



## Volunteer Activities

*"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention."*  
~Oscar Wilde

Illinois Action for Children (IAFC) introduced corporate volunteerism to partner and engage with the children, families, and providers participating in the agency's programs and services in 2018.

While COVID-19 has made it necessary to remotely conduct volunteer opportunities, IAFC has developed creative, meaningful ways for employees to give back to the communities in which they live, learn, work, and play.

### Off Site Employee Group Volunteer/Support

#### ***In-Kind Drives***

Timeframe: Year-round  
Group Size: 20+

In-Kind Drives are an effective way to engage groups of 20+ employees to an entire workforce in supporting Illinois Action for Children's programs and participants. We can create drives to support a range of IAFC participants including children birth to age twelve, parents, and early childhood providers. Types of drives include clothing, diapers, books, school supplies, etc.

- Option 1: Company provides the materials  
Option 2: Employees purchase and/or donate the materials

#### **Who Benefits**

- Children and/or families involved in IAFCs Early Learning Centers in Dolton, Chicago Heights, Ford Heights, and South Holland/Harvey
- Pregnant women and families with children birth-three years old who participate in our Home Visiting program
- Family, Friend and Neighbor Care Providers (home-based caregivers without a license)
- Licensed child care and early learning professionals
- Families receiving case management services through the North Lawndale READS program

#### **Types of Drives**

- Clothing/Shoes (Examples of priority needs include children's clothing (birth – five) including t-shirts, Underwear and Socks)
- Winter Outerwear-Coats, hats, scarves, gloves
- School Supplies for children in early learning programs or home-based child care and for the providers to use with the children
- Children's Books for the families' homes
- Basic infant needs for new parents in our Home Visiting Programs

IAFC will help customize the drive to meet your business needs.

\* Indicates IAFC requires at least eight weeks advance notice for amply marketing and recruitment time



### ***Employee Giving Campaigns***

Timeframe: Year-round

Group Size: 20+

IAFC welcomes the chance to work with companies on employee giving campaigns, which provide monetary support for IAFCs critical work on behalf children, families, and communities furthest from opportunities and resources. For companies with established annual employee giving programs, consider allowing IAFC to be one of the beneficiaries. We can also create text-to give, and traditional employee giving campaigns and provide all the information companies need to share with employees.

### ***Children's Book Read-Alouds***

Timeframe: Year-round

Group Size: 10+

With COVID-19, watching recordings of books being read to children has grown in popularity. Currently, we have approximately 60 children's book recordings on our YouTube channel, and we would like to continue growing this "library" overall and increasing the number of children's books read in Spanish and other languages.

### ***Interactive Volunteer Projects (Virtual)***

#### ***Job Skills Training for Parents\****

Location: Virtual breakout rooms

Timeframe: Year-round

Group Size: Varies based on number of sessions and times offered

The families who participate in IAFCs programs are primarily living in under-resourced communities where opportunities are limited. Whether working or unemployed, parents could benefit from a job skills workshop where they could learn or improve their resume writing, job searching, and interviewing skills. This could be a one-time event or an excellent annual or bi-annual opportunity for corporations that want to invest their time helping families achieve economic stability, which will in-turn support their children's successful learning and development.

#### ***Business Training for Early Childhood Providers\****

Location: Virtual breakout rooms

Timeframe: Year-round

Group Size: Varies based on number of sessions and times offered

Illinois Action for Children has connections to scores of licensed child care centers and family child care homes. Many have training in child development and early learning, but not business. We offer customized opportunities for employees to provide courses in different back-office operations such as finance/budgeting and human resources/staffing

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## **Volunteer Activities (In-Person)**

*In person volunteerism is currently on-hold due to COVID-19 restrictions*

### **Outdoor Beautification**

**Location:** IAFC Early Learning Centers Ford Heights, Harvey/South Holland, Chicago Heights)  
**Time Frame:** March – September; (No children present in August)  
**Group Size:** 10+  
**Cost:** IAFC has a limited inventory of gardening tools; Groups typically bring their own tools and purchase the planting supplies/materials

By the time it is safe to return to in-person volunteerism, our early learning centers will certainly need beautification including de-weeding, laying mulch, gardening/planting, etc.; additional component of interacting with children can be developed and included.

### **On-Site Job Skills Workshop/Fair for Parents\***

**Location:** Varies  
**Time Frame:** Year-Round  
**Group Size:** Varies  
**Cost:** NA

Engage the families who participate in IAFCs programs by creating an opportunity for them to learn and enhance their job skills. The workshop can be designed to engage a variety of group sizes and IAFC would secure a location on-site or near one of our Early Learning Centers. Increase participation by offering 1:1 or small group support in each area. Examples of breakout sessions include:

- What's right type of job for me
- Resume writing
- Completing job applications
- interviewing skills
- Career Development
- Networking Skills
- Job searching
- Starting a business basics

### **Art-Tastic**

**Location:** IAFC Early Learning Centers Ford Heights, Harvey/South Holland, Chicago Heights  
**Time Frame:** October-July (No children present in August)  
**Group Size:** 10+  
**Cost:** NA

This is a great opportunity for employees to roll-up their sleeves and get creative (and messy) with the children participating in IAFCs early learning centers. Paint murals, lead arts and crafts projects, etc.

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## **Short/Long-Term Individual Volunteerism**

### ***Parent Mentorship***

Location: Varies

Time Frame: Year-round

Service Term: Agreed upon by mentor and mentee

Many parents who rely on IAFCs services are working on individual goals to achieve stability and self-sufficiency. Mentorship activities include working with a parent to improve computer skills, prepare for their GED exam, or learn to speak English. Job related support may include helping to develop or refine resumes, build interview skills, learn how to conduct an effective job search or complete online applications.

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## IN-KIND DRIVES/SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES For Enterprise

### Early Learning Programs:

Early Learning Centers: 169 Children ages three to five  
Early Learning Centers: 32 Children ages birth to two  
Home Visiting: 45 Families (pregnant women and families with children 0-2)

### FFN Providers/Children: TBD by company\*\*

\*\*IAFC works with over 500 home-based providers who serve 4,500 children. However, we can select groups of providers of any size based on objective criteria.

### Basic Needs Care Packages

#### Home Visiting Families

##### Priority Items Needed:

- |               |            |                   |              |
|---------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|
| • Onesies     | • Diapers  | • Blankets        | • Bibs       |
| • Bottles     | • Teethers | • Lovies/plushies | • Rattles    |
| • Diaper Bags | • Wipes    | • Burping Cloths  | • Baby Socks |

### School Supply Packs

#### FFN Providers/Children in their care

##### Priority Items Needed:

- |                                   |                                |             |                       |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| • Paper<br>(regular/construction) | • Pencils                      | • Markers   | • Crayons             |
| • Colored Pencils                 | • Scissors<br>(children/adult) | • Glue      | • Erasers             |
| • Scotch Tape                     | • Math<br>Manipulatives        | • Notebooks | • Pencil/Pen<br>cases |
| • Books (0-12 yrs.)               | • Learning Toys                |             |                       |

In the past, Totes (for teachers) and Backpacks (for students) have been used to make individual packs.

### NOTE:

IAFC has a partnership with a nonprofit that may be able to donate some of the above basic needs or supplies for your IAFC care packs. If this is of interest, please let me know and I will reach out to them.

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