JULY 2013-JUNE 2015

EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL

BI-ANNUAL REPORT

Seeding Kentucky's Future

KENTUCKY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of EARLY CHILDHOOD

Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn & Ready to Succeed

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INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth has a history of successful, innovative initiatives in the field of early childhood development and education: from Head Start's inception in Kentucky in 1965, the Kentucky Education Reform Act in 1990, to the KIDS NOW Initiative and legislation in 2000. Additionally, the Head Start Reauthorization Act passed in 2009 by Congress created the opportunity to establish a state Early Childhood Advisory Council.

In 2000, the Commonwealth adopted the 20 Year Comprehensive Task Force Report that committed 25 percent of the Master Tobacco Settlement to early childhood initiatives, known as the Early Childhood Development Fund, to assure maternal and child health, support families, and enhance early care and education programs, and establish the support structure to sustain the work. In the fifteen years of funding, we have made great progress (see Appendix A for history).

Governor Steve Beshear, with strong support from legislative leaders, has continued that tradition by protecting and expanding on those prior commitments to children — protecting funding for public schools, increasing the state's outreach efforts in the Kentucky Child Health Insurance Program, promoting early childhood oral health, improving child care quality and access, and expanding preschool eligibility. The biennial budget enacted in 2014 included the Governor's proposal for an increase of $18.7 million in FY16 to expand preschool services to reach 5,125 more 4-year-olds whose family income is within 160 percent of the federal poverty level. In the 2015 Legislative Session, HB234 passed, expanding the quality rating system to include all early childhood programs receiving public funding.

In July of 2009, Governor Beshear appointed a Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education. Governor Beshear directed the Task Force to focus on the development and compilation of recommendations to address: "greater collaboration among providers of services to young children, quality at all levels from early child care through kindergarten, agreement on what constitutes school readiness, and reliance on accepted early learning standards and assessment." Throughout the Task Force discussions, the concept of the "whole child" was paramount and members addressed the health, social-emotional, cultural and cognitive aspects of a child and continually acknowledged the importance of the relationships among children, families, schools and communities.

In 2011, based on a recommendation from the Task Force, Governor Beshear created and appointed members to the Early Childhood Advisory Council by Executive Order, a broadly representative group of early childhood educators, administrators, and advocates (see Appendix B for a member list). The Early Childhood Advisory Council is supported by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. In 2013, the General Assembly passed HB184, establishing the new office and Council by statute.

Building upon our strong foundation of support for early childhood development and education and the previous work, in 2013 the Governor's Office of Early Childhood submitted a successful application for a federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant and secured $44.3 million to advance the system change agenda established in the prior two years. As a result, our work has now progressed from the system redesign phase toward full implementation.

Through the successful Race to the Top award and in other ways in this biannual period, Kentucky's national stature has continued to grow and the state has been spotlighted for numerous successes. In 2013, U.S. Secretary of State Arne Duncan visited Kentucky twice to meet with local and state officials and to promote early childhood education initiatives.

"It is imperative to the future of Kentucky that our children get the best possible start in school and in life."

-GOVERNOR STEVE BESHEAR

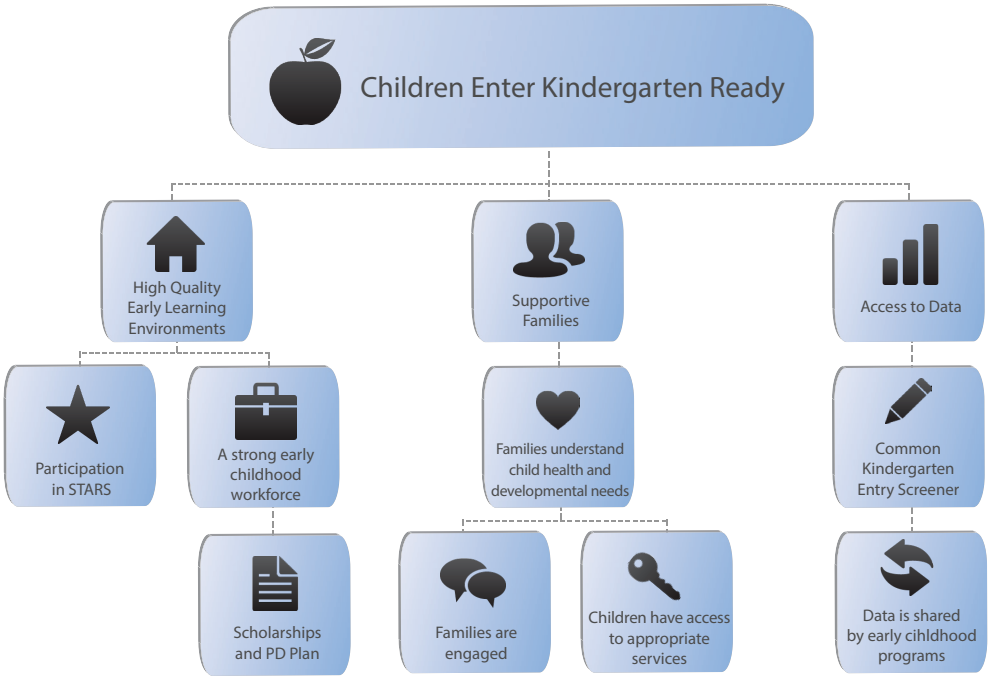
In 2015, Kentucky was one of five states awarded a $25,000 grant from the National Governor's Association to improve kindergarten readiness through the development of a soon to be released Superintendent's Toolbox. In an upcoming report by the Early Childhood Commission of the Southern Regional Education Board chaired by Governor Steve Beshear, Kentucky will be cited as a leader in improving the quality of early childhood education through the expansion of the state's quality rating and improvement system, Kentucky All STARS. Five Kentuckians were appointed to the Commission – Governor Beshear, Senator Mike Wilson, Representative Derrick Graham, Sharon Darling of the Center for Families Learning, and Terry Tolan from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. Our work continues to make an impact not only for Kentucky families, but serves as a model for states nationwide.

Kentucky agencies have also been awarded two Race to the Top District Challenge grants with an early childhood element, four Early Head Start Child Care Partnership grants, and the first in the nation rural Promise Neighborhoods grant. The profusion of federal grants provide further affirmation that Kentucky is now known for its innovation and commitment to early childhood development.

In our last Biannual Report, we highlighted the structural and programmatic changes that had taken place as a result of the creation of the Early Childhood Advisory Council, and noted past and recent accomplishments. In this Biannual Report, we will share our progress in the past two years and our future plans and aspirations to advance kindergarten readiness in the Commonwealth. In addition, we will briefly look back on 15 years of the Early Childhood Development Fund and its impact on the future of children in the Commonwealth.

WORK PLAN

In 2011, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Advisory Council adopted a work plan focused on preparing every child to be ready to succeed at school entry. We continue to pursue three main strategies to improve school readiness throughout the Commonwealth - improving the quality of all early care and education programs, engaging families as their child's first and most important teacher, and enhancing our ability to measure the impact of our work by improved data collection and integration.



CHILDREN ENTER KINDERGARTEN READY

The long-term outcome of our work is clearly focused on school readiness, and our goal is that every child will enter kindergarten "Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn & Ready to Succeed." In 2013 and 2014, the Kentucky Department of Education required every district to screen every child to assess their readiness at kindergarten entry. The kindergarten screening in 2014 found that half of our children arrive in kindergarten fully prepared to do kindergarten work. Despite a one percent gain over 2013 results, about 24,500 students entered kindergarten unprepared.

Recent studies show that children who start behind their peers in kindergarten are more likely to struggle throughout their school years and less likely to read at grade level, graduate from high school or to be prepared to compete in the workforce. Our strategies reflect our belief that school readiness begins before birth and is inclusive of the development of the whole child – physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. Consequently, our work with partners is broadly inclusive of prenatal health, early intervention programs, families, HANDS home visiting, early care and education programs, Head Start, public preschool, higher education, public libraries and others.

Foundational Accomplishments

In 2011, the Commonwealth adopted a multi-domain Kindergarten Readiness Definition (see Appendix C for definition) that has been widely used by educators to help families understand what will be expected of their child at kindergarten entry. Based on that definition, in 2012, the Kentucky Department of Education piloted the Brigance Universal Common Kindergarten Screen for assessing children's readiness as they arrive

Kindergarten Readiness Definition

School Readiness means that a child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success and ability to be ready to grow, ready to learn and ready to succeed.

at school. The screen was fully implemented in all 173 school districts in 2013, screening more than 50,000 children. These results will confirm our work going forward as we measure our progress in terms of gains in the number of children who arrive ready to succeed.

Progress in the Biannual Period

During this biannual period, the availability of the Brigance Screener results has literally "changed the conversation" in communities and the state about how we improve outcomes for children. Superintendents across the Commonwealth are charged with meeting the needs of all young learners in their districts once they arrive at school. And yet children spend the early years in a variety of settings which may include their home, licensed child care, the home of a relative or neighbor, Head Start or Early Head Start, or public preschool. Changing outcomes for kids requires that schools, families and communities work together on a common agenda with aligned strategies.

Community Early Childhood Councils, created in the KIDS NOW legislation in 2000 and funded with the Early Childhood Development Fund, are a primary example of working together. The number of active and effective Community Early Childhood Councils has grown since the creation of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, from 39 councils representing 60 counties in FY2012, to 83 councils serving 117 counties that were recently approved for FY2016. Community Early Childhood Councils serve as the "community table" for early childhood, bringing together schools, child care, Head Start, early intervention programs, children's librarians, local philanthropies, and more. Together, we believe they can craft strategies to improve kindergarten readiness for children in their communities. And in the future, we will measure their success by the changes in kindergarten readiness data (See Appendix D for more about Community Early Childhood Councils).

Future Aspirations

One project currently on the drawing board is the creation of the Superintendent's Toolbox - a new web based resource created in a partnership between the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Kentucky Department of Education, to empower Superintendents as local leaders to mobilize their communities to ensure that our children are ready to succeed beginning on their first day in the classroom. Launching later this year, the Toolbox will identify school and community partners and strategies to improve kindergarten readiness.

HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Increasing the number of children in high quality early learning programs has been a priority since the passage of the Kentucky Education Reform Act in 1990 and continued as a major focus of the KIDS NOW legislation in 2000. The Kentucky Education Reform Act made public preschool available to low income and at risk children and KIDS NOW worked to improve quality in private sector licensed and certified programs.

Foundational Accomplishments

When public preschool was established in 1990, it was created to be a high quality half-day early childhood program with certified teachers and quality learning environments. In 2010, the Kentucky Department for Education began a monitoring process for preschool programs called Preschool Program Review.

The STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating and improvement system was created in 2000 as a voluntary rating system for licensed and certified child care settings. Programs were encouraged to participate in the rating system and to use available program supports for achieving higher quality, and in 2013 about 40 percent had chosen to do so.

Progress in the Biannual Period

While both Preschool Program Review and STARS for KIDS NOW are effective models, research in the ensuing years about child development, feedback from providers and families, and a 2011 evaluation by an independent firm – ChildTrends - led the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, the Division of Child Care, and the Department of Education to begin planning with partners to enhance and align the quality standards and rating system for early childhood care and education programs. The STARS Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council began work in 2012 on the new design (see Appendix E for workgroup descriptions). State leaders are now in the process of operationalizing their recommendations.

Race to the Top provided the necessary resources to implement a new system of quality rating and improvement. We are using these resources to redesign the STARS for KIDS NOW rating system. STARS, operated statewide since 2000, gives child care providers resources to improve the quality of their services. The new system, called "Kentucky All STARS" will build on the foundation of STARS for KIDS NOW and Preschool Program Review, but expand to include public and private programs.

Governor Beshear and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services began the expansion of participation in STARS in the fall of 2014 by requiring that all programs that participate in the Child Care Assistance Program participate in the quality rating system. HB234, signed into law in 2015, further required that all programs that receive public funding be included in Kentucky All STARS. This includes Head Start, state-funded Pre-K Programs and any child care program that participates in the Child Care Assistance Program or receives other federal, state or local public funding.

Kentucky All STARS will also feature an enhanced system of training and technical assistance that programs can leverage to continually improve quality. Programs will receive specialized assistance in the areas of family engagement, curriculum, planning and assessment, classroom environments, staff qualifications

HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

and professional development, and administrative and leadership practices.

Programs will also be rewarded for achieving higher quality with enhanced reimbursement rates and other non-monetary incentives.

Public and private early care and education programs will use the same standards of quality, giving families a valuable tool to select programs their children. All programs in Kentucky All STARS will post their rating to display the independent assessment of their quality and have an opportunity to discuss how their program may fit a particular family's needs. Once Kentucky All STARS becomes fully operational in 2016, programs that are serving our most at risk children will have access to a system of supports designed to help them strengthen families and improve outcomes.

Future aspirations

Kentucky All STARS will be piloted now through the end of 2015 and will be fully operational in July of 2016. Today, there are 1,691 programs in STARS. When fully implemented, approximately 2,300 programs will proudly display the STARS rating. It is our hope that the remaining programs that are not required by statute to participate and do not currently participate will also join the rating system voluntarily. The system of rewards that will be created in late 2015 and heightened parent awareness should encourage them to do so.

A GREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

A key element in improving the quality of early learning environments is improving the qualifications of the early childhood workforce. This has been a focus since the early days of the KIDS NOW Initiative. Our research supports this strategy by demonstrating a strong correlation between teacher educational attainment and children's developmental progress.

Foundational Accomplishments

Through KIDS NOW, we have provided incentives (through the Division of Child Care) for programs to hire more educated staff and to encourage existing staff to access educational opportunities. We created

a system of regional professional development counselors to help aspiring students access appropriate coursework and financial assistance, a KIDS NOW scholarship program to help pay for both college and non-college professional development, a credentialing system for early childhood trainers, and articulation agreements with colleges and universities. This system of support for early childhood professionals is funded in part by the Early Childhood Development Fund.

