The Early Childhood Landscape in KENTUCKY

OVERVIEW

School readiness is shaped by many factors, each with the power to influence learning and development – both for better and for worse – from the days young children are born. For this reason, policymakers interested in promoting the long-term academic and life success of children must be prepared to consider their needs on a holistic basis – addressing not just access to high-quality early learning environments, but their health, safety, social-emotional development, and the economic and other stressors facing their families. While far from comprehensive, this state data profile is intended to provide a snapshot of both risk and reach. That is: what are the significant risk factors experienced by the children of my state, and how well are services reaching the children and families for whom they are intended?

Number of Children Age 8 and Younger, 2018

Children with All Available Parents in the Labor Force Age 0–5 (2018)

Children in Poverty* Age 0–5 (2018)

Children in Low-Income Working Families* Age 0–5 (2018)

Children in Poverty, by Race, 2018

VIEW DATA RESOURCE

*The federal poverty level for a family of four was $24,600. “Low income” is defined as having a family income less than twice the federal poverty level.
INFANT AND TODDLER SUPPORT

The first three years of life are a unique and critical period of development, during which up to 1 million new neural connections are formed in the developing brain each second. Infants and toddlers develop and learn at exponential rates as they explore and engage with the environments and adults around them. In order to best support their health and development, families need access to information and services.

Questions To Consider
Are women and children receiving health care services before and after birth?

Maternal and Child Health Grant

The federal government allocates the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant to states. Kentucky provides additional funding to the MCH program (as shown below).

The state has identified eight national performance measures to focus on:
- Low-Risk Cesarean Delivery
- Breastfeeding
- Safe Sleep
- Injury Hospitalization
- Physical Activity
- Transition (Children with Special Needs)
- Preventive Dental Visit
- Smoking

Kentucky MCH Funds by Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2017 EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>$11,256,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>$30,321,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Income</td>
<td>$23,126,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kentucky | MCH 2017 Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION SERVED</th>
<th>INDIVIDUALS SERVED</th>
<th>2017 EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant Women</td>
<td>1,040</td>
<td>$13,497,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants</td>
<td>19,111</td>
<td>$14,049,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (Age 1-2)</td>
<td>214,601</td>
<td>$14,761,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children with Special Needs</td>
<td>89,703</td>
<td>$16,700,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>24,438</td>
<td>$3,892,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>348,893</td>
<td>$62,901,444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIEW DATA RESOURCE 1
VIEW DATA RESOURCE 2
VIEW DATA RESOURCE 3
VIEW DATA RESOURCE
Prenatal Care and Birth Outcome, By Race

Receiving appropriate prenatal care helps reduce the likelihood of negative birth outcomes, including low birthweight and premature births, which are often linked to developmental delays and elevated rates of early school failure. Furthermore, births to teenage mothers increase risk for both children (increasing the likelihood of being born at a low birthweight and infant mortality) and their mothers (who are less likely to graduate from high school, maintain steady employment).

Often these outcomes vary significantly across demographic groups, which results in systematic inequities in infant and maternal health and well-being.

### Births to Women Receiving Late or No Prenatal Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian/Pac. Islander</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teen Births

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian/Pac. Islander</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Low Birthweight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian/Pac. Islander</th>
<th>American Indian</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are disparities in access evident in your state’s data? What steps might be taken to increase access to and utilization of prenatal care by expectant mothers?

Are there racial/ethnic disparities evident in the teen birth data? What steps is my state taking to reduce teenage pregnancy?

Are there disparities evident in the number of children born at low birthweight? What steps might be taken to reduce the prevalence of this outcome, particularly among high-risk populations?

[VIEW DATA RESOURCE]
Paid Family Leave

Paid family leave policies support employees requiring time off to bond with a newborn baby, adopted or foster child – or to care for a seriously ill family member.

