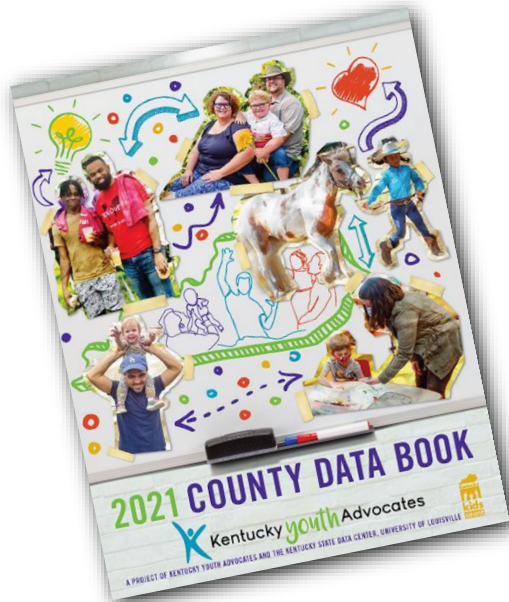


# Making Kentucky Kids Count!



Kentucky youth Advocates



Kentucky will be strongest when all children have their best chance to thrive. The 2021 Kentucky KIDS COUNT *County Data Book* examines data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, the impacts of systemic racial injustice on children and families, and solutions to advance racial equity so that every child can thrive. The time is now for us all to work together towards that goal. **With our collective determination, knowledge, and resources, Kentucky can close gaps in opportunity for our children.** Join the effort to build the vibrant communities we need to support families, ensure each child in our Commonwealth can dream big for their future, and have what they need to achieve those dreams.

2020 child population by race is available for all counties. Check out pages 16-19

Child Population Ages 0-17 by Race/Ethnicity

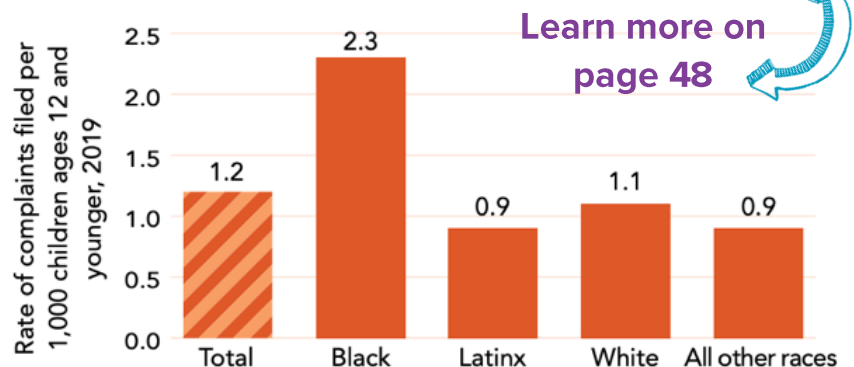
	2020								
	Total	Asian Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander American	Asian	Black	Latino	Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White	All other races
Kentucky	1,021,936	1,423	18,872	91,803	74,779	1,071	69,033	759,219	5,736
Adair	4,042	2	6	60	246	4	202	3,506	16
Allen	4,947	13	18	52	253	7	222	4,369	13
Anderson	5,584	10	33	93	196	3	375	4,851	23
Ballard	1,611	0	10	54	39	0	100	1,403	5

More than **1 in 5 Kentucky children are growing up in poverty** (21 percent), meaning they live in a household that earns \$25,926 or less for a family of four. The poverty rate increases to over two in five Black children in the urban centers of Jefferson and Fayette Counties (42 percent). This is comparable to 6 counties in southeastern Kentucky in which 40 percent or more of their entire child population lives in poverty.

**Responding to youth behavior in measured and age-appropriate ways can address the disproportionate number of Black youth who get caught up in the youth justice system.**

While anyone can file a complaint against a child, law enforcement accounted for 61% of complaints in 2019 and schools filed 27%. For young children ages 12 and younger, **more than two-thirds of complaints are for status offenses – like missing school or running away – or misdemeanors, which can be more effectively addressed within the community instead of the courts.** Black boys are perceived by adults as being older and less innocent than their White peers, which contributes to young Black children being more likely to have complaints filed against them. Even

**Complaints are filed on young Black children at a rate twice as high as children of other races**



Learn more on page 48

**SOURCE:** Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts, Court Designated Worker Database. Child population data from the U.S. Census Bureau and National Center for Health Statistics, 2019 Bridged-Race Population Estimates.

