



Kentucky 2023

# STATE HEALTH ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Kentucky Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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# Letter from Commissioner

I am pleased to present the most recent State Health Assessment (SHA) data to you. The Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) compiled the 2023 State Health Assessment for Kentucky. The information compiled in this report is the culmination of many gatherings with our partners and staff in pouring over data we collected, as well as data we received from community partners, which we will use to focus our efforts to improve the health of our community through the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Data drives the SHA process.

Physical inactivity, obesity, smoking, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and drug overdose deaths are just a few indicators the Commonwealth of Kentucky ranks among the worst performing states on. While there are many opportunities to improve our health status, our great state ranks exceedingly well in other ways. Lack of drinking water violations and the percentage of the population served by water fluoridation ranks first in the country. Other high-performing categories include the percentage of students graduating high school, fruit and vegetable consumption, the low percentage of uninsured Kentuckians and the high screening rate for lung cancer.



The KDPH team and its partners have compiled this document despite confronting a once-in-a-century pandemic while sustaining our public health mission through programs covering education, prevention, testing, surveillance and reporting. The Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) has nearly 150 programs to help Kentuckians become healthier in cooperation with partners.

I welcome your feedback on the SHA and invite you to visit the KDPH's [website](#) or follow us on social media to find out about our programs that are focused on improving the health of our community.

With gratitude,  
Steven J. Stack, MD, MBA, FACEP  
Commissioner



## READER'S GUIDE

The Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) compiled a comprehensive Kentucky State Health Assessment (SHA) in 2017. The 2023 SHA serves as a report containing the most recently reported data in Kentucky. Statistics were placed into public health themes with the following key points highlighted: Demographics, Healthcare Access/Coverage, Health Behavior Factors, Health Outcomes, Maternal and Child Health and Social Determinants of Health.

The data referenced throughout this document ranges from 2016-2021 and includes primary and secondary data. Primary data sources include Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance (KYBRFS) Program, Vital Statistics, Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Registry, Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Case Management System, Kentucky Injury and Prevention and Research Center (KIPRC), Kentucky Cancer Registry (KCR) and Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance Survey (YRBS). Secondary data used are from the U.S. Census for collecting demographics such as population and growth, gender distribution, population segmented by age and population segmented by race. Other secondary sources are the 2022 America's Health Rankings Annual Report from the United Health Foundation and Acutrans.

Data drives the SHA process. “Data-driven” means that an organization utilizes data to guide decision-making.

There are quantitative and qualitative data in this report. The quantitative data answers “what” and “how much” with the intent to discover facts. Qualitative data is more about exploring “how” and “why”: seeking data from various audiences to gain a deeper understanding of experiences and helping to explain reasons, situations or perspectives that affect quantitative data.