For professionals employed at least 20 hours per week in early care and education programs, scholarships funded through the Early Childhood Development Fund are a key strategy for improving program quality. The Division of Child Care in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services provides scholarships for non-college classes. College scholarships are administered through the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority. These funds assist early care and education professionals in moving through a credentialing system that begins at entry level and proceeds through post-secondary education. Professional development counselors help scholars enroll in the scholarship program, craft a professional development plan, and negotiate the seamless system of professional development. In the Biannual period, more than 3,000 college scholarships and 1,200 non-college scholarships have been awarded and more than $1.8 million has been invested. Scholarships have been completely expended in recent years.

Progress in the Biannual Period

While Kentucky has established a nationally recognized system of supports for professional development for early childhood educators and programs, we believed that further work was necessary to enhance both access and quality of professional learning opportunities. In addition, the Kentucky Department for Education, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and Head Start have largely functioned with parallel systems for professional development for their educators including separate workforce and training registries, conferences, and trainings. Community Early Childhood Councils have been encouraged to offer high quality learning opportunities locally to benefit both licensed and school-based programs. But, for the most part, the systems remained separate.

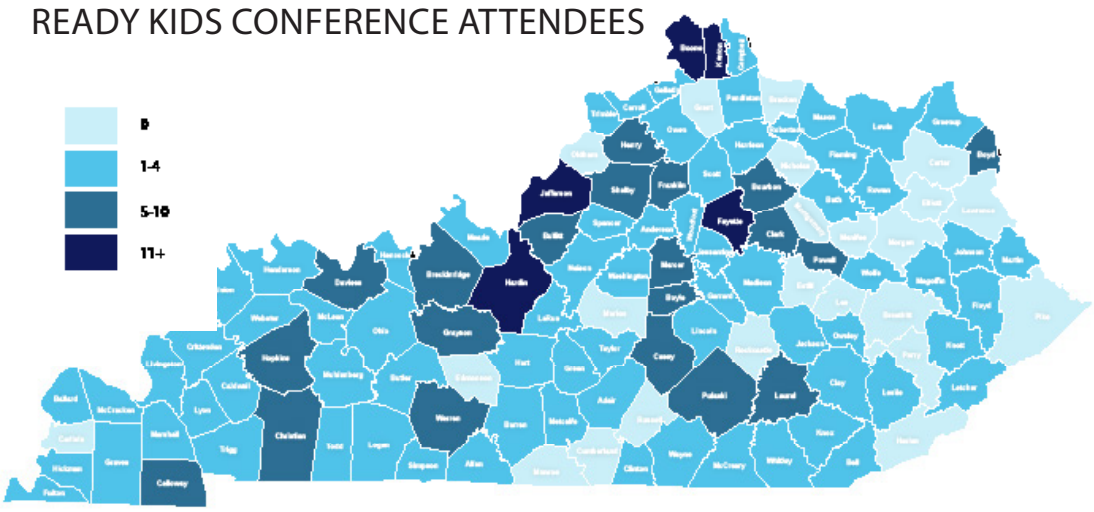
In 2014, with the encouragement of all partners, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood hosted the first ever Ready Kids Conference for professionals from child care, public preschool, and Head Start. The conference attracted more than 1,200 early childhood professionals.

This first conference was so successful that we were unable to find a venue sufficiently large to hold a 2015 Ready Kids Conference, so the Governor's Office of Early Childhood partnered with the Regional Training Centers to host five Ready Kids Regional Conferences. We anticipate a similar number of professionals will

A GREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

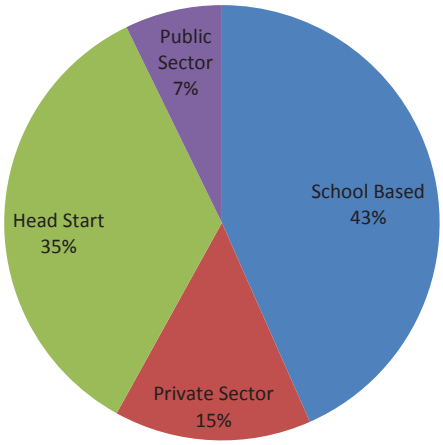
be in attendance for all five conferences this summer as were in the state-wide conference last summer.

READY KIDS CONFERENCE ATTENDEES



In July of 2016, we will once again host the Ready Kids Conference for all parts of the state in one location. We believe this combined quality learning opportunity is critical to meeting the needs of early childhood educators across settings and increasing partnership between all types of programs. In addition, using Race to the Top funding and in partnership with the Kentucky Department for Education and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, we are creating a unified workforce registry that will contain complete workforce education data on all early childhood educators and programs.

2014 Ready Kids Conference Attendee's Field of Work



Another important aspect of professional development moving forward will be creating a responsive professional development system with increased access to training opportunities around six high priority topics that support Kentucky All STARS. The responsive professional development system will support early childhood educators and give them greater access to skills and knowledge that make the most impact in their programs. The six high priority topics include Kentucky All STARS; Early Childhood Standards; Strengthening Families; Adult-Child Interactions; Screening and Assessment; and High Quality Environments.

One way that the Governor's Office of Early Childhood has worked to increase access to relevant training is by creating an online training module in partnership with Kentucky Educational Television. Launched in December 2014, more than 633 professionals have now completed the free online training module covering Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards. The module features videos of real educators explaining and demonstrating the standards in the classroom and covers essential components: standards; benchmarks; the developmental continuum; and example behaviors. We are currently working with Eastern Kentucky University on a similar online class on Strengthening Families and will continue to build high quality training in other priority areas.

A GREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

Future Aspirations

Increasing access to high quality professional development is a central strategy to help early learning and development programs achieve continuous improvement. Most often professional development opportunities focus on in-classroom staff. We have recognized, however, that we need to also provide program administrators with high quality learning, coaching and networking opportunities as well. According to ChildTrends' Blueprint for Early Care and Education Quality Improvement Initiatives, "Directors play a central role in early childhood education programs. Research has shown that their education, experience, and training directly influence their ability to facilitate quality improvement and maintain a high quality program." In response, Kentucky is building a network for local early learning and development program leaders. This program, funded by the Race to the Top grant, will engage administrators around high quality early learning and will be open to Head Start, community-based child care and school-based programs.

The local leadership development program will include a series of regional professional learning opportunities facilitated by eligible agencies that are successfully awarded funds from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. Awardees will hire staff and deploy required curriculum in a regional setting that will provide access to early childhood administrators statewide. Leaders will be provided the opportunity to network with early childhood colleagues, receive high quality professional learning on how to build and support a high quality workforce and other technical assistance topics.

Understanding the quality of the early childhood workforce is critical to promote continuous improvement. In order to better track what professional development educators are taking, Kentucky's Race to the Top plan outlines a project to integrate two data systems that currently house professional development records for early childhood educators. The Early Care and Education Training Records Information System contains professional development records for all licensed child care centers. Since 2014, licensed centers have been required to maintain information about the professional development of their staff in the Early Care and Education Training Records Information System. For school-based programs, the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System is available for districts to record professional development records of early childhood educators in the state-funded Pre-K Program. As detailed in Kentucky's Race to the Top plan, an interface will be built between the two systems to form a unified professional development data system for the state. With the combined data, both the Department of Education and the Division of Child Care can jointly examine the records to determine if gaps exist in the training being accessed and made available to the early childhood workforce. Likewise, the evaluation will provide important information to state officials as they devise policies designed to better support and improve competencies of the early childhood workforce.

SUPPORTIVE FAMILIES

While the work of improving environments continues to be important, according to a family survey conducted by the Division of Child Care in 2011, as many as half of Kentucky children under the age of five may not attend any organized program prior to attending kindergarten. That means that our commitment to school readiness for every child requires us to go beyond improving programs. We must develop strategies that help every family, parent, and caregiver understand the importance of their role as their child's first, most important teacher. Families need to be aware of the many ways that they can help their children develop optimally through their day-to-day talking, playing, and reading with their child.

Reaching this very diverse population is challenging and requires the deployment of a wide variety of strategies at both the state and local level. We are developing and refining tools, improving outreach and communications, and working with state and local partners to reach more families.

Foundational Accomplishments

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood has developed tools and materials for families, like our Parent Guides and the School Readiness definition and makes them widely available to families. We provide a wide variety of resources to families on our web site, in a section particularly targeted to families.

The Supporting Families Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council also created and distributed monthly messages aimed at reaching families and communities in an effort to increase their understanding of their child's early development. Each message focuses on early childhood development and is intended to assist teachers, caregivers, families and others in helping children be kindergarten ready. Past message topics have focused on the five domains of the School Readiness Definition and tips for families and parents.

Monthly messages are circulated through direct email to over 3,000 individual email addresses on the Governor's Office of Early Childhood distribution list, posted to social media sites and housed on the Kids Now website. We encourage our community partners to spread these messages by sharing with parents, writing letters to the editor, posting on a social media site or including in e-news or printed newsletters. Utilizing social media websites, our staff, partners, and other networks to distribute the messages results in an estimated potential reach of more than 50,000 individuals monthly (see Appendix F for example)

June 2015
Twitter Followers= **686**

June 2015
Facebook Page Likes= **683**

SUPPORTIVE FAMILIES

We have also worked closely with Community Early Childhood Councils to focus their efforts on engaging families. Their activities include public events like Literacy Fairs, early childhood developmental screening events, summer "kindergarten countdown" transition activities, activity days, cradle colleges, and many others. These types of activities are happening in communities across the Commonwealth.

Biannual Period

Although the creation of Kentucky All STARS is the largest of the Race to the Top projects, there are several other initiatives that will make meaningful impacts to families and children. The United Way Born Learning Academies are a series of parent education academies that help families focus on making every moment of a young child's life an opportunity for learning. Simple trips to the grocery store or bath-times can become a means for caregivers to introduce new language and concepts to developing minds. The academies also provide a beginning relationship between the school system and families that will hopefully continue into the school-age years. Toyota Manufacturing of Kentucky provided more than $1 million in funding to establish and support more than 50 school-based United Way Born Learning Academies. Building upon the success of this public and private partnership, Kentucky has now added more than $1.2 million in Race to the Top funds to establish an additional 150 academies to be supported by the Family Resource and Youth Service Centers. This will bring the total of United Way Born Learning Academies to 200 across the Commonwealth by 2017 and the Family Resource and Youth Service Centers will continue to train and support all of them after Toyota and Race to the Top funding have ended (see Appendix G for more about United Way Born Learning Academies).

Supporting programs through Kentucky All STARS and supporting families through the United Way Born Learning Academies are important components of the Race to the Top plan. In addition, in 2013, we have convened, with the Department of Public Health, partners from across state government and the private sector who interact with and support families of young children to align messaging and embed the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework in all of our programs. We are building on the commitment of state leadership as well as existing infrastructure in communities (e.g. Community Early Childhood Councils, Maternal and Infant Early Childhood, HANDS home visiting, Early Intervention, Social Services, and Help Me Grow). Working with traditional and non-traditional partners through the collective impact process will help to create more safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments for young children in Kentucky (see Appendix H for more about Kentucky Strengthening Families).

Race to the Top is now providing support to the Kentucky Strengthening Families initiative, co-hosted by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Department of Public Health. To date we have trained 101 of trainers in the Strengthening Families Framework, distributed 3,500 brochures, and made 37 presentations at meetings and conferences. As mentioned earlier, an online course is currently being developed.

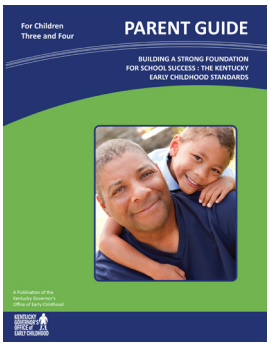
SUPPORTIVE FAMILIES

In addition, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood had parent guides translated into Spanish in 2015. Many organizations with direct access to families order parent guides including Family Resource and Youth Services Centers, public preschools and HANDS home visiting.

Future Aspirations

In future years, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood hopes to build a direct communication channel with parents, families and caregivers through social media, newsletters, and our web site. We would like to be the go-to source for families to find information about how they can help their child be successful in the early years.

Parent Guides printed in 2015



English: 93,000

Spanish:28,000

ACCESS TO DATA

Foundational Accomplishments

With the approved School Readiness Definition, the Commonwealth of Kentucky now has a common understanding of what it means to be ready to enter Kindergarten and the stage was set to evaluate the readiness of children at kindergarten entry.

In the 2013-2014 school year, Kentucky implemented the Brigance Kindergarten Screener in every school district for all children. Kentucky now has a baseline for measurement and accountability in future years. The readiness data will continue to inform future decision-making and facilitate deliberate planning for programs and services that improve early childhood outcomes. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood is a firm believer that what gets measured gets done. We are excited to have objective data on school readiness.

The screener is used in all Kentucky kindergarten classrooms to provide information to teachers and parents in order to support children's learning. Schools and districts also use this data to collaborate with families and communities to ensure all children are receiving developmentally appropriate educational instruction leading to success. The kindergarten screener is not used to determine eligibility for kindergarten. Educators will use the screener to observe students as they complete specific tasks. Data collected from the kindergarten readiness screener will inform teachers of each child's readiness to learn.

The aggregated screener data became the foundational data element for our Early Childhood Profiles (see Appendix I for sample profiles). The Early Childhood Profiles are county-specific tools that provide information about kindergarten readiness, access to preschool, Head Start and high quality care and education programs, a picture of the early childhood workforce, and selected demographic data elements that provide an indication of risk factors that may impact school readiness.

ACCESS TO DATA

These Profiles were created by the Data Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council in partnership with the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics, the Kentucky Department of Education and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

The profiles provide a valuable tool for local community groups, including Community Early Childhood Councils, to develop strategies for improving kindergarten readiness in their community.

Biannual Progress

Race to the Top has provided additional funding to support the ongoing work of the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to further integrate data from early childhood programs into the state's longitudinal data system. This shift towards a more comprehensive information system has the ability to increase access to services for families and increase overall system quality and the return on investment to these programs.

