



Mission:
To work collaboratively on policies and practices in and around schools that promote equity and improve the physical, social and emotional health and well-being of children, youth and families.

January 28, 2021

Representative Kimberly Moser, Chair
House Health and Family Services Committee

Senator Ralph Alvarado, Chair
Senate Health and Welfare Committee

Dear Representative Moser and Senator Alvarado,

The Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children, led by its Steering Committee of 31 organizations (left) and over 100 members, is writing to express our concern with respect to SB8, SB 37, SB 98, SB 117, HB 36 and HB 101 - legislation filed in the 2021 KY General Assembly related to vaccinations. Passage of any of these bills would significantly threaten the health and safety of Kentucky's children and of the general population.

We have prepared the attached Vaccination Fact Sheet to briefly summarize for you some data which supports this statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): "Vaccinating our children is the best way to keep them free of infection when they are exposed to viruses and bacteria that continue to spread in the United States and many parts of the world."

As health care professionals, you are both aware that the history of successful vaccine development and administration in the United States has led to significant decreases in the existence and spread of a number of communicable diseases. This, in turn, has promoted greater health and longevity for Kentuckians and for our fellow Americans. Part of the success of these immunizations has been in the requirement for their administration to our children as they enter day care or school.

Current Kentucky law allows for medical and religious exemptions from mandatory vaccinations. To remove these mandates and/or to create additional broad and loosely-defined exemptions would increase the risk of a return of these infectious diseases and result in negative health outcomes for Kentuckians, particularly those who are immunocompromised or are too young to have been immunized.

Rather than reduce vaccinations in the Commonwealth, good public policy and public health principles would dictate that we not only maintain immunizations, but that we work to improve Kentucky's current vaccination rates.

Steering Committee:

- Advocacy Action Network
- Aetna Better Health of Kentucky
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation
- American Academy of Pediatrics-Kentucky Chapter
- American Heart Association
- Bounce Coalition
- Cairn Guidance Inc.
- Cumberland Family Medical Center, Inc.
- Dept. Behavioral Health, Dev. & Intellectual Disabilities
- Development and Growth Strategies, LLC
- Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
- Gordon Food service
- Humana
- Kentucky Association of School Administrators
- Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling
- Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services
- Kentucky Department for Public Health
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Kentucky Health Departments Association
- Kentucky Public Health Association
- Kentucky Voices for Health
- Kentucky Youth Advocates
- KY Parent Teacher Association
- Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
- Spalding University
- United Health Care
- University of Kentucky





Mission:
To work collaboratively on policies and practices in and around schools that promote equity and improve the physical, social and emotional health and well-being of children, youth and families.

Steering Committee:

- Advocacy Action Network
- Aetna Better Health of Kentucky
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation
- American Academy of Pediatrics-Kentucky Chapter
- American Heart Association
- Bounce Coalition
- Cairn Guidance Inc.
- Cumberland Family Medical Center, Inc.
- Dept. Behavioral Health, Dev.& Intellectual Disabilities
- Development and Growth Strategies, LLC
- Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
- Gordon Food service
- Humana
- Kentucky Association of School Administrators
- Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling
- Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services
- Kentucky Department for Public Health
- Kentucky Department of Education
- Kentucky Health Departments Association
- Kentucky Public Health Association
- Kentucky Voices for Health
- Kentucky Youth Advocates
- KY Parent Teacher Association
- Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
- Spalding University
- United Health Care
- University of Kentucky

We urge the KY General Assembly to defeat SB 8, SB 37, SB 98, SB 117, HB 36 and HB 101. We stand ready to help in any discussion of legislation to strengthen immunizations and to share our knowledge of activities and initiatives from around the country that could improve the health of our Commonwealth.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,
Ben Chandler

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Chandler".

Chair, Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children
President and CEO, Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky

¹ American Academy of Pediatrics. How Vaccines Secure Your Child's Freedom from Disease. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/How-Vaccines-Secure-Childs-Freedom-Disease.aspx>

