

600.010 Title and intent of KRS Chapters 600 to 645.

- (1) KRS Chapters 600 to 645 shall be known as the Kentucky Unified Juvenile Code.
- (2) KRS Chapters 600 to 645 shall be interpreted to effectuate the following express legislative purposes:
 - (a) The Commonwealth shall direct its efforts to promoting protection of children; to the strengthening and encouragement of family life for the protection and care of children; to strengthening and maintaining the biological family unit; to ensuring that policies and practices utilized are supported by data and research and are monitored or measured for their effectiveness in achieving the intended results; and to offering all available resources to any family in need of them;
 - (b) It also shall be declared to be the policy of this Commonwealth that:
 1. All efforts shall be directed toward providing each child a safe and nurturing home;
 2. Emphasis shall be placed on involving families in interventions developed for youth, providing families with access to services necessary to address issues within the family, and increasing accountability of the youth and families within the juvenile justice system;
 3. To the extent possible, out-of-home placement should only be utilized for youth who are high-risk or high-level offenders, and that low-risk, low-level offenders should be served through evidence-based programming in their community; and
 4. As the population in Department of Juvenile Justice facilities is reduced through increased use of community-based treatment, and if staffing ratios can be maintained at the levels required by accreditation bodies, reductions of the number of facilities should be considered;
 - (c) The court shall show that other less restrictive alternatives have been attempted or are not feasible in order to insure that children are not removed from families except when absolutely necessary;
 - (d) Any child brought before the court under KRS Chapters 600 to 645 shall have a right to treatment reasonably calculated, through the use of evidence-based programs when available, to bring about an improvement of his or her condition and, to the extent possible, have that treatment administered in the county of residence of the custodial parent or parents or in the nearest available county;
 - (e) KRS Chapter 635 shall be interpreted to promote the best interests of the child through providing treatment and sanctions to reduce recidivism and assist in making the child a productive citizen by involving the family, as appropriate, and by advancing the principles of personal responsibility, accountability, and reformation, while maintaining public safety, and seeking restitution and reparation;
 - (f) KRS Chapter 640 shall be interpreted to promote public safety and the

concept that every child be held accountable for his or her conduct through the use of restitution, reparation, and sanctions, in an effort to rehabilitate delinquent youth; and

- (g) It shall further be the policy of this Commonwealth to provide judicial procedures in which rights and interests of all parties, including the parents and victims, are recognized and all parties are assured prompt and fair hearings. Unless otherwise provided, such protections belong to the child individually and may not be waived by any other party.

Effective: July 15, 2014

History: Amended 2014 Ky. Acts ch. 132, sec. 23, effective July 15, 2014. -- Amended 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 257, sec. 20, effective July 15, 2002. -- Amended 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 534, sec. 5, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 57, sec. 1, effective March 17, 1998. -- Created 1986 Ky. Acts ch. 423, sec. 1, effective July 1, 1987.

Legislative Research Commission Note. 1986 Ky. Acts ch. 423, sec. 199 provides: "KRS 446.250 to 446.320 to the contrary notwithstanding, [1986 Ky. Acts ch. 423] shall prevail in the event of a conflict between [1986 Ky. Acts ch. 423] and other Acts passed by the 1986 regular session of the General Assembly."