



Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

In-Person Meeting – July 24, 2023, from 12:00 to 3:00 EST

Attendees:

| | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sheila Schuster | Advocacy Action Network | Michelle Malicote | Kentucky DPH – School Health Branch |
| Candance Gurley | Aetna Better Health of Kentucky | Laurie Grimes | Kentucky Psychological Association |
| Joe Bargione Beverly Winsch | Bounce Coalition | Emily Beauregard | Kentucky Voices for Health |
| Kate McDonald Goodin | Feeding Kentucky | Marvin O. King | King and Co. Consulting, LLC. |
| Amalia Mendoza Alexandra Kerley Katy Walker | Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky | Meredith Cahil | REACH Evaluation |
| Lori Vogel | Kentucky Association for School Social Work | Jennifer Sumeracki | Trans Parent Lex |
| Jim Tackett Stephani Bunge | Kentucky Department of Education | J. Eric Davis Jake Archibald | United Healthcare |
| Elizabeth Anderson- Hoagland | Kentucky Department for Public Health | | |

Meeting Objectives:

- The Steering Committee will discuss health disparities and equity issues faced by children and youth in Kentucky and ways to utilize the Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children’s policy positions and actions to address them.
- The Steering Committee will review the results of the Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children’s coalition survey to gauge its progress as a coalition as compared to the 2021 baseline survey and discuss next steps to improve the coalition’s functioning.

Pre-Meeting Documents to Review:

- Racial Inequities and the Impacts of Racism among Kentucky Youth
- The State of Youth Mental Health in Kentucky
- Discover REACH Evaluation
- Bio Pastor Marvin O. King

Meeting Notes:

I. Introductions and Member Updates

The Steering Committee members introduced themselves and the organizations they represent on the KCHC, and shared the following updates:

- United Healthcare reminded the group of the prevention services they offer including childhood immunization, family health clinics and well-child visits.



- The Kentucky Department of Education now has a School Health Branch. They have also been awarded another five-year cooperative agreement to improve children's health. Their priority district will be Fayette County.
- The interim session is a good time to contact legislators. The Task Force on School and Campus Safety is meeting August 1st.
- Trans Parent Lex mentioned that there has been a big influx of people joining the group. They will have a picnic to greet all new members on August 13 before the start of the school year.
- Feeding Kentucky reminded the group about the Summer Feeding program and schools trying to increase meals and reduce barriers to obtaining them.
- The Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky held a Health for a Change webinar, **Unmasking the Impact of Toxic Stress and Discrimination on Health Outcomes**, on July 11, 2023,.The recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).
- The Prichard Committee's [Community Schools](#) Initiative has opened its application for Full-Service Community Schools.. A total of \$30 million will be distributed over five years, each selected district will receive \$1.5 million, equivalent to \$300,000 per year, to bring communities to the table and implement this research-informed framework. The application for selecting the 16 new districts is live and will remain open until August 25, 2023. Link: [Prichard Committee Community Schools](#)
- Kentucky Voices for Health (KVH) ThriveKY Quarterly Forum with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) will take place on August 1 at 2:00 providing major updates on topics such as Medicaid renewals, the Home and Community Based waiver (HCBS) waiting list, reimbursement rates for pharmacists. Link to register [here](#)
- The ThriveKY coalition and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services will hold their Quarterly Advocacy Update on state and federal policies with an impact on Kentucky families on September 5 2023, 2:00 to 3:30 ET. Register [here](#).
- Kentucky Voices for Health (KVH) & the coalition of ThriveKY partners will provide in-person around the Commonwealth events this year, April through November, with updates on state and federal policies that impact the health and wellbeing of Kentuckians. Register [here](#) for the August 15th event in Morehead from 10am-1pm EDT.

II. The Impacts of Racism on Youth Behavioral Health

Meredith Cahill, epidemiologist at REACH Evaluation shared the results of recent research on how racism impacts the behavioral health of students and led the conversation resulting from her presentation. The presentation slides have been distributed to the Steering Committee.

Comments:

- The data stems from a voluntary survey for school districts. Jefferson County chose not to participate. In 2021 there were additional questions related to experiences of racism.



