

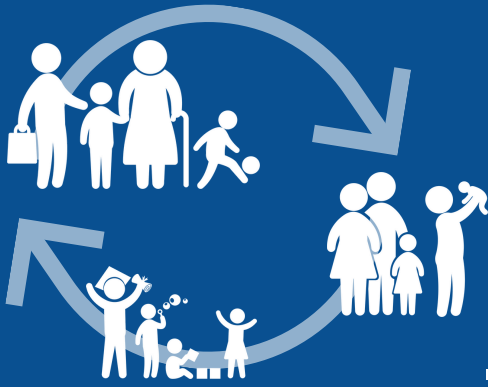
BLUEPRINT *for* KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN

The Blueprint for Kentucky's Children is a coalition of non-profit, public, and private organizations that stands on three pillars: thriving communities launch strong families, strong families launch successful kids, and successful kids launch a prosperous future for Kentucky.

2024 Blueprint for Kentucky's Children State Policy and Budget Priorities

These policy priorities can be implemented during the 2024 Kentucky General Assembly without being included in the state budget:

- ✓ Ensure compliance with tobacco-21 law by identifying retailers selling tobacco and nicotine products, requiring annual compliance checks, and penalizing those selling to kids.
- ✓ Exempt freestanding birth centers from certificate-of-need requirements to expand access to safe, equitable prenatal and delivery care.
- ✓ Reduce the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation and increase the safety of students by ensuring appropriate disclosures, checks, and training are complete for potential public and private school employees.
- ✓ Establish a process to automatically expunge an eviction from a family's record after they have been eviction-free for a reasonable amount of time, seal filings that do not result in an eviction, and prohibit minors from being named on eviction filings.
- ✓ Establish an interim joint taskforce on Kentucky's housing landscape to study the issue and create recommendations to address the housing crisis.
- ✓ Allow student teachers to be compensated for their work in the classroom.
- ✓ Propose amendments to child care zoning regulations to boost access to family child care homes.
- ✓ Establish the Employee Child Care Assistance Partnership (ECCAP) permanently to ensure a stable child care workforce.



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Kentucky kids and families need a strong state budget. Among the many budget priorities for the 2024 General Assembly, the Blueprint for Kentucky's Children hopes to see the following included:

✓ Health

- Increase investments in tobacco use prevention and cessation programming to curb use among youth and pregnant women.
- Ensure JUUL settlement funds are focused on mitigating youth nicotine addiction and preventing youth initiation.
- Boost investments in mental health reimbursement rates and bring Behavioral Health Service Organizations (BHSOs) and Behavioral Health Service and Multi-Specialty Groups (BHMSGs) on par with Medicare rates.

✓ Child Welfare

- Invest in children being raised by their relatives or fictive kin by dedicating funds to support subsidized permanent custody.

✓ Juvenile Justice

- Expand investments so communities can build a continuum of care that supports youth and their families in addressing the root causes of delinquent behavior and prevent ongoing involvement with the juvenile justice system.

✓ Education

- Allocate funding to support the student-teacher pipeline.
- Sustain funding for school-based mental health providers to improve access to services.

✓ Family Supports

- Invest in the supply of available, affordable housing by infusing state dollars into the state Affordable and Rural Housing Trust Funds.

✓ Child Care

- Maintain Child Care Assistance Program eligibility at 85% of State Median Income and the federally-recommended reimbursement rate.
- Base child care program reimbursement payments on enrollment rather than attendance, to align with new federal guidance.
- Implement a limited co-pay structure paired with maintaining a six-month transition period so that families can retain more income and still access benefits as they receive slight wage increases.
- Maintain scholarships, continue to cover costs of mandatory background checks, and persist with the implementation of the Family Child Care Home grant program to support early childhood educators.