



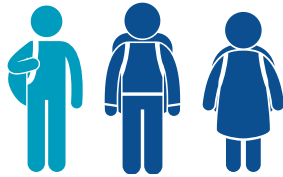
Kentucky can...



Invest in mental health supports to meet the needs of children in their schools and communities

Meeting the mental health needs of Kentucky kids is critical to ensure they can thrive in their schools and communities. Although youth mental health was a growing concern prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, rates of mental health issues have significantly increased in recent years. The latest data indicates 16% of Kentucky kids are facing anxiety or depression, as effects of the pandemic linger.

One in three Kentucky high school students reported poor mental health during the height of the pandemic.



Kentucky students need access to mental health services in a setting that works for them. For many families, this includes utilizing mental health services provided at their child's school or in their community at a BHSO or BHMSG.

Adequate funding for youth mental health is needed to ensure quality providers are available to meet the needs of kids, wherever they are seeking care, to promote academic success and overall health.

- **School-based mental health service provider** is a licensed or certified school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, or other qualified mental health professional.
- **School-based services (SBS)**, including mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services, have been shown to improve both health and academic outcomes.
- **Behavioral Health Service Organization and Multispecialty Groups (BHSO and BHMSGs)** serve more than 16,000 Kentucky kids in more than 110 counties.

The Impact of Mental Health Disorders

- In 2020, 35.6% of Kentuckians age 12-17 who had depression did not receive any care in the previous year.
- Without treatment, children with mental health issues are at increased risk of school failure, contact with the criminal justice system, dependence on social services, and even suicide.
- Children who have experienced four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are 32x more likely to have learning and behavioral problems.
- Kentucky is among 37 states that allocate funds specifically for services related to student mental health in their state budgets.
- Kentucky's Medicaid reimbursement rates for mental health services lag behind all of our bordering states, in some cases by more than 35%.

Blueprint for Kentucky's Children Policy Solution:

Improve the health and well-being of students by sustaining funding for school-based mental health providers and increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates for mental health services.



kyyouth.org/blueprintky/