- The group discussed the many ways racism impacts children and youth and the data that corroborates how, for example, BIPOC children were 2.8 times more likely to report serious psychological distress and suicidal ideation. The urgent need for systemic changes to combat racism was discussed.
- Many comments centered around the impact of SB150 on surveys like the KIP, which has helped provide important data for policy and program development. SB150 requires active parental consent (opt in) when surveys like KIP require passive consent (opt out). To change from opt out to opt in is a big endeavor because the infrastructure is not in place to obtain active consent – parents have to see the questions, questionnaires have to be sent out, the forms have to be returned and there is an issue with storing the forms, tracking responses, etc. therefore, the KIP survey has been postponed. It was mentioned that when parents have to opt out, the response rate is around 80%, but when parents have to opt in it goes down to around 30%. The Youth Behavior Risk Survey (YRBS) when there was a trial run with opt in did not even have a response rate of 30%.
- The impact extends to the users of the survey. Many research grant applications are based on surveys like KIP, for example, so postponing KIP or if response rates are too low, then this has an impact on available, current data for many purposes which can result in less grant funding coming to Kentucky.
- The Kentucky Department of Public Health is doing research on declaring racism as a public health crisis. This is something the KCHC could support.

III. Part II Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)

Continuing the previous in-person meeting of the Steering Committee on DEIB, Pastor Marvin O. King led the committee through a discussion on the coalition's actions to reduce health disparities and increase equity and justice for children and youth in Kentucky. The presentation slides have been distributed to the Steering Committee.

The comments were around guided questions:

- To the question of how to support equity for all children and youth:
 - We must act, move beyond our equity vision and mission statement.
 - There isn't a coordinated organized movement pushing back against what's happening not only in Kentucky but in the country around DEIB and this is of growing concern.
 - Most organizations participating in the KCHC agree on issues related to DEIB, but when it comes to taking action, that is where not every organization is on the same page. There should be an agreement on principles and values.
- To the question related to the barriers we face to taking action:
 - Some representatives serving on the KCHC Steering Committee are associated with organizations which don't feel free to advocate.



- The fear factor was brought up various times. There is the fear of repercussions. There is sometimes funding at stake. If there is no dependency on funding, on money, it is easier to be free with thoughts and feelings.
 - There is the fear of being sued. SB150, for example, has had a chilling effect on schools and providers that don't want something to happen to them for taking a stance against the legislation.
 - There is a real threat of violence. Because DEIB is being used in political polarization, there has been violence against BIPOC and LGBTQ+ people and those organizations that offer support.
 - Our children are more traumatized than ever. We send kids to school under trauma and stress and ask them to "learn".
- To the question of what all this has done to how we function and how we move forward.
 - There's a confusion about how to function, there is no concept about what we should be doing. We're told we should be kind, but then when we support people affected by harmful legislation, we could get arrested.
 - There is also the politics of respectability at play.
 - Things have been moving quickly and there is a lack of time for coordination. At this moment, we need to be moving in all the lanes: activists being forceful, people who are interested in negotiating with legislators to do more of that, op eds and raising awareness. We must coordinate all of this.
 - We need to build support internally. To sign off on different agendas. The power of the coalition is in the power of its membership. We needed a vote to move forward when he need to do so is required, so have the conversations around issues so we're ready when the time comes for action.
 - The KCHC should develop a list of what each organization can contribute to activities within the coalition. Leveraging their relationships.
 - The strength of the KCHC is also in going back to our own organizations and getting people energized.
 - To address the issue of fear, we need to have a strong informational campaign that neutralizes some of the fear with truth. Teach critical thinking.
 - Evaluate policies, framework, impact, informational campaigns to neutralize.
 - Identify issues we can work on together. When you're playing "defense" it is hard. We need to be prepared to have the hard discussion in place to be ready to respond.

IV. Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Children Coalition Survey

Dr. Beverly Wunsch presented the results of the KCHC Steering Committee coalition survey. The results were compared to the baseline survey. The survey is part of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky's evaluation efforts, as backbone organization to the KCHC, to analyze the progress of the KCHC.

The Steering Committee will meet in person to review the survey and discuss all aspects of the KCHC functioning.

Next Meeting: August 29, 2023 - Zoom