



**Equitable Access, Shared Assets, and Full Opportunity for  
Kent County Children, Youth & Families**  
FY2023–FY2025 Refreshed Community Plan



FY 2023 – FY 2025

# COMMUNITY PLAN



## VISION

Building equitable access, shared assets, and full opportunity for children, youth, and families.

## MISSION

Uniting our community to connect and strengthen Kent County youth and families.\*

**\*We focus on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households** - individuals and families who are working, but are unable to afford basic necessities - **and those below this income threshold**

## PRIORITIES

- 1** Build capacity to meet basic needs and support economic mobility with youth and their families
- 2** Center the voice and choice of youth and families to effectively access services
- 3** Increase and expand community-based programs and innovative approaches for child well-being

## SHARED RESULTS



Families are Economically Stable



Healthy Children



Children are Successful in School

# KCLMB's Purpose

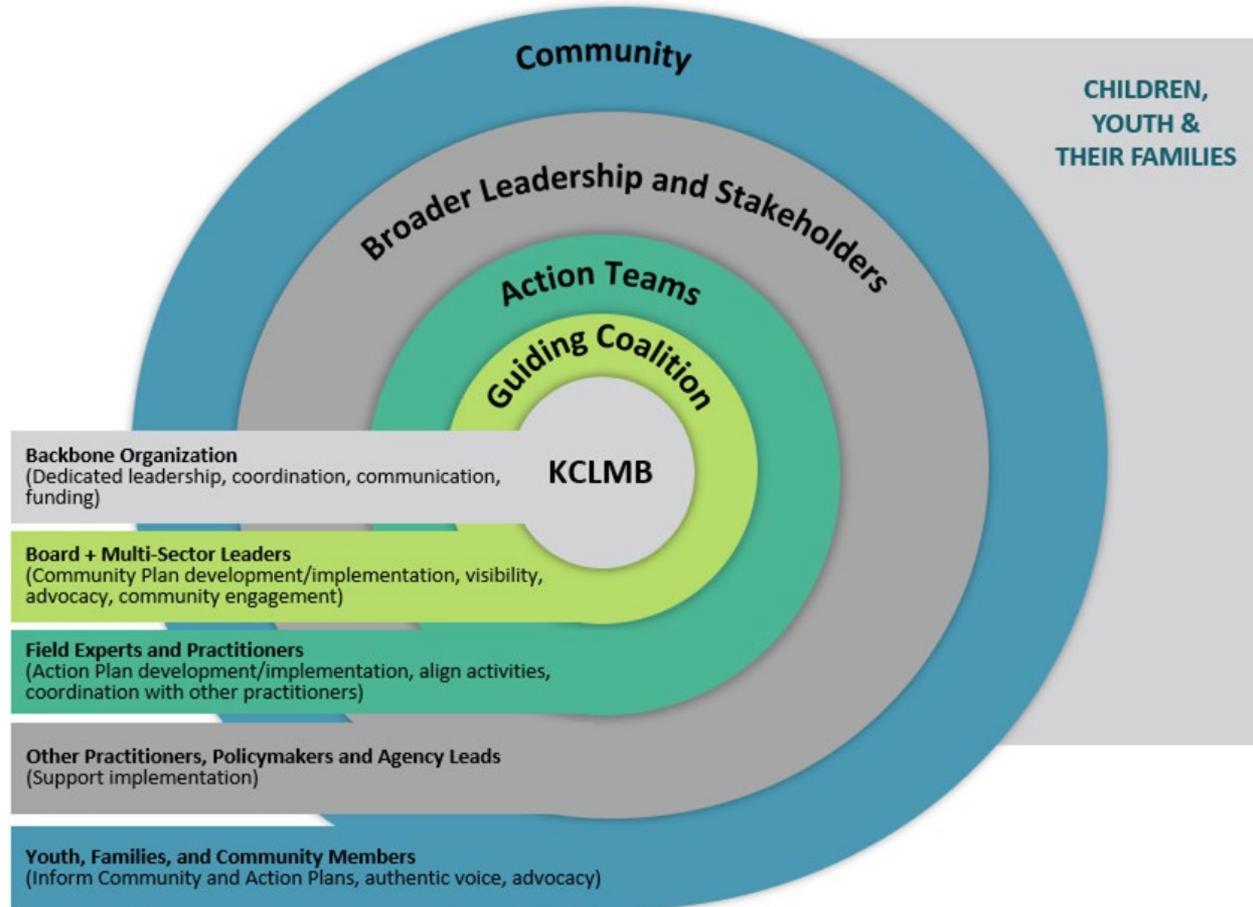
To convene partners, fund solutions and evaluate local investments that improve systems, services and programs for Kent County youth and families.



