

# 2011 BLUEPRINT FOR KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN AGENDA

The Blueprint for Kentucky's Children is a unified policy agenda promoted by children's advocates across the Commonwealth which aims to improve child well-being in Kentucky. In education, health, safety, juvenile justice, and economic well-being, rankings on child well-being consistently place the Commonwealth among the bottom ten in the nation.



Responding to a challenge from legislators, children's advocacy groups formed the Blueprint for Kentucky's Children to help move Kentucky forward. For each goal identified, the Blueprint Coalition has identified policy solutions to help achieve that goal. Through our work on these issues, we want to make Kentucky the best place to be a kid!

## Fair Deal for Working Parents

### ***Curb predatory lending practices to protect long-term stability for families***

- Cap the triple-digit interest rates currently charged on payday loans at 36% APR.

## Safe and Healthy Families

### ***Reduce child abuse and neglect***

- Ensure appropriate use of out-of-home care by increasing support and access to family preservation and family reunification services.

### ***Increase childhood wellness***

- Incorporate BMI (Body Mass Index) monitoring into the kindergarten and sixth grade Preventive Health Examinations to obtain an accurate baseline of public health data on childhood obesity.
- Require a children's health advisory committee that reports to administrators and policymakers.
- End the use of corporal punishment in Kentucky's public school system.

## Fair Opportunity for Every Child

### ***Increase high school graduation rates***

- Raise the mandatory age of school attendance from 16 to 18 years old and create opportunities for schools to implement flexible programming to engage students by improving alternative programs, allowing for early graduation, and creating pathways for career and technical programs.

### ***Use options other than secure detention ("lock up") for youth misbehaviors that are not crimes, like skipping school and running away from home***

- Limit the length of time youth are subject to a valid court order.
- Ensure judges have full information about compliance with laws that require alternative options to be tried before charges are filed.

### ***Increase school readiness***

- Adopt a statewide definition of school readiness.
- Adopt a governance structure for early childhood programming.
- Implement a system of developmentally appropriate assessment for school readiness.

## PARTNERS

4C for Children  
Amazing Creations Preschool, LLC  
Audubon Area Community Services  
Ballard Co. Preschool/Head Start - Murray Head Start  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kentuckiana  
Brooklawn  
CASA of Kenton County  
Children's Alliance  
Children's Champions of Madison County  
Children's Law Center  
Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C) Eastern Area Community Ministries  
Emerging Workforce Initiative, Inc.  
Estill County Community Education  
Family Information Network on Disabilities  
Family and Children's Place  
First Focus  
First Steps  
FOR KIDS ONLY  
Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky  
FRIENDS Family Resource Center  
Green River Area Development  
Jackson City School FRYSC  
Jefferson County Community Early Childhood Council  
Kentucky Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Kentucky Domestic Violence Association  
Kentucky Equal Justice Center  
Kentucky PTA  
Kentucky Philanthropy Initiative, Inc.  
Kentucky Public Health Association  
Kentucky Protection and Advocacy  
Kentucky River Foothills Development Council, Inc.  
Kentucky Voices for Health  
Kentucky YMCA Youth Association  
Kentucky Youth Advocates  
Kosair Charities  
Ladies Best Friends MC  
MASH Services of the Bluegrass  
Making Connections Louisville  
Metro United Way  
National Council of Jewish Women, Louisville Section  
Partnership for a Fit Kentucky  
Portland Now Prevention Partnership  
Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence  
Purchase Area Health Education Center  
Safe Kids Coalition  
Save the Children  
SKY Families Program, Cooperative Extension Program, Kentucky State University  
St. Joseph Children's Home  
United Communities to Advance our Neighborhoods (UCAN), Inc.  
United Way of Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky  
YMCA of Greater Louisville

## BLUEPRINT FOR KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN SUCCESSES

Together, Blueprint partners have been able to improve opportunities for children in Kentucky.

- **Access to health insurance for kids** - We worked to secure support from the Governor to remove substantive barriers to access so that thousands of hardworking parents can enroll their children in the Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP) with greater ease and their kids can stay healthy and ready to learn.
- **Children's dental health** - We advocated for changes in state law to improve the dental health of Kentucky kids by ensuring they have a dental screening before enrolling in kindergarten.
- **Family economic security** - We raised awareness about the dangerous debt trap caused by the 400% APR interest rates that payday lenders currently charge Kentucky families, leading to the implementation of a database to monitor loan usage. With a growing list of partners across the state we are making steady progress toward our goal of capping interest rates at 36% APR.

## FUTURE PRIORITIES

Kentucky's budget shortfall and the current economic climate have had an impact on our 2011 priorities, however Blueprint partners agree that the following items are essential steps to take when the state's budget outlook improves.

- **Close the gap between what families earn and what they need to make ends meet** – Institute a state refundable Earned Income Tax Credit.
- **Increase childhood wellness** – Expand school based health services.
- **Increase school readiness** – Make voluntary, quality pre-school available for every 3- and 4-year old Kentucky child through a diverse delivery model of preschools and existing community-based child care providers.

For more information, visit the Blueprint for Kentucky's Children website at [www.blueprintky.org](http://www.blueprintky.org).