

Governor Pritzker Launches Illinois Cares For Kids Statewide Enrollment Campaign “I Got Love / ¡Siento Amor!”

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CHICAGO— Governor JB Pritzker announced the launch of “I Got Love / ¡Siento Amor!”, the statewide enrollment campaign for childcare and early education services, featuring Illinois artists, musicians, and production partners.

Since March 2020, the state has provided \$978 million in early childhood stability and recovery. While this investment allowed providers to keep their doors open (97% of

licensed provider recipients remained open at the end of 2021), enrollment has decreased as an ongoing result of the pandemic.

To help increase early childhood and care enrollment statewide, the campaign is investing \$12.7 million in amplifying information about Illinois' one-stop-shop for all things early childhood, the Illinois Cares for Kids website, which has a search engine for local programs, information on child care subsidy programs, and many other resources on the importance of early learning. Illinois Cares for Kids is a place parents, grandparents, caretakers, teachers, and childcare providers can access all things related to early childhood in Illinois.

“We’re making Illinois the best state in the nation to raise a child – and it’s essential to ensure families have access to affordable early childhood education and care to build a strong foundation for a lifetime of learning,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Illinois Cares for Kids helps Illinois families choose from hundreds of local providers to find the right match for their children.”

The ‘I Got Love / ¡Siento Amor! campaign is available in English and Spanish and features an Illinois-based local artistic collaboration spreading the message that Illinois is full of people who care. The campaign will target families in need of childcare and early learning supports to showcase the importance of early learning programs and how the state can support families looking to enroll in one. “I Got Love’ / ¡Siento Amor! was a natural vehicle to musically convey the message. Nat King Cole, the singer of “I Got Love,” has roots in Illinois, having gained early fame as a piano player while living in Chicago.

The enrollment campaign is part of Governor Pritzker’s Learning Renewal Efforts and is a collaboration between the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development, Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

“We want to increase awareness among families that early childhood education programs are consistently open, safe, and serving children. We want Illinois families to feel empowered to quickly and efficiently locate early childhood education educators and resources,” said Dr. Jamilah R. Jor’dan, Executive Director, Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development.

The Illinois Department of Human Services, through the Division of Early Childhood, provided funding for community-based outreach grants. These grants support local community outreach to increase enrollment and are available to all 102 counties across

Illinois. The state identified a need to reach communities and families with timely, accurate information necessary to make informed decisions about the well-being of their children.

“Families need to know the resources and options available to them when it comes to early learning and childcare,” said Secretary Grace Hou, Illinois Department of Human Services. “This outreach campaign will give parents and caregivers struggling with the many stressors of raising a family resources to find safe providers they trust and can partner with to help children get ahead.”

“It’s important that families feel comfortable with the people taking care of their children,” said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala. “Illinois Cares for Kids shows families the quality of care they can receive and gives parents and caretakers the tools to make informed decisions about childcare and early learning.”

The campaign also includes a statewide Text Messaging Platform, Ready for K, that offers fun facts and tips on children’s learning and development, available in multiple languages.

More information on programs is available at www.illinoiscaresforkids.org/.