

COVID-19

Emergency Response



Each year, Children's Home & Aid serves nearly 30,000 children and families—we need your help now, more than ever, as we seek to meet the critical needs of our kids and families who have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Our families were already vulnerable before this pandemic—their stresses are much greater now. We continue to go where the need is greatest, providing vital programs and services to help families in need.

Every 7 minutes, someone contacts Children's Home & Aid for help. And 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, across Illinois, we answer that call.

For 136 years, Children's Home & Aid has been recognized for establishing best practices and achieving outstanding results through its programs and services that focus on child abuse prevention, healthy child development, and strengthening families. Children's Home & Aid's mission is to partner with children, youth, and families whose potential is at risk to create hope, opportunity, and bright futures.

As the health, safety and well-being of our entire community is paramount, we have closed all offices and Early Childhood Centers across the state, and have canceled all events through June 30th. We will continue to provide essential programming in person, including our therapeutic residential foster care center in Evanston, our crisis nurseries in Bloomington and Rockford, and crisis support to more than 1,000 children in foster care. Across our agency, our vital work is continuing remotely as we transition services such as child welfare, our early childhood centers, home visiting services, and behavioral health programming to virtual platforms.

We know that the needs of our most vulnerable families across the state will only heighten and intensify as this crisis continues. But, with your support, we can help our community weather this growing storm.

Our families cannot wait—we need your help now.



Every donation helps. Now more than ever, every dollar counts. From \$5 to \$5000, your gift will help ensure that the children and families entrusted to our care continue receiving the services they need for the duration of this crisis and beyond.

Our most critical need is for financial support to help us respond to the immediate and changing needs our families are experiencing because of COVID-19. Many of our programs have already incurred additional expenses, including overtime for staff responding to the crisis, boosting our technological infrastructure as an agency and for the families we now serve virtually, and the costs of purchasing essential needs for families most impacted.

At the same time, in line with state and local health officials' guidance, we have canceled all fundraising events through June 30th. These events typically raise **nearly \$700,000** to support our programming and the children and families we serve. The loss of this revenue, coupled with the increasing needs among our families, has created a dire situation for Illinois' most vulnerable children and families. We are turning to you, our dedicated volunteers and supporters to help now.

Even as our offices are closed, our front line staff are meeting the needs of children and families with dedication and creativity. Foster care workers and counselors are working with children and families via phone or FaceTime, while still risking their own health

to meet the most urgent needs through face-to-face visits. Our early childhood centers in Englewood and Schaumburg are buying food and infant supplies, and hosting drives for families in need. Our Child Care Assistance Program continues to help families find affordable daycare when caregivers are still working at banks, grocery stores, and other essential places of business.

Every day, we work to strengthen families—we know in a time like this that a hungry child is less likely to be able to self-regulate, that a parent who can't clean their home might feel greater anxiety. Our programs continue to look for new ways to provide services virtually to kids and families to ensure they are supported through services like ongoing therapy, counseling to keep families together, and support for parents during this time of increased stress and crises.

More ways to help...

Essential Needs. In Chicagoland alone, we estimate that over 5,300 families we serve are struggling to obtain essential needs—in particular, diapers, formula, wipes, and cleaning supplies. Increasingly, families are reaching out in desperate need of gift/cash cards to cover essentials like food, rent, and phone/ internet access during this crisis. We are greatly in need of supports to boost our technological infrastructure as an agency, and to provide critical tools like computers, phones, and internet access to our families. You can help by organizing a virtual drive with your company or friend/family network. ***For more information, please contact Liz Startz at estartz@childrenshomeandaid.org.***

Virtual Volunteers. As we work to adjust to a new environment and move programs to virtual platforms where possible, we ask that volunteers who wish to support us virtually act as ambassadors for our kids and families. Help us spread the word about the incredible needs of our families through social media, email, and phone calls to your networks. Create a GoFundMe or Facebook fundraiser, share our website, and/or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

The time is now to come together as a community and help kids and families in critical need of care. We are so grateful for your support—we could not do this without you!

For more information, please contact Tara Harper, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations at tharper@childrenshomeandaid.org or 630-915-9191.



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