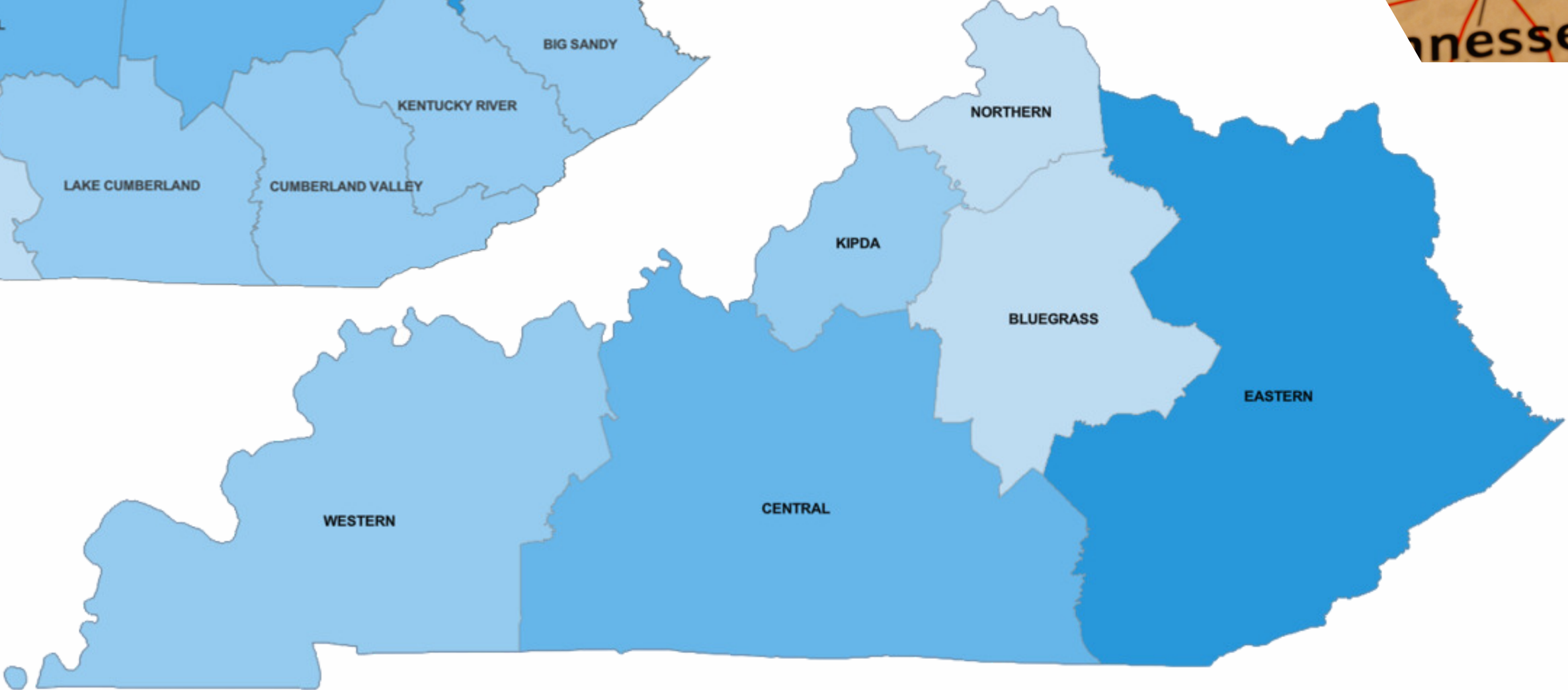
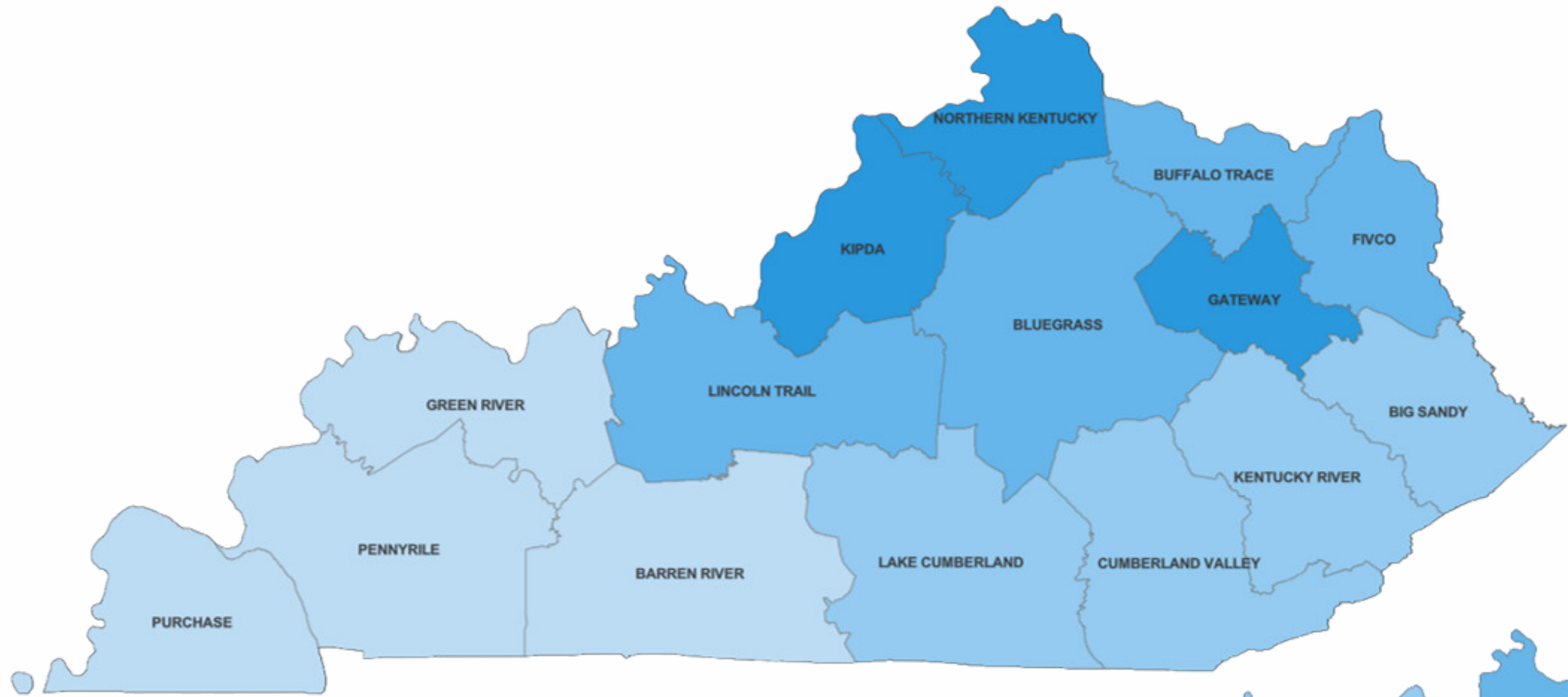
When possible, the KDPH chose to reference existing data and reports created by organizations and partners rather than duplicate data collection and analysis. When data is presented, the source and whether it is primary or secondary is noted.

