



Updated September 2023

Thriving Families, Safer Children Kentucky

Kentucky is now in its third year as a participating site team of the Thriving Families, Safer Children national commitment to child, youth, and family well-being. Below is an update on the initiatives supporting our priorities:

Statewide and Regional Prevention Collaboratives

Community leaders and advocates assembled around statewide and community-led efforts on strengthening conditions for families. The statewide plan was finalized in December of 2022 and the regional plans [began implementation](#) in early 2023.

Truth and Reconciliation: Truth Telling Circles

This initiative is a collaboration between Kentucky Youth Advocates/True Up, foster care alumni, University of Louisville (UofL), and the Kempe Center, that seeks to highlight and decrease the disproportionality of Black foster youth in Louisville through the sharing of testimonies. Several new advocates participated in truth telling circles and the youth are solidifying recommendations.

Community Response Pilots

[Community Response](#) is a model serving families who may benefit from additional support, such as parent skill-building or meeting concrete needs, when a report is called into the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) that does not meet the statutory criteria for an investigation. It began in July 2022 and is now delivered in 10 counties, with four under formal evaluation.

Alternative Response

DCBS began consulting with The Kempe Center in July 2022 to develop an Alternative Response (AR) model that will respond to low-to-moderate risk reports of child abuse and neglect. AR is a family-centered, strengths-based approach to assist families in navigating community resources and local supports while addressing child safety in the home. It began implementation in the Northeastern DCBS service region in September and the Two Rivers Region will follow in mid-October.

KY SEAT

The statewide parent advisory council [celebrated one year](#) of operation and has been partnering with DCBS to include parent voice in child welfare decisions affecting families. It is currently preparing to share legislative priorities for change with policymakers.

Lean on Me Kentucky

Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky (PCAK) launched [Lean on Me KY](#) in March 2023 and is currently working on infographics and analytics to show Lean on Me's reach. They are also creating a tool to help people conceptualize being a community supporter.

Building Community Well-Being Among Families

This is a project between Brighton Center, DCBS, Family Nurturing Center, and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago to strengthen the primary prevention system along with individuals and families in the community. They are currently developing a wellbeing matrix with Chapin Hall and forming a pathway of certification around wellbeing for families or organizations.

Fatherhood Engagement

In response to research on the impact of [responsible fatherhood](#) on maltreatment we are taking significant steps to increase father engagement and standardize human-centered and father-friendly practices, policies, and procedures through collaborations.

Kentucky Family Leadership Academy trainings

Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, together with PCAK, is offering [Kentucky Family Leadership Academy Trainings](#) throughout the months of October-May. These trainings are for caregivers with current or previous services from DCBS, as well as allied partners (including DCBS staff), to strengthen leadership and advocacy skills.

Division of Prevention and Community Well-Being (DPCW)

The DPCW was created out of a legislature approved agency reorganization during the 2022 legislative session and began in January 2023, with 3 branches over primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Its priorities include moving upstream, building robust primary and secondary prevention initiatives and branches and leveraging relationships, supporting families, supporting communities, relationship building with true community partners/members, quality improvement, and equity work.

For a full description of the above-mentioned initiatives, please visit kyyouth.org/tfscky