

2009 BLUEPRINT FOR KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN AGENDA

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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 from across the state have formed a broad-based coalition to develop a clear and workable agenda to move Kentucky forward. The result is the Blueprint for Kentucky's Children.

Safe and Healthy Families – All children need access to health insurance and opportunities to improve their health as well as protection from harm to ensure their safe and healthy development. Families need every support possible in providing that care.

- **Physical Activity.** Improve children's health and education outcomes by integrating physical activity into the elementary school day.
- **Family Preservation and Reunification.** Reduce child abuse and prevent out-of-home placement for children at risk of abuse by ensuring that family preservation services are available to every child who needs it and provide access to family reunification services to every family when appropriate.
- **Maltreatment.** Prevent child abuse from occurring by developing a statewide comprehensive child abuse and neglect prevention plan based on a public health model.

Fair Deal for Working Parents – Families need to be given the opportunity to save their hard-earned cash and financially support their children. Fair lending practices and targeted tax relief will help them achieve that goal.

- **Payday Lending.** Allow working families to keep more of their hard-earned money by capping the triple-digit interest rates charged on payday loans at 36 percent.

Fair Opportunity for Every Child – Every child needs access to quality early learning opportunities, a strong K-12 education, and support in making a successful transition to adulthood.

- **Graduation Rates.** Increase the number of high school graduates by raising the age at which youth can legally drop out of high school from 16 to 18 years old.
- **Juvenile Justice.** Reduce the use of secure detention for status offenders (youth charged with offenses that would not be crimes if committed by an adult) as this increases the likelihood of later engagement in criminal conduct.

Emerging 2010 Priorities

- *Create sustainable funding and best practices for expanding **school based health services**.*
- *Institute a refundable **State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** to provide tax relief to low-income families, helping them close the gap between what they earn and what they need to make ends meet.*
- *Expand options to assist families in paying for quality child care by improving access to the child care subsidy and expanding the reach of the **child and dependent care tax credit**.*
- *Make voluntary, **quality preschool** 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.