AOK Family Engagement

CONNECTING FAMILIES ACROSS THE COUNTIES

IDEC Webpage

Update Letter to Parents

Illinois Launches New Department of Early Childhood (IDEC)

Illinois has officially launched the Illinois Department of Early Childhood (IDEC), bringing early childhood programs and services together under one agency to make them easier for families to access. While services, eligibility, and local supports will remain the same during the transition, families can expect improved coordination, enhanced customer service, and a stronger focus on family engagement in the future. IDEC will continue gathering feedback from parents and community partners as it modernizes systems and works to create a more seamless experience for Illinois families.

MEET OUR PARENT AMBASSADORS

Stephenson County

Julianne

Hello! I'm Julianne, I have been with AOK as a Parent Ambassador for two years. I enjoy meeting new parents and connecting them with AOK and our partners. Helping families find resources and build a sense of community is one of my greatest passions. I can't wait to meet you all!

Layla

Hello, I'm a hardworking and dedicated person who takes pride in everything I do. Outside of work, I'm a mom to two boys who keep me motivated every day. I enjoy spending time with my family, creating memories, and continuing to grow both personally and professionally. I'm excited to be part of the team and look forward to getting to know everyone!

Carroll County

Michelle

Hi y'all! I'm Michelle, an AOK Parent Ambassador for two years. I'm passionate about helping families overcome barriers and connect with resources. I also serve as a Home Visitor with Right Steps Family Center, work with local food pantries, and coordinate Toys for Tots in Carroll County. I'm proud to be part of AOK and the amazing work we do together!

Jill

Hi everyone! I'm Jill, and I've been an AOK Parent Ambassador for just over a year. I love connecting with families and helping them overcome barriers to find the resources they need. My goal this year is to meet new people, build connections, and connect families with AOK network partners. I'll see you out there!

Become an AOK Parent Ambassador

We're still looking for **2 Jo Daviess County parents** to join our Parent Ambassador team! Parent Ambassadors help connect families to local resources, share community information, and make sure parent voices are heard.

Interested in making a difference in your community? Fill out our Parent Ambassador Interest Form!

We'd love to have you join us!

PA Interest Form

AOK Webpage

Bekah Randecker
Family Engagement Specialist
(815)599-8435
rrandecker@stephensoncountyil.gov

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MENTAL WELLNESS CORNER

As life gets busier with changing schedules, school routines, and family commitments, it is important to remember to care for yourself too.

Taking small moments to recharge, whether it's enjoying a quiet cup of coffee, spending time outside, connecting with a friend, or simply taking a few deep breaths, can make a difference in your overall well-being.

Prioritizing your mental health helps you show up with patience, energy, and connection for the people who count on you.

PREVENT, PROTECT, EMPOWER

Strong families are built through everyday moments of connection. Taking time to listen, play, encourage, and support your child helps build trust and confidence.

Young children learn from the adults around them, and positive relationships help them feel valued, understood, and secure. By creating a nurturing environment where children know they are loved and supported, families can help prevent harm and empower children to grow, learn, and thrive.

EARLY DETECTION, BRIGHT FUTURES

The early years are filled with incredible growth and discovery. From first words and steps to learning how to interact and explore the world around them, every milestone is an important part of a child's journey.

Families know their children best, and noticing changes, celebrating progress, and asking questions along the way can help children receive the support they need to thrive.

Early Intervention is here to partner with families and provide resources when extra support is needed.

Not sure where to start? Reach out to **Gabrielle Brunner**, Child and Family Connections, to connect you with local Early Intervention resources.

Phone: (815)599-1408 **Email:** gabrielle.brunner@roe8.org

Monthly Calendar

Community Resources & Events

Join us **Sept. 26 @ 10 AM**
Nature Walks & Family Talks
A Birding Experience

Facebook

Child & Family Connections