



**W**here children are born can affect their chances for a strong start in life. Babies need good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences to foster their healthy brain development and help them realize their full potential.

This fact sheet provides a snapshot of how infants, toddlers, and their families are faring with respect to these three developmental domains. For each domain, selected child or family indicators and policy indicators are highlighted and compared to national averages. Important demographic information is also included. A summary table of all indicators is provided on the last page, for reference.



## Demographics

### Infants and toddlers in Illinois

#### Overview

Illinois is home to 465,358 infants and toddlers, representing 3.6 percent of the state's population. As many as 41 percent live in households with incomes less than twice the federal poverty line (in 2017, about \$50,000 a year for a family of four), placing them at economic disadvantage. America's youngest children are diverse and are raised in a variety of family contexts. A broad array of policies and services are required to ensure that all of them have an equitable start in life.

ILLINOIS NATIONAL AVERAGE

#### Race/ethnicity of infants and toddlers

Non-Hispanic White  
 51.1%  
 49.3%

Hispanic  
 24.3%  
 26.1%

Non-Hispanic Black  
 15.4%  
 13.8%

Non-Hispanic Asian  
 5.2%  
 4.9%

Non-Hispanic other  
 3.8%  
 5.1%

American Indian/Alaska Native  
 0.1%  
 0.8%

#### Working moms

Mothers in the Labor Force  
 67.0%  
 61.5%

#### Poverty status of infants and toddlers

Above Low-Income  
 58.5%  
 55.4%

In Poverty  
 22.7%  
 22.7%

Low-Income  
 18.7%  
 22.0%

#### Infants and toddlers in poverty, by race

Non-Hispanic Black  
 48.0%  
 39.5%

Hispanic  
 28.7%  
 30.8%

Non-Hispanic Other  
 17.2%  
 20.0%

Non-Hispanic White  
 13.6%  
 14.6%

#### Family structure

2-Parent Family  
 75.2%  
 76.3%

1-Parent Family  
 21.8%  
 21.5%

No Parents Present  
 3.1%  
 2.2%

#### Grandparent-headed households

8.3%  
 9.4%

#### Rural/Non-metro area

Living Outside of a Metro Area  
 5.6%  
 8.7%

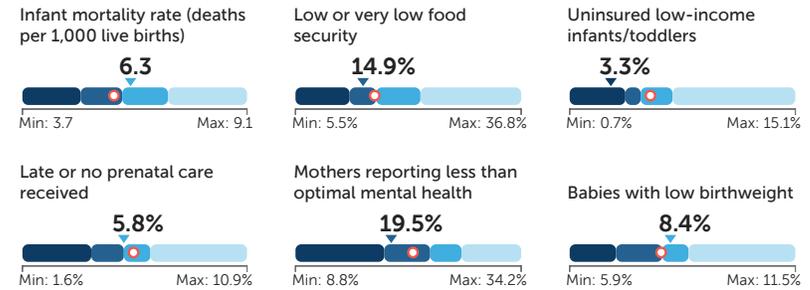
### What is Good Health?

Good physical and mental health provide the foundation for babies to develop physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially. The rate of brain growth is faster in the first 3 years than at any other stage of life, and this growth sets the stage for subsequent development. Access to good nutrition and affordable maternal, pediatric, and family health care are essential to ensure that babies receive the nourishment and care they need for a strong start in life.

Illinois falls in the Reaching Forward (R) tier of states when it comes to the overall health of infants and toddlers. The state's low ranking in the Good Health domain reflects indicators of health care access and affordability, and some indicators of children's health (e.g., preventive medical care received). However, Illinois is in the Working Effectively (W) tier when it comes to the percentage of low-income infants and toddlers who are uninsured.