The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics shared repository is a data warehouse that includes sophisticated modules for matching data across different sources with different types of identifiers, report development systems, and a data model that allows identifiable data to be stripped from the records it receives. This data can then be used for reporting and analyses that can be securely linked with data from other sources about the same individuals even though they do not contain names, social security numbers, or other identifiable characteristics. The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics shared repository is a malleable system that is sensitive to the federal and state privacy concerns and data requirements of individual agencies within the collaborative currently.

In 2014 and 2015, data sharing agreements have been signed between the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics and The Cabinet for Health and Family Services to share information from HANDS Home Visiting, First Steps Early Intervention Program, and the Division of Child Care. In addition, we have begun planning a pilot to integrate child-level and program-level data from the Head Start and Early Head Start programs across the state.

Future Aspirations

The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics will link all current early childhood data systems and provide a whole picture of individual children as well as information on program and policy results at the community, regional, and state level. The Data Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council continues to craft questions which the data can or should be able to answer and to identify the need for further data collection or integration. As the level of partnership and trust grows between cabinets and departments, we believe this process will be streamlined in the future.

BUILDING BETTER, MORE EFFICIENT EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

Improving collaboration, coordination, and alignment across sectors is the hallmark of the Governor's charge to the Early Childhood Advisory Council, and is infused throughout every aspect of the work of the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. The overarching principle that guides all of our work is to create a much more unified system of services to support families and their young children.

Kentucky offers a wide range of services to families and children from prenatal to school entry. These services are delivered through a variety of state government agencies, local government, health, mental health, social service entities, non-profit and for-profit providers, and federally funded quasi-government entities. Numerous state programs in multiple state agencies and cabinets administer existing early childhood programs creating a fragmented system that is confusing to many. Different state and federal funding requirements make program alignment and effective communication difficult.

The competing missions of funding sources, differing rules, standards and processes, ownership and responsibilities, create significant barriers to collaboration and coordination of state, regional and local-level programs and services. Further threat is posed by current economic conditions that strain public and private resources. Additionally, the culture of each community can curtail or enhance collaboration and coordination. Collaboration among the policy and provider agencies is essential to realizing the maximum benefit for public investment in early childhood services. All Early Childhood Advisory Council Workgroups are also mindful of the importance of including Head Start, public preschool, child care and families in their plans to improve services. The degree to which we are able to knit together this complex system will determine our future success in many areas.

Foundational Work

The importance of the Community Early Childhood Councils to early childhood development in the Commonwealth of Kentucky is paramount. The Community Early Childhood Councils are the local voice of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. These groups include volunteer representatives (a list of potential council members is available in Appendix 9) who work together to promote school readiness in their local communities. Community Early Childhood Councils are essential in the distribution and implementation of the School Readiness Definition, Parent Guides, monthly messages and more. At the local level, Community Early Childhood Councils are able to put these documents in the hands of parents, families and communities, enabling the message of school readiness to be broadly available in the entire early childhood community.

The Community Collaboration Workgroup and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood are committed to providing year-round ongoing training and technical assistance to local councils to improve their capacity to impact change in their communities.

The agreement to adopt a common definition of school readiness was another example of a long history of cross-cabinet and cross- department collaboration. In previous years, Kentucky Department of Education, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood had co-authored the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards, the Continuous Assessment Guide, the Quality Self-Study, and the Parent Guides.

BUILDING BETTER, MORE EFFICIENT EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

Biannual Progress

The Race to the Top proposal demonstrated our strong, sustained commitment to partnership among the agencies that provide programs for young children and their families. The grant required detailed Memoranda of Understanding from Kentucky Department of Education, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. These Memoranda of Understanding provided the agreed upon commitments and activities of each participating state agency in the following areas of work.

- Kentucky All STARS
- Partnership in Strengthening Families and United Way Born Learning Academies
- Data sharing
- Aligning workforce data systems
- Leveraging professional development

All state agencies worked together to promote and support the 2014 Ready Kids Conference. Partners agreed not to host competing conferences that year, but instead joined in and encouraged attendance from those who had previously attended the Regional Training Center Summer Institutes, Community Early Childhood Council Institutes, the Head Start Summer Institute, the Infant-Toddler Conference, and the Kentucky Association for Early Childhood Educator. This greatly contributed to the success of the Ready Kids Conference and made it a much more inclusive event, in some cases at substantial loss of revenue to partners.

And the Governor's Office of Early Childhood continued to work to strengthen Community Early Childhood Councils in 2013-2014, hosting monthly education webinars, producing a newsletter, encouraging attendance at meetings and conferences, including the 2013 Community Early Childhood Council Institute and the 2014 Ready Kids Conference.

Future Aspirations

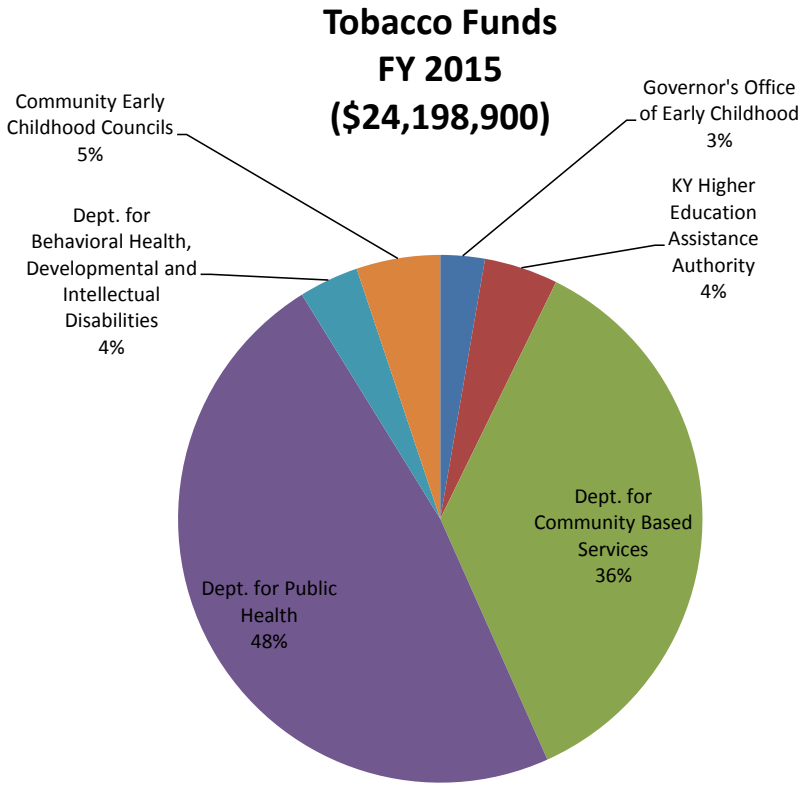
The Kentucky Department of Education and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood have convened a workgroup of collaborative partners eager to build a comprehensive strategy to facilitate increased communication and alignment between school districts and early learning communities. We refer to this strategy as the Superintendent's Toolbox.

The Superintendent's Toolbox will serve as a one-stop shop for resources and tactics that enable them to build meaningful partnerships between early childhood education and K-12 to create quality early learning opportunities for future students. The toolbox will be a model to demonstrate how aligned roles and shared responsibility between families, schools, early care providers and community partners can help improve outcomes for children, specifically school readiness.

INVESTMENT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

Based on KRS 200.151, Kentucky invests 25 percent of the Phase 1 Tobacco Settlement funds in the "Early Childhood Development Fund" for the KIDS NOW Early Childhood Initiative. This investment has produced many benefits for children, families and the Commonwealth. The KIDS NOW Initiative promotes partnerships across state agencies and public and private programs, and models comprehensive, collaborative efforts throughout the Kentucky system of early childhood services. Consistent with our "whole child" approach to our work, these dollars fund many different kinds of programs that support the health and development of young children and their families. These funds have played a critical role in our progress since 2000, and continue to be essential to the work of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and our ability to support services.

The Early Childhood Development Fund enables the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to recommend investment in many programs that work to develop the whole child, from before birth until they enter Kindergarten. These programs cross many state partners and local communities (see Appendix J for tobacco funded programs).



For a more complete and detailed list of programs that use Early Childhood Development Fund, see Appendix 10.

The oversight of the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood allows these programs and so many others to flourish under the umbrella of early childhood across the Commonwealth. In the years since HB706 was passed in the 2000 regular Legislative session, many programs supported by the Early Childhood Development Fund have led to long-term outcomes that could not have been achieved without these funds. These funds have launched, expanded, supported, and improved programs.

Key accomplishments made possible in part by the Early Childhood Development Fund since 2000:

In order to promote the healthy growth and development of the child within its family, a voluntary home visitation program, HANDS, was established for first time parents determined to be "at-risk." Third-party evaluation of the HANDS program shows that these families deliver more full-term babies and have a lower number of low birth weight and very low birth weight babies. In addition, HANDS families show a lower number of substantiated cases of physical abuse and neglect of babies.

INVESTMENT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

These positive program outcomes point to healthier children and a significant savings in healthcare dollars to the state. HANDS families also show significant positive changes in discipline, understanding child development, providing enriching learning experiences and quality/effective communication. Kentucky is still the only state in the nation with statewide coverage of state-funded home visiting. Beginning in 2016, the service will be available to families even if it is not their first child.

Another program example of how these milestones have been accomplished is the Newborn Metabolic Blood Screening program. This component of the initiative has helped to move Kentucky from the bottom of the scale to being one of only nine states to provide a complete panel of metabolic blood screens. As of January 1, 2006 Kentucky increased screening for 6 disorders to 29, the full panel recommended by the American College of Medical Genetics and the March of Dimes. The necessary equipment to make this possible was purchased with the Early Childhood Development Fund.

KIDS NOW Scholarships have worked to help increase professional development for early childhood professionals. In the Biannual period, more than 3,000 college scholarships and1,200 non-college scholarships have been awarded and more than $1.8 million has been invested. Since 2010, 100 percent of budgeted scholarship amounts have been awarded annually and requests exceeded available funds. In the 2014-2015 biennial budget the amount invested in scholarships increased for the first time in many years. These scholarships have allowed many non-traditional students to return to school and ultimately receive a credential or degree in early childhood and further their career goals.

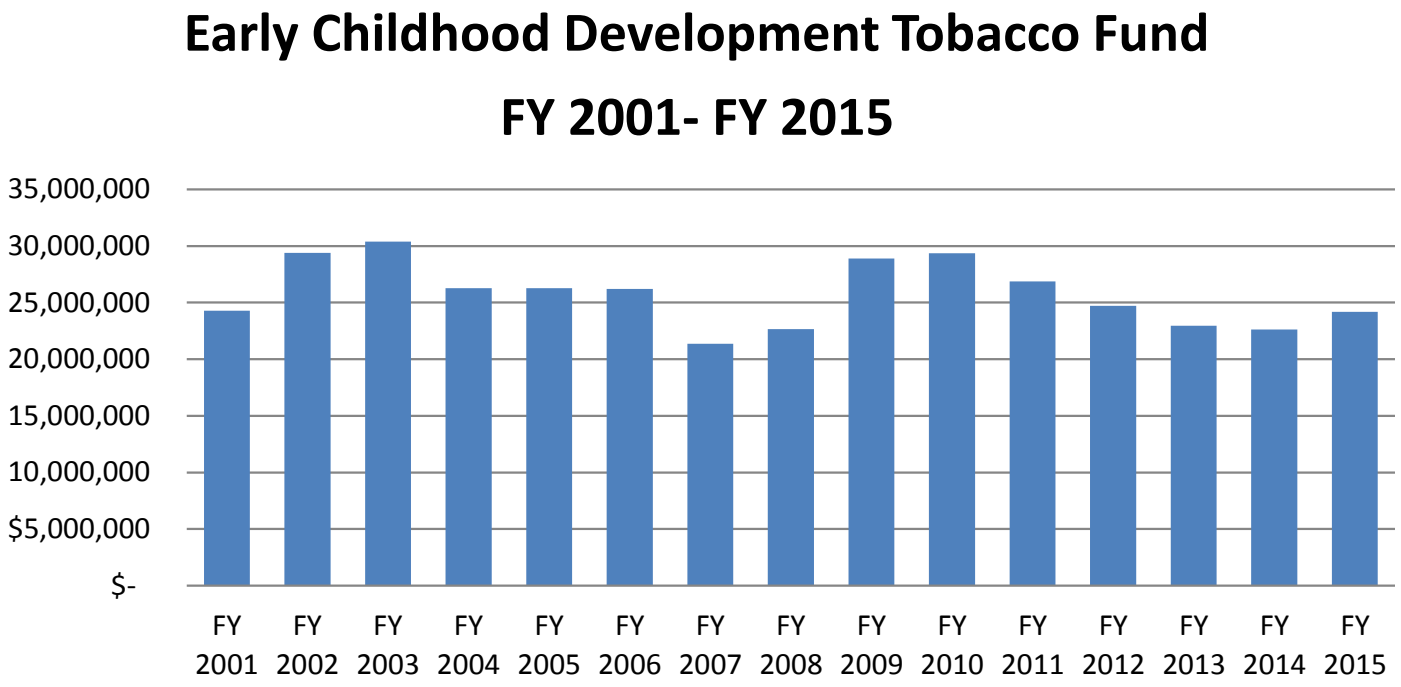
INVESTMENT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

Improving the quality of early childhood care and education programs continues to be a focus of the KIDS NOW Initiative and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. In the early years of the KIDS NOW Initiative, emphasis was on creating a voluntary quality rating and improvement system which we know as STARS for KIDS NOW. We also put in place a system of supports to encourage programs to be part of this voluntary system.

Historically, about 25 percent of licensed programs have participated. That number has substantially increased since the emergency regulation introduced by Governor Beshear requiring all programs that receive Child Care Assistance Program funds to be in the STARS program. And with Governor Beshear recently signing into law HB234, soon all programs that receive public funds will be required to participate.

