



SIUE Head Start/Early Head Start Centers achieve Gold Circle of Quality designations

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Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Head Start/Early Head Start Belleville, Bluffview, Cahokia and Lovejoy Centers have received Gold Circle of Quality designations from ExceleRate Illinois. The designation celebrates early learning providers who meet or go beyond the highest quality of early childhood education standards.

ExceleRate Illinois is a statewide quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development providers. The [Gold Circle of Quality](#) is the most prestigious level of recognition and assesses programs' learning environments, quality of teaching, administrative standards, staff's educational background and continued professional development.

“Providing and then acknowledging quality early childhood education opportunities promotes our program’s vision for all children, regardless of zip codes, to be prepared to succeed in school,” said Ms. G. Linnie Bailey, SIUE Head Start/Early Head Start Program Director.

“Every early learning and development provider who participates in ExceleRate Illinois makes quality a priority,” said Theresa Hawley, Executive Director, Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development. “The higher the designation, the higher the program’s demonstrated quality and comprehensiveness in meeting children’s early learning needs.”

[ExceleRate Illinois](#) is a comprehensive system that includes Licensed Child Care Centers, Preschool-for-All and Center-Based Prevention Initiative Programs, Head Start and Early Head Start Programs and Licensed Family and Group Care Homes.

The [SIUE Head Start/Early Head Start Program](#) is a nationally recognized quality early childhood education program that promotes school readiness for children and self-sufficiency for families. Services are available to St. Clair County expectant parents and families of children ages six weeks to five years of age. The Head Start Program currently provides services to 1,314 children and families and the Early Head Start Program serves 188 children and families. Both programs include children with specialized needs and English as Second Language Learners (ESL).