



Kentucky should...

support positive youth development through incoming social media settlement dollars

A major multi-district litigation is currently moving forward against social media companies, consolidating hundreds of cases filed by adolescents, parents, school districts, and attorneys general across the U.S., including Kentucky's Attorney General Russell Coleman.

The central claims are that platforms, including Meta, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and others, are "defectively designed" and that the "platforms failed to warn users of the risks associated with use" and have "harmed children's mental health."

Blueprint for Kentucky's Children Policy Solution:

Create mechanisms to direct social media settlement dollars to support youth well-being, including positive youth development programs.

Invest in Positive Experiences in Childhood and Adolescence

- Not all social media use is harmful, however research shows that manipulative or addictive social media features negatively impact youth mental health.
- Kentucky can address the more harmful effects of social media through positive childhood experiences (PCEs).
- After-school, summer, and mentorship programming; library enrichment opportunities; outdoor education; and experiences in the arts can serve as opportunities for positive experiences and connections and provide an alternative to social media and screen time.

By investing in positive youth development and experiences, Kentucky can ensure our young people thrive in their communities.

Making the case in Kentucky:

- In 2024, roughly half of teens surveyed (48%) reported social media sites have a mostly negative effect on people their age, up from 32% in 2022.
- Among Kentucky children ages 3-17, 27% have autism, developmental delays, depression or anxiety, ADHD, or behavioral problems.
- In the 2022-2023 school year, 16% of children in Kentucky were diagnosed with depression or anxiety.
- Social media usage may contribute to rising rates of anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges experienced by adolescents.