

Community Assessment of Illinois Action for Children’s Early Learning Programs Area – South Suburban Cook County

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Section 1: Description of South Suburban Cook County Head Start Area

Illinois Action for Children operates Head Start and Early Head Start programs for 468 children living in twelve southern Cook County Illinois zip codes: 60409, 60411, 60419, 60425, 60426, 60429, 60430, 60438, 60473, 60475, 60476, and 60633 (which is shared with Easter Seals).¹ The term “south suburban Cook County” in this needs assessment refers to these twelve zip codes.

The twelve zip codes cover large portions of Thornton and Bloom Townships, which are bordered on the north by the city of Chicago and Calumet Township, on the east by the state of Indiana, on the south by Will County, and on the west by Bremen and Rich Townships of Cook County.

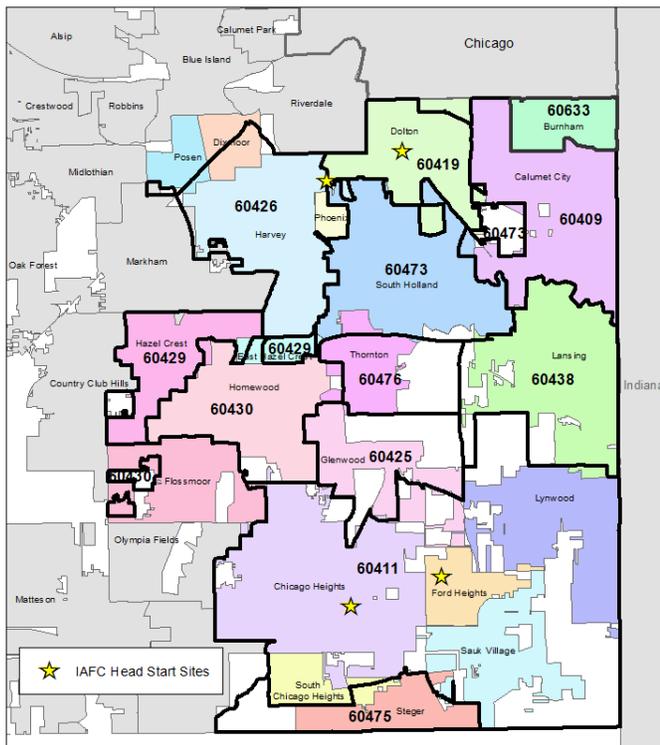
The zip codes fully cover eighteen south suburban municipalities: Burnham, Calumet City, Chicago Heights, Dolton, East Hazel Crest, Ford Heights, Glenwood, Harvey, Hazel Crest, Homewood, Lansing, Lynwood, Phoenix, Sauk Village, South Chicago Heights, South Holland, Steger, and Thornton. (Zip code 60426 also covers about half of Dixmoor and small portions of Posen and Markham). Some data that we use are available only by municipality. Table 1 shows the correspondences between these zip codes and municipalities.

¹ By the Head Start award, zip code 60412 is a thirteenth zip code in the area. However, 60412 in Chicago Heights is contained within 60411 in Chicago Heights, and the Census reports its demographic data under 60411. Therefore we treat these as one zip code, 60411, and the total number of zip codes as 12.

Table 1. Zip Codes and Municipalities of South Suburban Cook County Region

60409	Calumet City
60411 (includes 60412)	Chicago Heights, Ford Heights, Lynwood, Sauk Village, South Chicago Heights
60419	Dolton
60425	Glenwood
60426	Harvey, Phoenix, part of Dixmoor, small parts of Posen and Markham
60429	East Hazel Crest, Hazel Crest
60430	Homewood
60438	Lansing
60473	South Holland
60475	Steger
60476	Thornton
60633	Burnham

Map 1. Head Start Zip Codes with Municipalities



Some data that we use come from a third source, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) report cards for school districts. The 12 zip codes cover parts or all of 24 south suburban Cook County elementary school districts, whose data on student populations we also use to estimate the needs of younger children in the communities. Twenty-one elementary school districts map entirely or mostly on the twelve zip codes

Section 2: The Population of the South Suburban Cook County Head Start Area and Its Basic Economic Condition

According to the U.S. Census, south suburban Cook County has a total population of 261,179.³ This includes 15,328 children under the age of 5: 8,839 under age 3 and 6,489 children ages 3 and 4. These children comprise ten percent of the suburban Cook County children under age 5; five percent of children under 5 in Cook County, including Chicago; and two percent of all children under 5 in Illinois.

Census data indicate that 97.6 percent of the region's population identifies as belonging to one of three groups: African American or Black (60.2 percent), Hispanic or Latino (14.5 percent) and White (23 percent). The population clusters by race and ethnicity even more sharply when examined by zip codes. Eight of the 12 zip codes have a majority Black population, ranging from 50 percent to 89 percent. Three of the zip codes that have a majority Black population also have a population that is 21 to 26 percent Hispanic or Latino. In three other zip codes the majority of the population identifies as White (50 to 72 percent), while in a fourth that has no majority race, the plurality (49 percent) identifies as White.

ISBE elementary school district report card data identify race and ethnicity of the student population. We use the latest data, from 2016.

Compared to the overall population in the zip codes, the demographic composition of students in the 21 elementary school districts is somewhat more African American or Black than the Census numbers for zip codes above (almost 65 percent compared to 60 percent), more Latino or Hispanic (24 percent compared to 14.5 percent), less White (7 percent compared to 23 percent) and slightly more Asian American, other or unknown (3.3 percent altogether). Enrollments in these school districts average 1,395. Only five of the 21 districts have an enrollment above 2,000 students, a size often cited as optimal for a school district. Considering their high poverty levels that we will show next, the small size of most of these districts suggests that they are probably under-resourced and not well prepared to serve students with many needs. Head Start services can not only contribute by preparing students to achieve in this environment, but also benefit whole families that might have children in both Head Start and in the elementary schools.

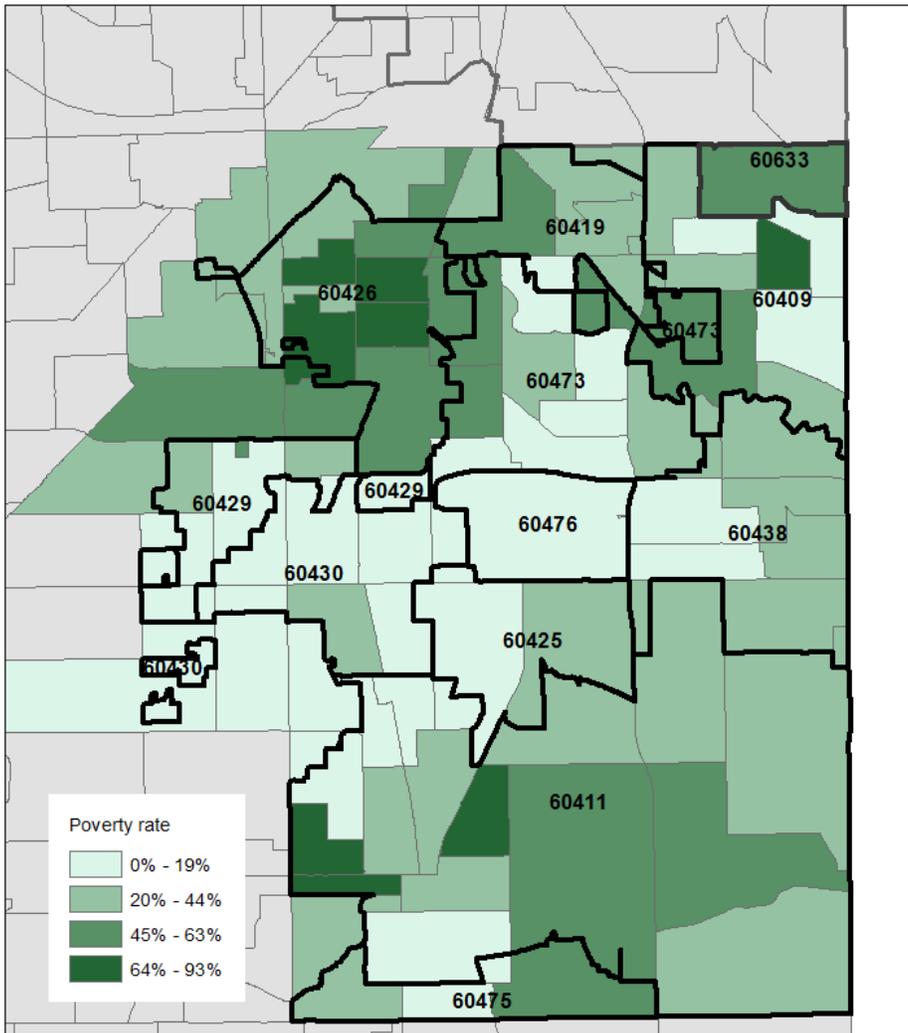
Children Living in Poverty and Head Start Slots

