



# A Family First Child Welfare System

IJC on Health, Welfare, and Family Services  
Department for Community Based Services  
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# START

Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams





# START History and Sites

- START adapted from a model developed in **Cleveland** in the 1990s with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation
- KY began planning for START in 2006 and has evolved the model to fit the needs of KY families
- START has been implemented in eight unique counties in KY: **Kenton, Boone, Campbell, Jefferson, Boyd, Martin, Daviess, and Fayette**
- START also in **Bloomington, IN; Asheville, NC; and several counties in OH and MD**





# What is START?

- Child Protective Services (CPS) program for families with parental substance use disorders and child maltreatment
- Combines best practices in child welfare, courts, and substance use disorder treatment
- Helps parents achieve recovery and keeps children in home with family when safe and possible
- START is recognized on the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare





# What is START?

- Serves CPS involved families with a substance exposed infant and/or young children 0-5
- Intense and coordinated CPS service delivery model with quick intervention for families upon receipt of CPS referral
- Partners with substance use disorder and mental health treatment for services
- Represents different approach to working with families involved with CPS due to parental substance use concerns





# Essential Elements

- CPS worker and family mentor paired and co-located under CPS START supervisor
- Shared caseload of 12-15 families for each CPS worker/family mentor dyad
- Rapid timeline for early family identification and engagement
- Weekly home visits by START team
- Non-punitive approach and shared decision making
- Quick access to holistic SUD assessment and treatment within 48 hours



# KY START Outcomes

- Women in START have **nearly double sobriety rate** of non-START counterparts (66% vs 37%)
- Children in START are about **half as likely to enter foster care** (21% vs 42%)
- At case closure, over **75% of START kids remained with or were reunified** with their parent(s)
- For every dollar spent on KY START, \$2.22 is **saved in off set of foster care costs**



# **Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP)**

- Similar to the START program, created to serve rural/resource poor areas
- Established in July 2017 in Carter, Greenup, Mason, and Rowan counties
- Expanded in July 2019 to Bath, Fleming, Lewis, and Montgomery counties
- Provides immediate access to intensive in-home services and substance abuse treatment from community mental health centers
- KSTEP has served 578 children since July 2017
- Program evaluation shows 95% of children have been able to remain safely in their home.



# Prevention Services by Region

**Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP)**

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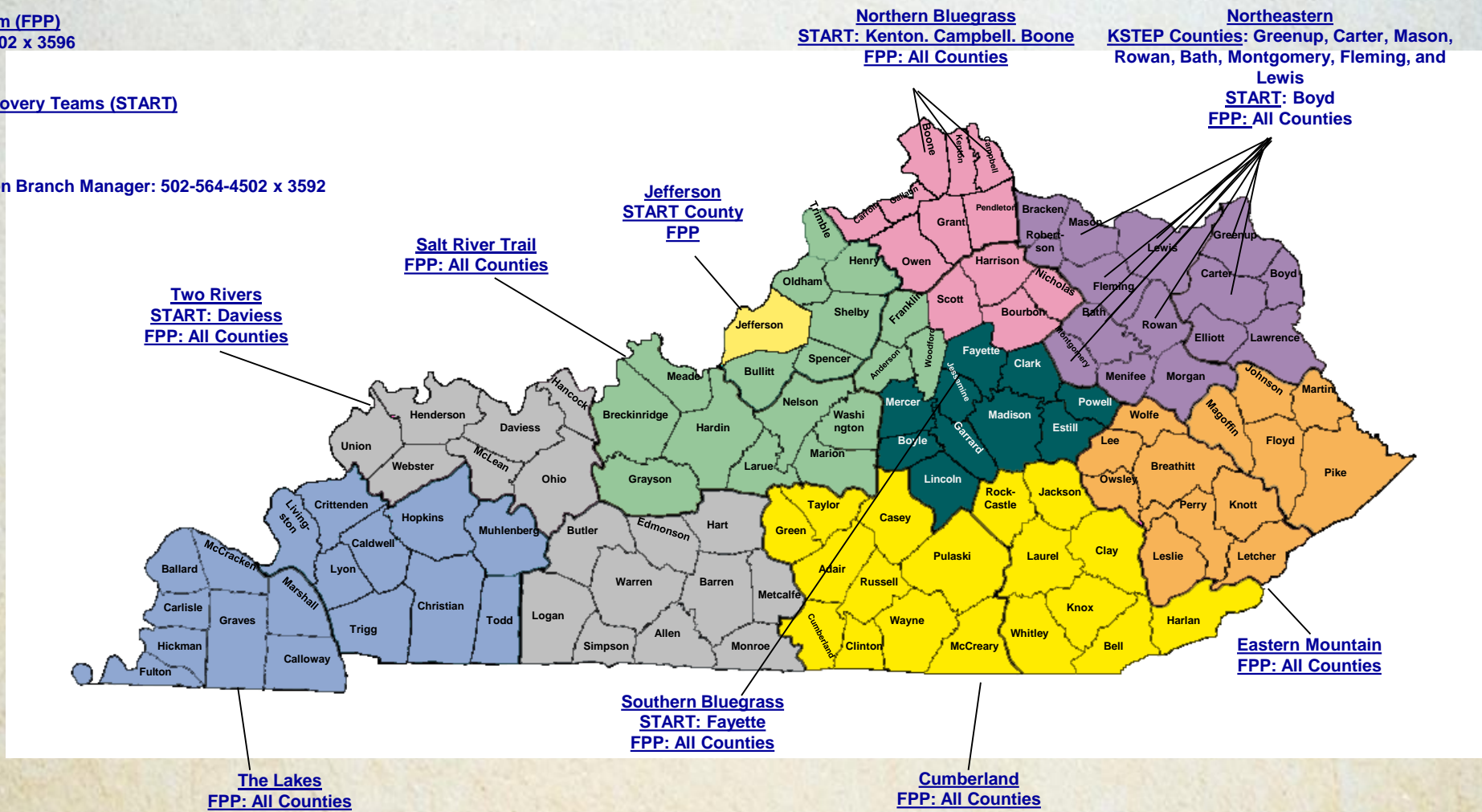
**Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START)**

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# Raven's Story





# Willa's Story