Early Childhood Development funded programs, like Community Early Childhood Councils, are a key strategy in increasing collaboration and improving local implementation in our work plan. Community Early Childhood Councils were originally established in HB706 and have been funded at about $1 million annually since 2001. Beginning in 2011, the Community Collaboration Workgroup of the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood have focused intensely on building the capacity and effectiveness of Community Early Childhood Councils as a local leadership group working to improve early childhood outcomes.

We believe that, at their best, Community Early Childhood Councils are effective agents for change in local systems that benefit families and children. They can bring together diverse members of their local community and mobilize them to work in concert to achieve community level improvements in kindergarten readiness. In the FY 2015 grant cycle, 82 councils were funded, covering a total of 117 counties.



INVESTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

Overall, these investments have changed the way we think about and function across early childhood programs and systems, resulting in:

1. **Statewide expansion of HANDS and the benefits the program has had in strengthening families, improving health outcomes, and reducing child abuse and neglect;**
2. **Increased capacity statewide for services to identify metabolic disorder early, address early childhood mental health, early childhood oral health, immunizations, and higher quality child care;**
3. **Increased professional development for staff who serve young children and families, creating better environments for learning;**
4. **Increased attention and focus on early childhood issues; particularly on the critical 0-3 years of early brain development;**
5. **Increased community ownership and involvement in developing local supports and resources for families and development of local early childhood councils.**

In addition to providing badly needed resources to early childhood programs, the Early Childhood Development Fund leverages significant federal funding. In an average year, for example, the HANDS Home Visiting Program generates almost $15 million in federal funds thanks to the tobacco investment meeting the maintenance of effort requirement of about $8 million. And during the state General Fund budget reductions that occurred during the years of the recession, having Early Childhood Development Fund in the child care budget enabled the state to continue to meet match and maintenance of effort requirements for the Child Care Development Fund block grant; thereby avoiding more drastic reductions in child care.

FUNDING FOR THE FUTURE

Kentucky's longstanding commitment to our youngest citizens was energized in 2000 when the Early Childhood Development Authority was created and the Kentucky legislature designated 25 percent of the Early Childhood Development Fund to enhance early childhood initiatives. This allotment of funds has allowed Kentucky to invest in many programs and initiatives that develop the whole child, from before birth until they enter Kindergarten.

Governor Beshear charged the Governor's Office of Early Childhood with moving the needle on early childhood outcomes and we have made incredible strides. A school readiness definition was developed so that all families will know how best to prepare their children for success in school. A statewide kindergarten entry screen was implemented so that teachers will have information to guide instruction and close learning gaps before they have a chance to widen. More than $1 million have been invested annually in local communities through Community Early Childhood Councils so they can develop local plans to meet unique needs.

The Early Childhood Development Fund has allowed the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to support high quality early learning environments through encouraging professional development and offering scholarships to early childhood professionals to further their training and education. Recent additional funding in the form of a $44.3 million federal grant has allowed the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to further expand and enhance the state's quality rating system for early childhood programs and to support families in new ways. As the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and state partners work to implement Race to the Top, we must also plan for the future.

Indeed, all Race to the Top funds must be expended by the end of 2017. It becomes imperative that the state considers strategies that will sustain the work to support programs, families and children. HB234 requires that the Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services prepare a report for the Interim Joint Committees on Education and Health and Welfare by November 1, 2017. The report will contain recommendations and plans for sustaining program quality after the depletion of federal Race to the Top grant funds. Although most of the funds are targeted at one time incentives and up front capacity building designed to encourage a rapid increase in quality, it is expected that additional investments will need to be made.

According to Governor Beshear, "Kentucky suffers from historically low reimbursement rates for child-care providers who serve low-income families, and incentives and rewards for providers for high quality will go away when the grant runs out." If we want high quality programs, we must support them. As the Governor's Office of Early Childhood works with state partners to develop strategies to sustain quality after Race to the Top, it will be an opportunity for the entire Commonwealth to examine if we are truly investing in early childhood programs at a sufficient level to cover the cost of high quality services.

FUNDING FOR THE FUTURE

It is easy to see that Early Childhood Development Fund and federal grants have been an important asset to the Commonwealth, but funds are decreasing, and over the past years we have seen an accelerated decline. When the Early Childhood Development Fund was established in 2000, the projections estimated ten years of funding. Instead, here we are in 2015, and we continue to receive funding, but it is a diminishing pool. We know that these funds will not continue indefinitely. It is imperative the Commonwealth has a plan for how those funds are going to be replaced going forward. If a plan is not in place, we will face a crisis of supporting existing programs for families and children as the funds continue to diminish. It is imperative that Kentucky not only continues to build on this work, but also commits new resources and funding.

Investing in early childhood is one of the most cost- effective approaches to increasing education, health and economic outcomes and lowering the costs of special education and social programs. Sustainable funding will be critical to Kentucky's ability to continue to provide essential services to families and children and to continue to improve the early childhood system at both the state and local level.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR KENTUCKY?

In this Biannual Report, we have highlighted on past, current and ongoing work to improve kindergarten readiness in Kentucky. We have also highlighted some of the anticipated challenges we will face as grant funding and the Early Childhood Development Fund diminish and ultimately end. But beyond funding, how does Kentucky sustain our momentum on improving early outcomes for young children and build on our past innovation and success?

The logical next step to enhance quality of early care and education programs would be to deliver publicly funded preschool through both private and school based providers. These collaborative delivery models would allow parents more access to preschool and assure that a larger percentage of eligible children take advantage of publicly-funded high quality preschool delivered in the context of full-day child care programs. It would also encourage public and private providers to work more collaboratively together and allow for shared costs and efficiencies.

In 2013, Governor Beshear championed and the General Assembly approved an expansion of preschool eligibility to families with incomes up to 160 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. The new eligibility will go into effect in the 2015-16 school year. In 2014, the General Assembly also committed General Funds for the first time to enhance Child Care Assistance and extend it to families earning 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

While increased eligibility in recent years demonstrates commitment and progress on assuring access to high quality early learning programs, we know that low-middle and middle income families are still least likely to access high quality preschool in school or private settings.

Governor Beshear has had a long commitment to increasing eligibility for preschool to 200 percent of Federal Poverty Level. That goal, coupled with enhancing eligibility and funding to high quality private sector programs serving low income children and collaborative delivery of preschool would increase access for working families who cannot otherwise afford it.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR KENTUCKY?

While working to enhance and expand programs, it will also be important that Kentucky continue to offer relevant professional learning for its early childhood workforce. Since 2000, Kentucky has had a system and devoted significant resources to improving early childhood teacher knowledge and skills by increasing access to high quality professional development, support of non-college and college scholarships, and financial rewards for credential and degree attainment. Kentucky has devoted more than $15 million to college scholarships for early childhood educators since 2001. School based teachers are required to hold an Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education credential administered by Education Professional Standards Board.

Kentucky currently rates nine out of ten on the "NIEER State Preschool Yearbook" because Kentucky does not require a credential or degree for preschool aids or assistant teachers. We could require preschool assistants to have a Child Development Associate credential by some future date and commit additional scholarship funds to assist them in achieving the credential. This would raise our score, but more importantly, would improve classroom quality and child outcomes.

Running a high quality early childhood programs is expensive. Kentucky has a historically low reimbursement rates for child care providers who serve low income families. Race to the Top will allow us to increase incentives and rewards to providers for achieving higher quality, but they will not sustain this increased rate after the grant ends in 2018. While the incentive system is in the design phase right now and the cost has not yet been determined, we estimate that Kentucky may need more than an additional $6 million per year to sustain Race to the Top rates and adequately reimburse programs to sustain high quality. In addition, we will need the commitment of the General Assembly to sustain General Fund investments in the Child Care Assistance Programs.

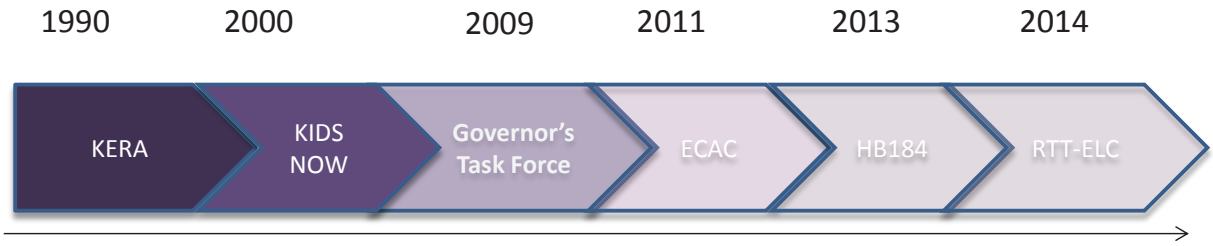
In order to continue the progress we have made and reach for more improvements in early childhood, it is imperative there is increased collaboration across the state. In 2011, acting on a recommendation from his Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education, Governor Beshear established the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (see Appendix K for staff list). The Governor's Office of Early Childhood was charged with unifying the work of the entire state and local early childhood system to better leverage resources across agencies to improve kindergarten readiness. Cross Cabinet commitment to the Governor's early childhood priorities has been a powerful driver of Kentucky's progress. In 2013, Kentucky secured a $44.3 million Race to the Top grant to further this work. Inter-agency cooperation was cited as a strength in Kentucky's application. This was facilitated by the Governor's creation of an office focused on increased collaboration. It is essential that the Office of Early Childhood continues to represent the Governor's agenda through its placement in the Governor's office.

The most direct path to a stronger Kentucky, the very best thing Kentucky can do for its future, is to build a healthier, more educated population and workforce. And that begins with getting our children off to a good start. We have much to be proud of. And we have many opportunities ahead.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: HISTORY OF KIDS NOW

Early Childhood Progress in the Commonwealth



Kentucky Education Reform Act – Created State-Funded Preschool program and full utilization

Kentucky Invests in Developing Success – Created The Early Childhood Development Authority. Committed 25% of tobacco settlement to Early Childhood

Governors Task Force on Early Childhood Development & Education A 28 member task force makes **eight** recommendations for early childhood in Kentucky

Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) Governor creates the 26 member council to promote program accountability and provide guidance that affects Kentucky children and families

House Bill 184 Passed Incorporated Governor Beshear's executive order in KIDS NOW legislation

RTT-ELC Brings $44.3mm to effect systems change in KY EC systems

The Commonwealth has a history of successful, innovative initiatives in the field of early childhood development and education: from Head Start's inception in Kentucky in 1965, the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) in 1990, to the KIDS NOW Initiative and legislation in 2000. Additionally, the Head Start Reauthorization Act passed by Congress created the opportunity for establishing a state Early Childhood Advisory Council.

In 2000, the Early Childhood Development Authority adopted the 20 Year Comprehensive Task Force Report that organized the KIDS NOW program initiatives into four categories: Assuring Maternal & Child Health; Supporting Families; Enhancing Early Care and Education; Establishing the Support Structure.

In July of 2009, Governor Steve Beshear appointed a 28 member Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE). Governor Beshear directed the Task Force to promote greater collaboration among providers of services to young children and reliance on accepted early learning standards and assessment, to bring a renewed emphasis to quality at all levels and to determine a common understanding and definition of "school readiness." Additionally, the Task Force was asked to review the current service delivery system to ensure a more effective use of the public's resources and a successful transition to kindergarten. The Task Force members brought a variety of professional and community experiences to the process. Membership included representatives from the public school system, universities and Head Start; state government agencies including health, education and social service agencies; day care; advocates and community based providers. In late 2009 and throughout 2010, the Task Force focused on the development and compilation of its recommendations to address: "greater collaboration among providers of services to young children, quality at all levels from early childcare through kindergarten, agreement on what constitutes school readiness, and reliance on accepted early learning standards and assessment."

Throughout the discussions, the concept of the "whole child" was paramount in that members included the health, social-emotional, cultural and cognitive aspects of a child and continually acknowledged the importance of the relationships among children, families, schools and communities.

In July 2011, the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education made 8 recommendations. In the two years that have followed, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and partners have accomplished many of the tasks set forth in these recommendations along with continuing the efforts set forth in the 20 Year Plan.

In 2013, House Bill 184 passed, enacting the new governing structure identified and other changes previously made in the Executive order into the KIDS NOW legislation.

In 2014, Kentucky received a $44.3 million federal Race to the Top grant to expand and enhance the quality rating system for early childhood programs. And soon after, Governor Beshear signed into law HB234 requiring all programs that receive public funds to participate in the rating system Kentucky All STARS.

APPENDIX B: ECAC MEMBER LIST

- Senator Tom Buford
- Kentucky State Senate, Republican 22nd District

- Representative Tom Burch
- Kentucky House of Representatives, District 30 in Southeastern Jefferson County

- Jane Chandler
- Principal of Corbin Preschool Center, Director of Special Education, Preschool Coordinator

- Marilyn Coffey
- Retired Educator, Local School Board Member

- Ben Cundiff
- Partner in Cundiff Farms

- Dreama Gentry
- Executive Director, Partners for Education at Berea College

- Paula Goff
- Part C of IDEA Coordinator

- Tracy Haddix
- Director of Children's Services, Community Action of Southern Kentucky

- Audrey Haynes
- Secretary, Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

- Cindy Heine
- Early Childhood Advocate

- Terry Holliday
- Kentucky Commissioner of Education

- Amy Hood Hooten
- Infant/Toddler & Early Childhood Specialist for Training and Technical Assistance Services at Western Kentucky University

- Daphne Hosinski
- Pediatrician

- Rick Hulefeld
- Executive Director, Children Inc.