According to the Census, a large number of children in south suburban Cook County are eligible by family income for Early Head Start and Head Start. Some 2,854 children under age 3 live in poverty – 32 percent of children under 3 (compared to 21 percent for Illinois and 24 percent for all of Cook County). For those 2,854 children, according to the Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM), there are only 320 Early Head Start slots and 245 ISBE Prevention Initiative slots, including those operated by Illinois Action for Children. Head Start and ISBE slots can cover only about 20 percent of the eligible children under age 3.

Another 2,193 three- and four-year-olds live in poverty in south suburban Cook County zip codes. Their overall poverty rates are also about one child in every three – 34 percent (compared to 21 percent in Illinois and 24 percent for all of Cook County). Four zip codes in particular have very high rates of child poverty, ranging from 41 percent up to a high of 57 percent of children under 5: 60411, 60419, 60426 and 60633.

³ All Census data come from 2016 American Community Survey five-year estimates, covering 2012-2016 for zip codes. The Census reports data by various geographical units: zip codes, municipalities, townships and counties, as well as Illinois as a whole.

Map 3. Rates of Poverty for Children 0 to 5 in South Suburban Cook County Census Tracts



According to IECAM the region has only 570 Head Start slots for children ages 3 and 4, including those operated by Illinois Action for Children. These can serve 26 percent of the children living in poverty in south suburban Cook County.

There are another 2,536 ISBE Preschool for All slots for children ages 3 and 4 in the region, according to IECAM. They cannot, however, fully substitute for Head Start because the school districts and community-based organizations that provide these slots do not offer the array of services that children living in poverty often need. Moreover, in addition to poor children, many other children are eligible for these seats. South suburban Cook County has 3,568 children who live below 185 percent of the federal poverty level (which is often used in Illinois to estimate the number of children eligible for ISBE Preschool for All slots). Comparing these 3,568 eligible children to the combined number of Head Start and ISBE Preschool for All slots, we estimate that there are enough Head Start and ISBE slots for about 3,106 children (87 percent of eligible children) in south suburban Cook County.

Data note: The estimate of 87 percent coverage by Head Start and ISBE Pre-K does not count other eligible children in families with somewhat higher incomes who qualify for Head Start and ISBE pre-Kindergarten services and need a seat: for example, dual language learners, children with special

needs, foster children, some children of single parents and children with trauma. We examine these needs below.

Many poor children live in *deep poverty* – that is, they live below 50 percent of the federal poverty level – and they would especially benefit from an array of Head Start services. There are not enough Head Start slots for even those children with the deepest needs. South suburban Cook County has 1,573 children under age 3 living in *deep poverty*, but only 360 Early Head Start seats (enough for 20 percent). It has 1,208 children ages 3 and 4 who live in deep poverty but only 540 Head Start seats (enough for 45 percent).

Poverty comparisons demonstrate how disproportionately high the south suburban Cook County's level of need is.

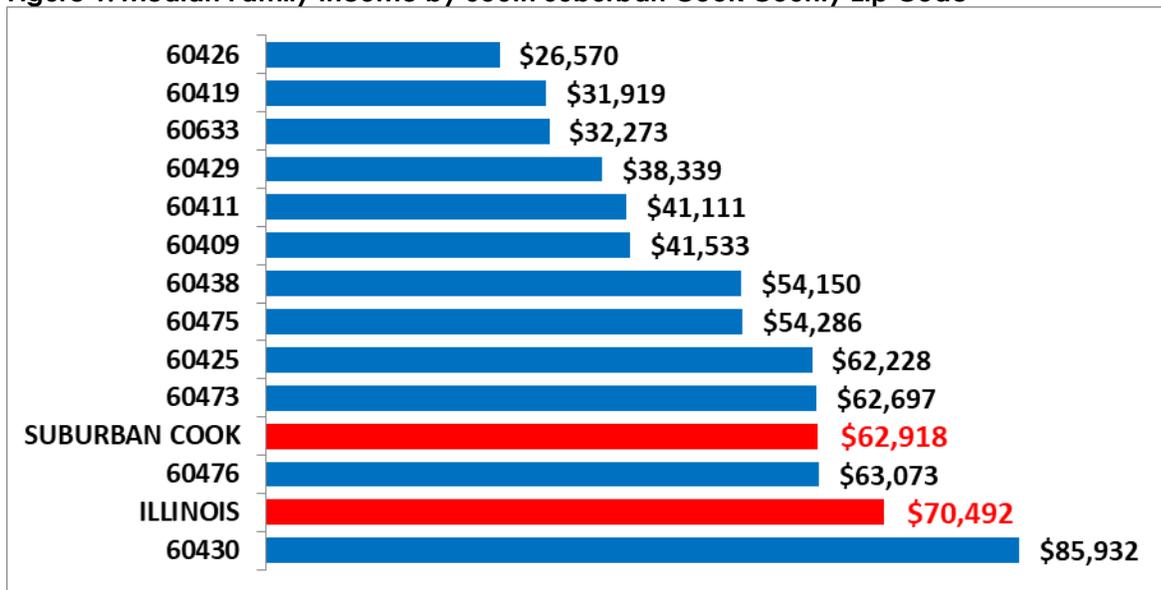
- *Comparisons to all suburban Cook County:* The 12 zip codes of south suburban Cook County have 10 percent of all suburban Cook County's children under age 5, but they contain 20 percent of all suburban Cook County's children under age 5 living in poverty and 27 percent of all suburban Cook County's young children living in deep poverty.
- *Comparisons to Illinois:* With just 2.0 percent of all Illinois children under age 5, south suburban Cook County has 3.0 percent of Illinois' children under age 5 living in poverty and 3.7 percent of its children under 5 living in deep poverty.

It is critical to have coordination among community-based organizations and the public sector in south suburban Cook County to increase these children's access to the services they need and ensure that the services are of the highest quality and relevance.

Low Family Incomes

According to the Census, annual median family income in the 12 zip codes over the period 2012 through 2016 ranged from a low of \$26,570 in the Harvey-Phoenix zip code to high of \$85,962 in Homewood. See Figure 1. Eleven of the 12 zip codes have a median family income below the state's median family income of \$70,492 and ten zip codes have a median income less than the Cook County median income, \$62,918. In three of the zip codes median family income is less than one-half of the median incomes of suburban Cook County and Illinois.

