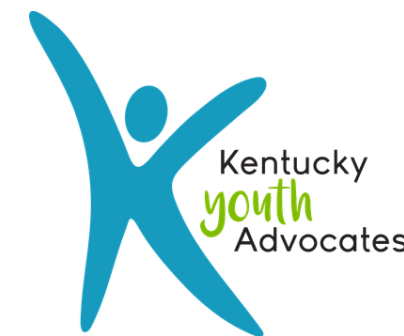


2026 Regular Session HB 686

IJC on Health Services
Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Dr. Shannon Moody
Executive Director
Kentucky Youth Advocates





For nearly 50 years, **Kentucky Youth Advocates** has advocated for policies and budget investments that give children the best possible opportunities for a brighter future.

As the independent voice for children, our vision is to **make Kentucky the best place in America to be young.**



A program initiative of Kentucky Youth Advocates

Bloom Kentucky is powered by grantmaking partners across the state, united by a shared commitment to end Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and promote resilience through systemic change.

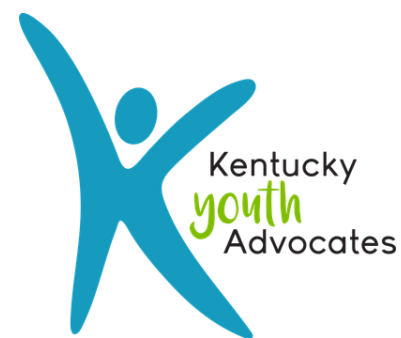
The coalition is dedicated to cultivating a Commonwealth **where every child has an opportunity to bloom.**



HB 686 (2026 RS)

Overall aims:

- Establish a **statewide Commission** to promote youth mental health and positive youth development programming outside school hours.
- Create a **dedicated fund that can accept social media settlement funds, gifts, and grants** to provide funding to programs aimed at increasing improved outcomes for youth and reducing self-harm and suicide risk.
- Expand the State Interagency Council and Regional Interagency Council to include a **Suicide Awareness and Reduction Network** integrated into Kentucky's existing system of care for children and transition-age youth that perform community needs assessments and applies for grants.



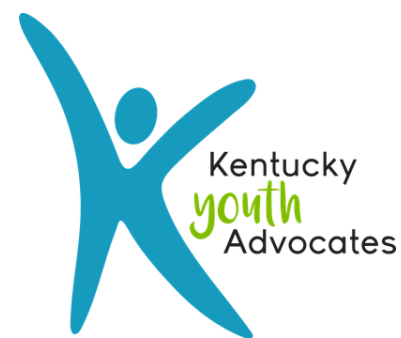


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Section 1 Definitions

This section adds new definitions to Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) Chapter 210, including:

- “Commission” — refers to the Kentucky Positive Youth Development Commission established later in the bill.
- “Eligible organization” — means an organization that provides positive youth development programming.
- “Positive youth development programming” — defined as structured, prevention-focused, evidence-based activities outside school hours that promote mental well-being, reduce suicide risk, and engage youth and families.
 - *Does not apply to education programming provided during school hours*
- “Youth” — means school age children and young adults up to age 25.





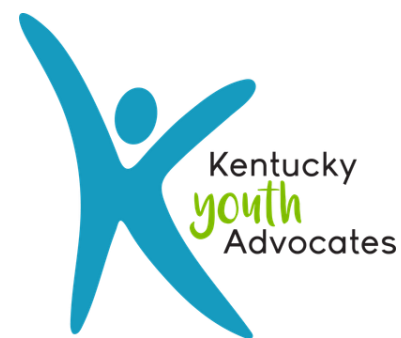
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Section 2

Creates the **Kentucky Positive Youth Development Commission**

Key function:

- The commission's purpose is to improve **youth well-being** and **prevent self-harm** through community based programs. The Cabinet is required to staff the Commission.
- Membership includes state agency leaders (e.g., behavioral health, public health, education), the state treasurer, the attorney general, and appointed members from relevant organizations such as grantmakers, mental health providers and youth serving groups.*
 - *Non-voting members include President of the Senate (or designee), Speaker of the House (or designee), two statewide YSOs, and the KY Out of School Alliance.*
- Establishes terms for members.
- The commission must meet at least twice per year and may contract for research and services.
- The department must adopt regulations for grant applications and oversight of funded programs.





