

# Investments in Illinois' Future

## A 10 Year Analysis of State Funding for Youth Ages 12 to 24

Supporting youth during their transition from childhood to adulthood is a critical investment in our collective future. Public spending on programs and services for youth is an important indicator of the degree to which our society prioritizes this important responsibility. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of 6 to 18 year olds, those who are now between the ages of 12 to 24, increased 12.8%. **Investments in Illinois' Future** analyzes Illinois expenditures on programs and services for youth ages 12 to 24 between fiscal years 1994 and 2004. This historical analysis yielded the following key findings that provide valuable information and context to inform future planning, policy development, appropriations decisions, and statewide analysis impacting youth in Illinois.

### Illinois lacks a clear vision for comprehensive youth development

- Increases and decreases in state spending across program categories mirrored similar shifts at the federal level. This suggests the lack of a state level plan or funding priorities separate from those dictated by federal level decisions. A state vision is needed to ensure that vital community programs and other state priorities are funded regardless of federal decisions.
- Total spending levels in six of the eight program categories remained the same between fiscal years 1994 and 2004, raising questions about how information and analysis related to changing trends and service gaps was utilized to influence spending decisions.

### Growth in expenditures on intervention and treatment exceeded those on prevention between 1994 and 2004

- Spending on youth programs focusing on intervention and treatment increased by 32% between FY 1994 and 2004.
- Global prevention program expenditures increased by 29% between FY 1994 and 2004.
- Target prevention program expenditures had the slowest growth, only 3.8% between FY 1994 and 2004.

### Gaps in available programs leave many youth without services

- Most youth programs in Illinois were designed for youth enrolled in school, approximately ages 14 to 18, leaving significant gaps in programs and services for youth outside this age range as well as those not in school.
- Approximately 60% of the programs analyzed in this report were linked to the Illinois State Board of Education or the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Youth not connected to these agencies are less likely to receive needed services such as mental health treatment or housing assistance.

### A significant number of youth programs have gone without a cost of doing business increase

- In at least five of the ten years studied, 38% of programs failed to receive an annual cost of doing business increase.
- Programs connected to a federal funding stream were 40% more likely to keep pace with inflation than were solely state-funded programs.
- Earlier this year, fifteen programs received a much-needed cost of doing business adjustment as part of the FY 2007 state budget. However, many youth programs have not received a cost of doing business increase in recent years.

A full copy of this report can be found at <http://www.heartlandalliance.org/creatingchange/research.html>. For more information, please contact Gina Guillemette at 773-336-6083 or [gguillemette@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:gguillemette@heartlandalliance.org) or Andy Ray at 773-336-6082 or [aray@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:aray@heartlandalliance.org).