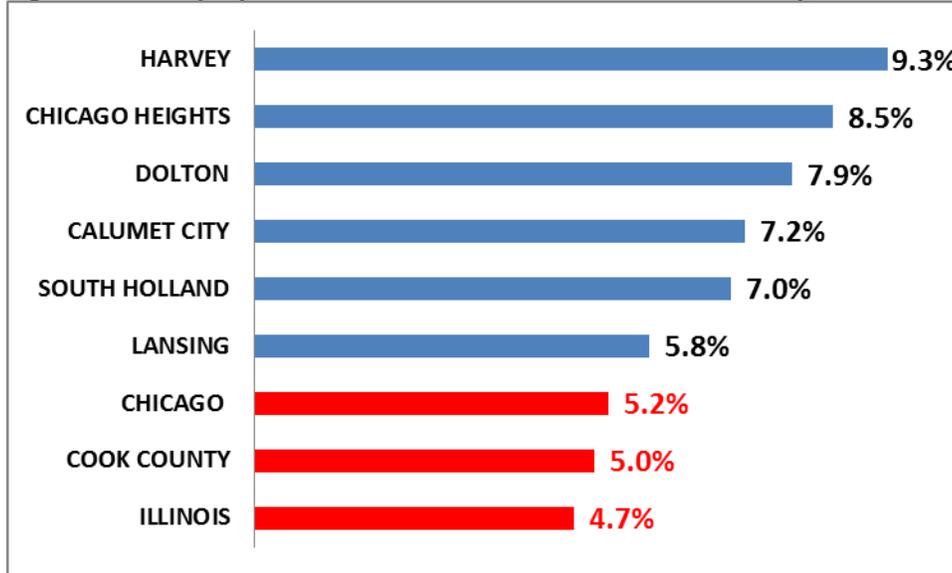
Figure 1. Median Family Income by South Suburban Cook County Zip Code



Unemployment

A major source of low family incomes in south suburban Cook County is the area's weak labor market, as indicated by a high unemployment rate. The latest figures (December 2017) from the Illinois Department of Employment Security are available for only the six larger municipalities in the area. These rates are shown in Figure 2. Each community had a substantially higher unemployment rate than Cook County, Chicago, or all of Illinois.

Figure 2. Unemployment Rates in South Suburban Cook County, December 2017



Not shown in the Figure 2, but of similar importance, is the extremely slow improvement in unemployment in these communities since the recession of 2008. Over the last year of data, December 2016 to December 2017, employment in south suburban Cook County lagged further behind its healthier Cook County neighbors and the state. While unemployment improved by a substantial amount – by between 0.7 and 0.9 percentage points in Chicago, Cook County as a whole and Illinois, in five of the six municipalities it improved by smaller amounts, only 0.2 to 0.6 percentage points. (Calumet City alone saw a rapid improvement in the unemployment rate from 9.1 to the 7.2 percent shown in Figure 2.)

Unlike IDES, the Census reports unemployment for all twelve south suburban Cook County zip codes, not just the six municipalities, and in a form that can be averaged across the entire area. These data come from 60 months of data collection that ended before the IDES unemployment figures in Figure 2 above. From 2012 to 2016, the entire area's unemployment rate averaged 16.5 percent. This was far above the average unemployment rate for all of Cook County (9.7 percent over that period) and twice that of Illinois (8.2 percent over that period).

The very high and only slowly-improving unemployment rates not only help explain why incomes in south suburban Cook County remain so low, they also indicate that south suburban Cook County has intense economic distress, weaker grounds for economic optimism, and high need for services that Head Start can provide to meet the needs of children and parents with low incomes. Like all Head Start staff in areas with high unemployment, staff in south suburban Cook County must be prepared to address the variety of problems frequently associated with unemployment, such as stress, hunger, homelessness, and physical and mental health issues, as well as unstable work and a need for job counseling and training. Staff can support parents with employment challenges by maintaining effective links with human services organization that address these issues.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

IAFC has worked closely with OAI to refer families to their employment resources. In addition, we have served on their early childhood action committee to support them with capacity building around child care payments and early learning referrals. We have also partnered closely with Prairie State College to provide early learning information to students in their workforce development programs.

Employment and Employer Services – Oak Forest Workforce Center**708-633-2777**15900 Cicero Ave., Bldg. B, 2nd Fl. Oak Forest, IL 60452**Contact:** Angela or Tiffany**Website:** www.eesforjobs.com**Services:** Job placement services at no cost are available: Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm. Orientations held every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday from 9:00am-10:00am (Arrive by 8:45am). Training and employment opportunities for young adults 18-24 years old at no cost are available, must live in Cook County and are out of high school.**Employment and Employer Services – Harvey IDES Office****708-596-8808 or 708-596-8807**

16845 Halsted St. Harvey, IL 60426

Website: www.eesforjobs.com**Services:** job placement services at no cost are available: Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm, Orientations held very Monday & Wednesday from 9:00am- 10:00am.**Ford Heights Community Service Organization****708-758-2665**

943 E. Lincoln Hwy Ford Heights, IL 60411

Website: <http://www.fhcsoi.org/>**Services:** Provides Vocational training that includes: Construction Flagger Certification, Forklift Certification, 10 hour OSHA Safety Intro to Construction, Resume Writing, Employment Coaching, Entrepreneurial Training, Financial Literacy, Employment and Assistance.**Training s qualify for state certification and licensing, Computer lab, Free Community Public Access, Free Basic Computer Literacy Training.***Opportunity Advancement Innovation (OAI)****708-283-5020**

214 Forest Blvd. Park Forest, IL 60466

Contact: Pamela Williams, Program Manager **Direct line:** 708-283-5020 ext.16**Email:** pwilliams@oaiinc.org**Website:** www.oaiinc.org**Services:** quality education, training, and career opportunities for unemployed or underemployed individuals, including the formerly incarcerated and homeless, workers without union representation including immigrants.**CEDA****800-571-2332**3518 West 139th St. Robbins, IL 60472**Direct line:** 708-371-1220 ext. 3057**Website:** www.cedaorg.net**Services:** Must Meet Income Guidelines- provide job skills enhancements for unemployed Family Support and Community Engagement eligible participants through the services and expertise of a contracted employment service provider

Prairie State College

708-709-3500

202 S. Halsted St. Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Website: www.prairiestate.edu

Services: adult basic and high school equivalency (GED), English as the Second Language (ESL).

Employment and Employer Services – Elite Staffing

708-539-5085

1400 W. Hubbard St. Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60642

Contact: Larry Thomas larry@elitestaffinginc.com

Website: www.elitestaffinginc.com

Services: Employment Services and Staffing Agency

We also provide the following job links:

www.chicagojobs.com

www.Metrochicagojobs.com

www.hotjobs.com

www.illinoisjobs.com

www.careerbuilder.com

www.monsterjobs.com

www.federaljobsearch.com

www.indeed.com

www.ziprecruiter.com/jobs

www.simplyhired.com

www.actforchildren.org

Section 3: Priority Children Compare our 12 zip codes against all of Cook County

Head Start instructs its grantees to place priority upon four groups of children: homeless children, children with special needs, dual language learners and foster children. These groups can of course overlap. Here we estimate statistics for each group separately.

Homeless Children

ISBE school district data (21 school districts within our zip codes) provide us the best, though not perfect, understanding of the proportions of children in a community who are homeless. Schools collect data on children who meet the definition McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness:

Homeless students are defined as children/youth that lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:

- Students who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- Students who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings students who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory students who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because they are living in circumstances described above.⁴

⁴ Illinois State Board of Education, “2016 Report Card Definitions and Sources of Data,” available at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/rc16-definition.pdf>.

With relatively high poverty, unemployment, low incomes and high rents⁵ south suburban Cook County is predictably high in its rates of homelessness. The 21 elementary school districts report homelessness that averages 4.85 percent (weighted by the enrollment in each district). This is more than *three times* the comparable homelessness rate reported for all suburban Cook County school districts (1.5 percent), and more than twice the Illinois rate of 2.2 percent.