Data is presented in various ways including narrative text, maps, charts, graphs and tables for a variety of visualization options.

The Area Development District (ADD) maps consist of 15 different districts [Barren River, Big Sandy, Bluegrass, Buffalo Trace, Cumberland Valley, Five Counties (FIVCO), Gateway, Green River, Kentucky River, Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA), Lake Cumberland, Lincoln Trail, Northern Kentucky, Pennyryle and Purchase]. The region maps consist of 6 different areas (Western, Central, KIPDA, Northern, Eastern and Bluegrass Run.



# KENTUCKY'S 15 AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS



KENTUCKY MAP OF SIX REGIONS

# ACRONYMS

Acronyms are used throughout the document. The first time a term is used, the phrase or name will be written in full, followed by the acronym. Some of the frequently used abbreviations in this document:

<b>KDPH</b>	Kentucky Department for Public Health
<b>KyBRFS</b>	Kentucky Behavioral Factor Risk Surveillance Survey
<b>SHA</b>	State Health Assessment
<b>SDOH</b>	Social Determinants of Health



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TEAM HAPPY FRIENDSHIP LOVE GIVE LIFE MONEY FOOD  
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## Internal Process

Beginning in October 2022, a small group of the KDPH staff came together to start the planning process for the SHA. Most staff had participated in the 2017 SHA process. Additional staff were brought onto the SHA Committee based on their access to data and expertise on the subject matter, and it grew to more than 15 regularly attending members, with other subject matter experts brought in ad hoc. Over the next several months, meetings were held virtually on at least a monthly basis. During these meetings, topics discussed were what data to include from the previous SHA, what data should not be included in the update and what new data should be added. Additionally we discussed additional staff and external organizations that should be brought to the table; availability of data and calculation changes from previous year data sets, layout of the document, graphical presentation and alignment with the KDPH's brand policy guidelines, etc. The KDPH staff compiled the document with updated, analyzed data. Epidemiologists calculated statistics and made charts to represent the data visually.

