



Coordinated Intake for Home Visiting Collaboratives Project

The Launch of Four IRIS Communities in Illinois

Contributors:

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"We envision Illinois as a place where every young child – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language, geography, ability, immigration status, or other circumstance – receives the strongest possible start to life so they grow up safe, healthy, happy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn."

- Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development & Illinois State Board of Education

In Illinois, a Coordinated Intake for Home Visiting Collaboratives Project provided an opportunity for four community collaborations across the state to implement IRIS and develop workflows that meet the needs of home visiting programs in their communities. While the needs and vision look different in each community, the goal is the same: ensuring that all families with young children are connected to the services they want and need.

Illinois envisions the State "...as a place where every young child – regardless of race, ethnicity, income, language, geography, ability, immigration status, or other circumstance – receives the strongest possible start to life so they grow up safe, healthy, happy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn." As a part of this work, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) administers the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5). Under PDG B-5, the Coordinated Intake for Home Visiting Collaboratives Project supports a broader vision to establish coordinated points of entry throughout the state for home visiting as well as other early childhood care and education services. Through this project, IRIS has been implemented in four Illinois communities including rural regions.

Through IRIS implementation, meaningful community conversations have occurred on workflow, communication, and coordination of home visiting referrals. Each of the four collaborations embraced the flexibility of IRIS's features to develop unique processes to support their respective community's specific needs, while continuing to align with and forward the state's shared vision.

All four communities launched in 2021, growing their IRIS networks along the way. From the start, this project has been unique because of the breadth of the communities involved, the representation of multiple sectors, and the roles of the leaders themselves. The Local IRIS Leadership Teams are comprised of pediatricians, social workers, home visitors, coordinated intake workers, school district programs, and more, all of whom have their own experiences and expertise to share with their peers in the IRIS Learning Communities. In addition to sharing perspectives, accomplishments, and lessons learned, the leadership teams utilize this time to discuss important project updates and connect around the shared vision of ensuring all young children receive the strongest start to life.

The following community collaborations are now coordinating referrals through IRIS:

Brightpoint (formerly Children's Home and Aid) in the Madison County Coordinated Intake IRIS Network (Madison and St. Clair Counties)

- Heidi Elliot - helliott@brightpoint.org
- Janice Moenster - jmoenster@brightpoint.org

DuPage Home Visiting Network in the DuPage County IRIS Network

- Deyanira Cabrera - deyanira.cabrera@dupagehealth.org
- Kate Estrada - kate.estrada@dupagehealth.org
- Gabrielle Gunther - Gabrielle.Gunther@dupagehealth.org

Sangamon HEART through the SIU Medicine Department of Pediatrics in Sangamon County in the Sangamon HEART IRIS Network

- Dr. Meredith Volle - mvolle@siumed.edu
- Gwen Walsh - gwalsh56@siumed.edu

Sauk Valley STARS Early Childhood Coalition through the Regional Office of Education 47 in the Sauk Valley IRIS Network (Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties)

- Lois Meisenheimer - lmeisenheimer@roe47.org
- Krista Peterson - kpeterson@roe47.org