administration

Forefront and Serve Illinois: Nonprofit Volunteer Opportunities Page

In collaboration with **Forefront**, **Serve Illinois** has developed a statewide page for nonprofits to post volunteer opportunities. Through this page, you can learn more, submit opportunities, become a partner, or search for opportunities by county. Click [here](#) to review the page.

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

Upcoming Community School Training and Networking Events

Administration

ACT Now: Community Schools Regional Meetings NOW VIRTUAL!

ACT Now will continue to hold meetings online for community school providers. Participants will hear about policy updates, network with other providers, and receive professional development based on topics selected by community schools providers. **Please fill out our [survey](#) so that we can plan next year's training events and continue to advocate for the amazing work you and your programs are providing.**

Community Schools: Suburban Regional Meeting

- **Date:** [April 22, 2020](#)
- **Time:** [10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.](#)
- **Topic:** COVID-19 Response and Virtual Family Engagement
- **To register:** Click [here](#) (Log in directions will appear once registered)

Community Schools: Chicago Regional Meeting

- **Date:** [May 1, 2020](#)
- **Time:** [10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.](#)
- **Topic:** COVID-19 Response, Planning for Next Year, and Summer Learning
- **To register:** Click [here](#) (Log in directions will appear once registered)

Youth Opportunities

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

Funding Opportunities

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

Were you forwarded this email?

[Click Here](#) to Subscribe to the ACT Now Newsletter!

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

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](#).

Note to ACT Now Members

ACT Now would like to acknowledge the challenges many of our youth, families, colleagues, and communities are facing with the outbreak of COVID-19. We would also like to thank all our partners for their hard work in responding to the pandemic as we navigate unprecedented situations.

We will continue to support you all by sharing resources and materials relating to COVID-19 from reputable federal and state agencies, through our newsletter and E-alerts, as well as our [webpage, specifically designated for COVID-19 resources](#), and our social media platforms.

We are available for questions and concerns remotely. Please contact our **Network Lead, Susan Stanton**: at stantons@actnowillinois.org or our **Youth Development Associate, Emma Spencer**: at spencere@actnowillinois.org.

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