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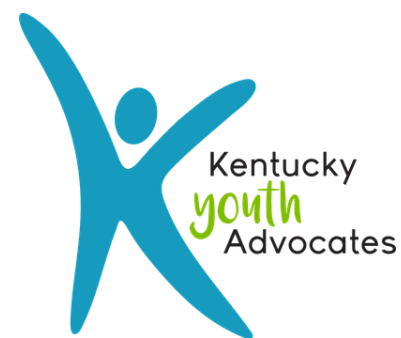
Section 3 — Positive Youth Development Fund

Creates the Positive Youth Development Fund in the State Treasury:

- The fund may receive money from settlements related to youth harms (e.g., litigation against social media companies), state appropriations, grants, gifts, and other lawful sources.
- The fund supports youth development programs and does not lapse at fiscal year-end.
- Up to 10% of the fund can be used for administrative costs and technical assistance.
- The Attorney General can recover litigation costs from funds received through legal settlements.

Section 4 — Amendments to KRS 200.503

Amends an existing statute defining terms for children's mental health services to include positive youth development programming as a recognized practice in the system of care for youth with behavioral health needs.



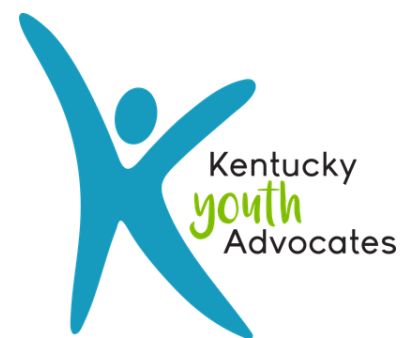


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Section 5 — Amendments to KRS 200.505 (State Interagency Council - SIAC)

Changes the membership and responsibilities of the **SIAC for Services and Supports to Children and Transition-Age Youth** by:

- Adding the **state suicide prevention coordinator** and **Attorney General** (or designees) as council members.
- Requiring the council to **coordinate with the new Positive Youth Development Commission** and regional councils to create workgroups, perform community needs assessments, research opportunities for positive youth development programming, **and apply for grants to implement such programs.**
- Directs regional interagency councils (RIAC) to coordinate with the commission to create Suicide Awareness and Reduction Network workgroups to conduct local needs assessments and apply for grant funding.



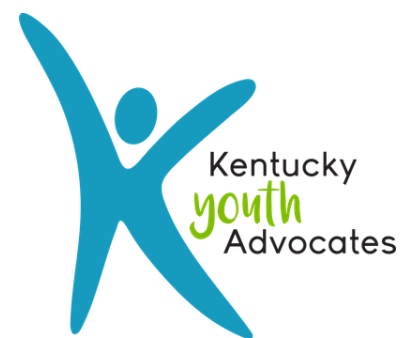


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Section 6 - RIAC and Suicide Awareness and Reduction Network (SARN)

- Requires regional interagency councils to coordinate with the Positive Youth Development Commission to establish SARN workgroups with membership including:
 - Local school districts; Local law enforcement; School resource officers; Mental health professionals; Local health departments; Child development specialists or pediatricians; Regional community mental health centers; Parents of children and transition-age youth; and Transition age-youth.
 - To create workgroups, perform community needs assessments, research opportunities for positive youth development programming, and apply for grants to implement such.

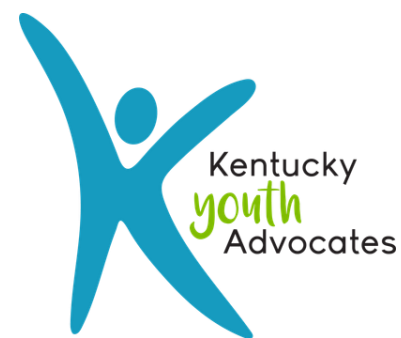
Section 7: Commission Membership Terms





Why positive youth development?

- Settlement language specifically notes eligible use of funds for afterschool and summer programming
- Proven to keep kids safe and promote connection and well-being
- Provided by caring and trained adults in a variety of settings
- Nondigital, engaging alternatives to social media that reduce screen time and promote resilience





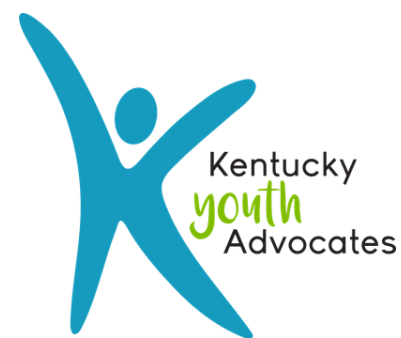
Youth Voice

Disconnect to Connect Challenge

A youth-led challenge to encourage young people to disconnect from their devices, reconnect with their communities, and advocate for how future social media settlement dollars can be used to benefit and invest in future generations' overall well-being.

Listening Sessions with Youth

- August 24 - Louisville
- September 14 - Mayfield
- September 16 - Covington*
- September 23 - Slade
- October 6 + 17 - Lexington



Questions?

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