Child Maltreatment

In 2018, Kentucky had 107,537 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 56,391 were referred for investigation.¹

There were 23,752 child victims of abuse or neglect in Kentucky in 2018, at a rate of 23.5 children per 1,000. This translates to an 32.5% increase since 2013.²

Of the 23,752 children, 15,886 were first time victims.³

The largest age group of victims was children under one, representing 3,377 of the 23,752 cases.⁴

Types of Maltreatment Victims, 2018

- 78% of child maltreatment perpetrators in 2017 were parents of the child. 22% were non-parents or had an unknown relationship.⁶
- 50% of Kentucky’s child victims in 2017 were female while 50% were male.⁷

Plans of Safe Care

- In 2018, Kentucky reported 1,025 infants who were screened-in with prenatal substance exposure and 310 infants who were screen-out.⁹
- Kentucky reported no plans of safe care for screened-in infants.¹⁰
Foster Care and Adoptions

- **15,348** total children were served by the foster care system in FY 2018.
- **9,355** were in care on the day of September 30th, 2018.
- **7,492** children entered care during the 2018 FY while **5,993** exited during the same year.
- **1,124** of Kentucky’s children were adopted while **2,834** were waiting to be adopted.xv

There was a **14.8%** increase in the number of children in care between 2017 and 2018. Adoptions from the system decreased by **0.35%** from 2017.xvi

**691** children in Kentucky aged out and exited foster care in 2017. This is an increase from **661** in 2016 and represents a **4.5%** increase.xvii

- Children in foster care in 2017 spent an average of **17.9** months in care. xviii
- The average length of stay in Kentucky for children waiting to be adopted from foster care in **33.5** months.xix
- The average age of children waiting to be adopted in 2017 was **8.5** years old.xx
- The average age of adopted children was **6.8** years old.xxx
Data from 2017 shows that 5,769 children in foster care within Kentucky stayed with a relative.

- 1,202 children were staying in group homes while 133 children were classified as runaways. xxii

- 4% of households in Kentucky in 2017 had a grandparent living with a grandchild. xxiii

- The average length of time a child in care spent living with their current relative foster family was 3.2 months. xxiv

**Child Poverty**

Kentucky had 316,000 children in 2017 who lived with parents who lacked secure employment, representing 31% of all children. xxv

23% of Kentucky’s children lived in households with a high housing cost burden. xxvi

The average number of individuals receiving TANF fell from 58,549 in 2017 to 38,606 in 2018. This represents a 33.9% decrease. xxvii

The state spent $44,464,533 on WIC in 2019, serving 94,296 people. This represents a 7.3% decrease in total participants and a 3.3% decrease in spending. xxviii

662,360 people in Kentucky were food insecure in 2017, including 186,660 children who struggled with hunger. xxix

42.0% of households in Kentucky with children received SNAP benefits in 2017. xxx
Health
Kentucky had 4,831 low birth-weight babies born in 2017 which is constituted as babies weighing less than 5.5 pounds. This translates to 8.8% of infants born in Kentucky in 2017.  

Kentucky had a total of 6,109 preterm births in 2018, meaning less than 37 completed weeks of gestation. 11.2% of all white babies were born premature while 14.2% of black babies arrived prematurely in 2018. The total premature birth rate was 11.3%.  

There were 4,060 births to mothers aged 15-19 in Kentucky in 2017, representing a rate of 29 in every 1,000 teen girls.  

355 infants under 1 died in Kentucky in 2017, representing an infant mortality rate of 6.5 per 1,000.  

Public Health Insurance Coverage for Children, 2018

- 3.8% of Kentucky’s children had no health insurance in 2018. This represents 40,000 children. Kentucky is a Medicaid expansion state.  
- 545,371 children in Kentucky were enrolled in Medicaid in 2018. This represents 0.1% decrease from 2017.  
- 103,244 children in Kentucky were in the state Chip Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 2018. This represents an 7.1% increase from 2017.
Juvenile Justice System
- There were 2,985 total arrests for children under 18 in Kentucky in 2018.
- 137 of these arrests were for Disorderly Conduct.
- 691 arrests were made for Property Crimes.
- 251 were arrested under the charge of Drug Abuse Violations.
- 555 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Kentucky in 2018. This is an increase from 510 kids in 2015, representing an 8.8% increase.

Teens & Youth
- 18,000 (7%) of Kentucky’s youth were both not in school and not working in 2017.
- In 2017, there were 0 reports of children in Kentucky aged 10-14 committing suicide, and 34 reports of suicide among children aged 15-19.
- 73 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Kentucky in 2017.

Child Welfare Services Funding
- Kentucky spent $560,030,302 on child welfare services in 2016. Child welfare services are all of the direct and administrative services that state agencies provide to children and families.
- $212,340,939 were allocated from the federal government and $347,689,363 came from state and local funds.

Federal Funding Sources
- The breakdown of the $212,340,939 in federal funding received in Kentucky in 2016:
  - 39,172,624 Title IV-E Foster Care Program
  - $49,901,904 as part of the Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program
  - Kentucky’s sum of expenditures for Social Service Block Grants in 2017 was $21,053,491.


xiv Based on Calculations from the CWLA


xx Ibid.

xxi Ibid.


xxiii Ibid.


xxvi Ibid.


xxx Ibid.


Kentucky’s Children 2020


