

KENTUCKY'S FUTURE IS AT STAKE



Children and youth in Kentucky are facing serious challengesⁱ, among them:



of children ages 10 to 17 have **obesity**, ranking 1 among the 50 states & DC.ⁱⁱ



of high school students and 31.4% of middle school students are **vaping**.



of middle school students reported their **mental health was not good**.



of high school students seriously **considered attempting suicide**.



of middle school students **attempted suicide**.

The health and wellness of children and youth are the driving force for a healthier Kentucky.

The Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children is a group of diverse organizations working together to improve the health of children and youth in the Commonwealth by promoting policies, practices and programs of impact in the school setting, using the comprehensive approach of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) framework^{vi}, and embracing the Children's Objectives of Healthy People 2030^{vii}. Its backbone organization is the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky.



Schools play a critical role in the development and support of children as they grow and learn.

Children and youth spend a large portion of their lives in schools during ages when there are critical and rapid changes in their brains and bodies; this is a setting in which both health and education outcomes can be achieved and inequities addressed, fostering children's strengths, resiliency and potential. Schools are also a place where children can feel safe and cared for; 69.7% of high school students and 66.2% of middle school students reported there is at least one teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they have a problemⁱ.

Funding for schools has been decreasing for too long.

- SEEK funding per student is 15.8% lower in 2018 than it was in 2008ⁱⁱⁱ.
- Kentucky school districts have reduced services, programs and staff since 2008.

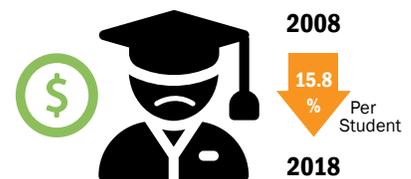
A survey of districts found that^{iv}:



- 54% have fewer days in the school calendar.
- 25% are spending less on health services.
- 25% have reduced or eliminated career and technical education.
- 42% have reduced student supports (after school, summer school, intervention/enrichment services).
- 35% implemented or increased instructional fees.

- Wealthy school districts had \$2,840 more in state and local revenue per student than poor districts in the 2018/2019 school year^v.

SEEK Funding



It's time to reverse this trajectory!

The Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children has over 100 members and is managed by a steering committee of 29 organizations. The coalition would like to collaborate with the Kentucky Legislature to find ways to adequately address the negative challenges Kentucky's children and youth are facing, reduce the already exorbitant cost of these negative outcomes, and invest in a better future for Kentucky.

Please see back for additional information.

www.kentuckyhealthychildren.org

THE KENTUCKY COALITION FOR HEALTHY CHILDREN



ⁱ Kentucky Department of Education. Youth Behavior Risk Survey 2019.

ⁱⁱ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. State of Childhood Obesity / Kentucky. <https://stateofchildhoodobesity.org/states/ky/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Michael Leachman, Kathleen Masterson and Eric Figueroa, "A Punishing Decade for School Funding," Nov. 29, 2017, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/a-punishing-decade-for-school-funding>.

^{iv} Kentucky Center for Economic Policy (KCEP). State Budget Cuts to Education Hurt Kentucky's Classrooms and Kids. 2018. <https://kypolicy.org/state-budget-cuts-education-hurt-kentuckys-classrooms-kids/>

^v The most recent for which data is available. The gap increased \$122 in 2019 compared to the prior year, and is now \$208 shy of the pre KERA gap in inflation-adjusted terms. KCEP. Inequality Between Rich and Poor Kentucky School Districts Grows Again Even as Districts Face New COVID Costs and Looming Revenue Losses. September 2020. <https://kypolicy.org/new-analysis-inequality-between-rich-and-poor-kentucky-school-districts-grows-again-even-as-districts-face-new-covid-costs-and-looming-revenue-losses/>.

^{vi} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wsc/index.htm>

^{vii} U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Healthy People 2030. Children. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/children>