

YOUTH JUSTICE

Kentucky's young people need support and community, not more law enforcement. Nearly 700,000 children were arrested nationwide in 2019. These children face a variety of challenges that require an equally wide variety of community based supportive solutions.

#1

Kentucky leads the nation in rates of child abuse and neglect.

4.4x

Black children are 4.4x more likely to be arrested than their white peers.

#3

If Kentucky were its own country, it would be third for women's incarceration.

#1

Kentucky has more children in foster care or with a non-parent caregiver.

SUPPORTING KENTUCKY KIDS:



VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION:

Kentucky is number 1 in child abuse and neglect, and instances of community-based violence against youth are rising.

Kentucky needs a statewide comprehensive violence prevention plan that assists families affected by violence, supports victims of gun violence, and provides grant opportunities for grassroots organizations working with communities and families.



PUBLIC HEALTH:

All issues connected to youth justice – from neglect, to youth violence, to parental incarceration – have long term effects on health, wellbeing, and opportunity. We must address the crises facing our children through a public health lens.



RAISE THE AGE:

Children under the age of 13 should not be forced into juvenile court. Kentucky is one of 28 states with no minimum age.

Navigating the legal system is complicated and confusing for people of all ages. Young children should never be expected to do this.

All children make mistakes and deserve a fair chance to correct their harm and change behavior. Children need holistic interventions that include family, school, and community.



POLICE FREE SCHOOLS:

When police enter schools, they do what they are trained to do: detain, handcuff, and arrest. This blanket approach does not meet the individual needs of students.

Nationally, schools are removing police, but Kentucky is moving in the wrong direction.

Students need more licensed social workers and therapists. This will help children navigate life, find a sense of belonging in their communities, and grow into healthy adults.