- Marybeth Jackson
- Director for the Division of Child Care (DCC) at the Kentucky

- Jennifer Miller
- Director, Head Start Collaboration Office

- Brigitte Blom Ramsey
- Executive Director, Prichard Committee

- Nicki Patton Rowe
- Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer, Simpson County RTC

- Bill Scott
- Executive Director, Kentucky School Board Association (KSBA)

- Anna Shepherd
- Head Start & Preschool Director for Floyd County Schools

- Dr. Ruth Ann Shepherd
- Division Director for Maternal and Child Health in the Kentucky

- June Widman
- Executive Director of the Eastern Kentucky Child Care Coalition

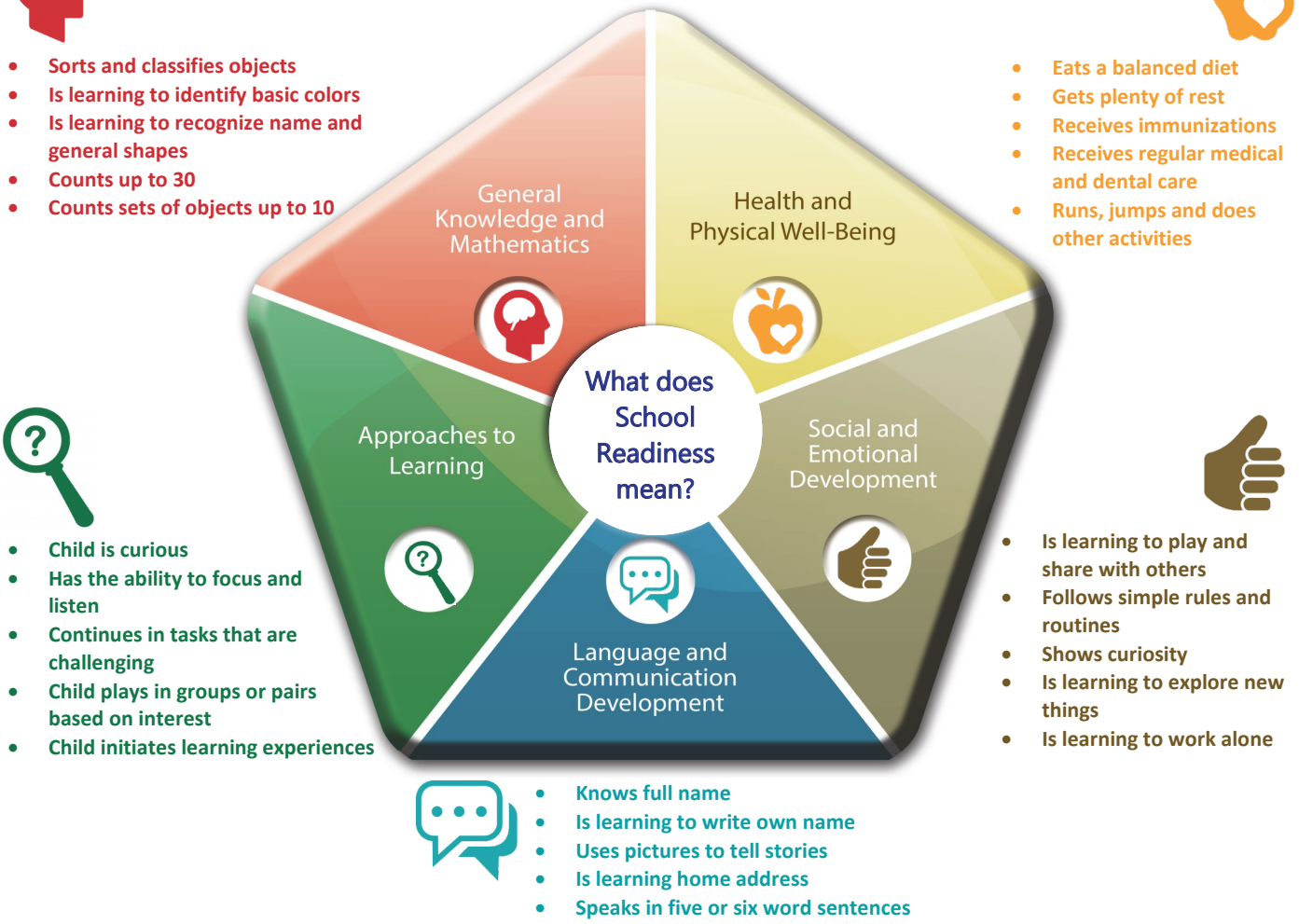
- Kathryn Whitmore
- Endowed Chair, Director, Early Childhood Research Center

- Tom Zawacki
- Secretary, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL READINESS DEFINITION

School Readiness in Kentucky

School readiness means that each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success and ability to be **Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn & Ready to Succeed.**



The skills listed in the diagram above are helpful for children to know before entering Kindergarten. The indicators included represent the hopes and aspirations for incoming students, not the expectations. Kentucky recognizes that children develop and learn at different rates and times. Not every child will master all of the skills and behaviors listed above prior to Kindergarten. These skills and behaviors are NOT USED to determine school eligibility. In Kentucky, all children who meet the legal age requirement are entitled to enter public school.

Families, early care and education providers, schools and community partners must work together to provide developmental experiences that promote growth and learning, to ensure that all children enter school eager and excited to learn. The purpose of this definition is to give parents, child care and preschool, and communities an overview of the expectations of schools for incoming students and to help families and communities prepare children for school. In addition, a readiness profile provides teachers, child care providers, and parents a tool to better inform them on the specific strengths and needs of each individual child.

KENTUCKY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of EARLY CHILDHOOD

Partners involved in creating this document include the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the Kentucky Head Start Association. Special thanks to Jefferson County Public Schools for the development of the graphic.

APPENDIX D: COMMUNITY EARLY CHILDHOOD COUN-

The Early Childhood Advisory Council may recognize and fund a community early childhood council. A council shall be composed of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than twenty-seven (27) members. Each council shall be composed of at least one (1) member representing local agencies or organizations from profit, nonprofit, or family child care, Head Start or Early Head Start, and each school district in its designated service area. Other members may be appointed who represent local agencies and organizations, including, but not limited to, the organizations or agencies listed below:

(a) Early childhood advocate;

(b) Faith community;

(c)Family resource center;

(d)Military establishment;

(e) Child-care resource and referral agency or child-care subsidy agent;

(f) Child-care consumer or parent;

(g) County cooperative extension service;

(h) Department for public health;

(i) University, college, or technical school;

(j)United Way;

(k)Kentucky Early Intervention System;

(l)Agency administering services to children with disabilities;

(m)Home visitation agency;

(n)Family literacy agency;

(o)Civic organization;

(p)Public library;

(q)Regional training center;

(r)Community action agency;

(s)Government;

(t)Business community;

(u)Home schooling association;

(v)Health care professional;

(w)Foster care parent; or

(x) Adoptive parent.

APPENDIX E: ECAC WORKGROUP DESCRIPTIONS

The Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) plays a pivotal role as the components of the Kentucky Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) plan are implemented. Below is a summary of each ECAC workgroup's activities.

- Data Systems – Kentucky's RTT-ELC plan provides funds to expand the Longitudinal Data System to include more early childhood data. In the coming two years, members of the data workgroup will act in an advisory capacity to the Kentucky Center for Economic Workforce Statistics as they identify data sources and build interfaces to collect additional data.

- Community Collaboration - The Community Collaboration Subcommittee provides recommendations to the ECAC and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood regarding Kentucky's Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs). CECCs are community-based, volunteer organizations that convene groups of Early Childhood advocates to address local needs. Some data suggest that up to 40% of Kentucky's children are not in a formal setting prior to entering kindergarten. Therefore, preparing all children for kindergarten is not solely a Head Start, school district or child care problem. The CECCs are eligible to receive funding through the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to identify and address areas of local need.

- Professional Development – A primary strategy to continually improve the quality of the early childhood workforce in Kentucky is to do so with high quality professional development. The Professional Development workgroup is tasked with developing a plan to redesign the State's system of delivery for training and technical assistance. The primary task will be to focus on several high priority topics.

- Program Investment – The Program Investment Subcommittee provides ECAC with analysis and recommendation on programs funded through KidsNow initiatives. KidsNow initiatives are funded through Kentucky's investment in 25% of all tobacco settlement dollars.

- Public Awareness – This group works to engage the leaders and decision makers around early childhood issues. It is currently working to solidify branding and create a cross-agency communications group for Kentucky All-STARS. It has also working to reach out to political leaders to reinforce the importance of funding early childhood issues in Kentucky.

- STARS for Kids Now Workgroup – The STARS workgroup, designated as the STARS Redesign Team will play a pivotal role in the expansion of the existing rating system. The team is chaired by a Head Start Director and will be responsible for re-envisioning the new system to cover all of the standards of quality. Once the indicators of quality have been identified, the team will work with national experts in order to evaluate the components of the expanded system. This team will also work with State and National experts to design "alternate pathways" for Head Start and School-based programs. Kentucky is conducting a pilot (as of July 1, 2015) to further evaluate how the expanded system identifies and rates levels of quality.

- Supporting Families – The Supporting Families workgroup focuses on engaging families as children's first, most important teachers. We work to align messaging to families between cross-agency partners with workgroup membership representing child care programs, Community Early Childhood Councils, Public Health, United Way Born Learning Academies and non-profit partners. We are responsible for determining the topics for our widely circulated Monthly Message email distribution that helps families play an active role in their child's kindergarten readiness.

Monthly Message:

Making the Most of Everyday Moments

The holidays can be a busy season for many families. Thankfully, creating brain-building moments with your child can easily be a part of your families current routine. During the first five years of life, 700 connections happen every second in your child's brain. Back and forth interactions with adults are a main way these connections are formed. Try out some of these activities, created by Vroom, to make the most of your families everyday moments.

ACTIVITIES

AGE 0-1

BEDTIME

Weather Report

At bedtime, talk to your child about the weather today and what it meant for you. "Today was COLD. I wish I wore a heavy jacket because I was outside all morning!"

Brainy Background

Talking about everyday activities helps build children's vocabulary, communication skills and their brains!

AGE 1-2

PLAY TIME

Blanket Box

Put a spoon or one of your child's toys inside a box. Cover it with a blanket and say, "Bye, bye." Then pull the blanket off and say, "Hello." Do it again. Now it's your child's turn. What does he/she do? What do you think your child is thinking?

Brainy Background

Your child is learning that something exists even when he/she can't see it, and is learning to hold a picture of something in his/her mind. This thinking skill is necessary for imagination, creativity and using letters to stand for sounds in reading.

AGE 2-3

MEALTIME

Bowl Half Full

When your child is eating out of a bowl, have a back and forth conversation about how full the bowl is. Is it a little full? Half full?

Brainy Background

When you have a back and forth conversation about how full the bowl is, you are helping your child gain basic ideas about math. It can also help him/her learn new words!

SOURCE: http://joinvroom.org/sites/default/files/Vroom_Activities_English_0.pdf

KENTUCKY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of EARLY CHILDHOOD
Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn & Ready to Succeed

APPENDIX F: MONTHLY MESSAGE EXAMPLE

AGE 3-4

PLAY TIME

Dance Moves

Playtime can become a dance party. Turn on some tunes on your phone or radio and start doing a silly dance. Shake a leg, wiggle your hips. Can your child copy your moves? Next song, it's his/her turn to lead. Go back and forth until you're danced out.

Brainy Background

Believe it or not, dancing games can be great brain-builders! This one in particular teaches your child to pay attention to sounds and rhythm and to imitate you using her/his body. It also gives him/her the chance to be the leader and that's a good feeling.

AGE 4-5

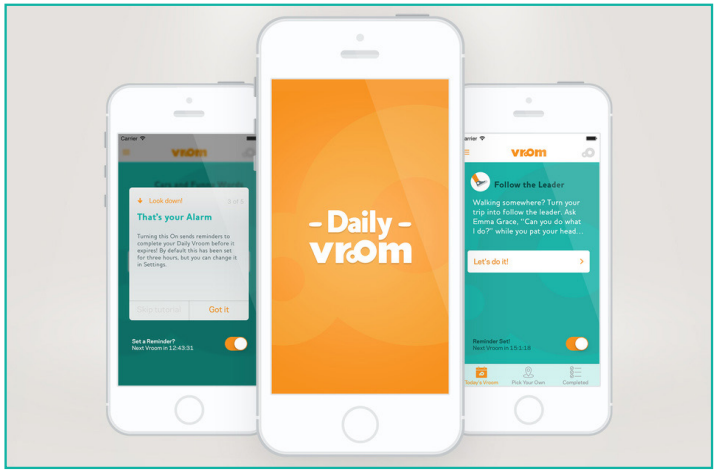
GETTING DRESSED

Name That Clothing

Try getting dressed a new way this morning! Lay your child's clothes out, but instead of asking him/her to find his/her pants, ask your child "Can you find the clothes you wear on your legs? On your feet?" Keep playing until your child is dressed.

Brainy Background

This new way of dressing gives your child practice using information he/she is holding in his/her mind- what scientists call your child's "working memory." Using information you know in different ways helps lead to success in school and success in life!



Available for iPhone or Android users in English and Spanish.

Want more ideas?

Download the Daily Vroom app on your phone to get daily brain-building ideas based on your child's age. They are easy ways to make the most of everyday moments.

Visit www.joinvroom.org

APPENDIX G: UNITED WAY BORN LEARNING ACADEMY

United Way bornlearning® academy

All children are born learning! In the first few years of life, a child's brain is formed by experiences and environments. This lays the foundation for learning. As a child's first and best teacher, parents provide the interaction and nurturing relationships young children need to learn. United Way Born Learning Academies partner with families to make the most of learning in the early years.

In Kentucky, half of children do not arrive at kindergarten ready to learn. Families can take an active role in getting their child ready for kindergarten starting from birth through United Way Born Learning Academies. The program offers practical ideas to turn everyday moments into learning opportunities. Through a series of six free workshops, parents, families and caregivers learn about child development and how to spark learning during ordinary routines like bath times and grocery trips. Workshops are open to all families with children from birth to age five. Free childcare and dinner are provided. Many offer prizes and graduations at the conclusion of the program. Workshops take place in elementary schools and are coordinated by local Family Resource and Youth Service Centers.

