

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Updates

COVID-19 Boosters for Adults Recommended

Recently, the [U.S. Federal Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) authorized a second booster dose of both the Pfizer-BioNTech and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for adults over 50 years of age and certain immunocompromised individuals. Vaccines are still the best tool we have to prevent hospitalization and death from COVID-19 and its variants. The City of Chicago continues to update its website, [Chicago Vaccine site](#), for ongoing developments.

State Updates

State Legislators Propose Funding for Afterschool in Series of Legislation

In a press conference on **Friday, April 1, 2022**, House Democrats announced several proposals that would invest in youth development opportunities, expand access to child care programs, and support community-based interventions to decrease crime across the state of Illinois. These proposed initiatives would be part of a larger crime reduction package that the State legislature is debating in its last week of Spring session. Afterschool champions and partners of ACT Now, Leader Jehan Gordon-Booth, Senator Peters, Senator Pacione-Zayas, and Senator Villanueva, shared the importance of appropriating funding for FY23 to youth development initiatives including:

- \$3 billion for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). This is a proposed increase of \$41.1 million
- \$19.6 million for Teen REACH, an increase of \$5.1 million that was proposed by Governor JB Pritzker in his FY23 Budget
- \$14.3 million for the Redeploy Illinois Program focusing on incarcerated youths. This is an increase of \$8 million
- \$45 million for the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) After School Program grant, an increase of \$25 million.

Finally, **Susan Stanton** (ACT Now Network Lead) spoke to the importance of afterschool programs as being critical to "improving [academic and social-emotional] performance, safety in our communities, and building the workforce of tomorrow."

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Core Area	Organization	Name of Event/Training	Date	Registration Link
Youth Development	ACT Now	STEM Webinar #4: Big, Blue Rock: Integrating Geoscience Curriculum into STEM OST Programming	April 7, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
Professional Development	Million Women Mentors	You Can't Be What You Can't See! STEM Career Awareness for Middle School Girls, featuring Learning Blade	TOMORROW , from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	National Girls Collaborative Project	Families & STEAM: Strengthening Relationships & Building Partnerships	TOMORROW , from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	IL-QPSA Webinar #3 for NEW Users	April 13, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	IL-QPSA Webinar #2 for RETURNING Users	April 14, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
	National Council for Mental Wellbeing	Foundations of Social Justice and Organizational Change	April 25, 2022, at 12:30 p.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	April Membership Exchange: Crisis in the Field - Using Data to Support the Afterschool Workforce	April 26, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	Community Schools CHICAGO Training: Family Engagement	April 27, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	National Girls Collaborative Project	STEAM Resources for Libraries	May 17, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER

Safety, Health, and Nutrition	Loyola Stands Against Gun Violence Committee	Community Advocacy and Violence Prevention Summit	TOMORROW , from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	In-Person Event REGISTER
	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	Behavioral Signs and Symptoms and How to Mitigate	April 13, 2022, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.	REGISTER
	United Way of Metro Chicago	Arc of Recovery: COVID Response from Crisis Management to Long-Term Investment	April 28, 2022, from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	REGISTER

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

Resources for Providers

Youth Development

[Million Girls Moonshot STEM Resources for April](#)

This month the Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) celebrates Earth Day and Environmental Education Week (**April 18 to April 22, 2022**)! Now is the time for all of us — education, business, and civic leaders — to take action on climate in order to preserve and protect our health, our families, and our livelihoods. To do this, we need to inspire the next generation of creative thinkers and problem solvers to design the solutions that will get us there. This **Earth Day (April 22, 2022)**, let us act boldly, innovate broadly, and implement equitably. It is going to take all of us! **Note: More resources will be archived on our MGM page.**

[Survey](#) Opportunity for MGM STEM Program Providers! **ACT Now** is part of the MGM initiative and helping to support out-of-school time programs as they increase the quality of STEM learning opportunities for all young people, especially for underserved and underrepresented youth. [This survey](#) will help us better understand how we can best support afterschool and summer programs statewide. It should take 5-10 minutes to complete. **Everyone who completes this survey will be entered in a drawing for a \$100 Visa gift card.**

Webinars and Training Opportunities

- [The M in STEM: Math in Everyday Life](#) - **April 20, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.**
- [Dimensions of Success \(DoS\) Certification](#) - **April 20, 2022, and April 21, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** The deadline to register is April 6, 2022 (**TOMORROW**).
- [The M in STEM: Making Math Meaningful](#) - **May 19, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.**
- [ACRES April Cohort: Ready, Set, STEM! & Asking Purposeful Questions](#) - April through May
- [ACRES April Cohort: Elevating Youth Voice and Choice](#) - April through May

