



Kentucky Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

State Fiscal Year 2024

502-696-5300

www.ag.ky.gov/Resources/Child-Abuse/Pages/Kentucky-Child-Victims-Trust-Fund.aspx

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Frankfort, KY 40601

Report of the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board

Pursuant to KRS 15.925

For almost 40 years, the Kentucky Child Victims' Trust Fund has built awareness about and invested in the prevention of child sexual abuse. The Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention Board was codified in the Kentucky Revised Statute in 1984. In 2022, the General Assembly and leaders within the state began evaluating the Trust Fund's role in influencing the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The name and focus of the Board shifted to encompass addressing all forms of child maltreatment.

Pursuant to KRS 15.920, the duties of the Board are as follows:

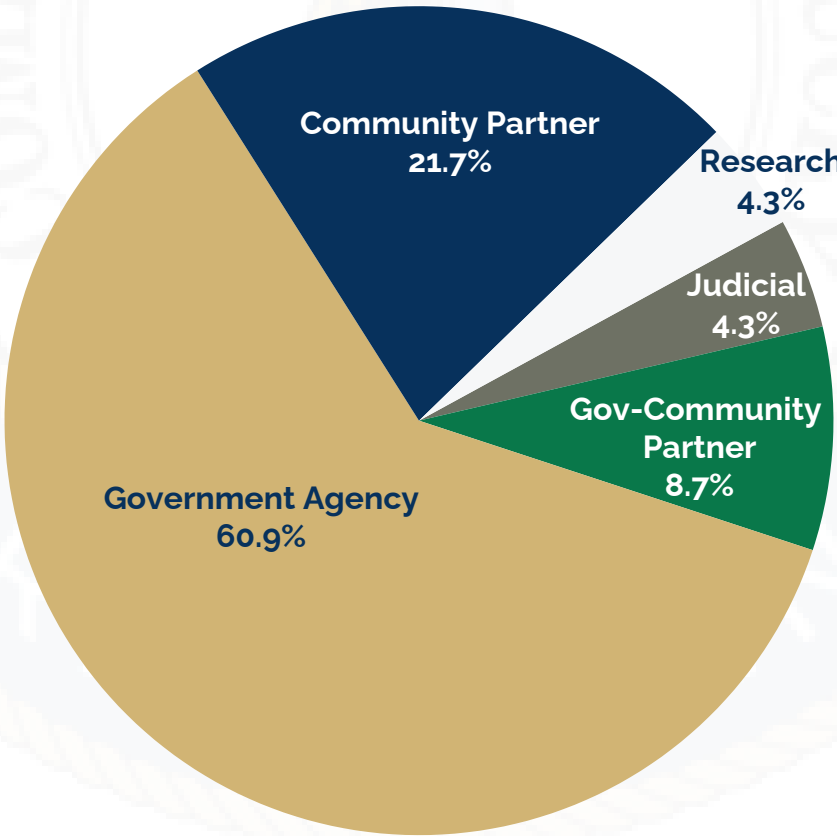
- Develop a biennial state plan for the distribution of funds from the trust fund. This plan will cover the period of 2024-2026.
- Provide for the coordination and exchange of information on the establishment and maintenance of prevention programs.
- Develop and publicize criteria for the receipt of trust fund money by eligible community resource organizations and eligible prevention programs.
- Review, approve, and monitor the expenditure of the trust fund money by community resource organizations and prevention programs.
- Provide statewide educational and public informational seminars for the purpose of developing appropriate public awareness regarding the prevention of child abuse and neglect; encourage professionals and groups to recognize and deal with prevention of child maltreatment; encourage and coordinate the development of community resource organizations, make information about the prevention of child maltreatment available to the public and organizations which deal with child maltreatment problems, and encourage the development of community prevention programs.
- Establish a procedure for an annual, internal evaluation of the functions, responsibilities, and performance of the state board. In a year in which the biennial state plan is prepared, the evaluation shall be coordinated with the preparation of the state plan.

The core of our mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect.

This year, the Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board further examined the new duties to prevent all types of abuse. The Board recognized that this ambitious goal could not be reached by simply tweaking current practices and procedures, but rather required a complete overhaul of the governance structure. The Board committed the time to read, research, and better understand the current prevention work in Kentucky and then evaluate the most effective approach to achieving the goals set out for the Board by the General Assembly.