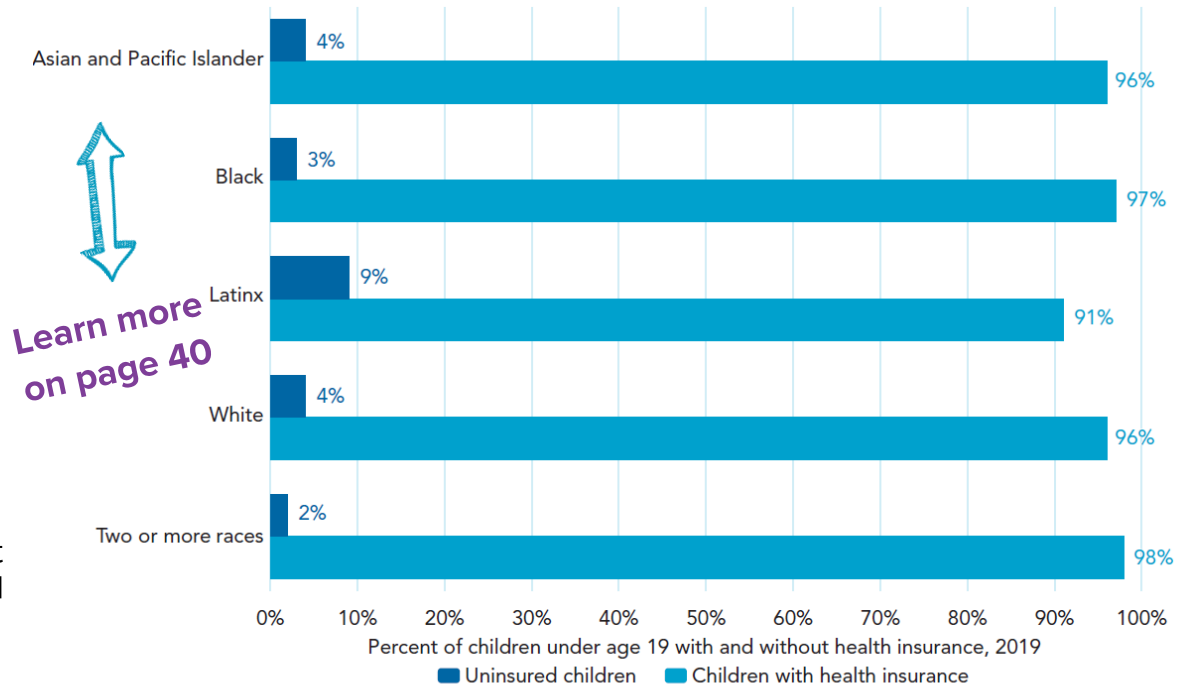
when young Black children have a case handled out of formal court, early charges can impact how future cases are handled.

### Solutions:

- Align discipline responses in schools to children’s age to keep young people from entering the juvenile justice system. With schools disproportionately referring Black students, prevention focused approaches by schools, such as restorative justice, and increased partnerships with local organizations to counsel and mentor youth can reduce disparities.
- Establish a minimum age – at least 12 years old – that a child can be charged with an offense and, instead of sending them through the juvenile justice system, connect the child and family to community-based services.

## Efforts to connect children and parents to health insurance have narrowed disparities in coverage, but gaps remain for Latinx children.

Kentucky’s outreach and enrollment efforts have resulted in **96% of children having health coverage**, and public programs like Medicaid and Kentucky Children’s Health Insurance Program (KCHIP) have been key in keeping children covered during the COVID-19 pandemic as many parents lost employer sponsored coverage. While efforts to connect children and parents to health insurance



Learn more on page 40

SOURCE: Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

and improve telehealth utilization have narrowed disparities in coverage and accessing care for most populations, **gaps remain for Latinx children.**

### Solution:

- Prioritize closing the remaining gap in health coverage for Latinx children by increasing investments to conduct outreach and enrollment with the Latinx population using culturally relevant messages and trusted messengers.