### Six Key Indicators of Good Health

**KEY** ← Range of all state values → ▼ Illinois ○ National average  
**G** Getting Started **R** Reaching Forward **O** Improving Outcomes **W** Working Effectively



### Good Health Policy in Illinois

Medicaid expansion state	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State Medicaid policy for maternal depression screening in well-child visits	Recommended
Medicaid plan covers social-emotional screening for young children	N/A
Medicaid plan covers IECMH services at home	N/A
Medicaid plan covers IECMH services at pediatric/family medicine practices	N/A
Medicaid plan covers IECMH services at ECE programs	N/A

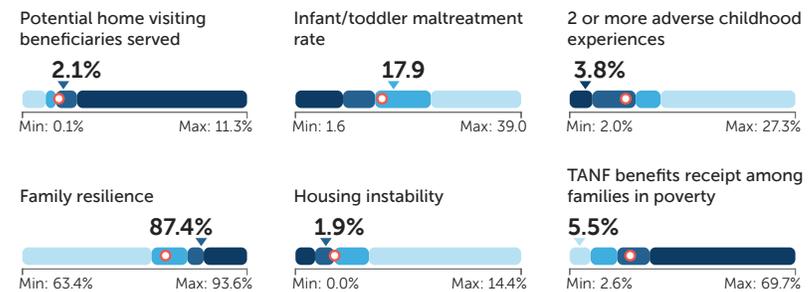
### What Defines Strong Families?

Young children develop in the context of their families, where stability and supportive relationships nurture their growth. All families of infants and toddlers benefit from support with parenting, and many—particularly those challenged by economic instability—need access to resources that help them meet their children's daily and developmental needs. Important supports include home visiting services, child welfare systems that are responsive to young children's needs, and family-friendly employer policies that provide paid sick and family leave.

Illinois falls in the Improving Outcomes (O) tier of states when it comes to indicators of Strong Families. The state's high ranking in this domain primarily reflects indicators of child welfare and home visiting. Illinois is doing exceptionally well on indicators such as the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences and the percentage of infants and toddlers exiting foster care to permanency. The state is not doing so well on indicators related to access to basic needs and supports, such as the percentage of families in poverty receiving TANF benefits.

### Six Key Indicators of Strong Families

**KEY** ← Range of all state values → ▼ Illinois ○ National average  
**G** Getting Started **R** Reaching Forward **O** Improving Outcomes **W** Working Effectively



### Strong Families Policy in Illinois

Paid sick time that covers care for child	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paid family leave	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



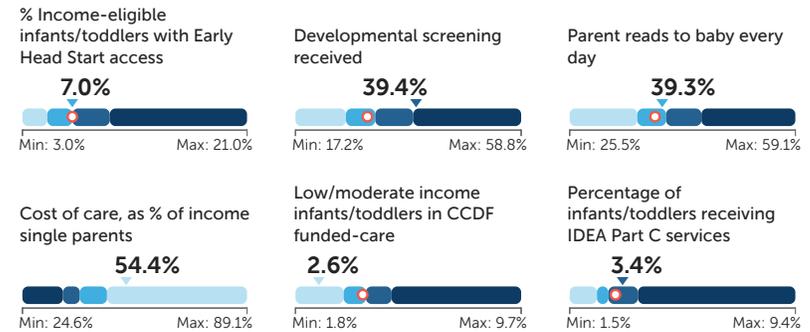
## What Defines Positive Early Learning Experiences?

Infants and toddlers learn through play, active exploration of their environment, and, most importantly, through interactions with the significant adults in their lives. The quality of babies' early learning experiences at home and in other care settings has a lasting impact on their preparedness for life-long learning and success. Parents who require child care while they work or attend school need access to affordable, high-quality care options that promote positive development.

Illinois scores in the Getting Started (G) tier of states when considering key indicators related to early care and education and early intervention for infants and toddlers. The state's low ranking in Positive Early Learning Experiences reflects nearly all indicators in this domain. However, the percentage of infants and toddlers receiving IDEA Part C services and the percentage who received a developmental screening using a parent-completed tool in the past year are both in the Improving Outcomes (O) tier.