- Youth and families lead us in creating solutions
- Push back on the status quo within systems
- Deep commitment to including all people with energy and interest in advancing a shared vision
- Holding ourselves accountable for equitable and lasting change
- Meaningful connections and communication to sustain collective progress
- Following through on long-term priorities

## Guiding Principles

# KCLMB's Collaborative Model



# Shared Result: Families are Economically Stable

## THE CHALLENGE

- 44% of Kent County Households earn less than the basic cost of living (33% ALICE, 11% Fed. Poverty Level), when disaggregated the rate rises to 80% for Black households
- In 2021, 127 Kent County students experienced homelessness
- Kent County has struggled to invest in solutions that promote affordable housing, accessible transportation and other equitable supports for basic needs

## THE OPPORTUNITY

KCLMB is building a long-term vision to address these needs and promote economic mobility



# How Do We Get There?

## **Priority 1:**

Build capacity to meet basic needs and support economic mobility with youth and their families

- Access to stable and safe housing
- Expand transportation options
- Flexible, participant centered supports to fill the gaps in families' existing support networks



# KCLMB's Commitment

## Convening for a Vision

Bringing together local leaders and organizations to work collaboratively to address housing and accessible transportation. Establishing a shared vision to direct investments around basic needs.

## Healthy Families

Investing in Kent County Healthy Families, a home visiting program, works to monitor and model parent-child interactions. The program supports the development of healthy children ages 0 to 5 and stable, economically sufficient parents

## Priority 1:

Build capacity to meet basic needs and support economic mobility with youth and their families



# Shared Result: Healthy Children

## THE CHALLENGE

- In the four years before the pandemic, the rates of anxiety and depression in Middle and High School students increased by 9%
- KCPS performed 2x's the number of suicide ideation assessments in the 2021-2022 school year when compared to 2020
- Black students were 1.2x's more likely to struggle with anxiety and depression than their White peers

## THE OPPORTUNITY

We need to increase access and reduce stigma around behavioral health. KCLMB will facilitate a student led process to identify solutions and invest in strategies



## Priority 2:

Center the voice and choice of youth and families to effectively access services

## How Do We Get There?

- Support families in finding and connecting to resources
- Serve as a hub for connecting and coordinating resources and providers
- Increase equitable design and delivery of resources and programs for youth experiencing behavioral health challenges
- Engage with youth to increase and share behavioral health resources and tools to support their peers

# KCLMB's Commitment

## Local Care Team

The Kent County Local Care Team (LCT):

- Meets with families to understand their challenges
- Brainstorms solutions, shares knowledge, develops strategies and advocates for and with families to help them thrive
- Links parents and children with behavioral health and wellness services
- Connects families to additional resources and provides ongoing support

## Resource Coordination

Serving as a hub for service providers and families including managing a robust resource directory and actively sharing resources

## Youth Connections

Engaging with Middle and High School students to share behavioral health resources and tools to support their peers

## Priority 2:

Center the voice and choice of youth and families to effectively access services



# Shared Result: Children are Successful in School

## THE CHALLENGE

- Over the past 5 years, students in Kent County have been struggling to attend school with a 12% increase in Chronic Absenteeism
- At Kent County Middle School, students of color are 2.2x's more likely to be chronically absent than white students

## THE OPPORTUNITY

KCLMB is investing in out of school programs to create more spaces for students to identify their strengths, advocate for themselves and their peers and to connect with their schools and community



## Priority 3:

Increase and expand community-based programs and innovative approaches for child well-being

## How Do We Get There?

- Youth Development – Invest in strengths-based approaches, mentoring, and positive spaces for socializing
- Civic Engagement – youth as change makers
- Increase youth and family engagement in program design and refinement

## **Priority 3:**

Increase and expand community-based programs and innovative approaches for child well-being

# **KCLMB's Commitment**

## **Middle School Afterschool Program**

Investing in after-school programming for 6th to 8th graders

## **Community Schools**

Supporting our Community Schools as they develop partnerships to connect the school, students, families and surrounding community to the resources needed for students to thrive



## Kent County Local Management Board

Chair: Shelly Neal-Edwards (Social Services)  
Vice Chair Lauren Scearce (Juvenile Services)  
William Web (Health Department)  
Maria Daniels (Core Service Agency)  
Shelley Heller (County Commissioners)  
Van Hamlin (Public Schools)  
Jill Coleman (Parks & Recreation)  
Wanda Boyer (Activist/Advocate)  
Terrence Moody (Retired Teacher)  
Zita Seals (Millington Councilwoman)  
John Schratwieser (Kent Cultural Alliance)  
Annie Woodall (Public Library)  
Teverly Swinson (#SmallTownBigArtists)  
Jamie Barrett (Big Mixx's)

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