Reviewing Kentucky's current prevention services:

On November 20th 2023, the Board met for a full day session to learn more about the work happening within Kentucky agencies involved in the child welfare system. The Board reviewed 23 documents including agency reports, statistical data and other publications.



All Board members were asked to provide reports and documents that would be relevant for the board for a review. This was a preliminary review of available information. It was identified through this process that a deeper analysis of available information, especially the gaps in policies and programming was needed.

Highlights from the Board's review of reports and publications in Kentucky:

- Substance abuse and misuse is singularly impactful across systems.
- Families want to feel included and heard.
- Keeping children in their homes and serving them in their communities continues to be a priority but is not always possible due to some of the following barriers:
 - Insufficient recruitment and retention in staffing
 - Lack of quality and quantity of service providers and partners in local communities
 - Inadequate levels of funding for funding programs, paying providers
- Evidence-based practices are being deployed in programs all along the prevention continuum with good results.
- Multi-system and multi-agency public and private collaborations continue to be vital to child abuse prevention and early identification programs.
- Programs and services, both public and private, are working towards becoming more inclusive and accessible to all families in need of support.
- Policies that provide economic and concrete support for families are associated with decreased risk for neglect and physical abuse. Kentucky has prioritized only some of these supports.
 - Concrete supports are one of the five Protective Factors identified by the Strengthening Families and the Protective Factors Framework, Center for the Study of Social Policy. The five protective factors include:
 - parental resilience;
 - social connections;
 - concrete support in times of need;
 - knowledge of parenting and child development;
 - and social and emotional competence of children.

Documents and publications reviewed are listed in the attached addendum.

Restructuring & Strategic Planning

In May of 2024 the Board met to evaluate the governance structure and develop a two-year strategic plan. As part of this meeting, the Board recognized the need for greater intentionality in grant funding. In order to implement a more targeted and strategic grant program, the Board determined that identifying the current gaps in prevention and refining the governance structure were necessary first steps. The Board came away from this May meeting with a new strategic plan slated for implementation beginning July 2024.

During the first year of its strategic plan, the Board will:

- Identify the gaps in child abuse and neglect prevention efforts;
- Prepare an annual report; and
- Begin aligning the grant process with the identified gaps.

In the second year of its strategic plan, the Board will:

- Evaluate the state's child abuse and neglect prevention efforts; and
- Conduct a deeper analysis of the gaps existing in the state's child abuse and neglect prevention efforts.

In order to accomplish the objectives outlined in the strategic plan, the Board developed a new committee structure. The Annual Report Committee will prepare the Board's annual report each year and also take responsibility for identifying the gaps in child abuse and neglect prevention efforts. The Governance Committee will prepare the Board's by-laws and strategic plan as well as conduct evaluations of Board operations. The Grants Management Committee will monitor the finances and budget of the Board, oversee the grants process, and oversee the sustainability of revenue. During year two of the strategic plan, the Board will launch an Evaluations Committee to deepen the work around evaluating and analyzing prevention work in the Commonwealth.

Review of Child Victims' Trust Fund Grant Awards

The Board met nine times in fiscal year 2024, and endorsed and financially supported several programs that are working across the Commonwealth. These programs reduced child sexual abuse and exploitation as well as child abuse and neglect; improved the coordination among the various agencies, governmental and private, that provide prevention services; and improved the condition of children and parents or guardians who need prevention program services. A recurring theme for the Board is maximizing its impact on child abuse prevention. As part of this conversation, the Board has considered the scope and focus of its prevention efforts using the following definitions:

- Primary prevention activities are directed at the general population and attempt to stop maltreatment before it occurs, with all community members having access to and opportunities to benefit from services.
- Secondary prevention activities focus on offering services to at-risk populations, with one or more risk factors associated with child maltreatment, such as poverty, parental substance misuse or parental mental health concerns, and may focus on communities with high incidence of identified risk factors.
- Tertiary prevention activities focus on families where maltreatment has already occurred, seek to reduce the negative consequences of the maltreatment, and to prevent its recurrence.

