The importance of providing high-quality early childhood services to children cannot be overstated, particularly in terms of the benefits potentially experienced by the children, their families, and their communities. [1] For those children who live in poverty or are experiencing other risk factors that may be detrimental to future academic success, high-quality early childhood programming may make all the difference for many of these children. [2]

Illinois has a strong history of providing early childhood services, ranging from early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities to Preschool for All. More recently, Illinois has expanded Preschool for All, providing more comprehensive services to 4-year-olds throughout the state. The maps below show the percent of children ages 3 and 4 living in families with income below 185% the federal poverty level (FPL). Overlaid are locations of Preschool for All programs. The map on the left is the state as a whole divided by counties, while the map on the right features the Chicago Metro area by townships. For more detail, check the Demographic Theme Maps or the Tabular Data pages on IECAM at www.iecam.illinois.edu.

IECAM provides a comprehensive picture of early care and education services in Illinois by combining demographic data (population, language use, poverty level, risk factors) and early childhood program data (Preschool for All, Head Start, Child Care).

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