

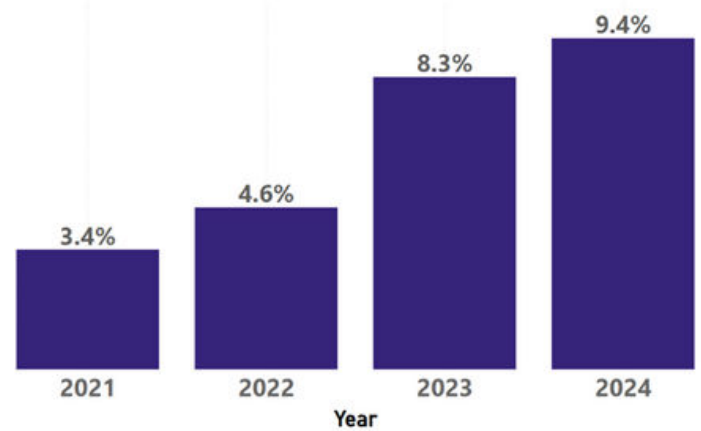
# INCREASE FUNDING FOR EARLY INTERVENTION (EI) BY \$40 MILLION IN FY25

HB5782 (Leader Lisa Hernandez) / SB3914 (Senator Lakesia Collins)

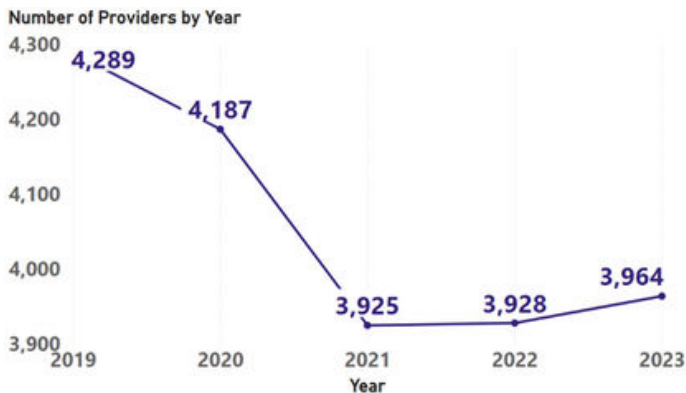
The Early Intervention (EI) program provides a range of family-centered developmental and social-emotional services to infants and toddlers who have or are at risk for significant developmental delays and disabilities. These critical services improve developmental outcomes for young children, support families to better meet their child's needs, and reduce future educational and health costs to our communities and the state by minimizing the need for special education services. EI is an entitlement for families and serves children from all income levels and in every county across the state

## SERVICE DELAYS HAVE MORE THAN DOUBLED SINCE FY22.

While the EI program's caseload has returned to pre-pandemic levels, the loss of EI therapists and service coordinators is having a substantial impact on the provision of timely services for families. **Thousands of families are currently on waiting lists for the EI services they are legally entitled to receive, and the service delay percentage has more than doubled to historically high levels.**



## THE EI WORKFORCE IS IN CRISIS.



Service delays are tied directly to the program's ongoing workforce crisis. Despite a long-overdue rate increase in FY24, decades of neglect have left providers without adequate compensation. In fact, the state would need to raise provider reimbursement rates by at least 25% just to account for inflation. Most EI providers, who work as fee-for-service independent contractors and not full-time state staff, must cover their own health insurance and travel costs, and are not compensated for missed or canceled appointments. These challenges, among others, are leading providers - many of whom have advanced degrees - to leave EI and work instead in hospitals, schools, private practices, or other settings.

## THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW – BABIES CAN'T WAIT.

The Illinois General Assembly has an opportunity this year to address the EI program's stubbornly high service delays and an impending workforce crisis. **We urge the legislature to increase funding for the Early Intervention program by \$40 million in the FY25 budget, allowing IDHS to authorize a 10% rate increase, at least, for providers.** (Governor JB Pritzker's FY25 budget proposal included a small \$6 million increase for EI).

More therapists will leave the program entirely without immediate action, causing further harm to infants, toddlers, and their families. The time to act is now.



*Data provided by Illinois Department of Human Services  
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**For more information, please contact:**  
Jonathan Doster, Start Early, 708-220-4049  
Melissa Maldonado, Start Early, 970-201-3880

## SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Access Living

Advance Illinois

Brightpoint

Clearbrook

Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI)

Erikson Institute

Family Focus

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Illinois

Illinois Action for Children

Illinois Developmental Therapy Association

Illinois Head Start Association

Jewish United Fund

Kids Academy

Latino Policy Forum

Legal Council for Health Justice

M Street Pediatric Therapy

Metropolitan Family Services

Mission: Readiness Illinois

Oakton College Early Childhood Education Center

Power Pac Illinois

Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

Raising Illinois

ReadyNation Illinois

SEIU Healthcare

Start Early

Teach Plus

The Carole Robertson Center for Learning

The Goddard School - North Aurora