If the same 4.85 percent of children under age 5 in south suburban Cook County are homeless as elementary school-age students, then there are 744 homeless children under the age of 5: 429 homeless children eligible for Early Head Start and 315 homeless children eligible for Head Start. Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program recruits children ongoing throughout the program year.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

South Suburban PADS

708-754-4357

414 W. Lincoln Highway Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Regina Stevens, Supervisor 708-550-4411 ext.101

Email: reginas@sspads.org

Website: www.sspads.org

Services: *assists families that are involved with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or at-risk of becoming involved with DCFS or other state systems. The SCCF program provides supportive services to families to prevent homelessness and assist families experiencing homelessness with obtaining stable housing.*

Catholic Charities

708-333-8379

16100 Seton Rd. South Holland, IL 60473

Contact: Christopher Torres, Regional Director

Website: www.catholiccharities.net

Services: *transitional apartment housing and case management services for the homeless, clothing room for families in need, central information and referral to other CC programs, free public benefits screening, emergency assistance food and clothing banks (open Tuesday- Thursday, 9 a.m. - Noon) senior services; Monday supper at St. Anne's parish at 6 p.m. to anyone hungry or homeless.*

Homeless Prevention Call Center

877-426-6515

Services: *Financial assistance to individuals and families who are at risk of being evicted or have their heat and lights shut off due to a recent crisis (short term, one-time crisis). Several requirements will determine assistance.*

⁵ According to the 2016 Census most south suburban Cook County families *with children under age 6 – 52 percent – are renters*. This is higher than the comparable shares in Illinois as a whole (42 percent) and Cook County (50 percent), though less than Chicago (59 percent). In four of the individual zip codes at least 60 percent of households rent their housing. Seven of the twelve zip codes had median rents greater than Illinois' median rent (\$925) and range up to \$1,432. Four of the zip codes had median rents above the Cook County median of \$999. Finally *rent as a share of median family income* is a good indicator of *affordability* in housing. Median rent takes a large share of median family income in all twelve zip codes of south suburban Cook County. The share in ten of the twelve zip codes is at or above the Illinois rate of 19% and all are at or above the Cook County rent share of family income (16 percent). In four zip codes the shares are at least twice the Cook County rate, ranging as high as 45 percent of family income in 60429.

Housing Authority of Cook County
312-663-5447

175 W. Jackson Boulevard Chicago, IL 60640

Contact: Holly Wallace, Manager of Educational Programs & Partnerships 312-542-4683

Email: hwallace@thehacc.org

Website: www.thehacc.org

Services: implements its Low Income Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs to provide rental assistance for low income participants who seek affordable and safe rental housing throughout Cook County.

Family Communities and Scattered Sites which are communities that have one to five bedrooms and are predominantly households with children.

Precious Steps

708-566-4130

14618 Lincoln Ave. Harvey, IL 60426

Contact: Angela Harding, President/CEO, 773-230-9971

Website: www.precioussteps.org

Services: Supportive living facility for youth ages 18-24 years of age, with or without children. Offers housing, counseling, social development, and mentoring.

Respond Now

708-755-4357

1439 Emerald Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Stephanie Hobson, HUB Coordinator

Email: shobson@respondnow.org

Website: www.respondnow.org

Services: food pantry, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, foreclosure prevention, SNAP Outreach, Medicaid Expansion assistance, prescription medication vouchers, temporary lodging, transportation, clothing, Community Garden, books for children, Holiday Giveaway, and Back-To-School backpacks and supplies.

Homeless Prevention Call Center

877-426-6515

Services: emergency hotel stays on a limited basis, food pantry, clothing bank, rental services, utilities and prescription assistance. All assistance is limited, call prevention call center for referral.

South Suburban PADS- Emergency Shelter Network

708-754-4357

414 W. Lincoln Highway Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Troy Colbert

708-332-7700 ext.131

Website: www.sspads.org

Services: emergency overnight shelter in the south and southwest suburbs that includes socialization and support, a hot dinner, breakfast and sack lunch.

South Suburban PADS- Wellness Center**708-750-4411**

4411 W. Gatling Blvd. Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Regina Stevens, Director 708-550-4411 ext.101**Email:** reginas@sspads.org**Website:** www.sspads.org

Services: through supportive housing, individuals and families are stabilized and provided wrap-around services that include case management, recovery services, counseling, employment services, life skills training, financial management, and other skills training to build their capacity to secure and retain permanent housing.

Together We Cope**708-633-5040**

17010 S. Oak Park Ave. Tinley Park, IL 60477

Contact: Brianna Stelmazek, HUB Case Manager**Email:** bstelmazek@togetherwecope.org**Website:** www.togetherwecope.org

Services: For Residents in Harvey and Posen-Robbins only. Financial assistance with emergency payments for rent, mortgage, and utilities. Food pantry available Monday-Friday, clothing vouchers, back-to-school, family first, and holiday assistance programs.

Near Homeless Children - Unstable Residence

A very significant feature of some children's experience in south suburban Cook County is not exactly homelessness but substantial movement from residence to residence and from school to school. In 2016 elementary school districts collected data on *mobility* as defined this way:

- Student mobility (turnover) reflects any enrollment change between the first school day in October and the last day of the school year. It is the sum of the students who transferred out and the students who transferred in, divided by the average daily enrollment, multiplied by 100. Students are counted each time they transfer out or in during the reporting year. Thus, individual students may be counted more than once.⁶

A number equivalent to one-in-five children (21.3 percent) changed schools in the 21 school districts in 2016. That is twice the rate of mobility in all 118 of suburban Cook County's elementary school districts (10.5 percent) and almost twice the Illinois rate (12.2 percent).

Given this widespread housing instability and its underlying sources in low home ownership, relatively high rents and low family income, many Head Start families will need support in meeting the challenges of unstable housing and common transfers in and out of Head Start programs.

Dual language Learners, Linguistically-Isolated Households, Limited English Proficiency

According to the Census south suburban Cook County has many (2,438) linguistically isolated households by the Census definition, but not an atypically high portion of households. These comprise about three percent of households, a share below the percentages of 7 percent for Cook County as a whole and 5 percent for Illinois. Three of the zip codes have rates of 4 or 5 percent: 60411, 60438 and 60633. Almost 80 percent of the linguistically isolated household households are Spanish-speaking households.

⁶ Illinois State Board of Education, "2016 Report Card Definitions and Sources of Data," available at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/rc16-definition.pdf>. Note: Beginning in 2017 ISBE changed its operational definition of mobility. The report card now counts individual students who changed schools, not incidents of students transferring in or out of a school. The latter might count a student more than once.

Elementary school districts collect data at the school level on students with limited English proficiency (LEP), which ISBE defines this way:

- Limited-English-proficient students are students who have been found to be eligible for bilingual education.⁷

The 21 elementary school districts have 2,994 elementary students with limited English proficiency (LEP). By far the largest number (872) live in zip code 60411 in Chicago Heights, although services for English language learners are needed for children from other zip codes as well. Taken together, the 21 school districts have an LEP rate of just over 10 percent. While not negligible by any means, this is substantially below the LEP rate of all 118 suburban Cook County school districts (18 percent) and even slightly less than Illinois' LEP rate of 10.5 percent.

Data for children under 2 is not available at the time of this report.

Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program plans to recruit children who are dual language learners ongoing throughout the program year.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

Moraine Valley Community College

708-974-4300

9000 Old 88th Ave Palos Hills, IL 60465

Website: www.morainevalley.edu

Services: ESL, GED, Adult Continuing Education.

Prairie State College

708-709-3500

202 S. Halsted St. Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Website: www.prairiestate.edu

Services: adult basic and high school equivalency (GED), English as the Second Language (ESL).

Children with Disabilities or Special Needs

The prevalence of special needs among young children is notoriously difficult to measure, partly because of definitional challenges and partly because of data collection challenges, including collecting data on young children. The Census reports a number for children under age 5 with disabilities for only four of the twelve zip codes in our region. Two of the zip codes have percentages that are similar to the Illinois, Cook County and suburban Cook County rates, but two of the smaller zip codes (60473 and 60476) have rates six and eight times higher than those rates. Given that the sample size is small in those zip codes, it is difficult to know how meaningful even such large multiples as six and eight are. Nevertheless, these are potentially very many special needs in 60473 and 60476 for the Head Start team to address.

- ISBE school district data on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) can be more meaningfully interpreted. IEP students are students who have been found to be eligible to receive special education services. The percentage of IEP students is the count of IEP students, divided by the total fall enrollment, multiplied by 100.⁸

⁷ Illinois State Board of Education, "2016 Report Card Definitions and Sources of Data," available at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/rc16-definition.pdf>.

⁸ Illinois State Board of Education, "2016 Report Card Definitions and Sources of Data," available at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/rc16-definition.pdf>.