Resources - Activities, Toolkits, and Videos

- **Activity Plans for Earth Day:** [Math and Climate Change - Teach about the climate by understanding the math. This website has a variety of k-12 activities that teach and encourage youth to care for the planet.](#)
- **Activity:** [Piles of Paper](#) - In this activity, learners keep track of how much paper the group uses in a week. Build awareness of paper waste, while strengthening measurement and estimation skills. This content is appropriate for youth ages 4 to 14.
- **Curiosity Camp Activity:** [Recycled Plant Paper](#) activity sheet with the [I'm a Kid...Does Climate Change Affect Me?](#) video featuring IF/THEN Ambassador and climate scientist Kimberly Miner.
- **Toolkit:** [Brokering Youth Pathways: A Toolkit for Connecting Youth to Future Opportunity](#) from the Hive Research Network - This toolkit shares ways in which various out-of-school educators and professionals have approached the challenge of brokering.
- **Toolkit:** [A Pathway to Equitable Math Instruction Toolkit | SABES](#) - Created to help educators develop an anti-racist, culturally responsive math practice. It offers “an integrated approach to mathematics that centers Black, Latinx, and Multilingual students in grades 6-8, addresses barriers to math equity, and aligns instruction to grade-level priority standards.
- **Toolkit:** [Brokering Youth Pathways: A Toolkit for Connecting Youth to Future Opportunity](#) from the Hive Research Network - This toolkit shares ways in which various out-of-school educators and professionals have approached the challenge of brokering.
- **Role Model Video:** [#SheCanSTEM](#) video featuring IF/THEN Ambassador and climate scientist, Dr. Victoria Herrmann
- **Role Model Video:** [Mission Unstoppable: Tracking Bears with Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant](#)

[Changing the Beat of Mental Health](#)

[Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago](#), [Communities United](#), and the Youth Leaders of the [Ujima Project](#) recently hosted an event to showcase a new report on mental health. In specific, panel discussion (led by young men of color) highlighted that, for their peers, the normalization of trauma and systemic inequity is leading to worsening mental health. The event also allowed these leaders to share their thoughts on intervention strategies.

[Updated Report on Youth COVID-19 Vaccine Rates in Chicago](#)

[Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago](#) has released a brief report on the current levels of youth COVID-19 vaccinations within the City of Chicago.

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

Opportunities for Providers

Professional Development

[2022 College Changes Everything Conference - Submission Deadline EXTENDED](#)

In an effort to be responsive to the level of interest from participants, the [Illinois Student Assistance Commission \(ISAC\)](#), the sponsor of this conference, is extending its priority consideration date to submit interest session proposals to **Friday, April 8, 2022**. Please complete the online session proposal form. **ACT Now** will be presenting at the CCE Conference and is part of the planning committee!

[Crisis in the Field: Using Data to Support the Afterschool Workforce](#)

The afterschool workforce in Illinois is facing an unprecedented staffing crisis. The need for youth support is greater than ever, but the impact of the pandemic and historic underinvestment in these roles has made staffing programs a challenge. **ACT Now** surveyed the field to examine the state of the afterschool workforce and the issues they are facing to determine potential solutions. Join us on **April 26, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, for our April Membership Exchange where we will officially release the data and discuss how to use the results to make positive changes in the field including:

- Advocating for increased per award grant amounts
- Building into budgets increased wages and staff mental health supports
- Training on how to create a culture of support

For questions or concerns, please contact **Lesley Fisher Chapman** (Project Coordinator) at ChapmanL@actnowillinois.org.

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

Youth Opportunities

Youth Development

[Spring Forward With a Day of Service](#)

My CHI. My Future is collaborating with organizations to host several opportunities for youth within the City of Chicago during Spring break! The Austin, Bronzeville, Back of the Yards, Garfield Park, Roseland, and South Shore neighborhoods will all be hosting days of service. Teens who attend will get access to an exclusive spring break party at Navy Pier.

[Open-Mic Event for Teens!](#)

The Steppenwolf Theatre is hosting an open-mic event for teen writers on **April 9, 2022, from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.** This free event is open for teen writers of all genres and experience levels. Whether youth have got a piece ready to share, or they are just curious, or anything in between, all teens are invited to join and celebrate the power of the written word.

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?

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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 (Youth Development Associate)
at Spencere@actnowillinois.org

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

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