## Six Key Indicators of Positive Early Learning Experiences

KEY ← Range of all state values → ▼ Illinois ○ National average  
**G** Getting Started **R** Reaching Forward **O** Improving Outcomes **W** Working Effectively



## Positive Early Learning Experiences Policy in Illinois

Families above 200% of FPL eligible for child care subsidy No

## All indicators for Illinois

**G** Getting Started **R** Reaching Forward **O** Improving Outcomes **W** Working Effectively

### Good Health

<b>O</b> Eligibility limit (% FPL) for pregnant women in Medicaid	<b>213.0</b>	<b>W</b> Uninsured low-income infants/toddlers	<b>3.3%</b>
<i>National average: 200.0</i>		<i>National average: 5.8%</i>	
<b>O</b> Low or very low food security	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>G</b> Infants ever breastfed	<b>80.3%</b>
<i>National average: 16.5%</i>		<i>National average: 83.2%</i>	
<b>G</b> Infants breastfed at 6 months	<b>53.0%</b>	<b>R</b> Late or no prenatal care received	<b>5.8%</b>
<i>National average: 57.6%</i>		<i>National average: 6.2%</i>	
<b>O</b> Mothers reporting less than optimal mental health	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>O</b> Preventive medical care received	<b>94.0%</b>
<i>National average: 22.0%</i>		<i>National average: 90.7%</i>	
<b>G</b> Preventive dental care received	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>R</b> Babies with low birthweight	<b>8.4%</b>
<i>National average: 30.0%</i>		<i>National average: 8.2%</i>	
<b>R</b> Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	<b>6.3</b>	<b>O</b> Received recommended vaccines	<b>71.5%</b>
<i>National average: 5.9</i>		<i>National average: 70.7%</i>	

## Strong Families

<b>O</b> Housing instability	<b>1.9%</b> <i>National average: 2.5%</i>	<b>G</b> Crowded housing	<b>13.8%</b> <i>National average: 15.6%</i>
<b>G</b> TANF benefits receipt among families in poverty	<b>5.5%</b> <i>National average: 20.6%</i>	<b>R</b> Infant/toddler maltreatment rate	<b>17.9</b> <i>National average: 16.0</i>
<b>R</b> Unsafe neighborhoods	<b>6.0%</b> <i>National average: 6.3%</i>	<b>O</b> Family resilience	<b>87.4%</b> <i>National average: 82.6%</i>
<b>W</b> 1 adverse childhood experience	<b>17.6%</b> <i>National average: 21.9%</i>	<b>W</b> 2 or more adverse childhood experiences	<b>3.8%</b> <i>National average: 8.3%</i>
<b>W</b> Infants/toddlers exiting foster care to permanency	<b>99.7%</b> <i>National average: 98.4%</i>	<b>O</b> Potential home visiting beneficiaries served	<b>2.1%</b> <i>National average: 1.9%</i>

## Positive Early Learning Experiences

<b>R</b> Parent reads to baby every day	<b>39.3%</b> <i>National average: 38.2%</i>	<b>G</b> Parent sings to baby every day	<b>47.8%</b> <i>National average: 56.4%</i>
<b>R</b> % Income-eligible infants/toddlers with Early Head Start access	<b>7.0%</b> <i>National average: 7.0%</i>	<b>G</b> Cost of care, as % of income married families	<b>14.7%</b> <i>National average: N/A</i>
<b>G</b> Cost of care, as % of income single parents	<b>54.4%</b> <i>National average: N/A</i>	<b>G</b> Low/moderate income infants/toddlers in CCDF funded-care	<b>2.6%</b> <i>National average: 4.2%</i>
<b>O</b> Developmental screening received	<b>39.4%</b> <i>National average: 30.4%</i>	<b>G</b> Infants/toddlers with developmental delay	<b>4.6%</b> <i>National average: 1.1%</i>
<b>O</b> Percentage of infants/toddlers receiving IDEA Part C services	<b>3.4%</b> <i>National average: 3.1%</i>		