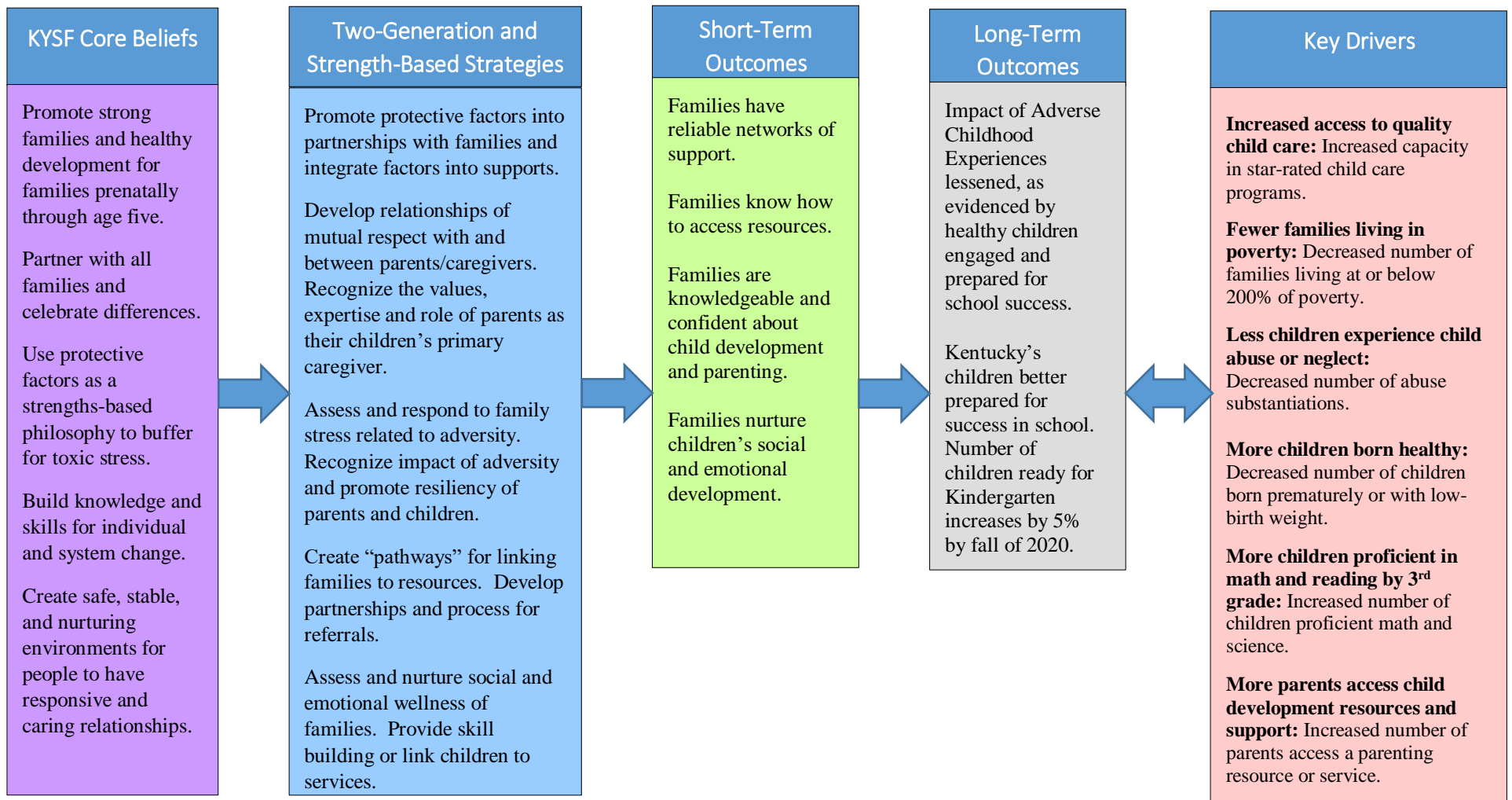


## Kentucky Strengthening Families Theory of Change

It is the premise of Kentucky’s Strengthening Families (KYSF) that we develop pathways to child and family well-being by promoting Protective Factors (PF) for families. 2015 data shows that 59% of Kentucky families experienced at least one adverse childhood experience (measure of family stress), with over half of those families reporting two or more adverse experiences. By implementing two-generation and strength-based strategies, organizations support and nurture PF for families. This practice results in resilient and responsive parents/caregivers who are able to lessen the negative impact of childhood stress and support the development and early learning of their young children. KYSF recognizes Nurturing and Attachment as a sixth PF. In response to the five core beliefs below, KYSF believes that families’ ensuring their children feel loved and safe is critical. KYSF focuses on buffering toxic stress and Adverse Childhood Experiences, which requires that families and providers understand the importance of a loving, nurturing bond between child and caregiver.



**Evaluation Plan:**

**Short-Term Outcomes:** are measured through the Protective Factors Survey. Each of the four outcomes aligns with a functioning area captured on the survey. Data will be collected annually from pilot groups representing various systems across Kentucky. Results will help determine:

- The percentage of Kentucky families that report improved access to resources and use of practices that support their protective factors;
- The impact KYSF supports and resources has had on organizations’ success in improving results for families.

**Long-Term Outcomes:** are measured by the percent of children considered “ready” based upon meeting benchmarks in the five areas screened on the Brigance Kindergarten Screen. This tool considers children’s development in five areas: physical, academic, language, self-help, and social emotional. Baseline data in 2015 indicated readiness for 50% of children in physical, 36% in academic and cognitive; 72% in language, 54% in self-help, and 78% in social emotional development areas.

**Drivers:** Kindergarten readiness – per KYSF – is inclusive of the health and wellness of young children and their families. To measure the impact of the protective factors on the long-term goal of children being ready for school, additional drivers pertaining to family wellness are monitored. These drivers align with wellness indicators currently collected in Kentucky through various systems. This change model theorizes with the intentional promotion of protective factors that family stress decreases and the following wellness indicators improve:

Driver	Wellness Indicator	2015 Data	2016 Data	2017 Data	2018 Data	2019 Data	2020 Data
More children have access to quality child care.	Increased capacity in more star-rated child care programs.	87,372	131,327	166,254	160,000	164,879	160,896
Fewer children are living in poverty.	Decreased number of families living at 200% of poverty.	174,490 53.1%	174,762 53.3%	53%	52.5%	50.8%	50%
Less children experience child abuse or neglect.	Decreased number of child abuse substantiations for children 0-17.	17,917 1.8%	19,132 1.9%	16,548 1.5%	17,457 1.3%	No data	No data
More children are born healthy.	Decreased number of children born with a low birth weight.	4,818 8.9%	4,666 8.7%	8.8%	No data	No data	No data
	Decreased number of preterm babies.	5,981 11.1%	6,089 11.1%	10.9%	10.5%	3.7%	11.3%
More children are proficient in math and reading by 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade.	Increased numbers of children proficient in math and science.	45.8% math 54.1% reading	47.6% math 54.3% reading	50.4% math 55.2% reading	47.7% math 52.7% reading	47.8% math 53.1% reading	No data
More parents access child development resources and support.	Increased number of parents access a parenting resource or service.	Data determined locally could include participation in a home visitation program (i.e. HANDS) or number of parents attending/completing a parenting series (i.e. Born Learning Academies, Parent Cafés, etc.).					

*Note: 2015-2020 data taken from statewide early childhood profile produced by the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood using data from KLDS. Wellness indicators and data can be updated to reflect your own region or community-based data.*