In the 21 elementary school districts in south suburban Cook County about one in seven elementary school students (14.1 percent) had IEPs in 2016. This does not represent extraordinarily high need: the IEP rate of all suburban Cook County school districts was 13.5 percent and for all of Illinois was 14.3 percent. Applied to 15,328 children under age 5 in south suburban Cook County, however, it does suggest that a significant population of 2,161 children under 5 may need services to address special needs, and many of these children may thus have priority eligibility for Early Head Start and Head Start services. [IEP rates in individual school districts in south suburban Cook County range from 9.4 percent to 18.7 percent. It is difficult to know whether these reflect real differences in the prevalence of special needs or substantial measurement error in the way that some districts identify children with special needs.]

*** At the time this document was finalized, there was no data available for children 0-2.**

Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program plans to recruit children who have special needs ongoing throughout the program year. We also plan to offer or link children with special needs to services as soon as they are identified throughout the program year.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

IAFC attends monthly meetings with Child and Family Connections #12. We work closely with CFC #12 to ensure children that are referred receive the appropriate supports in a timely manner. Through relationship building we are able to quickly follow up with their office for case management follow-ups.

Children and Family Connections # 12- Easter Seals

708-429-8231

17300 S. Ozark Ave Tinley Park, IL 60477

Contact: Peter Byrne, Program Manager

Direct line: 708-429-8231 ext.232

Email: pbyrne@eastersealschicago.org

Website: www.eastersealschicag.org

Services: Free in home screenings for children under the age of 3 who are experiencing delays, determining eligibility for Early Intervention Services, developing the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for eligible children, monitoring ongoing IFSP services, providing transition services, conducting Child Find activities, promoting public awareness.

DHS Family Community Resource Center in Cook County – South Suburban

708-293-4700

3301 Wireton Rd. Blue Island, IL 60406

Website: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us>

Services: Assessment of children age 0-3 for developmental delays

Foster Children

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) reports the number of child placements in foster care, relative care and group homes by zip code. Foster placements in the twelve zip codes total 360 children of all ages. Using proportions of foster children by age in Cook County as a whole, as reported by DCFS, we estimate that 111 foster children in south suburban Cook County are under age 5 and thus priority children for Head Start.⁹

One zip code, 60411, has about 25 (22 percent) of the foster placements, and three other zip codes, 60409, 60419 and 60473, have 14 to 16 foster placements.

With just two percent of the children under 5 in Illinois, the twelve south suburban Cook County zip codes have more than four percent of the DCFS foster placements in Illinois. With just 5 percent of Cook County's children, these zip codes have 10 percent of DCFS foster placements in Cook County. With only 10 percent of suburban Cook County's children, these zip codes have more than 26 percent of DCFS foster placements in suburban Cook County.

Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program plans to recruit children in foster care ongoing throughout the program year. We also plan to offer services to foster children, in collaboration with ILDCFS, as soon as they are identified.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

South Suburban PADS

708-754-4357

414 W. Lincoln Highway Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Regina Stevens, Supervisor 708-550-4411 ext.101

Email: reginas@sspads.org

Website: www.sspads.org

Services: *assists families that are involved with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or at-risk of becoming involved with DCFS or other state systems. The SCCF program provides supportive services to families to prevent homelessness and assist families experiencing homelessness with obtaining stable housing.*

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

708-489-2894

12940 South Western Ave., Suite 300 Blue Island, IL 60406

Contact: Nathaniel Powell, Intact Family Services Specialist
708-490-2894 ext. 21

Email: nathaniel.powell.@lssi.org

Website: www.lssi.org

Services: *critical programs for foster care, mental health services, alcohol and drug treatment, affordable senior housing, residential programs for people with developmental disabilities, and programs that help formerly incarcerated individuals integrate back into society.*

⁹ Placements by zip code appear in Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, "Children in FOS/HMR/IGH Care By Placement Zip Code Data as of December 31, 2017," available at <https://www.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/newsandreports/Documents/PlacementZipcode.pdf> ; Cook County foster placements by age appear in "Demographic Information of Children In Foster/Relative/Institution/Group Home Care Data as of 12/31/17," available at <https://www.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/newsandreports/Documents/subdemogr.pdf>.

Total Priority Children

Table 1 summarizes our estimates of the number of priority children in south suburban Cook County. Since one child might be included in one, two, three or four of the priority categories, we add up the numbers *only to show a potential maximum number of priority children in the area*, but not to estimate the actual number of priority children in the area. Another way of interpreting the total in Table 1 is that it estimates the number of occurrences of priority categories among children than rather than the number of children with an occurrence.

Table 1. Pie Chart Children in Head Start Priority Categories	
Homeless Children	744
Children with Disabilities (IEP)	2,161
Dual Language Learners (LEP)	2,994
Foster Children	111
Total (with possible duplicates)	6,010

Note that the occurrence of children with disabilities is documented in elementary schools, and we apply that percentage to pre-school-age children. Some disabilities, however, might not present themselves until later in a child's development and may elude even observant and dedicated Head Start staff and consulting professionals.

It is worth observing that the two most common occurrences of need in Table 1, children with disabilities and dual language learners, occur at a relatively moderate rate in south suburban Cook County. Other parts of Illinois have higher measured rates of these factors. On the other hand, the priority factors which occur at very high rates specifically in south suburban Cook County, homelessness and foster placements, are nevertheless much less common occurrences than disabilities and dual language learners.

Section 4: Additional Family Circumstances and Key Needs

How a family and child respond to adverse poverty and near poverty conditions presented in Section 2 above often depends upon a set of circumstances such as family structure, health, culture, housing, community resources and stresses such as neighborhood safety and personal characteristics such as children's and parents' resilience. These contribute to a family's strengths or its economic vulnerability. Data on some of these family circumstances in south suburban Cook County are available and we review them next.

Birth

Birth weight matters for the successful development of babies and over a large population might reflect the health of mothers. In suburban Cook County as a whole 6.1 percent of births were low-birth-weight births in 2015, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The rate of low-birth weight in every south suburban Cook County zip code exceeds that suburban Cook County rate. In those zip codes between 7 percent and 15 percent of births have a low birth weight, and combined, their rate is 8.7 percent.

Other 2015 birth indicators also show that south suburban Cook County has a level of risk that exceeds that of suburban Cook County as a whole. The following comparative need measures are calculated from IDPH birth data, except the last:

- Births to mothers with less than a high school education: 11.2 percent of births (vs. 8.6 percent in all of suburban Cook County)
- Births to teenage mothers: 8.0 percent of births (vs. 4.3 percent in suburban Cook County).
- Pre-term births: 11.8 percent of births (vs. 10.0 percent in suburban Cook County).
- Births to mothers in poverty: 33 percent (vs. 24 percent for both Cook County and Illinois, from Census data).

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

We partner closely with Family Christian Health Center and Ingalls to conduct ongoing recruitment at their offices.

Advocate South Suburban Hospital

708-799-8000

17800 Kedzie Ave Hazel Crest, IL 60429

Website: www.advocatehealth.com/ssub

Services: health care, financial, and social services with specialty services in primary care for adults, pediatrics, family planning and women's health

Aunt Martha's Community Health Center

877-692-8686

52 W 162nd St. South Holland, IL 60473

Website: www.auntmarthas.org

Services: health care, financial, and social services with specialty services in primary care for adults, pediatrics, family planning and women's health

Aunt Martha's Community Health Center

773-646-3960

1536 Vincennes Ave. Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Website: www.auntmarthas.org

Services: primary care (adults), psychiatry and counseling

Aunt Martha's Pediatric Health & Wellness Center

877-692-8686

500 Dixie Highway Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Website: www.auntmarthas.org

Services: pediatrics, psychiatry and counseling

Aunt Martha's Women's Health Center

877-692-8686

233 W. Joe Orr Rd. Chicago Heights, Illinois 60411

Website: www.auntmarthas.org

Services: OB/GYN, family planning, dental and mental health

Chicago Metropolitan

708-333-3030

15620 S. Wood St. Harvey, IL 60426

Website: www.cmobltd.com

Services: OB/GYN, pediatrics

Christian Community Health Services

708-596-4111

901 E. Sibley South Holland, IL 60473

Contact: Kenneth Burnett, Chief Executive Officer

Website: www.cchc-online.org

Services: primary health care, pediatrics, mobile health van, on-site pharmacy, HIV/AIDS testing and holistic care

Christian Community Health Services

708-868-9457

364 Torrence Ave. Calumet City, IL 60409

Contact: Kenneth Burnett, Chief Executive Officer

Website: www.cchc-online.org

Services: primary health care, pediatrics, mobile health van, HIV/AIDS testing and holistic care

Cook County Department of Public Health

708-753-5800

1645 Cottage Grove Ford Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Marydale Donald, Administrative Leader

Website: www.cookcountyhhs.org

Services: HIV/AIDS care, Family Medicine and Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, and Pediatrics

Cook County Department of Public Health

708-293-8100

13450 S. Kedzie Ave. Robbins, IL 60472

Contact: Stephanie Ware, Administrative Leader

Website: www.cookcountyhhs.org

Services: Internal Medicine, OB/GYN and Pediatrics.