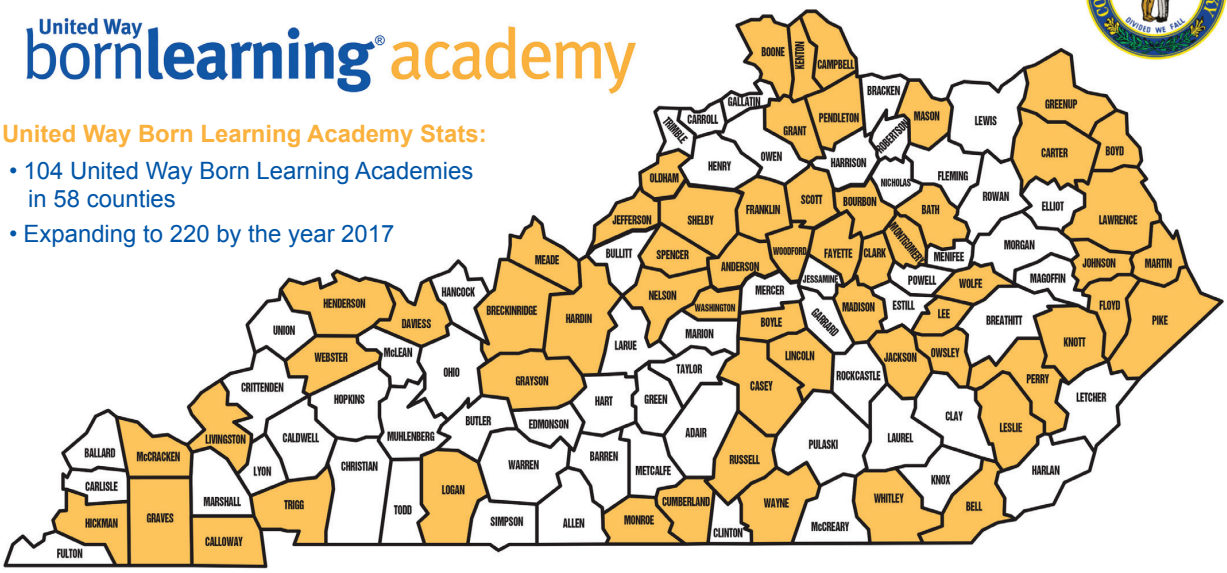
History

Inspired by The Harlem Children's Zone Project in New York and United Way's Born Learning campaign, former Kenton County Superintendent Tim Hanner partnered with United Way of Greater Cincinnati Success By 6, Northern Kentucky University faculty, and local schools to develop and launch the Born Learning Academy in 2009. In 2012, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky committed $1 million to fund 50 Born Learning Academies over 5 years. In 2014, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood pledged $1.4 million from the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant to expand the program by 150 Academies. Today, the partnership includes The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, United Way of Greater Cincinnati Success By 6, The Governor's Office of Early Childhood, United Way of Kentucky, Toyota and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

United Way bornlearning® academy

United Way Born Learning Academy Stats:

- 104 United Way Born Learning Academies in 58 counties
- Expanding to 220 by the year 2017



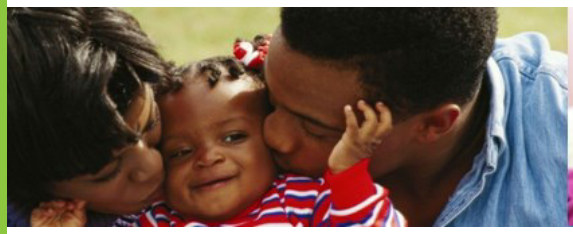
KENTUCKY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of EARLY CHILDHOOD
Ready to Grow. Ready to Learn & Ready to Succeed

TOYOTA KENTUCKY

United Way

For more information, visit kidsnow.ky.gov

APPENDIX H: KENTUCKY STRENGTHENING FAMILIES



What is Kentucky Strengthening Families?

Kentucky Strengthening Families (KYSF) represents a multi-disciplinary partnership of over 20 national, state and local, and public and private organizations **dedicated to embedding six research-based Protective Factors into services and supports for children and their families**. Supporting families is key strategy for promoting school readiness and preventing child abuse and neglect. All families experience times of stress, and research demonstrates that children grow and learn best in families who have the supports and skills to deal with those times. By supporting families and building their skills to cope with stressors, we can increase school readiness and reduce the likelihood abuse will occur in families. **Kentucky Strengthening Families** is using a nationally recognized strategy—Strengthening Families: A Protective Factors Framework – which is coordinated nationally by the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

KYSF is funded by the Governor's Office for Early Childhood (GOEC) through the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge Grant Program and the Kentucky Department for Public Health through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant Program.

Kentucky Strengthening Families Vision

All Kentucky Children are healthy, safe and prepared to succeed in school and in life through families that are supported and strengthened within their communities.

Kentucky Strengthening Families Mission

Kentucky is strengthening families, promoting knowledge and skills, and providing access to resources and support by enhancing protective factors through family, community, and state partnerships.

The Protective Factors

The Protective Factors lay the foundation for the Strengthening Families Framework. Protective factors are conditions in families and communities, which when present, help increase the health and well-being of families and children and reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect . All Kentucky families can benefit from comprehensive efforts to build protective factors. The protective factors identified for Kentucky are:

1. **Parental Resilience**
   Families bounce back
2. **Social Connections**
   Families have friends they can count on
3. **Knowledge of Child Development**
   Families learn how their children grow and develop
4. **Concrete Support in Times of Need**
   Families get assistance to meet basic needs
5. **Social and Emotional Competence of Children**
   Families teach children how to have healthy relationships
6. **Nurturing and Attachment**
   Families ensure children feel loved and safe

KENTUCKY
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

APPENDIX H: KENTUCKY STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Background

In 2001, with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) began studying the role that early child care and education programs nationwide can play in strengthening families and preventing abuse and neglect. The Strengthening Families conceptual framework involves building research-based Protective Factors around young children by working differently with their families across all child- and family-serving organizations and systems. This approach includes aligning systems with protective factors, using data driven decision-making, marshaling leadership and making policy and systems changes on multiple levels.

In 2013, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Kentucky Department for Public Health convened a group inclusive of many organizations that touch families to explore the implementation of the Strengthening Families framework. These organizations represented by the leadership team below made a commitment to embed the protective factors in the daily practice of government and community-based programs. In January 2014, the Leadership Team developed a strategic plan to move the **Kentucky Strengthening Families** initiative forward in the Commonwealth.

Leadership Team

- Governor's Office of Early Childhood
- Department for Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health
- Cabinet for Health and Family Service, Office of Policy and Budget
- Children, Inc.
- Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
- Department for Community Based Services, Division of Child Care
- Department for Community Based Services, Division of Protection and Permanency
- Department of Education
- Department for Libraries & Archives
- Department for Medicaid Services and Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP)
- Family Resource and Youth Services Centers
- Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Kentucky Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs
- Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children, Inc.
- Metro United Way
- Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky
- Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence

Key Aspects of Kentucky's Work

In Kentucky Strengthening Families, we have a shared commitment to:

- Promoting strong families and healthy development for families prenatally through age five
- Partnering with all families and celebrating differences
- Using protective factors as a strengths-based philosophy to buffer for toxic stress
- Building knowledge and skills for individual and system change
- Creating safe, stable and nurturing environments for people to have responsive and caring relationships

For more information online

http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/mch/ecd/

Kentucky Strengthening Families contact

Tal Curry at **tal.curry@ky.gov**

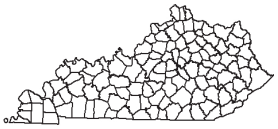
Blair Haydon at blair.haydon**@ky.gov**

KENTUCKY STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Revised 10/14

2015 Early Childhood Profile

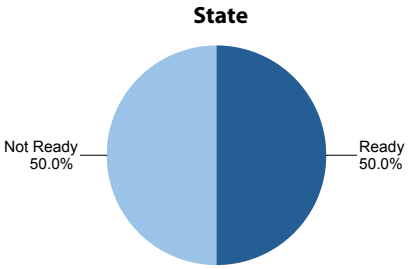
Kentucky



The Early Childhood Profile is produced by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) for the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) and the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) utilizing data from the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (KLDS).

Kindergarten Readiness

Kindergarten readiness means that each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success. The kindergarten screener measures readiness in five important domains. The composite readiness score reflected here is comprised of the academic/cognitive, language development and physical development domains.



Results by Composite Domain

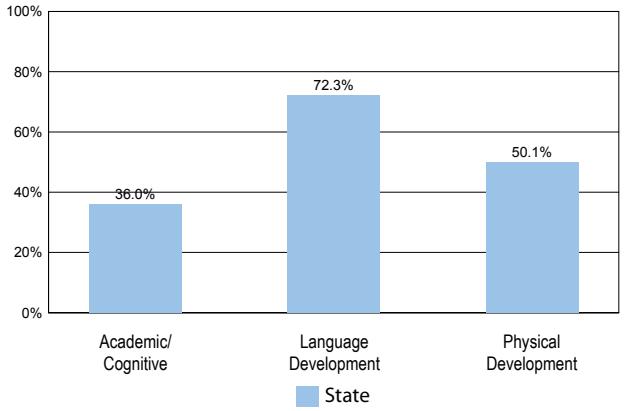


Chart shows percentage of students scoring "average" or "above average". For a detailed explanation, see the technical notes at http://kcews.ky.gov/reports/earlychildhoodprofiles/

Results by Social-Emotional and Self-Help Domains

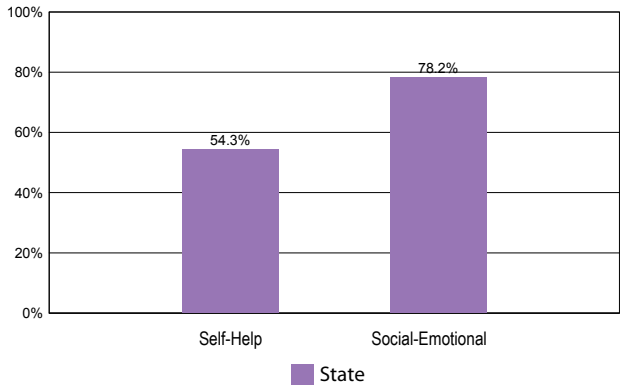


Chart shows percentage of students scoring "average" or "above average". For a detailed explanation, see the technical notes at http://kcews.ky.gov/reports/earlychildhoodprofiles/

Early Care and Education Programs

	State
Kindergarten	**54,949**
Preschool	**22,567**
At-risk 4-year-olds at or below 150% of the federal poverty level (FPL)	10,907
3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities	9,650
3- and 4-year-olds over income or other	2,010
Head Start enrollment	**12,864**
3- and 4-year-olds income eligible (at-risk 4s at 150% FPL)	11,072
3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities	1,592
Other (4s over 150% FPL without disabilities)	200
Total child care capacity	**170,142**
Children receiving child care assistance (CCAP program)	**24,361**
CCAP at Licensed Centers	22,884
CCAP at Licensed Homes	244
CCAP at Certified Homes	878
CCAP at Registered Providers	355

Third Grade Assessment Results

Below are the percentages of 3rd grade students who scored proficient or distinguished in the 2013-14 school year. They were kindergartners in the 2010-11 school year.

	State
Math	45.8%
Reading	54.1%

KENTUCKY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of EARLY CHILDHOOD

Kentucky UNBRIDLED SPIRIT

KCEWS KENTUCKY CENTER FOR EDUCATION & WORKFORCE STATISTICS

APPENDIX I: EARLY CHILDHOOD STATE PROFILE

Family, Health and Services

Select Indicators	State #	State %
Number of children:		
0-2 years old	164,636	3.7%
3-4 years old	110,238	2.5%
Children living below:		
100% poverty	99,315	30.2%
150% poverty	139,936	42.6%
200% poverty	174,490	53.1%
Children 0-17 years old with substantiated child abuse/neglect	17,917	1.8%
Children 0-17 years old living with grandparents	56,617	5.6%
Households with non-English language in home	95,287	5.6%
Births to mothers who are not high school graduates**	9,714	18.0%
Births to teenage girls 15-19 years old**	6,057	43^
Low birth weight babies (born less than 5.5 pounds)**	4,818	8.9%
Preterm babies (born before 37 weeks of pregnancy)	5,981	11.1%

^ Rate per 1,000 females ages 15-19

**Numbers represent 1-year rolling averages calculated from 3-year aggregate data. Rates are 3-year aggregate rates.

Early Childhood Workforce

Since 2001, early childhood educators have had access to college and non-college scholarships to improve knowledge and skills.

	State Number	State Amount
College Scholarships Awarded	847	$ 714,240
Non-College Scholarships Awarded	698	$ 130,148

Find an Early Childhood Professional Development Counselor in your county here:
http://www.kentuckypartnership.org/info/ECPD/scholar/pdc.aspx

State and Local Contact

Hazel Combs Hazel.Combs@ky.gov

http://kidsnow.ky.gov/Mobilizing-Communities

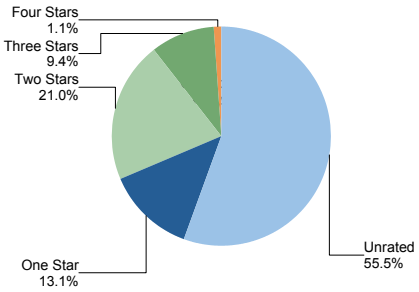
Visit the Governor's Office of Early Childhood online at http://kidsnow.ky.gov or call 502-782-0200 for more information.

Support Services

	State
Children receiving Medicaid insurance	449,750
Children receiving KCHIP health insurance	40,904
Families served by the First Steps program	4,196
Number of families served by the HANDS home visitation program	9,431

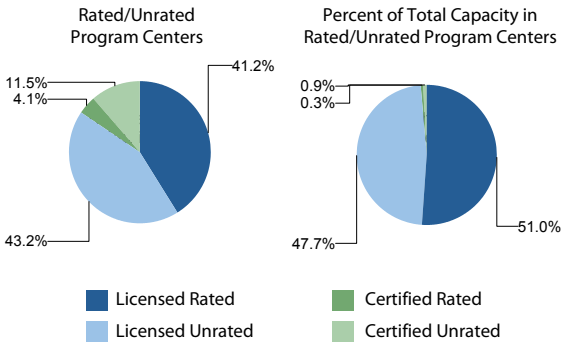
STAR Ratings for Child Care

Early child care facilities can voluntarily participate in the STARS for KIDS NOW rating. A higher quality rating means better child-to-caregiver ratios, program curriculum, child care staff training, program regulatory compliance, and personnel policies.