The Board continues to wrestle with identifying the types of prevention activities it will address through its grant funding. To help inform this decision, the Board will be sending a survey to its partners, stakeholders, and community members requesting input on existing gaps in the prevention programming landscape. With this information, the Board believes it can create a more robust and effective grant funding process.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 - 2024

Conference Sponsorship Grant Awards

Funding awarded for four events

- Total funding awarded for all events \$12,370
- Total reimbursement paid for all events \$10,415.38

Office of the Attorney General, Trafficking and Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Unit

Training Event: It Saves to Know: Missing Children Conference

September 6 – 8, 2023

Event Description: The purpose of this three-day conference is to reduce child maltreatment and mitigate child exploitation for missing and runaway youth by training those who work directly with vulnerable youth and their families. National experts, federal agencies, and state and local Kentucky leaders will address topics such as strategies to reduce exploitation of children, an overview of digital evidence, and best practices when investigating a missing child report.

The Board approved funding in the amount of \$5,000 to cover the following expenses:

- Costs for CEU accreditation and audio/visual support at the venue
- Up to 8 scholarships for lodging costs
- Water and chips for each attendee
- Speaker and conference support expenses

Pennyrile Allied Community Services/Community Collaboration for Children

Community Event: Tackling Tough Topics

March 26, 2024

Event Description: Full-day event with 3 keynote presenters and 2 breakout sessions.

Topics included:

- drug use in local high schools
- cyber safety
- understanding child sexual abuse
- preventing child sexual abuse

The Board approved funding in the amount of \$2,500 to support this event.

Pennyrile Allied Community Services/Community Collaboration for Children

Community Event: **Playing for Prevention**

April 20, 2024

Event Description: Four-hour event in Mayfield, KY to provide information on community resources and encourage connections with community partners. A family-focused event offering food, family activities, and informational booths staffed by local and state community partners.

The Board approved \$1,400 in funding for food, drinks, food supplies, Child Abuse Awareness Month items to be given out at the event, and mental health tools to be given out at the event.

Lake Cumberland Community Action Agency/Community Collaboration for Children Program

Community Event: **14th Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference**

March 5, 2024

Event Description: Full day of workshops addressing a variety of topics, including: fentanyl awareness, the connection between intimate partner violence and child maltreatment, behavioral health issues in juvenile and family court cases, transforming men into nurturing fathers, and primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts.

The Board approved \$3,470 for this event.

Prevention Grant Awards

The Board awarded funding for five prevention programs totaling \$98,791.55. Event details appear below.

Child Watch Counseling and Advocacy Center, Inc.

Project Title: The Totally Awesome Super Important You

Project Description: Child Abuse prevention education to preschool and elementary school students in 13 Western Kentucky counties, the Kentucky Sheriff's Boys and Girls Ranch, and other child-serving agencies. Age-appropriate interactive discussions, activities, and videos provide students with an understanding of child abuse and how to prevent it or stop it when it is already occurring. Components include Body Safety, Cyber Smarts, and Respect.

Funding Requested: \$15,401.61

Total Project Cost: \$30,803.22

Funding requested to pay for the following:

- Staff salaries for Community Education Coordinator and Victim Services Advocate
- Mileage for travel to schools
- Utilities
- Office supplies
- Program materials

Family Nurturing Center of Kentucky

Project Title: Kids on the Block

Project Description: Child Abuse prevention education to preschool and elementary school students in Northern Kentucky. Dynamic, interactive performances using life-size Kids on the Block puppets to educate children about child abuse and neglect. Utilize national scripts.

Funding Requested: \$10,000

Total Project Cost: \$35,000

Funding requested to pay for: Staff salary for Prevention Specialist

Judi's Place for Kids, Inc.

Project Title: Judi's Place for Kids

Project Description: Darkness to Light and ROAR education and prevention programs will be provided to local area schools (staff, students, parents) and community members

Funding Requested: \$8,000

Total Project Cost: \$23,000

Funding requested to pay for the following:

- Training and Travel
- Materials

Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky

Project Title: Strengthening Caregivers & Communities Through Prevention Education

Project Description: This project will equip service providers with tools to support healthy families and provide education on communication strategies to increase awareness and education among parents, caregivers, and community members. A train-the-trainer program addressing Abusive Head Trauma will be updated; a Summit promoting caregiver and community engagement on topics address cyber safety, discipline, fatherhood, and CSA prevention was offered; materials and training for the "Are They Good For Your Kids" program will be translated to Spanish and technical assistance and support will be provided to "Are The Good For Your Kids" trainers.