Cook County Department of Public Health

708-293-8100

15900 S. Cicero Ave. Oak Forest, IL 60452

Contact: Felicia Odom-Brown, Administrative Leader

Website: www.cookcountyhhs.org

Services: Gynecological Services, Medicine, and Surgery

Dupage Medical Group

708-388-5500

2320 W. High St. Blue Island, IL 60406

Contact: Felicia Odom-Brown, Administrative Leader

Website: www.cookcountyhhs.org

Services: Family medicine, pediatrics, cardiology, dermatology, lab services, specialty care, and multi-disciplinary care

Family Christian Health Center

708-596-5177

713 E. 142nd St. Dolton, Illinois 60419

Contact: Dr. Lisa Green, CEO/ Family Practice Physician

Website: www.familychc.org

Services: Pediatric Services Only

Family Christian Health Center

708-596-5177 - 31 W. 155th St. Harvey, IL 60426

Contact: Mia Webster-Cross, RN/ Clinical Operations Director

Website: www.familychc.org

Services: primary care, today care, pharmacy, and dental

Healthcare Consortium of Illinois/Healthy Start

708-841-9515

1350 E. Sibley Blvd., Suite 303

Dolton, IL 60419

Contact: Call direct line to speak with agency representative

Website: www.hcionline.org

Services: The following services are FREE of charge to eligible pregnant women and their infants who participate in the Southeast Chicago Healthy Start program: case management, community events, parenting classes, male resources, system navigation, prenatal/ postpartum care, employment opportunities, breastfeeding support, and referrals

Ingalls Health System

708-915-6498

One Ingalls Drive Harvey, IL 60426

Website: www.ingalls.org

Services: health care, financial, and social services with specialty services in primary care for adults, pediatrics, family planning and women's health.

Metro South Medical Center

708-597-2000

12935 Gregory St. Blue Island, IL 60406

Website: www.metrosouthmedicalcenter.com

Services: cardiac care, emergency department, fitness and lifestyle center, maternity, mental health, laboratory, neurology, nutrition, sports physicals, surgical services, women's health.

Metro South Health Center at South Holland

708-210-2001

401 E. 162nd St. South Holland, IL 60473

Website: www.metrosouthmedicalcenter.com

Services: patients 18 years of age and older, general practice, internal medicine.

Planned Parenthood

708-349-2227

14470 S. Lagrange Rd.

Orland Park, IL 60462

Website: www.plannedparenthood.org

Services: pregnancy and STD testing, contraceptive consultation, women's health care, men's health care, LGBT services, HIV testing.

Single-Parent Families and Poverty

According to the Census, 14,907 children under age 5 live in south suburban Cook County, and about 53 percent (7,350 children) live in single-parent families. Half of these (3,954) also live in poverty. Thus 27 percent of all children under 5 in the region *live with a single parent and in poverty* – almost three times the ten percent rate for all suburban Cook County children under age 5 and almost twice the 15 percent rate all Illinois children under age 5.

We do not automatically regard this high number of children living with single parents in poverty as a deficit for the community. Single parents are often fiercely devoted to their children and may thus be a source of strength for the community. We also recognize, however, that single parents may face many challenges of being a sole caregiver, such as finding programs such as Head Start for their children, getting their children to the program every day, and attending parent meetings, particularly if they are employed in low-wage jobs that require them to work very early or late hours, or change work schedules frequently. Illinois Action for Children has a responsibility to recruit and enroll such families in Head Start, to identify which Head Start families face such challenges, and to offer Head Start services that help them address the challenges.

Children with TANF, SSI or SNAP

The Census reports the number of children in families participating in TANF, SSI or SNAP income-support programs. This is a complex number that reflects the number children in families that both are eligible for *and* take up these supports, both a need and a strength. As the poverty numbers above show, many south suburban Cook County families will meet means-tested eligibility criteria for these supports. In fact, some 44 percent of south suburban Cook County children from birth to age 18 received at least one of the three income supports in 2016. By contrast, participation rates in all of Cook County were about half of that (23 percent) and in all of Illinois were just 27 percent.

These relatively high participation rates in public support programs indicate both high need and a certain amount of social strength in the form connectedness, efficacy or social support among families living in poverty in south suburban Cook County.

Another set of relevant data are ISBE data for elementary school districts. The category “low income” includes families that receive SNAP, TANF, free or reduced-price lunches, participate in Head Start or have a variety of needs:

- Low-income students receive or live in households that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); are classified as homeless, migrant, runaway, Head Start, or foster children; or live in a household where the household income meets the U.S. Department of Agriculture income guidelines to receive free or reduced-price meals.¹⁰

In the 21 south suburban Cook County elementary school districts *80 percent* of children are classified as “low income.” This is a much larger proportion of students who are “low income” than in all of suburban Cook County school districts (48 percent) or in all Illinois school districts (50 percent). If this proportion of school-age children in south suburban Cook County has such high need, we can safely assume that a similar 80 percent of children under age 5 share such need.

¹⁰ Illinois State Board of Education, “2016 Report Card Definitions and Sources of Data,” p. 8. Available at: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/rc16-definition.pdf>

Perhaps more important, many of these families are linked to and using income supports. Illinois Action for Children plans to identify families eligible or receiving income supports ongoing throughout the program year, and if appropriate, we will link parents and their children to supports as needed.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

CEDA

800-571-2332

3518 West 139th St. Robbins, IL 60472

Direct line: 708-371-1220 ext. 3057

Website: www.cedaorg.net

Services: Must meet income guidelines- family support and case management, family nutrition, employment program, scholarship program, housing financial counseling, rental assistance, trade skills program, dental care assistance, auto repair assistance, and vision care assistance.

CEDA

800-571-2332

1203 West End Ave. Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Direct line: 708-371-1220 ext. 3057

Website: www.cedaorg.net

Services: Must Meet Income Guidelines- family support and case management, family nutrition, employment program, scholarship program, housing financial counseling, rental assistance, trade skills program, dental care assistance, auto repair assistance, vision care assistance.

CEDA

800-571-2332

53 East 154th St. Harvey, IL 60426

Direct line: 708-371-1220 ext. 3057

Website: www.cedaorg.net

Services: Must Meet Income Guidelines- family support and case management, family nutrition, employment program, scholarship program, housing financial counseling, rental assistance, trade skills program, dental care assistance, auto repair assistance, vision care assistance.

Illinois Action for Children

312-823-1100

8741 S. Greenwood, Suite 300 Chicago, IL 60619

Website: www.actforchildren.org

Services: Illinois Child Care Assistance Program makes it possible for families who qualify to receive financial assistance in paying for child care.

Parents must meet the State of Illinois' income and family size guidelines.

DHS Family Community Resource Center in Cook County – South Suburban

708-293-4700

3301 Wireton Rd. Blue Island, IL 60406

Contact: Call direct line for agency representative

Website: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us>

Services: child care resource & referral, community based youth services, developmental disabilities services, domestic violence, family planning, family and community services, mental health, family management, WIC.