	Child Care Centers		Child Care Capacity	
Rating	Licensed	Certified	Licensed	Certified
STARS	962	96	86,796	576
Not STARS	1,009	269	81,156	1,614

The following charts show the percentage of STAR-rated and unrated program centers and the percent of total capacity in STAR-rated and unrated program centers.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."
- Margaret Mead

Visit http://kcews.ky.gov/reports/earlychildhoodprofiles/ for sources, technical descriptions of each data element in this profile, notes for how to use this report, and links to other sources of information for the early childhood community. For school and district Kindergarten readiness data, please visit the Kentucky Department of Education's Open House website at http://openhouse.education.ky.gov/

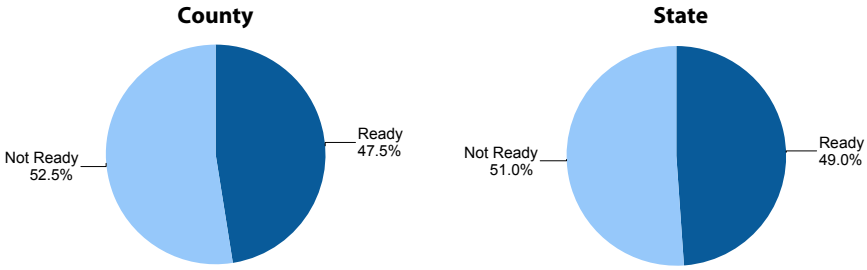
2014 Early Childhood Profile

Franklin County

The Early Childhood Profile is produced by the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) for the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) and the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) utilizing data from the Kentucky Longitudinal Data System (KLDS).

Kindergarten Readiness

Kindergarten readiness means that each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success. The kindergarten screener measures readiness in five important domains. The composite readiness score reflected here is comprised of the cognitive/general knowledge, language and communication and physical well-being domains.



Results by Composite Domain

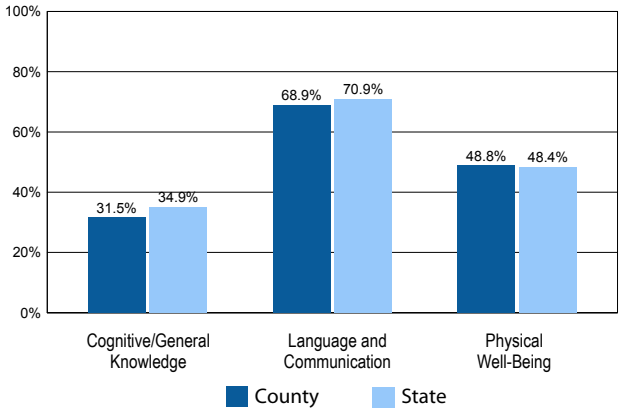


Chart shows percentage of students scoring "average" or "above average". For a detailed explanation, see the technical notes at http://kcews.ky.gov/reports/earlychildhoodprofiles/

Results by Social-Emotional and Self-Help Domains

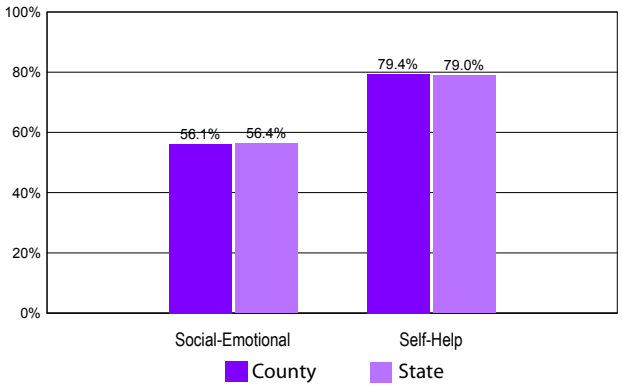


Chart shows percentage of students scoring "average" or "above average". For a detailed explanation, see the technical notes at http://kcews.ky.gov/reports/earlychildhoodprofiles/

Early Care and Education Programs

	County	State
Kindergarten	**663**	**55,877**
Preschool	**221**	**22,492**
At-risk 4-year-olds at or below 150% of the federal poverty level	81	11,156
3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities	114	9,661
3- and 4-year-olds over income or other	27	1,675
Head Start enrollment	**112**	**14,659**
3- and 4-year-olds income eligible (at-risk 4s at 150% FPL)	106	12,726
3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities	6	1,719
Other (4s over 150% FPL without disabilities)	0	214
Total child care capacity	**3,931**	**176,688**
Children receiving child care assistance (CCAP program)	**337**	**23,761**
CCAP at Licensed Centers	311	21,831
CCAP at Licensed Homes	*	275
CCAP at Certified Homes	*	1,084
CCAP at Registered Providers	19	571

Third Grade Assessment Results

Below are the percentages of 3rd grade students who scored proficient or distinguished in the 2012-13 school year. They were kindergartners in the 2009-10 school year.

	County	State
Math	37.9%	43.6%
Reading	45.2%	47.7%

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APPENDIX I: EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNTY PROFILE

Family, Health and Services

Select Indicators	County #	County %	State %
Number of children 0-2 years old	1,728	3.5%	3.8%
Number of children 3-4 years old	1,162	2.3%	2.6%
Children living below 100% poverty	1,195	33.9%	29.9%
Children living below 150% poverty	1,490	42.2%	42.2%
Children living below 200% poverty	2,050	58.1%	53.1%
Children with substantiated child abuse/neglect	80	0.8%	1.6%
Households with non-English language in home	1,141	5.4%	5.6%
Births to mothers who are not high school graduates**	71	13.0%	18.0%
Births to teenage girls 15-19 years old**	51	32^	43^
Low birth weight babies (born less than 5.5 pounds)**	56	10.0%	9.0%
Preterm babies (born before 37 weeks of pregnancy)**	72	12.0%	11.0%

^ Rate per 1,000 females ages 15-19

**Previous reports used a three-year total. These totals are for one year.

Workforce Quality

Since 2001, early childhood educators have had access to college and non-college scholarships to improve knowledge and skills.

	County Number	County Amount	State Number	State Amount
College Scholarships Awarded	16	$ 12,768	1,025	$ 849,560
Non-College Scholarships Awarded	29	$ 6,090	757	$ 148,838

Find an Early Childhood Professional Development Counselor in your county here:
http://www.kentuckypartnership.org/info/ECPD/scholar/pdc.aspx

State and Local Contact

Franklin County

Christy Brock Jazzrgrlcb@hotmail.com.

http://kidsnow.ky.gov/Mobilizing-Communities

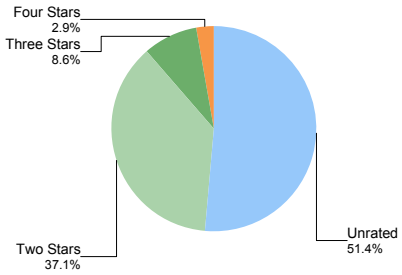
Visit the Governor's Office of Early Childhood online at http://kidsnow.ky.gov or call 502-782-0200 for more information.

Support Services

	County	State
Children receiving Medicaid insurance	4,091	412,249
Children receiving KCHIP health insurance	629	70,867
Families served by the First Steps program	29	4,480
Number of families served by the HANDS home visitation program	111	10,113

STAR Ratings for Child Care

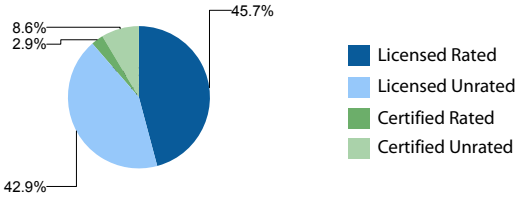
Early child care facilities can voluntarily participate in the STARS for KIDS NOW rating. A higher quality rating means better child-to-caregiver ratios, program curriculum, child care staff training, program regulatory compliance, and personnel policies.



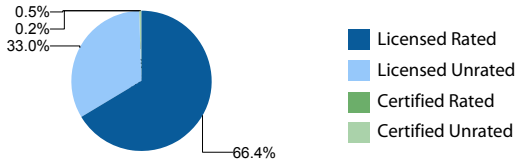
	Child Care Centers		Child Care Capacity	
Rating	Licensed	Certified	Licensed	Certified
STARS	16	1	2,611	6
Not STARS	15	3	1,296	18

The following charts show the percentage of STAR-rated and unrated program centers and the percent of total capacity in STAR-rated and unrated program centers.

Rated/Unrated Program Centers



Percent of Total Capacity in Rated/Unrated Program Centers



Visit http://kcews.ky.gov/reports/earlychildhood/ for sources, technical descriptions of each data element in this profile, notes for how to use this report, and links to other sources of information for the early childhood community.

APPENDIX J: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

Kentucky's investment of 25% of the Phase I Tobacco Settlement Dollars in the KIDS NOW Early Childhood Initiative is yielding many benefits for children, families and the Commonwealth. KIDS NOW continues to promote partnerships across state agencies, public and private sectors. The Kentucky initiative models comprehensive, collaborative efforts that are uncommon when compared to other states in the nation.

Assuring Maternal and Child Health

Folic Acid Campaign (2000-present)
FY2015 Funding: $80,000 FY 2014 Funding: $128,200

The goal of this initiative is to prevent the high incidence of two common and serious birth defects, spina bifida and anencephaly, collectively called neural tube birth defects, in Kentucky by providing all women of childbearing age access to the B vitamin Folic Acid, a known preventive measure. When the initiative began in 2000, Kentucky's rate of neural tube defects was 1½ times the national average. An estimated 50 - 70% of such birth defects are preventable through the daily ingestion of folic acid prior to pregnancy and in the early prenatal period. In 2000, nursing coordinators in all 120 county health departments were trained to promote folic acid supplementation and to counsel young women on the importance of folic acid and every year thereafter, all health departments have played major roles in the education on and provision of folic acid supplementation. Kentucky Folic Acid Partnership (KFAP) contributes to the promotion of perinatal health through multiple statewide activities targeting folic acid promotion and awareness, reaching over six million participants with their awareness programs since their beginning. In 2004, KFAP added an awareness program on prematurity as a focus to promote healthy pregnancy outcomes and have reached over nine million participants with this program. In 2007, the Kentucky Department of Public Health, in conjunction with the March of Dimes and Johnson and Johnson Pediatric Institute, developed a new prematurity toolkit, "Healthy Babies Are Worth the Wait", which included the promotion of folic acid, that was made available early fall 2007 and is still available today to anyone who has an interest in promoting healthy pregnancy outcomes.

KIDS NOW Plus (KN+): A Substance Abuse Treatment Program for Pregnant and Postpartum Women (2004-present)
FY2015 Funding: $891,400 FY 2014 Funding: $697,400

Kentucky recognizes the need to assist pregnant women with current substance abuse disorders or with certain risk factors for substance use disorders to give birth to healthy babies. Pregnant women using alcohol and/or drugs are one of the most difficult-to-reach and costly subpopulations in Kentucky. Babies born to addicted mothers are at risk for fetal alcohol syndrome, developmental delays, mental retardation, low birth weight, and other health issues. Without early intervention, future costs may include special education, medical interventions, and foster care services. This project was designed to identify pregnant women in the community who are using, or are at risk for using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and to connect them with needed services. Program components include the following:

1. screening for substance use or past use as well as mental health disorders and domestic violence before, during and after pregnancy to indicate any changes in data (to date, over 17,000 women have been screened using various tools measuring for various outcomes);
2. providing prevention information and referrals to community resources for pregnant women at any level of risk;
3. providing intensive case management for women who are misusing or are at high risk for misusing substances, and for women who have mental health problems and/or domestic violence (both of which place the woman at high risk for substance use during pregnancy);
4. referring high risk women to substance abuse and mental health treatment as well as other needed services; and
5. continuing case management and sobriety support through 60 days postpartum whether or not the woman accepts a referral for treatment.

In addition to these direct services, KIDS NOW Plus staff provides pregnancy-specific training on screening and brief intervention to local health departments, OBs, and other agencies in contact with pregnant women. The program collects data through the use of detailed pre-and post-interviews which are designed and analyzed by the University of Kentucky Center for Drug and Alcohol Research. At the beginning of this initiative, most of the work completed was comprised of building relationships with local health departments and individual physicians, which included training in the administration of substance abuse screening tool(s). In 2007, a new screening tool to cover substance abuse along with domestic violence and mental health issues was developed in collaboration with the University of Kentucky and implemented across the state along with a new program focus on intensive case management.

Immunization Program for Underinsured Children (2000-2014)
FY2015 Funding: $0 FY2014 Funding: $250,000

The goal of this component is to achieve 100% immunization coverage by age three. Vaccines are among the most cost-effective tools in preventing and controlling infectious diseases. For every dollar spent on vaccines, it has been estimated that up to $24 in additional health care costs are saved. When the KIDS NOW initiative began 17% of children ages birth to three years old were underinsured. The purchase of vaccinations for this population of children, who are non-Medicaid and non-KCHIP eligible, has helped and continues to help increased access to immunizations. The program was fully implemented in August 2000 with training provided to all physicians willing to participate. Funds from the tobacco settlement have allowed thousands of children to receive needed vaccines in their local health departments so that families did not have to travel potentially long distances to the closest federally qualified health center for services.

Oral Health Education and Prevention Program (2002-present)
FY2015 Funding: $500,000 FY2014 Funding: $80,000

During 2001, Kentucky Children's Oral Health Profiles reported that nearly one-third of a sample of two- to four- year-olds were affected by early childhood caries. Kentucky's rate of early childhood caries is three times higher than the national average with approximately 80% of early childhood caries in Kentucky seen in only 20% of the children. This is not only a health issue in Kentucky, but also an economic development issue. Approximately $1.5 million is lost in Kentucky public schools due to children missing school because of oral health related problems. While early childhood caries is highly preventable and at an affordable price, rehabilitation of severe early childhood caries can be more than $5,000. The goal set forth by the enhanced initiative component, KIDS Smile, is to prevent early childhood caries through:

(1) targeted early screening;
(2) oral health education of caregivers;
(3) application of fluoride varnish to primary teeth if necessary; and,
(4) if appropriate, proper referral to a dentist for care.