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## External Process

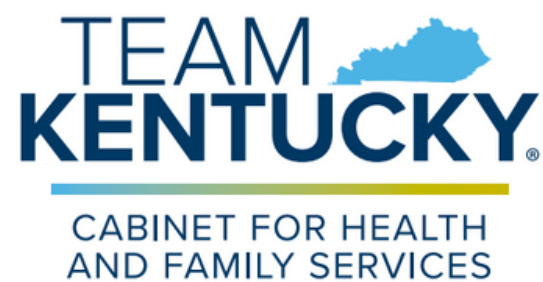
External partners were invited to join the SHA committee. The KDPH included organizations that represent populations disproportionately affected by poorer health outcomes. The KDPH has partnerships with countless organizations that fit into this category with the hope of expanding participation and the amount of data from external partners in the future. For this document and timelines, a few organizations were selected to provide an external perspective. During the SHA process the KDPH collaborated with Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, Kentuckiana Health Collaborative, the Department of Aging and Independent Living and Kentucky Voices for Health to obtain data.



The **Kentuckiana Health Collaborative (KHC)** is a non-profit coalition of businesses and healthcare stakeholders working to solve the complex health problems that face our local community[DKV(D1)] to improve the health status and healthcare delivery in Greater Louisville and Kentucky.



The KHC met with the KDPH in the spring of 2023 to discuss their mission and focus areas and contribute to the conversation. The mission of the KHC is to work collaboratively with healthcare purchasers and stakeholders to build healthier communities through high quality, affordable and equitable healthcare across Kentucky and Southern Indiana. They focus on three main strategies: improve healthcare quality, make healthcare more affordable and build healthier communities.



**Department for Aging  
and Independent Living**  
**502-564-6930**

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The **Department of Aging and Independent Living (DAIL)**, a state agency within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, oversees services for Kentucky elders and individuals with disabilities. The mission of the DAIL is to promote the welfare, dignity and independence of older adults, individuals with physical disabilities and adults in need of a guardian. The KDPH met with the DAIL in the spring of 2023 to discuss the Office of Dementia Services (ODS) within the DAIL, which provides resources and support on Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Related Disorders (ADRD). The DAIL shared Alzheimer’s data for this state health assessment.

PARTNERS

# PARTNERS



**The Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky (FHK)** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization funded by an endowment that works to address the unmet health needs of Kentuckians by developing and influencing policy, improving access to care, reducing health risks and disparities and promoting health equity. The FHK met with the KDPH in the fall of 2022 to discuss their qualitative community and partners survey of 700 participants and their strategic plan for 2023-2027. The two focus areas in their strategic plan 2023-2027 are access to health care and children's health.



- ✓ Responders identified **affordability of health care** and **insurance coverage** as top impact on health.
- ✓ **78% of respondents answered**, *“It is very important that those working on health, healthcare and health policy focus on health equity in their work.”*

# PARTNERS

*"If you don't have access to care because you don't have the way to pay for it then you can be devastated...you having access to care through Medicaid is crucial to your health, and it helps you with your social determinants of health, it gives you access to good food...there are ways your MCOs can help you."*

-- Lisa Garrison

*"In most cases...be less costly to do these things that will help people and make people less vulnerable than to not do them and continue to keep people vulnerable."*

-Clark Williams

*"Mothers who seek prenatal and postpartum care have longer, healthier lives and can identify complications sooner get treatment quicker. Why wouldn't we want everyone to have that?"*

-Kelly Taulbee



The Kentucky Voices for Health (KVH) met with the KDPH in the spring of 2023 to discuss their mission and highlight stories from fellow Kentuckians. KVH believes every Kentuckian should have the opportunity to live a healthy life and contribute to the health of their communities. As a 501© (3) nonprofit and nonpartisan coalition, KVH brings together individuals, advocates, community organizations, state agencies and policymakers to address the underlying causes of poor health by connecting Kentuckians with opportunities to make change through policy advocacy. The KVH focuses on health equity and social determinates of health (SDOH), and shared story highlights during a SHA committee meeting. Countless other stories can be found on the KVH's website.

# PARTNERS



Organization representing populations disproportionately affected?



Organization representing sectors other than governmental public health?



Met with Chief of Staff, Quality Improvement Coordinator and Division Director to discuss survey results and their strategic plan in November 2022. FHK emailed the survey with Strategic Plan in January 2023.



