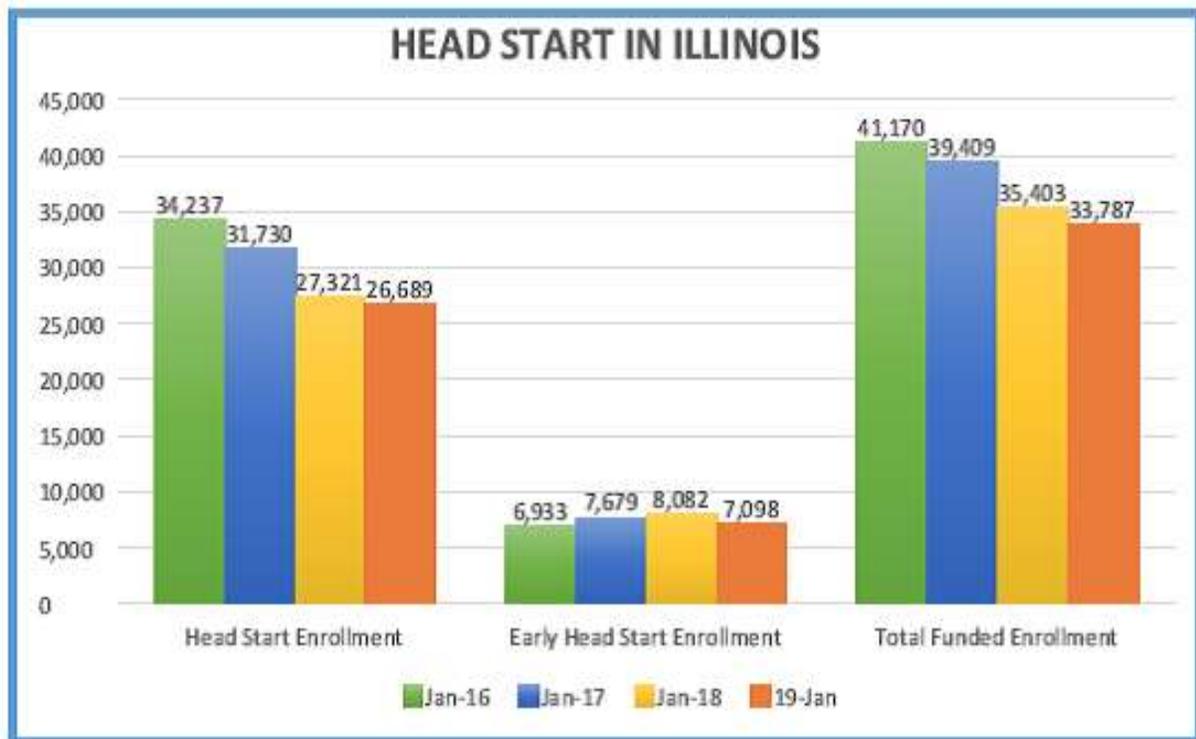




# Head Start in Illinois



*Source: Office of Head Start Region V Funding Plan*

## **59 Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees Provide Comprehensive Services to Our Most Vulnerable Children and Families**

**The premise of Head Start is simple: every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to reach their full potential.**

## **The Whole Child**

Head Start programs offer an ideal laboratory for the study of effective child development and learning. The Department of Health and Human Services funds extensive research every year that reinvigorates practices, ensuring that programs meet children's needs by creating a deep understanding of how they learn and what supports healthy development. Children enter Head Start with serious socioeconomic disadvantages that can hold them back for life.

## **The Whole Family**

Head Start supports families facing difficult circumstances and seeks to mitigate obstacles to learning in the early years. An additional motivator behind children's success through elementary school and beyond are very likely parents. By helping families who are struggling with poverty and other socio-economic challenges achieve their goals for education, employment, and housing, Head Start plays a transformative role across two generations.

## **What are the components of a Head Start program?**

Head Start takes a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of young children. There are four major components to Head Start:

- **Education:** Providing a variety of learning experiences to help children grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally.
- **Health:** Providing health services such as immunizations, dental, medical, and mental health, and nutritional services, and early identification of health problems.
- **Parent Involvement:** Involving parents in the planning and implementation of activities. Parents serve on policy councils and committees that make administrative decisions; participate in classes and workshops on child development; and volunteer in the program.
- **Social Services:** Provide outreach to families to determine what services they need. Development of individual family goals and a Head Start/Early Head Start advocate/mentor to assist each parent with meeting their goals.