**Kentucky** does not have a statewide paid family leave policy.

### States with Paid Family Leave Policies

Nine states (reflected on the map below) have implemented universal paid family leave policies, while eight additional states have enacted paid family leave provisions for state employees only. These are: Arkansas, Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>First Year</th>
<th># Weeks</th>
<th>Benefit (% Income)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Up to 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Up to 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Up to 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Up To 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Up to 66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Up to 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Up to 100%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Up to 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Up to 90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Up to 100%, not to exceed 120% of state average weekly wage

### Home Visiting

Home visiting is a type of service targeted to expectant parents and parents with children ages 0-5 to support healthy child development. Though models and programs vary, home visits typically allow trained experts to provide services, share best practices, and connect families to other resources all within the home setting.

**Kentucky** uses the following evidence-based models for home visiting programs:

- Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up Intervention
- Early Head Start Home-Based Option
- Family Check-Up
- Health Access Nurturing Development Services
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters
- Parents as Teachers

10,208
Number of Families Served Through Home Visits in 2017

198,592
Number of Home Visits Provided in 2017
Price and Affordability of Infant Care

Licensed child care is delivered in both center-based and home-based settings. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, this care is affordable if it costs no more than 10 percent of a family’s income, with efforts underway in some states to ensure subsidized child care costs are capped at no more than 7 percent.

$6,294
Average Annual Price of Infant Care in Kentucky

12%
Infant Care Price as a Share of Median Family Income in Kentucky

43%
Families in Kentucky that can Afford Infant Care (10% standard)

Federal Expenditures on Infants and Toddlers

While many states have invested heavily in prekindergarten programs serving three- and four-year olds, services to children aged zero to three are most commonly underwritten through a pair of federal programs: the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), a federal block grant that supports both child care subsidies and quality enhancement initiatives, and Early Head Start (EHS). Compared to preschool programs for older children, the infant and toddler slots funded by these programs are typically available to fewer children. CCDF subsidies for infants and toddlers often reimburse providers for less than the actual cost of care.

$5,676
CCDF | Average Per Child Expenditure, Ages 0-2

$12,629
EHS | Average Per Child Expenditure, Ages 0-2

2.8%
Percentage of All Children Ages 0-2 Receiving CCDF Subsidy Supports

1.5%
Percentage of All Children Ages 0-2 Receiving Early Head Start Services

*Head Start programming includes both the Head Start preschool program for children ages three and four and Early Head Start, which serves children under three. The figures above depict enrollment and investment in Early Head Start.
Early Childhood State Overview | Kentucky

THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

At ages three and four, children may be eligible to enroll in one or more types of publicly-funded pre-kindergarten. This includes state-funded pre-K, often delivered in both public and private settings, and Head Start, a federally-funded preschool program operated by local grantees. State funded pre-K programs generally incorporate child eligibility and provider quality requirements. These programs are typically not compulsory.

Questions To Consider
How many children are attending pre-K, public or private?

Are certain populations more likely to attend pre-K?

How expensive is child care for 4-year-olds?

Do the wages depicted for the early childhood workforce permit for the hiring and retention of highly-qualified early childhood educators?

Pre-Kindergarten Trends Within Publicly Funded Programs

12%
3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Head Start Program
(Estimated 13,384 children)

19%
3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in State Funded Pre-K Program
(Estimated 21,270 children)

Parent-Reported Percentage of 3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Any Type of Preschool Program
Including Both Public Programs and Private Programs Supported by Parent Tuition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following group(s) have enrollment rates in preschool programs that are below the state average: Black, Hispanic, Children of two or more races.

Wages and Price

$19,840
Median Annual Wage
Child Care Worker (2018)

57%
Median Wage for
Child Care Worker as Percent of State Median Income (2018)

$6,258
Average Annual Price of
Child Care for 4-Year-Old (2018)

$28,960
Median Annual Wage
Preschool Teacher (2018)