Attended March 6th, 2023, SHA Committee meeting. Contributed to discussion.



Department for Aging and Independent Living  
502-564-6930

Attended April 17th, 2023, SHA Committee meeting and shared Alzheimer's Data to include in the SHA.



KVH: Attended April 17th, 2023, SHA Committee meeting. Shared community stories to include in the SHA.



# HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS





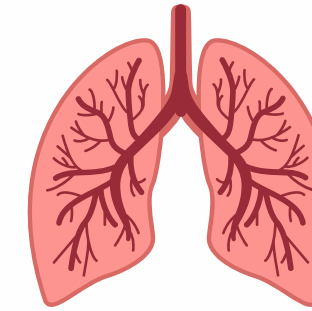
The prevalence of Kentuckians without healthcare insurance at 4.3% is below the national average of 7.1%.

Cancer mortality rates for all sites show a steady decline from 2015-2019 (195 to 171.9 rates per 100,000).



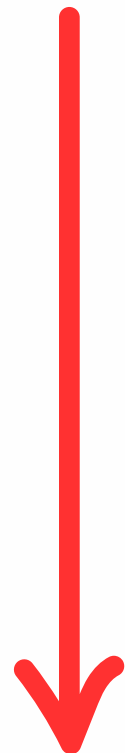
Alcohol consumption is lower than the U.S. norm.

High school graduation is 90.6%, ranking 4th in the country.



Screening for lung cancer with annual low-dose CT scans among those at high risk: In Kentucky, 13% of those at high risk were screened, which was significantly higher than the national rate of 6%. It ranks 4th among all states, placing it in the top tier.

Kentucky had a lower percentage (13%) of severe housing problems in years 2015-2019 than the US (17%).



Kentucky has a higher percentage of people with diabetes than the U.S.

A higher percentage of Kentucky adults are categorized as having fair or poor health when compared to the U.S. median.



Poor mental health days were higher among Kentuckians when compared to the U.S. median.

Kentuckians continue to have higher smoking habits than the U.S. median. However, smoking rates have declined from 2016 (24.5%) to 2021 (19.6%). The rate of women who smoke during pregnancy is three times higher in Kentucky than the U.S. median.



Kentucky has a higher percentage of children in poverty than the U.S. (21.0% vs. 17%).

Kentucky (19.4) reported a much higher Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) rate per 1,000 births than the U.S.



## Kentucky ranks 43rd overall out of 50 states

(America's Health Rankings)

2023 SHA Topic	KY	US	Year of Data	Source of KY Data	Source of US Data
No Leisure Time Physical Activity	30.5%	23.7%	2021	KyBRFS	U.S. Census
Alzheimer's Disease	11.2%	8.5%	2020	KyBRFS	U.S. Census
Coronary Heart Disease	6.1%	3.8%	2021	KyBRFS	U.S. Census
Obesity	40.3%	33.9%	2021	KyBRFS	U.S. Census
Infant Mortality	5.9	5.4	2021	KY Vital Statistics	U.S. Census
Air Pollution: Particulate Matter	8.2	7.4	2019	County Health Rankings (CHR)	CHR
Food Environment Index	6.5	7.0	2019-2020	CHR	CHR

## YRBS 2021 data for High School (grade 9-12)

### ABOUT

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) is a CDC supported set of surveys that track behaviors that can lead to poor health in students grades 9 through 12. This data is from 2021.

Substance Use	KY High School	US High School
Currently smoked cigarettes frequently (20 days or more in last 30 days)	1.3	0.7
Currently Used Electronic Vapor Products Frequently (20 or more days in last 30 days)	8.1	7.3
Ever took RX pain medicine without a doctor's prescription or differently from how a doctor told them to	10.6	12.2
Seriously considered Attempting Suicide	19.1	22.2
Were Not Physically Active for At Least 60 Minutes on At Least 1 day	15.9	15.8



# Resources

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Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH). State Health Assessment. Frankfort, Kentucky: Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Kentucky Department for Public Health, [2017].

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