WIC Clinic-Robbins Health Center

708-293-8200

13450 South Kedzie Ave. Robbins, IL 60472

Website: www.wicprograms.org

Services: free health and nutrition screening; vouchers or coupons for nutritious supplemental foods; nutrition counseling and education; breastfeeding counseling and breast pumps for those in need; referrals for medical care, immunizations/ vaccinations, and other services; coupons for fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmer's markets during summer months.

WIC Clinic-CEDA

708-339-3614

53 E. 154th St. Harvey, IL. 60426

Contact: Debra Hines, Site Supervisor

Website: www.wicprograms.org

Services: free health and nutrition screening; Vouchers or coupons for nutritious supplemental foods; Nutrition counseling and education; Breastfeeding counseling and breast pumps for those in need; Referrals for medical care, immunizations/ vaccinations, and other services; Coupons for fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmer's markets during summer months.

Illinois Department of Employment Security

708-596-2325

16845 Halsted St. Harvey, IL 60426

Contact: Pamela Lloyd, Program Representative

Direct line: 708-596-2372

Email: pamela.a.lloyd@illinois.gov

Website: www.ides.illinois.gov

Services: job placement and referrals, unemployment insurance, employment and training programs, and more. IDES services are available locally through the Illinois Employment and Training Center (IETC) Network, with 55 locations throughout the state and six IDES offices in the City of Chicago.

Unemployment and Employment Services

800-244-5631

HUB 708-966-9482

Website: www.findhelpsouthcook.org

Services: Variety of resources such as shelters and food pantries.

Respond Now

708-755-4357

1439 Emerald Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Contact: Stephanie Hobson, Hub Coordinator

Direct line: 708-755-4357 ext.227

Email: shobson@respondnow.org

Website: www.respondnow.org

Services: food pantry, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, foreclosure prevention, SNAP Outreach, Medicaid Expansion assistance, prescription medication vouchers, temporary lodging, transportation, clothing, Community Garden, books for children, Holiday Giveaway, and Back-To-School backpacks and supplies.

Chronic Truancy and School Attendance

Children who are chronically truant are greatly at risk of school failure and need special prevention supports to attain or restore an appropriate level of attendance. It is commonly thought that preschool plays a key role in establishing the pattern for later school attendance. Parents and children must develop the value that attendance is important, and even if they already have that value, they must develop family habits that embody the value. The Head Start program can help prepare a child for success in school by working with the parent on attendance.

Like the rate of IEPs, there is not an extraordinarily high rate of chronic truancy in south suburban Cook County, especially given the level of economic distress in the communities. In fact, having a substantial commitment to education, or at least to attendance, seems to be a strength of the community. The 21 elementary school districts have an overall rate of chronic truancy of 8.0 percent. This is well above the suburban Cook County of just 3 percent, but below the Illinois rate of 9.8 percent. Their attendance rate is 94.4 percent, the same as suburban Cook County's as a whole, and slightly above the state's attendance rate of 94.0 percent.

Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program plans to identify children at risk of chronic truancy ongoing throughout the program year, and we will support parents and their children or link them to supports by determining resources needed and make applicable referrals to resources provided in the directory.

Public Health Emergencies: Opioids, Firearms and Homicides

The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) reports public health data that reflect a substantial level of community trauma in south suburban Cook County, which particularly affects children.

CCDPH reports data on the opioid crisis for all of suburban Cook County, but not for smaller areas such as our south suburban Cook County zip codes. In suburban Cook County, opioid-related overdose deaths increased by 16 percent from 2013 to 2015. In 2016 there were 221 opioid-related overdose deaths (a rate of 8.8 per 100,000).

For other traumatic public health-related deaths, CCDPH reports 2015 data on the *South District* of suburban Cook County, an area that is somewhat larger than the 21 zip codes.¹¹ The latest data are for 2015 and indicate that drug-related deaths in the South District occurred at a higher rate than in all suburban Cook County: 12.7 vs. 11.1 per 100,000 people.¹² Firearm-related deaths in the South District occurred at about *twice* the rate as in all suburban Cook County: 15.0 vs. 7.3 per 100,000. Homicides-by-any-means occurred at almost three times the rate in all suburban Cook County: 13.3 vs. 5.0 per 100,000. All of these 2015 rates grew significantly from 2014 to 2015.

Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program plans to identify children who experience high levels of family stress or trauma ongoing throughout the program year, and we will support parents and their children or link them to supports ongoing as needed.

¹¹ The South District covers all five Townships in Cook County directly south of Chicago: Thornton, Bloom, Calumet, Rich and Bremen, while the 21 zip codes consist of large parts of just Thornton and Bloom Townships. See http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/files/data-and-reports/health-statistics/Deaths/V_S_Deaths_2015_All_Sections.pdf

¹² CCDPH calculates rates on an age-adjusted basis to allow for comparisons across regions with different age distributions. These are the rates reported here. See footnote 2.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

We work closely with Grand Prairie to for quick access to counseling for families dealing with acute trauma exposure.

Aunt Martha's Community Health Center**877-692-8686**

1536 Vincennes Ave. Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Website: www.auntmarthas.org

Services: primary care (adults), psychiatry and counseling.

Aunt Martha's Pediatric Health & Wellness Center**877-692-8686**

500 Dixie Highway Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Website: www.auntmarthas.org

Services: pediatrics, psychiatry and counseling.

Emergency Behavioral Healthcare Center**708-331-0500**

1909 Checker Sq., Inner Door 8 East Hazel Crest, IL 60429

Website: www.gpsbh.org

Services: comprehensive continuum of behavioral healthcare services for children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Medical Card and Private insurance accepted.

Family Christian Health Center**708-596-5177**

31 W. 155th St. Harvey, IL 60426

Contact: Mia Webster-Cross, RN/ Clinical Operations Director

Website: www.familychc.org

Services: Counseling services for both children and adults.

Grand Prairie Services**877-477-8632 or 708-754-8815**

16278 Prince Drive South Holland, IL

Website: www.gpsbh.org

Services: child and adolescent screening, assessment and support, therapy/counseling, adult services, case management, residential services, recovery support, and psychosocial support.

Screening Assessment and Support Services-SASS**800-345-9049****24 Hour Crisis Line: 708-331-0500**

Website: <http://www.gpsbh.org/sass.html>

Services: 24 hour crisis hotline, screenings and psychiatric hospitalizations, and/or intensive outpatient services. Assists families with Medicaid, no insurance or DCFS wards residing in the Southwest Suburban Catchment Area.

South Suburban Family Shelter**708-794-2140**

PO Box 937 Homewood, IL 60430

24 Hour Hotline: 708-335-3028 (short term emergency shelter)

Website: www.ssfs1.org

Services: counseling for victims of domestic violence and their children; legal and medical

advocacy intervention programs for perpetrators of violence. Serves for victims of domestic violence are free of charge. Spanish speaking staff is available.

South Suburban Council of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse
708-647-3333

1909 Checker Square East Hazel Crest, IL 60429

Website: www.sscouncil.org

Services: drug testing, assessments, basic alcohol/substance abuse/abuse counseling, individual and group services and intensive adolescent outpatient. Medical card and private insurance accepted. Sliding scale payment options are also available. Spanish speaking staff available.

Thornton Township Youth & Family Services
708-596-6040

14323 S. Halsted St. Riverdale, IL 60827

Contact: Dr. J.L. Weems, Director, 708-596-6040 ext. 2000

Website: www.thortontownship.com

Services: counseling, crisis intervention and response, psycho- education services for parent groups, senior citizens groups and other groups as needed, male mentoring, after-school programs, summer enrichment programs, short term family counseling for children, adolescents, and their families; short term individual counseling for adults and youth; short term marriage and couple counseling and evaluation and referral when appropriate. All services are **FREE** if you live in Thornton Township

Children in Military Families

Assessment of need for Head Start services among children living in military families is of significant interest. Unfortunately, the Department of Defense data on military families are restricted, somewhat older (from 2012) and no longer reported for geographic regions smaller than counties.¹³ The Census reports a very limited set of data: women in the military with a child under age 6. Only ten such women are reported living in the 21 zip codes, 49 reported in Cook County and 351 in Illinois. Unless these families identify themselves to Head Start programs, or military family services identify them, it will be difficult to serve the children of military families.

