

# 2010 BLUEPRINT FOR KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN AGENDA

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 formed a broad-based coalition to develop the Blueprint for Kentucky's Children, a clear and workable agenda to move Kentucky forward.



## Fair Deal for Working Parents

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

**Payday Lending.** Cap the triple-digit interest rates currently charged on payday loans at 36 percent.

**Earned Income Tax Credit.** As a part of comprehensive state tax reform, institute a refundable earned income tax credit to provide tax relief to low-income working families, helping them close the gap between what they earn and what they need to make ends meet.

## Safe and Healthy Families

All children need access to 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.

**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 by increasing access to family reunification services.

**Children's Wellness.** Collect students' BMI (Body Mass Index) as part of the school physical to provide district level measures of obesity. Integrate physical activity into the school day for at least 30 minutes a day or 150 minutes per week. Require a children's health technical advisory committee to report to the Kentucky Medicaid Council.

## 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 and by creating opportunities for schools to implement flexible programming to engage at-risk students.

**Juvenile Justice.** Reduce the use of secure detention for 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. This can be achieved in part by helping communities increase alternative options.

**Early Childhood.** Adopt a statewide definition of school readiness and a system of developmentally appropriate assessment. 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.

### FORMATIVE/ EMERGING ISSUE:

**School-based Health.** Encourage schools to act as agents for wellness by seizing opportunities in school assessment and funding to expand school based health services.