



Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

November 29, 2022, 1:00 to 2:00 EST

Attendees:

Sheila Schuster	Advocacy Action Network	Jim Tackett, Stephanie Bunge	Kentucky Department of Education
Candace Gurley	Aetna Better Health of Kentucky	Denise Beach	Kentucky Health Department Association
Ashlea Christiansen	American Health Association	Gannon Tagher	Kentucky Nurses Association, KNA School Nurse Group
Joe Bargione	Bounce Coalition	Candance Carpenter	School Health Branch -Kentucky Department for Public Health
Vestena Robbins	Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities	Molly Lewis	Kentucky Primary Care Association
Erica Jones Davis	Department for Medicaid Services	Emily Beauregard Cara Stewart	Kentucky Voices for Health
Kate McDonald	Feeding Kentucky	Alicia Whatley	Kentucky Youth Advocates
Amalia Mendoza Alexandra Kerley Katy Walker	Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky	Shannon Parker	Strengthening Families, Kentucky Department for Public Health
Elizabeth Anderson-Hoagland	Health Promotion, Kentucky Department for Public Health	J. Eric Davis	United Health Care
Joseph Frazier	Center for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, KY Chamber of Commerce		

Meeting Objectives:

- The Steering Committee will review the document “KCHC 2023 Children’s Mental Health Legislative Agenda” and approve for distribution.
- The Steering Committee will begin a discussion of the context of the 2023 legislative session.

Pre-Meeting Materials Included in Packet to Review:

- KCHC 2023 Children’s Mental Health Legislative Agenda
- Context 2023 General Assembly Session
- Newly elected legislator contact information
- House and Senate leadership positions
- Legislative Calendar – 2023 Regular Session

Meeting Notes:

I. Member Updates

- The Annual Meeting of Kentucky Voices for Health will take place December 14, 2022, in Lexington. Topics include health care coverage after the federal health emergency ends,



Kentucky public assistance programs and the benefits cliff, and a 2023 legislative preview on health policies with participation from Kentucky legislators.

- Link to register: [KVH](#)
- The December Newsletter of the Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children's was released December 1. Steering Committee members are asked to share with their networks Alexandra Kerley (akerley@healthy-ky.org) requested any information on Steering Committee member organization's events, publications and /or news to include in the January 2023 newsletter be sent to her.
 - Link to Newsletter: <https://www.kentuckyhealthychildren.org/kchc-newsletter-archive>
- Molly Lewis, CEO of the Kentucky Primary Care Association, a member of the KCHC steering committee, has shared the public comments that organization filed with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services on December 1. Link to the Kentucky Oral Health Coalition's public comment: <https://kyoralhealthcoalition.org/kohc-comments-on-proposed-regulation-201-kar-8601/>.
- The Steering Committee members were asked to send other children's health policies that their organization or networks will be supporting during the 2023 legislative session for further coordination.
- The Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky's Board of Directors has approved the new 5-year strategic plan. The Foundation has reduced their areas of focus from four to two. The two prioritized areas are access to health care and children's health. In the children's health focus area, the Foundation has delineated goals in four areas, selected based on data related to the greatest challenges faced by children in Kentucky: childhood obesity, children's mental health, tobacco and vaping, and health disparities and discrimination. The Foundation, as the backbone organization to the KCHC, would like to coordinate the efforts in these areas with what the coalition has selected as priorities related to them.
- A reminder that there will not be a KCHC Steering Committee meeting in December. A survey will be sent to all steering committee members to determine the date and time of the in-person, two- three-hour January 2023 meeting. January 17, 18, 19 are the dates being considered.

II. The 2022 Kentucky Kids Count

Alicia Whatley, Policy and Advocacy Director at Kentucky Youth Advocates, gave a presentation on the 2022 Kentucky Kids Count County Data Book which features the most recent data on 16 measures of child well-being. The book indicates whether outcomes for children across Kentucky have improved, worsened, or stayed the same over a five-year period.

Link: <https://kyyouth.org/kentucky-kids-count/>

With respect to health, the data book highlights some issues around children's mental health. Both this data and the KIP data (Kentucky Incentives for Prevention) present signs of increased psychological distress. Some of the data highlighted:

- Older youth have the highest rates with 1 in 4 reporting depression and anxiety.
- However, even 6th graders reported high levels of depression and anxiety; 16%.



- There is a breakdown of the data by race. In the range of children experiencing anxiety and depression, comparing 2016 thru 2020, both have increased in all categories, almost doubling and higher among Latinx children and youth.
- Youth suicide rates in Kentucky are higher than the national average.

Some of the solutions highlighted include:

- Health care coverage, closing gaps
- Improving the use of innovative models of care: integrated care (in schools), primary care clinics and where kids are getting care.
- Using telehealth
- Creating welcoming environments for all children
- Diversifying the workforce, language, inclusivity, etc.

III. The Mental Health Coalition’s Legislative Priorities

Because the KCHC has prioritized children’s mental health this year, coordination with the Kentucky Mental Health Coalition is considered of utmost importance as the 2023 legislative session begins. Dr. Sheila Schuster, Executive Director of the Advocacy Action Network which includes the Kentucky Mental Health Coalition, presented some of the points of intersection between the Mental Health Coalition’s legislative priorities and those of the KCHC.

- This is not a budget year, however if the budget is opened, increase funding for behavioral health services in Eastern and Western Kentucky hit hard by floods and tornadoes.
- Oppose the decrease in the state income tax. If it cannot be stopped, fight cuts in services under HB7.
- For 988 line- Provide education to prepare for 2024 legislation to establish a \$.70/mobile cell line fee to create sustainable funding for 988 calls and services going forward.
- Ban conversion therapy.
- Ban corporal punishment
- Comprehensive health education. Children who learn about healthy relationships are less likely to enter unhealthy, abusive relationships, less likely to discriminate, etc.
- Increase Suicide Prevention in Schools.
- Provide education/prevention in schools addressing addiction and recovery, including vaping.
- Establish a fund to educate, prevent & treat addicted gambling.
- Education & screenings for post-partum mood & depression disorders
- . Establish the Office of Gun Violence Prevention
- Assess workforce shortage w/ required licensure data
- Oppose “Student Privacy Bill” a/k/a Trans Bathroom Bill
- Oppose bills that prohibits medical care for Gender Dysphoria
- Oppose bill that affirms parental rights above government policy

IV. The 2023 KCHC Children’s Mental Health Legislative Agenda

The group reviewed and discussed the final draft of the document which captures the Steering Committee’s 2023 Children’s Mental Health Legislative Agenda. The group approved the document as ready to be sent to the General Assembly, along with a letter for the KCHC Chair, with the following change:

- Remove the THC column from the graph related to youth vaping.



In terms of distribution of the document, along with the legislators, the CMH Legislative Agenda document will be sent out in the newsletter and Steering Committee members were encouraged to distribute it through their networks. Additionally, the following were mentioned for a targeted distribution:

- Governor's Office
- Lt. Governor's Youth Mental Health Initiative
- School Boards Association
- Kentucky Healthcare Workforce Collaborative
- Kentucky Council on Post-Secondary Education

V. Context of the 2023 Legislative Session

Dr. Sheila Schuster provided an overview of some of the changes to expect during the session (documents included in packet).

Next Meeting: January 18, 2023, 11:00 to 2:00 – In person at the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky Conference Room.