



Executive Summary

Early CHOICES SY25 End of Year Report

Program Overview

The purpose of [Early CHOICES](#) is to provide professional development (PD) and technical assistance (TA) to increase the number of high-quality, inclusive options for early childhood students with disabilities. Early CHOICES is one of the three discretionary grants that assist school districts, special education cooperatives, and families to improve educational outcomes of young children with disabilities and meet the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B State Performance Plan (SPP). Early CHOICES focuses on the least restrictive environment (LRE) for children ages 3-5 and assists the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) with SPP Indicator 6 (Preschool LRE).

Advancing Inclusion in SY25

Exceeded State Goals

54.6% of preschoolers with Individualized Education Program (IEPs) were served in regular early childhood programs, surpassing the state target by 6.8% and continuing a positive multi-year trend.

State & National Leadership

Early CHOICES served on multiple state advisory groups and presented at conferences all across the state of Illinois. National partners like the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) continue to feature Early CHOICES as a model for systemic inclusion strategies. Early CHOICES also presented at major national conferences, positioning Illinois as a leader in early childhood inclusion.

Community Inclusion Teams (CITs)

Community Inclusion Teams (CITs) are cross-sector teams that bring together early childhood, special education, and community partners to expand access to high-quality inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities. In SY25, Early CHOICES staff members are the lead technical assistance providers for 7 active CITs across the state, serving 3 counties, 3 lead education agencies, and 1 special education cooperative.

Family Engagement & Resource Development

In SY25, Early CHOICES' [EC LRE Stakeholders Consortium](#) developed the [Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) Family Resource Guide](#), a tool designed to help families understand their rights and advocate for inclusive opportunities for their children.

Communities of Practice (COPs)

Communities of Practice (CoPs) provide structured, collaborative spaces for professionals to deepen their knowledge of inclusive practices. In SY25, three COPs were offered to programs already engaged with Early CHOICES. These CoPs brought together 148 individuals from 72 early childhood entities and met multiple times throughout the year.

SY25 in Review

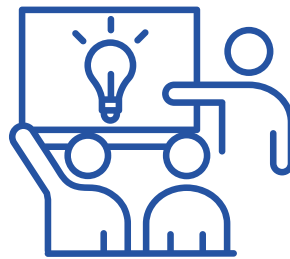
253

school districts connected for
Professional Development &
Technical Assistance Support

50

Professional
Development Events

36 Universal Foundations
14 Communities of Practice



1 in 3

Illinois school districts
provided with
Technical Assistance



13

Collaborative Agreements
with Illinois School Districts

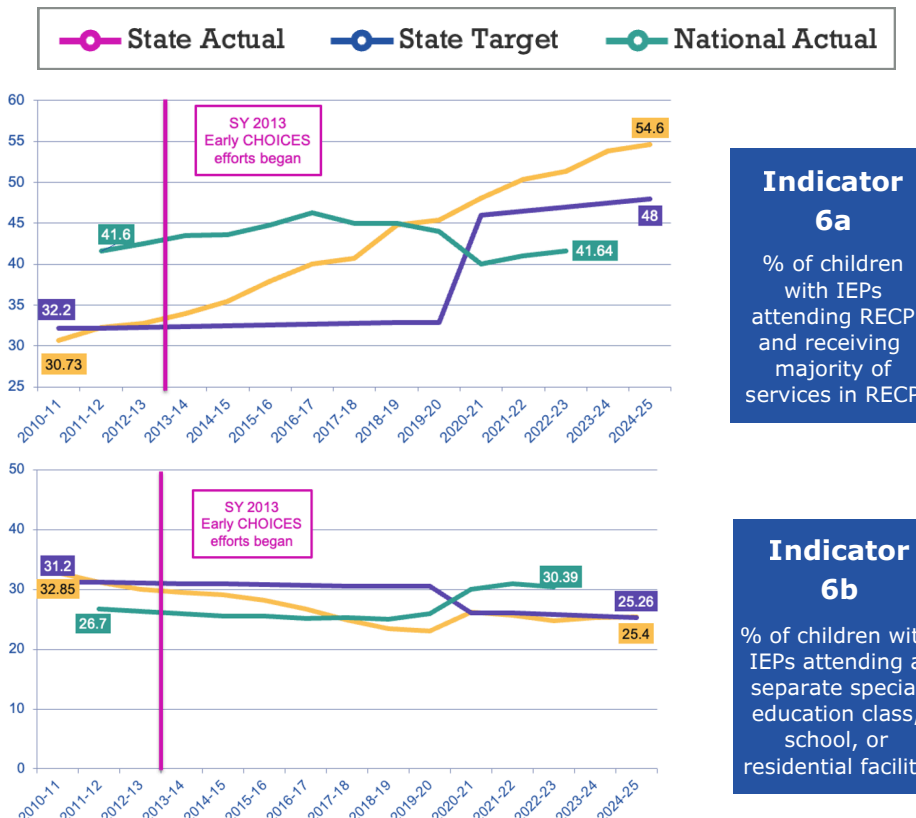
617

individuals accessed
online learning modules



Indicator 6 Data

We collaborate with districts to increase the % of children aged 3-5 with IEPs attending a Regular Early Childhood Programs (RECP) and receiving the majority of special education and related services in the RECP. **The data below are the most recent SPP Indicator 6A and 6B data available from ISBE.**



Indicator 6a

% of children with IEPs attending RECP and receiving majority of services in RECP



Indicator 6b

% of children with IEPs attending a separate special education class, school, or residential facility

150
attendees at our
statewide conference,
the 2025 Summer
Inclusion Institute

2,251

total social media followers

