

VOICE for Children

2025 VOICE for Children

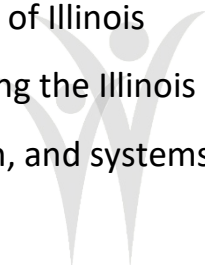
Distinguished Career Award Recipient

Gail Nourse, MSW

Consultant and First Director of the Pennsylvania Key

Gail Nourse retired in May of 2024 after many years of work in a variety of settings and states focused on early childhood. This work occurred primarily in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and as a national consultant in a variety of states. For the past six years she provided consultation through the national Build Initiative supported by the Pritzker Children's Initiative in the areas of state systems building, increasing quality supports for infants and toddlers, and facilitating peer learning. Gail also served on the leadership team for initiatives in California and Philadelphia related to coordination of quality improvements. Through the Partnership for America's Children, Gail managed an early intervention project with advocates from five states.

Prior to her consultation projects, Gail served as the Vice President of Illinois Policy at Start Early in Chicago where she was responsible for leading the Illinois Policy Team in the areas of legislative and advocacy work, outreach, and systems



development. In an earlier role at Start Early, Gail was a Senior Policy Manager for the National Policy Team where she focused on peer learning among states and individualized state consultation to Arizona, Colorado, and Florida.

From 2005 until 2011, Gail was the first Director of the Pennsylvania Key, a public-private organization, where she provided statewide leadership in collaboration with the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning in the development of an integrated and coordinated system of program quality improvements, professional development supports for the early childhood field, community outreach and business engagement.

Beginning In 1997, Gail developed and directed a county-wide early childhood initiative housed at the United Way of York County, Pennsylvania, which focused on improving the quality, affordability, and accessibility of early childhood education, creating professional development opportunities, conducting community education forums, addressing financing issues, and engaging the business community. This initiative served as a model for a Pennsylvania statewide development of community planning and engagement initiatives.

Gail also has extensive experience in providing child welfare services in Philadelphia. She has a master's degree in social work from Boston University.

