



Kentucky
youth
Advocates





Kentucky youth Advocates

Kentucky Youth Advocates is the independent voice for Kentucky kids. Our vision is to make Kentucky the best place in America to be young.

We do this by:

- **Working with decision-makers**
- **Educating and mobilizing advocates**
- **Publishing data and research**
- **Convening stakeholders**

Paid Family Leave

Paid family leave has proven short- and long-term health and well-being benefits for families:



- Contributes to fewer low birthweight babies, fewer incidents of pediatric abusive head trauma, fewer infant deaths, and higher rates of breastfeeding
- Promotes parent-child bonding and accessing prenatal care
- Linked to children having better developmental outcomes, including fewer behavioral problems
- Improves maternal mental health
- Generates greater income stability for families

Paid Family Leave

It also has proven returns on investment for employers:

- Boosts employee morale and reduces turnover
- Creates an incentive for potential employees
- Lever for increased labor force participation
- Potential savings in the state budget due to decreased reliance on public assistance programs



Leave for Foster/Kinship/Fictive Kin Families

Paid Family Leave for Families of Circumstance

- Kentucky has the highest rate of child abuse in the United States (for the 3rd year in a row)
- Children of all ages join families due to abuse, neglect or dependency
- Children with a history of trauma (and their new parents/caregivers) often need extra supports as they adjust into new arrangements



Families of Circumstance

Informal kinship care

Varying types of custody depending on arrangements made within those families.

Kinship Care/Fictive Kin Care

Children who are placed with **relatives** or **close family friends (fictive kin)** as a result of an investigation and removal due to dependency, neglect, or abuse. Involvement with Department or Community Based Services (DCBS)—custody of the child is maintained by the relative or fictive kin.

Foster care. Children placed with relatives, close family friends (fictive kin), and those unknown to the child who have become certified as foster parents—custody of the child is maintained by DCBS.



Data for Jefferson County

Placement Type	Number of Children
Foster Care (DCBS or Private)	450
Relative/Fictive Kin	330
Other Active Placements	246
Total Out of Home Care (OOHC)	1016

Average Age of Child:
10 years old

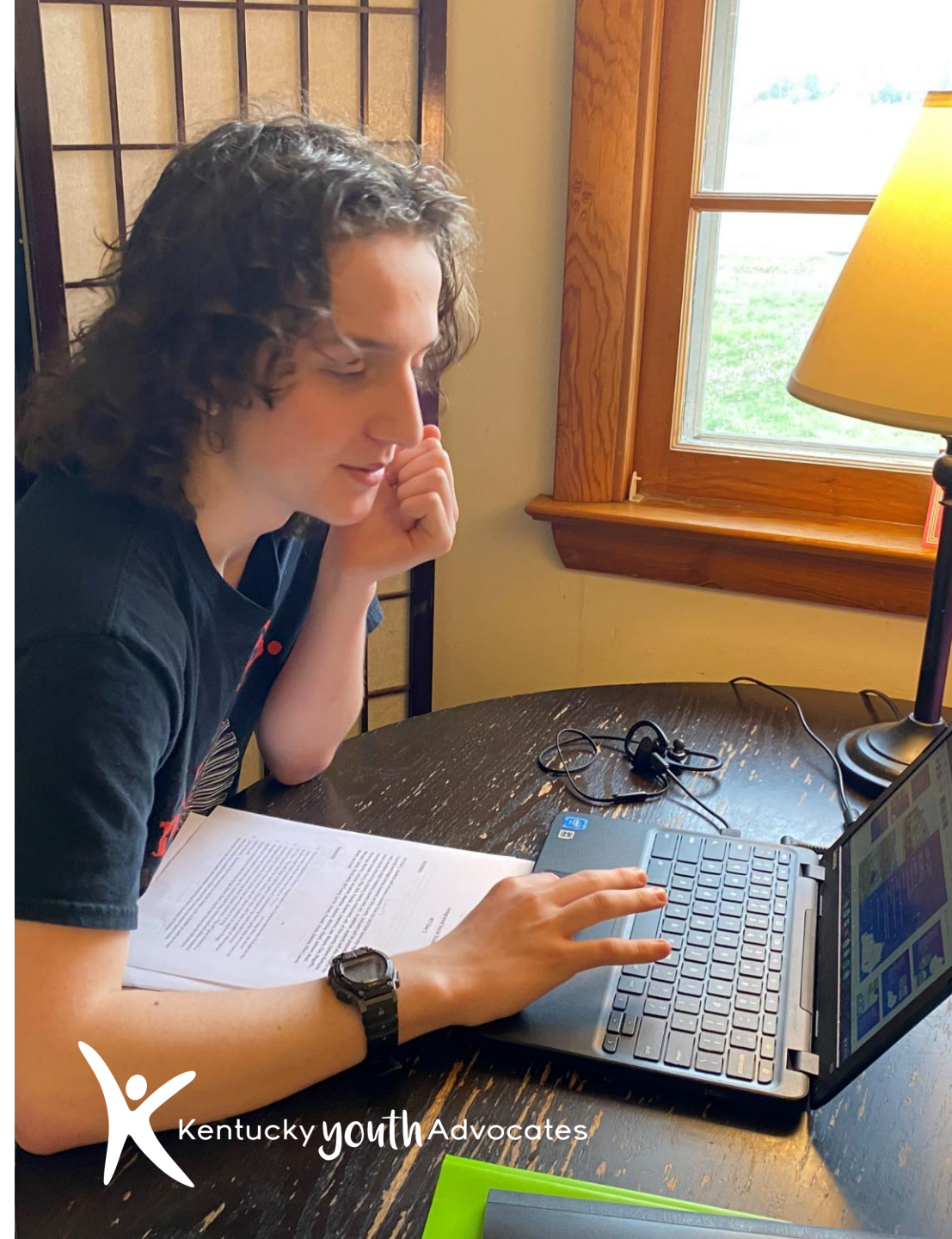
Children with a Goal
of Adoption:
414

Sources: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services, Foster Care FACTS 2/2021
*estimate based on CHFS conversation



Considerations

- Multiple placements can lead to delayed permanency outcomes, academic difficulties, and struggle with meaningful attachments
- 1 out of 5 youth in foster care experience homelessness after age 18
- If young people transitioning from foster care in a single year were involved in the criminal justice system at the **much lower rate of the general population**, it would produce savings in excess of \$5 billion over their lifetimes



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Recommendations for Inclusion

- Include relative and fictive kin children placed with the caregiver as a result of abuse, neglect, or dependency with leave granted at the time of placement
- Include children in foster care placed with prospective adoptive parent(s) at any age by which foster parents sign an intent to adopt or other adoption contract



**Questions?
Thank you!**

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BLUEPRINT *for*
KENTUCKY'S
CHILDREN