KIDS Smile targets the training of WIC and public health nurses to apply fluoride varnish to help prevent early childhood caries (decay). Since initial funding began, over 1,100 health department nurses and other providers have been trained in KIDS SMILE.

Supporting Families

HANDS Voluntary Home Visiting Program (2000-present)
FY2015 Funding: $9,000,000 FY2014 Funding: $8,583,000

In order to promote the healthy growth and development of the child within the family, a voluntary home visitation program has been established for first time parents determined to be "at-risk." Third-party evaluation of the HANDS program shows that these families deliver more full-term babies and have a lower number of low birth weight and very low birth weight babies. In addition, HANDS families show a lower number of substantiated cases of physical

abuse and neglect of babies. These positive program outcomes point to healthier children and a significant savings in healthcare dollars to the state. HANDS families also show significant positive changes in discipline, understanding child development, providing enriching learning experiences and quality/effective communication.

Early Childhood Mental Health Program (2001-present)
FY2015 Funding: $1,000,000 FY2014 Funding: $873,100

This component of the initiative focuses on the need to provide mental health consultation for early childhood programs and to assure that young children and their families receive appropriate assessment and therapeutic services. It is estimated that one out of every ten children and adolescents have a mental health challenge. Regionally-based early childhood mental health specialists work directly with early care and education providers in targeting children in need of mental health services. Program components include:

- Free consultation/education services to early care and education staff, including training
- Mental health assessments and referral to therapeutic treatment for young children
- Working closely with Healthy Start and HANDS to provide mental health services
- Assisting families in accessing needed resources
- Providing information and acting as a resource to providers and raising awareness

Children's Advocacy Centers (2002-present)
FY2015 Funding: $175,000 FY2014 Funding: $175,000

This component of the initiative focuses on the need to mitigate the physical and mental health impact of sexual abuse inflicted on a child by providing comprehensive, state-of-the-art medical examinations. This program provides community-based services for sexually abused children in child-friendly settings across Kentucky. KIDS NOW has provided funding to increase the capacity of the regional centers and since 2007, comprehensive medical exams have been available in all fifteen centers. Tobacco Settlement dollars through the KIDS NOW initiative have also funded Medical Unit Coordinators for each regional center, that are credited with improved quality and efficiency of the centers.

Enhancing Early Care and Education

Scholarship Fund for Child Care Providers (2000-present)
FY2015 Funding: $1,100,000 FY2014 Funding: $700,000

The focus of this initiative is to provide a scholarship fund administered through the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority and the Division of Child Care, available to those who work in early care and education programs or as assistants in preschool classrooms at least 20 hours weekly. The funds assist early care and education personnel in moving through a credentialing system that begins at entry level and proceeds through post-secondary education. The quality of early care programs and education is closely related to the education and training levels of the providers. Early care and education personnel are among the most poorly paid individuals in the workforce and therefore need assistance to increase their educational achievement and to permit movement up the career ladder in early childhood. Professional Development Counselors help scholars enroll in the program, craft a professional development plan, and negotiate the seamless system of professional development. The focus of this scholarship fund is really to create a system in Kentucky for Quality Workforce Development through offering college and non college scholarships, along with professional development incentives. College Scholarships help child care providers receive college credit hours, leading toward a traditional degree and non-college scholarships help child care providers attain non-college credit hours that may or may not lead toward a traditional degree, but ensure specialized training for each provider. Other incentives offered to child care providers in Kentucky include monetary awards for achieving

Scholarship Fund for Child Care Providers CONT.
educational and professional development milestones, plus related educational reimbursements. As early childhood professionals are able to attain one credential, they become more able to attain further credentials, preparing them for better professional development opportunities in the future. Achieving the Commonwealth Child Care Credential, a Kentucky specific credential, often leads to achieving the Child Development Associates (CDA) which is a nationally recognized credential. Attaining a CDA sometimes leads to even further education and a broadening of individual professional futures. Providing early childhood development associates with college and non-college scholarships, along with other professional development incentives, ensures a quality workforce development plan for the early childhood workforce in Kentucky.

Community Early Childhood Councils (2000-present)
FY2015 Funding: $1,200,000 FY2014 Funding: $1,200,000

Community Early Childhood Councils (CECCs) were formed to identify the unique early childhood needs of the local community and to work collaboratively to meet these needs. A network of these community councils have been formed across the state in various counties and sub regions. The potential council member agencies and individuals are identified in HB 706. According to national standards, much of Kentucky's child care is judged to be of poor quality and yet providers often cannot afford the expense associated with increasing quality. The Community Early Childhood Councils strive to improve the quality of child care by promoting high quality early care and education by increasing participation in the STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating system, funding literacy projects, incorporating cultural diversity, providing nutrition and health activities, meeting the unique training needs of their service areas, and encouraging the use of developmental assessment for young children to meet individual needs of young children and their families. For the fiscal year 2013, 69 councils have applied for funding, representing 105 counties. While many aspects of the KIDS NOW initiative are administered at the state level, the CECCs bring a local, community level voice to the goals of the initiative within a particular county or group of counties.

Previously Funded Programs

First Steps: Kentucky's Early Intervention System (2005-2012)
FY2012 Funding: $128,200

The First Steps program is Kentucky's response to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004. First Steps provides support and services to infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities and/or delays and their families. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), Department for Public Health is the lead agency responsible for administering the First Steps program. Primary referral sources, families and other interested parties can access the First Steps program locally through fifteen system Points of Entry (POEs) covering the fifteen Area Development Districts (ADDs). (To find the Point of Entry in any ADD, interested parties may call 877-417-8377.) The First Steps program serves almost 13,000 infants and toddlers with disabilities each fiscal year. The First Steps program works to render services to children with disabilities and their families through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Services may be provided in the home, at child development centers or in a clinical setting,

Reach out and Read (2009-2013)
FY2013 Funding: $100,000

This program in Kentucky has been supported as a component of the KIDS NOW Initiative since December 2007. Many American children enter kindergarten without needed basic language and literacy skills. Early childhood language skills are the foundation for reading ability and begin with the basic exposure to primary language, when parents talk with and read to their children. This program provides health professionals that provide pediatric care with developmentally appropriate books to give to families and children at well-child visits from the age of six months to five years. During each visit, parents also receive counseling about the importance of reading in the development of

early language skills. At some sites, volunteers model reading to children while families are waiting to see the doctor. Reach Out and Read is a national program that has proven successful as parents who participate are more likely to read to their children and have more children's books in their home. These children score significantly higher on vocabulary tests that indicate school readiness. The national funding for Reach Out and Read has been cut several times, requiring new sites to demonstrate a 75% funding match before they are approved. Kentucky has continued to receive funding because of the KIDS NOW Initiative offering matching funds.

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EHDI) (2000-2013)
FY2013 Funding: $100,000

The goal of this program is the early detection of those infants at risk for hearing loss and early intervention to those that are diagnosed with hearing loss. Formerly known as the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program, in December 2006 the program was renamed to better reflect the program goals and objectives. This program assists hospitals, with forty or more live births each year, in implementing universal hearing screening on all newborns prior to hospital discharge. The Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs is partnering with the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and other public and private entities statewide to provide outreach to families, health departments, physicians, schools, and other community based organizations.

Child Care Health Consultants (2000-2012)
FY2012 Funding: $919,100

This component of the KIDS NOW initiative provides personnel to train, educate, and provide free technical assistance to child care providers and parents in the areas of health, safety, nutrition, and the benefits of early intervention. Emphasis is also placed on the prevention of communicable diseases in group settings and the social/emotional well being of children. Services offered through this program include:

- Outreach to promote awareness of the program to child care providers and early childhood partners
- Providing education and information to providers, parents and children on health, safety and nutrition
- Consultation for the purpose of decision making or planning activities to improve child care services specific to health, safety and nutrition
- Follow-up for playground safety consultation with identified hazards
- Referral to agencies such as: local health department, community mental health center, private psychologist, FRYSC, private doctor, social agency, First Steps and others

Healthy Babies Campaign (2001-2008): The goal of this statewide, multi-media public awareness/education campaign was to educate the public about fetal alcohol syndrome, the impact of substance abuse on pregnancy and child rearing, the importance of smoking cessation, and about healthy lifestyle choices that help babies to be born healthy. An extensive statewide media campaign ran from December 2001 - June 2002. While this campaign was officially completed in FY02, Healthy Baby materials continue to be distributed at the local community level. In collaboration with the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program, the Healthy Baby television campaign ads ran again in 2004, 2005 and 2008.

Eye Examinations For Children (2000-2006): All children (ages 3 – 6) in Kentucky are required to submit evidence of an eye examination no later than Jan. 1 of the first year of public school entry for ages 3, 4, 5, and 6. (Not a screening, because screening alone often misses visual difficulties such as amblyopia, that have the potential for reversal if diagnosed and treated before the age of five.) This program was intended to support local health departments, Family Resource Centers, and Kentucky Optometric Association with identification of families who are not eligible for Medicaid or KCHIP and whose income does not exceed 250% of the FPL. Funds were made available through the Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs to assist children who do not have sufficient resources to pay for the cost of an eye examination. Over the course of this program, the amount of children receiving these services through Medicaid and KCHIP increased each year until use tapered off. Due to lack of need and use, the funding for this initiative was discontinued in 2006.

APPENDIX J: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

Early Childhood Development Tobacco Fund Budget						
	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Governor's Office of Early Childhood	***1,525,000***	***2,150,000***	***2,050,000***	***1,950,600***	***1,912,500***	***1,912,500***
Office of Early Childhood	525,000	1,150,000	1,050,000	750,600	712,500	712,500
Community Early Childhood Councils	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
KY Higher Education Assistance Authority	***1,000,000***	***1,000,000***	***1,000,000***	***800,000***	***700,000***	***1,100,000***
Scholarship Program for Child Care Providers	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	800,000	700,000	1,100,000
Dept. of Community Based Services	***9,274,900***	***9,395,400***	***9,175,000***	***8,715,000***	***8,715,000***	***8,715,000***
Child Care Program	9,099,900	9,395,400	9,175,000	8,540,000	8,540,000	8,540,000
Children's Advocacy Centers	175,000	-	-	175,000	175,000	175,000
Dept. for Public Health	***17,551,400***	***14,313,400***	***12,486,300***	***10,814,300***	***10,614,300***	***11,580,000***
HANDS Voluntary Home Visiting Program	9,220,400	8,752,000	8,000,000	8,583,000	8,583,000	9,000,000
Reach Out & Read	225,100	225,000	200,000	100,000	-	-
Child Care Health Consultants	2,457,600	1,000,000	1,000,000	700,000	700,000	1,000,000
Immunization Program for Underinsured Children	2,313,400	1,775,900	800,000	250,000	250,000	-
Folic Acid Campaign	400,000	200,000	200,000	128,200	128,200	80,000
Early Childhood Mental Health Program	1,072,400	950,000	950,000	873,100	873,100	1,000,000
Oral Health Education and Prevention Program	510,500	310,500	310,500	80,000	80,000	500,000
KEIS / First Steps	1,000,000	750,000	675,800	-	-	-
Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI)	352,000	350,000	350,000	100,000	-	-
Dept. for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities	***975,000***	***900,000***	***900,000***	***683,400***	***697,400***	***891,400***
KIDS NOW PLUS: A Substance Abuse Treatment Program	975,000	900,000	900,000	683,400	697,400	891,400
Grand Total	***30,326,300***	***27,758,800***	***25,611,300***	***22,963,300***	***22,639,200***	***24,198,900***

APPENDIX K: GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF

- Terry Tolan
- Executive Director

- Christian Motley
- Deputy Director

- Joe Roberts
- Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Project Manager

- Hazel Combs
- Professional Development Coordinator

- Courtney Daniel
- Public Awareness Coordinator

- Naitore Djigbenou
- Family Engagement Specialist

- Albert Fox
- Professional Development Director

- Blair Haydon
- Strengthening Families Coordinator

- Jennifer Miller
- Head Start Collaborative Office Director

- Meredith Scott
- Project Analyst

- Ashlee Whisman
- Administrative Specialist

APPENDIX L: RESOURCES

Early Childhood Advisory Council
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/About-Kids-Now/Pages/ECAC.aspx

For more details about the 26 member Governor appointed body, utilize this web source, which houses all meeting and member information.

Early Childhood Profiles
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/School%20Readiness/Pages/profiles.aspx

Access the individual county profiles that were discussed in this document.

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Staff
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/About-Kids-Now/Pages/Staff.aspx

Learn more about the individual staff members.

History of KIDS NOW Web Page
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/About-Kids-Now/Pages/History.aspx

Access more detailed information about the history behind the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. On this same webpage, you will find easy to download files for the following documents:

• Governor's Early Childhood Task Force 20 Year Comprehensive Early Childhood Plan

• HB706: The original legislation that committed 25% of the Kentucky Tobacco Settlement Fund annually to support early childhood programs.

• Final Report of the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education

• HB184: Passed in 2013, House Bill 184 enacted the new governing structure identified and other changes previously made in the Executive order into the KIDS NOW legislation.

Monthly Message Archive
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/Mobilizing-Communities/Pages/Monthly-Message.aspx

Access all previous monthly messages for the Community Early Childhood Councils.

Parent Guides
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/engaging-families/Pages/Parent-Guides.aspx

Access an electronic copy of the newly revised Parent Guides for Birth to Three and Three and Four.

School Readiness Definition
http://kidsnow.ky.gov/School%20Readiness/Pages/default.aspx

Made available as a web resource, families and other stakeholders are able to access this important information at any time.

125 Holmes Street, Frankfort, KY 40601
502-782-0200

http://kidsnow.ky.gov facebook.com/kygoec twitter.com/KYGOEC