



# Madison County Launches Coordinated Intake System

IRIS Launch

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*"The goal . . . is to ensure that families in Madison County receive family support and our youngest children have access to services that provide a strong foundation for school readiness, no matter what services a family chooses within the community."*— Heidi Elliott, Children's Home & Aid Coordinated Intake Manager

*The recently launched Madison County Coordinated Intake System will connect expectant parents and families with children (prenatal to age five) to home visiting services and other resources in the Illinois community. Learn about the role of IRIS in the network's vision in this article from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

Children's Home & Aid is proud to announce the launch of the Madison County Coordinated Intake System. The project is supported through a grant from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development - Preschool Development Grant Birth-5 (PDG B-5). Illinois envisions a future in which there are coordinated points of entry throughout the State for home visiting as well as other early childhood and family supports services. Four community collaborations, Children's Home & Aid Child Care Resource & Referral Program in Madison and St. Clair counties, DuPage Home Visiting Network in DuPage county, Sangamon Success 0-3 Initiative in Sangamon county, and Sauk Valley STARS Early Childhood Education Coalition in Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties are included in the pilot. Each will use the Integrated Intake and Referral System (IRIS), a web-based community referral system developed by the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnership and Research. "IRIS was designed to help community organizations connect those they serve to resources within their community. Leveraging relationships, technology and data, community partners can serve families better," said Mary Orem, IRIS Implementation Coordinator.

The Madison County Coordinated Intake System consists of community partners from public schools, social service agencies, and Early Intervention. Madison County Coordinated Intake will connect expectant parents and families with children (prenatal to age five) to home visiting services and other community resources through IRIS. Valuing family choice, the Coordinated Intake System will offer families early childhood program information, options, and referrals that are responsive and respectful of each family's needs and located within their community or county. Services are free and voluntary and can be accessed by calling Children's Home & Aid or through one of the community partners. Heidi Elliott, Children's Home & Aid Coordinated Intake Manager stated, "Our agency was selected through a competitive request for support and because of our established relationships with a diverse group of community partners. The goal of

the grant is to ensure that families in Madison County receive family support and our youngest children, have access to services that provide a strong foundation for school readiness, no matter what services a family chooses within the community."

### **Broad-based Community Partners**

- Alton CUSD #11-Birth to 3 Program
- Chestnut Health System-Doula
- Coordinated Youth-Healthy Families Illinois
- Children's Home & Aid Stronger Beginnings for Families & Child Care Resource & Referral
- Early Intervention-Child & Family Connections #21
- East Alton School District-Washington Early Childhood Center
- Erikson & DCFS-Early Childhood Project
- Granite City School District-Partnership for Kids
- Riverbend Head Start & Family Services-Early Head Start
- MIECHV-St. Clair County Coordinated Intake and Triad School District-Foundations for Success

### **Who is Children's Home & Aid**

Children's Home & Aid is a leading child and family service agency in Illinois. Each year, it protects, educates, and counsels more than 40,000 children, youth, and families. Since 1883, Children's Home & Aid has been a compassionate advocate helping to shape public policy in child welfare, early childhood, and juvenile justice. Children's Home & Aid is 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. The agency's mission is to advance the well-being of children by investing in families to create a world where all children and families thrive in strong communities.

For more information, contact Heidi Elliott at 1-800-467-9200, Ext. 119

Source Article: [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#)