Work Schedules

Low-income wage earners who live in poverty tend to work hours outside of traditional weekday and daytime hours in industries such as retail, restaurant, office cleaning, hospital, security and home health services jobs. Some parents work such schedules on a regular basis, while others have them on a variable or on-call basis. Our research on the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program in Cook County found that, among workers who live at the poverty level or below, more than half (54 percent) typically work at least one hour from 7 PM to 6 AM or weekends, and the majority of these work at least 16 such hours. One of our research partners analyzed Census micro data for Cook County and found that employed parents with low incomes who live up to twice the poverty level have a high need for early morning child care from 4 AM to 8 AM (34 percent of all low-income parents) and evening child care from 6 PM to midnight (16 percent). Parents who are students might have similar schedules.

Many low-income parents with nontraditional hours cannot access Child Care Assistance to help them pay for center-based child care because they do not work or attend school when most centers are open, during traditional daytime hours. But they might be eligible for free services of Head Start and Early Head Start during the day time when they need to sleep or conduct household business. For these parents, Head Start can solve a child care problem.

¹³ See the information available here: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/-/residential-demographics-by-county-for-military-childr-1>

Other parents may find it difficult to enroll their child in Head Start because of their schedules. Parents who work during drop-off or pick-up times (either regularly or on-call) might be unable to transport their child to Head Start. Those who work afternoons and into the evenings might have difficulty attending parent meetings held during typical times. These represent a variety of needs based on work and school schedules that Head Start in south suburban Cook County might find among its enrolling families. Illinois Action for Children Early Learning program plans to identify parents whose work or school schedules are non-traditional, ongoing throughout the program year, and we will support parents and their children or link them to supports as needed.

COMMUNITY SERVICES WE HAVE FOUND:

Illinois Action for Children

312-823-1100, option 3

8741 S. Greenwood, Suite 300 Chicago, IL 60619

Website: www.actforchildren.org

Services: Illinois Child Care Assistance Program makes it possible for families who qualify to receive financial assistance in paying for child care.

Parents must meet the State of Illinois' income and family size guidelines.

DHS Family Community Resource Center in Cook County – South Suburban

708-293-4700

3301 Wireton Rd. Blue Island, IL 60406

Contact: Call direct line for agency representative

Website: www.cedaorg.net

Services: Child care resource & referral, community based youth services, developmental disabilities services, domestic violence, family planning, family and community services, mental health, family management, WIC.

Summary of Strengths and Additional Needs

While south suburban Cook County is sometimes thought to be a resource-poor community, many families in those communities are linked to income supports at higher rates than other cook county communities. Some of this record might be related to greater poverty and eligibility for income supports in south suburban Cook County, but some also seems to be related to local agencies and families working together to access income supports. Children in south suburban Cook County, moreover, while living in high poverty, tend nevertheless to have lower or average chronic truancy and average attendance.

South suburban Cook County has high rates of a number of risk indicators beyond the four priority factors that affect the well-being of young children. These indicators are all related to poverty and community stress or trauma: births to poor mothers, births to teenage mothers, births to mothers without a high-school equivalent, low-birth weight births, pre-term births, children living with single parents in poverty, drug-related deaths, and deaths from firearms and deaths from homicides. Families' will benefit from comprehensive services ranging from better access to maternal and child health services and nutrition, mental health and trauma counseling services, housing services and income support, and even education, training and employment services.

Appendix A.

South Suburban Cook County Children Ages Birth through 4 in Head Start Priority Categories, estimates					
Zip Codes	Total Children (with possible duplicates)	Homeless Children	Children with Disabilities	Dual Language Learners (LEP)	Foster children*
12 Zip Codes, total	6,011	744	2,161	2,994	112
60409		See SD data	See SD data	See SD data	16
60411		SD data	SD data	SD data	25
60419		SD data	SD data	SD data	15
60425		SD data	SD data	SD data	5
60426		SD data	SD data	SD data	5
60429		SD data	SD data	SD data	11
60430		SD data	SD data	SD data	7
60438		SD data	SD data	SD data	9
60473		SD data	SD data	SD data	14
60475		SD data	SD data	SD data	1
60476		SD data	SD data	SD data	1
60633		SD data	SD data	SD data	4
<p>* DCFS data by zip code. Note: School districts overlap zip codes and estimates for individual zip codes using school district data are not reliable.</p>					

Appendix B. Elementary School District Data

SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME	DISTRICT TOTAL ENROLL- MENT	LEP %	IEP %	LOW- INCOME %	HOME- LESS %	MOBILITY RATE %	ATTEN- DANCE RATE %	CHRONIC TRUANTS RATE %
Brookwood SD 167	1,189	9.4%	11.9%	46.3%	1.2%	16.1%	95.5%	1.9%
Burnham SD 154-5	218	18.8%	8.3%	97.2%	0.0%	40.9%	95.6%	9.2%
Calumet City SD 155	1,158	14.4%	18.7%	76.7%	1.5%	15.1%	94.2%	16.1%
CCSD 168 (Sauk Village)	1,513	3.4%	15.9%	70.1%	1.3%	51.5%	92.4%	11.1%
Chicago Heights SD 170	3,231	27.0%	14.4%	78.1%	0.8%	39.2%	93.8%	7.9%
Dolton SD 148	2,193	2.4%	13.0%	92.9%	3.3%	23.1%	93.8%	0.2%
Dolton SD 149	2,867	3.1%	13.7%	99.3%	1.0%	22.2%	94.8%	5.8%
Ford Heights SD 169	449	0.2%	12.7%	96.0%	10.2%	27.6%	94.5%	32.9%
Harvey SD 152	2,249	12.3%	10.0%	97.3%	27.9%	19.3%	93.7%	11.7%
Hazel Crest SD 152-5	1,018	0.8%	10.1%	99.1%	6.1%	22.9%	94.4%	0.1%
Homewood SD 153	1,919	3.2%	17.1%	38.4%	1.8%	8.0%	94.8%	3.8%
Hoover-Schrum Memorial SD 157	952	10.6%	13.8%	97.2%	3.4%	20.0%	95.3%	3.5%
Lansing SD 158	2,506	3.2%	17.8%	72.8%	1.7%	7.7%	94.7%	0.0%
Lincoln ESD 156	1,030	15.7%	12.1%	95.3%	1.2%	13.9%	94.2%	16.6%
Sandridge SD 172	354	9.6%	15.5%	55.4%	1.7%	16.0%	94.1%	55.8%
South Holland SD 150	945	0.6%	9.4%	75.8%	28.0%	15.9%	96.2%	11.4%
South Holland SD 151	1,564	20.1%	16.2%	80.1%	1.3%	16.1%	94.3%	1.3%
Steger SD 194	1,445	9.2%	12.7%	76.2%	1.4%	13.4%	94.1%	10.5%
Sunnybrook SD 171	1,023	11.4%	16.7%	73.2%	3.5%	17.9%	95.0%	0.4%
Thornton SD 154	214	14.5%	10.7%	32.2%	0.9%	12.7%	94.5%	0.0%
W Harvey-Dixmoor PSD 147	1,252	22.7%	14.9%	85.5%	3.0%	21.9%	95.0%	28.4%
South Suburban Cook County Total	29,289	10.2%	14.1%	79.8%	4.9%	21.3%	94.4%	8.0%
<i>Suburban Cook County</i>	258,385	18.4%	13.5%	48.1%	1.5%	10.5%	95.4%	3.2%
<i>Illinois</i>	316,963	10.5%	14.3%	49.9%	2.2%	12.2%	94.0%	9.8%
<i>Partially in the 12 zip codes:</i>								
Flossmoor SD 161	2321	4.9%	13.7%	40.8%	2.6%	16.9%	95.3%	6.8%
Posen-Robbins ESD 143-5	1716	25.4%	8.7%	92.2%	0.6%	11.7%	94.8%	5.7%
Prairie-Hills ESD 144	2563	3.6%	13.0%	95.4%	1.1%	22.4%	93.8%	0.1%