



KANSAS Thriving Families

Safer Children

Let's reimagine child welfare
into a child well-being system.

Every child deserves a nurturing family.

Every family deserves to live in a safe, supportive community.

Together, we can build momentum to prioritize family well-being in hopes of reducing our over-reliance on foster care and family separation. We can offer better support and resources for children and the adults in their lives – parents, family members, caregivers, and educators – before they come in contact with agencies like child protective services.

Separation must be a last resort.

The Challenge

Over the past decade, there was a **47% rise** in the children in foster care in Kansas, with rates of removal among the highest in the nation. Following national trends, children of color in Kansas made up a disproportionate percentage of children in care – **15% of black children in care compared to 6% of the population.**

We must invest in communities and systems of care that prioritize keeping Kansas families together.

Kansas is one of 22 states in the **Thriving Families, Safer Children** movement to rethink child welfare systems. The goal is to come together to reimagine the multitude of specific ways we can better support Kansas families *and transform child welfare into a system of child well-being.*

Every child is filled with tremendous promise – and we have a shared obligation to foster their potential.

Our current system continues to fall short in ensuring all Kansas families experience safe, stable environments for children to thrive.

However, in a child well-being system:

More children will stay with their families.

We'll address and alleviate family stressors before they become crises that result in intervention from the child welfare system.

We recognize the difference between poverty and child maltreatment.

We'll address the concrete needs of more children and families, preventing potential maltreatment before it occurs.

Resources will be available for families experiencing disruption.

Communities will reallocate resources into equitable, hope-inspiring services and concrete supports like help with legal representation, obtaining housing, accessing public benefits, and getting the right educational services.

Costs will go down.

Preventative services and concrete supports are less costly than our current system.

Kansas Partners

Parents, caregivers, youth, and individuals with lived experience of the child welfare or prevention services system

Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund

Kansas Children's Service League

Kansas Department for Children and Families

Kansas Department for Health and Environment

University of Kansas School of Social Welfare and Center for Public Partnerships & Research



Learn more

Join us to help make this vision a reality for Kansas!

ksthivingfamilies.org