Funding Requested: \$26,307

Total Project Cost: \$80,809

Funding requested to pay for the following:

- Staff Salary for Programs/Training Coordinator
- Consultant/Contractual Services
- Training and Travel
- Operational Expenses
- Materials

South Central Kentucky Kids on the Block

Project Title: Puppets for Child Abuse Prevention

Project Description: Child abuse prevention education to preschool and elementary school students across the state. Dynamic, interactive performances using life-size Kids on the Block puppets to educate children about child abuse and neglect. Three programs are covered by grantee: child abuse prevention program for grades K-6, fire safety for grades K-6, and cyberbullying for grades 3-6.

Funding Requested: \$39,082.94

Total Project Cost: \$78,424.92

Funding requested will pay for the following:

- Staff salaries for Puppeteers and Support staff
- Fringe benefits
- Training and travel
- Operational expenses
- Equipment for puppeteer programs
- Materials

CUMULATIVE TOTALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

Programs Funded: 9

Grant Funding Awarded: \$ 111,161.55

Consistent with KRS 15.910, the Board is comprised of the following members and their designees if applicable:

- *Chairman of the Board*, Attorney General, Daniel Cameron, Designee: Heather Wagers
- Education & Workforce Development Cabinet, Secretary Jamie Link
- Cabinet for Health & Family Services, Secretary Eric Friedlander, Designee: Mary Carpenter
- Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, Secretary Kerry Harvey, Designee: Mona Womack
- Kentucky State Police, Phillip J. Burnett, Commissioner, Designee: Captain Bradly Stotts
- Kentucky Youth Advocates, Terry Brooks, Executive Director, Designee: Shannon Moody
- Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky, Jill Seyfred, Executive Director
- Kentucky Court Appointed Special Advocates Network, Inc., Andrea Bruns, State Director
- Children's Advocacy Centers of Kentucky, Caroline Ruschell, Chief Executive Officer
- Children's Alliance, Michelle Sanborn, President
- Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Mary P. York, Executive Director, Designee: Dr. Jaime Pittenger (January 2023 - August 2023)
- Kentucky Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Mary P. York, Executive Director, Designee: Dr. Christina Howard (September 2023 - Present)
- Kentucky Association of Regional Programs, Steve Shannon, Executive Director
- Administrative Office of the Courts, Katie Comstock, Director, Designee: Eboni Thompson
- Member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, David Meade
- Member of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, Julie Raque Adams

No one organization or program working alone will reverse the rising and troubling trend of poor outcomes with regards to the safety and well-being of Kentucky's children.

Addendum

1. Prosecutors' Advisory Council Child Sexual Abuse Data 2021
2. Kentucky Child Fatality and Near Fatality External Review Panel
2022 Annual Report
3. Multidisciplinary Commission on Child Sexual Abuse 2021 Annual Report
4. 2020-2021 Evaluation Proposal of the Kentucky Department for Community-Based
Services (DCBS) Community Prevention Pilot
5. Kentucky CASA Network Inc., Biennial Report 2023
6. 2022-2024 Prevention Collaborative Primary and Secondary Prevention Plan
7. July 2021 - August 2022 Custody Relinquishment for Behavioral Health
Treatment Work Group
8. September 2023 Thriving Families, Safer Children Kentucky Update
9. July - August 2022 Lean on Me Kentucky Focus Group Reports
10. FY2023 DCBS Family Preservation Services (FPRS) Annual Report
11. July 2021 Addressing Economic Hardship Key to Preventing Child Welfare
System Involvement, Chapin Hall
12. 21st Century DCBS 18-month Strategic Plan
13. August 2023 Transitioning Pathways Leading to Critical Success (TLC) Learning
Group Recommended Short and Long-Term Action Report
14. August 2023 High Acuity Youth: TLC Findings and Recommendations
15. FY2022 Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Annual Report
16. FY2022 CAC Kentucky Annual Report
17. August 2023 Kentucky Upstream Statewide Mapping Report
18. The Annie E. Casey Foundation 2022 Kentucky Kids Count County Data Book
19. Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice 2021-2022 Annual Report
20. Kentucky Department of Education Professional Training/Education
21. 2022 Human Trafficking Report to the Legislative Research Commission