84%
Median Wage for
Preschool Teacher as Percent of State Median Income (2018)
### Pre-Kindergarten Policy  
**KENTUCKY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

| ACCESS |  
|------------------|------------------|
| **Family Income - Eligibility** | 160% of Federal Poverty Line  
| **Other Risk Factors - Eligibility** | Child disability or developmental delay; Homelessness or unstable housing; Child history of foster care  
| **Child Age** | 3 by August 1  
| **Required District Participation** | Required for all  

| FUNDING |  
|------------------|------------------|
| **State Agency** | State Department of Education: Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Teaching and Learning, Division of Program Standards, School Readiness Branch  
| **Total Spending (2016-17)** | $178,932,547  
| **Funds by Source** | State: $96,011,951; Federal: $60,391,573; Non-required local: $22,529,023  
| **Dedicated Revenue Source for State Funds?** | Yes  
| **Agencies Eligible to Receive Funding** | Public schools  
| **Permitted Subcontracting Agencies** | Public schools, Head Start, Private agencies, Faith-based centers  

| PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS |  
|------------------|------------------|
| **Minimum Daily Hours** | 2.5  
| **Minimum Days Per Week** | Determined locally  
| **Annual Operating Schedule** | School year or academic year  
| **Maximum Class Size** | 20  
| **Required Screenings** | Vision; Hearing; Height/weight/BMI; Blood pressure; Immunizations; Psychosocial/behavioral; Developmental; Full physical exam  

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**THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS**

**Questions To Consider**

*Does my state support pre-K enrollment? If so, for which children?*

*What are the funding sources for pre-K?*

*What requirements must providers meet in order to be eligible for the state pre-K program?*
KENTUCKY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM – CONTINUED

Questions To Consider

Are pre-K standards aligned with goals of the K-12 system?

Does my state require pre-K teachers to have a certain degree? If so, what?

Has my state developed a system to assess the quality of pre-K and child care providers? Is participation mandatory for state pre-K programs?

Quality Ratings of Child Care Programs

In recent years, many states have designed Quality Ratings and Improvement Systems (QRIS) to provide parents with information about the quality of individual child care providers. The QRIS rating is often a reflection of various measures such as teacher-child interactions, classroom environment, family engagement, and staff educational attainment. Typically voluntary, QRIS systems are meant to help improve the quality of child care providers and help families choose the right provider for their children.

Accountability

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) | Kentucky All STARS
--- | ---
Provider Participation | Voluntary
Number of Levels | 4
Tiered Reimbursement | No
Other Financial Incentive | Yes

Child Care Providers By QRIS Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QRIS Level</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Unrated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providers</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### K-3 Policy

#### K-3 Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Kentucky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory Age of Attendance¹</td>
<td>6 by 8/01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten Entrance Age¹</td>
<td>5 by 8/01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-Required Full-Day Kindergarten²</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-Required Half-Day Kindergarten¹</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Kindergarten Attendance¹</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Standards and Assessments

- **Required Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA)²:**
  - Each school district must administer the Common Kindergarten Entry Screening to each student entering kindergarten no later than 30 days after the start of the school year.

- **KEA Results Use²:**
  - Results must be entered into the student information system within 30 days of the start of the school year and individual results must be shared with parents. Districts may use the data in the following ways: inform districts, parents and communities about readiness gaps; inform policy decisions; establish local goals for program improvement; and as part of program evaluation. Results may not be used to determine enrollment eligibility.

- **Dual Language Learner (DLL) Assessment:**
  - ACCESS for ELLS

- **Number of States Using DLL Assessment:**
  - 36

- **3rd-Grade Reading Retention Law²:**
  - Retention is not required.

#### Educators

- **Early Childhood Education License Required for Kindergarten Teachers²:**
  - Professional certificate for interdisciplinary early childhood education, birth to primary.

- **Science of Reading Test Required for Elementary Teachers³:**
  - Partially. Teachers must pass a test that includes multiple topics.

- **Teacher-to-Student Ratio Requirement²:**
  - 1:24 for grades K-3.

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At age five, children are eligible to begin kindergarten—generally considered the start to their formal education. In these early grades, there is a strong focus on learning to read due to research indicating that 3rd-grade literacy is crucial for success in school and life.

**Questions To Consider**

- Are districts required to offer full-day kindergarten?
- At what age are children eligible to attend school? At what age is attendance compulsory?
- How are children assessed in grades K-3? What are assessment results used for?