

## **Competitiveness: Building Stronger Families**

*Many Kentucky families need help to get through difficult times. Governor Steve Beshear offers these proposals to strengthen Kentucky's families and protect our most vulnerable:*

**Restore Child Care Assistance Cuts.** Loss of federal funds forced a \$57 million cut last year to the Child Care Assistance Program for working, low-income families. Gov. Beshear's budget will restore the income eligibility for participants to 150 percent of the federal poverty level and will resume new applications for the program. If the General Assembly accepts this proposal applications would be accepted for benefits to begin July 1, 2014. This is predicted to help 16,100 kids and 9,400 families in FY15 and 18,000 kids and 10,600 families in FY16.

**Fund Staff for the Child Fatality Review Commission.** Gov. Beshear proposes to fulfill the request made by the new Child Fatality Review Commission for \$840,000 for staffing and support over the biennium so that the commission can continue their work to help protect our most vulnerable children.

**Expand the HANDS Program.** Kentucky currently offers the Health Access Nurturing Development Services (HANDS) program, a voluntary home visitation program, to new and expectant parents. Families meet with a HANDS Parent Visitor who will discuss any questions or concerns about pregnancy or a baby's first years. Based on the discussion, all families will receive information and learn about resources available in the community for new parents. Some families will receive further support through home visitation. This program was expanded to families that already had children in high risk communities in 78 counties with the use of a federal grant. Gov. Beshear proposes \$11.6 million to replace that grant, and an additional \$5 million to take this expansion to the rest of the state.

**Funding Support for Organizations that Help Women and Families in Crisis.** Gov. Beshear proposes an additional \$500,000 over the biennium to Kentucky's domestic violence centers, and \$500,000 over the biennium to Kentucky's sexual assault programs.

**Meals on Wheels.** The Cabinet for Health and Family Services has applied for a Home and Community Based Waiver that would result in approximately 3,500 additional people receiving Meals on Wheels for 5 hot meals per week. This waiver would serve individuals who meet nursing home level of care and need assistance with activities of daily living including meal preparation, homemaking and personal care.

**Exempt the Department for Community Based Services from Cuts.** Gov. Beshear's proposed budget exempts from cuts the Department for Community Based Services, which provides family support; child care; child and adult protection; eligibility determinations for Medicaid and food benefits; and the state foster care and adoption systems.