



Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM)



Purpose

- To provide an effective tool for resource allocation and planning for early care and education in Illinois
- To enable data to drive decision-making about early childhood resource allocation
- To develop a one-stop source of information on publicly-funded and private early education services in Illinois
- To support a “culture of transparency” that contributes to accountability and that clarifies the process of distribution of state funds for early care and education



Origin

- **Legislation:** Illinois’s *Preschool for All Children (PFA)* Program
- **Impetus from:** Illinois Early Learning Council
- **Project funding:** Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
- **Project home:** University of Illinois (ECAP, NCSA)
- **Project partner:** Chicago Metropolitan 2020 (CM2020)
- **Other public funding:** Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA)
- **Private funding:** Six private foundations



Process of development

1. Examine previous efforts related to providing integrated early education data
2. Establish advisory council of stakeholders
3. Interview agencies and stakeholders about their data needs
4. Create prototype Web site presenting data (ISBE’s PreK data, HS, 2000 census data) in table format

... cont’d ...



Process of development

5. Undertake usability tests of prototype Web site with stakeholders
6. Modify Web site based on feedback, and debut public site with table data only (Phase 1) (June 2006)
7. Add GIS capabilities to Web site (Phase 2) (Sept 2007)
8. Continue development of Web site (add multiple years, new search features, etc.)



Audience

The audience for IECAM includes:

- State agencies
- Legislators
- Applicants for state funds
- Child care administrators
- Early care and education advocates



Questions ...

IECAM seeks to answer these questions:

- How many children are there in county, township, etc.?
- How many children have characteristics that place them at risk for academic failure?
- How many early education services are there in county, township, etc.?
- Where are the early education services located in county, township, etc.?



... and Answers

To answer these questions, IECAM provides:

- Demographic data on children
 - > Population
 - > Risk factors: poverty level, language
- Data on early education services (PFA, HS, child care)
 - > number of sites
 - > number of children served or funded

These data are provided:

- for various geographic areas (counties, townships, etc.)
- in both maps and tables



Policy Q & A

Question

Policy makers ask, “What is the need for publicly-funded child care in this area?”

Answer

IECAM provides data only, in as unbiased a fashion as possible. “Need” is a policy issue. Policymakers must determine what “need” is, based on the available data.



Data (“slot-based”)

IECAM data on “slot-based” early education services include:

- Publicly-funded services
 - > PFA and PreK (data from ISBE)
 - > Head Start (data from HS and IL-HSA)
- Private services (data from INCCRRA)
 - > licensed child care
 - > license-exempt child care
 - > licensed family child care homes



Data (“non-slot-based”)

IECAM data on “non-slot-based” early education services include (all publicly-funded):

- ISBE’s Birth-to-age-3 programs
- Programs for children 0-3 from IDHS’s Bureau of Child and Adolescent Health
- IDHS’s Early Intervention programs for children 0-3



Data (demographics)

IECAM data on demographics include:

- Population of child cohorts age 0 through age 5
- Number of children living at or below 100% FPL
- Number of children living at or below 185% FPL
- Number of children living at or below 400% FPL
- Number of households speaking Spanish and other non-English languages



Data (demographics)

IECAM data on demographics include:

- Census Bureau 2000 data
- Estimates for 2005 prepared by U of IL demographers (based on Census 200 data, Census Bureau updates, and estimation algorithms)
- Some Census Bureau 2007 updates in demographic theme maps



Technical aspects

- Software
 - > Database (MS SQL)
 - > GIS (ESRI ArcGIS)
 - > interface between DB and GIS
- Hardware
 - > Dual-server SAN array for failover
 - > separate GIS development server



Costs: Staffing

- Project coordinator
- Database manager
- Database programmer
- GIS programmer
- Demographer
- Network administrator
- Outreach and training staff
- Clerical



Costs: Other

- Hardware (as noted in earlier slide)
- Software (as noted in earlier slide)
- Travel
 - > meetings with state agencies
 - > meetings with stakeholders
 - > training and outreach events



Challenges

Major challenges:

- assuring timely delivery of data from sources to IECAM
- providing accurate definitions of data elements for users
- verifying accuracy of data
- designing the Web site and DB features to balance ease of use with the availability of advanced features
- clarifying for users the distinction between data numbers and “need for child care”
- balancing the desires of funders with the desires of policymakers and advocates



Challenges

Additional challenges:

- coordinating state agencies
- assuring consistency of state funding over multiple years
- providing appropriate training to stakeholders (workshops, conferences, DVDs)
- producing operational manuals to assure continuity among transition of staff



Questions?



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Live search demonstration