
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 228 Session of
2022

INTRODUCED BY DeLISSIO, DELOZIER, HANBIDGE, KINSEY, FREEMAN,
HOHENSTEIN, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, FITZGERALD, SCHLEGEL CULVER,
SOLOMON, SCHLOSSBERG AND BRADFORD, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
2 comprehensive study of statutes and regulations promulgated
3 under Titles 23 and 67 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
4 Statutes and the Human Services Code in the past five years
5 currently in effect in this Commonwealth that have
6 exacerbated trauma in children and families and make
7 recommendations of methods to draft statutes and regulations
8 in a trauma-informed manner to mitigate trauma.

9 WHEREAS, Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are stressful
10 or traumatic events that occur in childhood from birth to 17
11 years of age that negatively impact a child's health,
12 development and long-term well-being; and

13 WHEREAS, The greater number of ACEs a child experiences the
14 more profound the effect on a child's developing brain and body;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, ACEs may cause poor health and emotional, cognitive
17 and social impairments and are linked to chronic mental illness
18 and substance use problems in adulthood, negatively impacting
19 education, job opportunities and earning potential and leading
20 to somatic and mental difficulties during the individual's

1 adulthood that may even cause death; and

2 WHEREAS, An adverse childhood experience may include
3 physical, emotional or sexual abuse, physical or emotional
4 neglect or household dysfunction, including substance abuse, an
5 untreated mental illness, incarceration of a household member,
6 domestic violence or separation or divorce involving a household
7 member; and

8 WHEREAS, The statistics are startling, indicating that 50% of
9 substance use, 78% of intravenous drug use, 65% of alcoholism,
10 52% of domestic violence, 62% of sexual assaults, 58% of
11 attempted suicides and 50% of depression diagnoses can be linked
12 to ACEs; and

13 WHEREAS, Individuals with six or more ACEs have a life
14 expectancy of 20 years less than someone with no ACEs; and

15 WHEREAS, In late 2019, the Department of Health released a
16 report on ACEs in this Commonwealth, and the research
17 highlighted the challenges this Commonwealth faced even prior to
18 the COVID-19 pandemic; and

19 WHEREAS, The study found that half of all Pennsylvanians had
20 at least one adverse childhood experience, more than 19% have
21 experienced three or more ACEs and 38% of all Pennsylvanians
22 have experienced either physical or emotional abuse as a child;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Approximately 8 to 10 children in every Pennsylvania
25 school return home to face some kind of abuse; and

26 WHEREAS, The most significant levels of trauma occur in waves
27 not only for children, but for their entire family system; and

28 WHEREAS, The discussion should not only be about issues
29 related to a child's safety and well-being, but should include
30 the discussion of the role of a child's family and community;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, Since those who enter the child welfare system are
3 disproportionately poor and children of color, those children
4 often carry the weight of community trauma even before they
5 become part of the system; and

6 WHEREAS, For this Commonwealth to have a prosperous and
7 healthy populace, a thriving economy and a reduction in social
8 services and health care costs, the most important actions to
9 take are to prevent ACEs and to heal children and parents from
10 ACEs they have experienced; and

11 WHEREAS, ACEs can be prevented and mitigated; and

12 WHEREAS, To prevent and mitigate ACEs, our Commonwealth's
13 statutes and regulations should ideally help to ameliorate ACEs
14 and not exacerbate ACEs; and

15 WHEREAS, Unfortunately, some statutes and regulations in
16 effect in the Commonwealth may have inadvertently exacerbated
17 trauma; and

18 WHEREAS, Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and trauma-informed
19 policy should apply to all health-and-human-service-related
20 statutes and regulations in this Commonwealth; and

21 WHEREAS, TIC is an approach in the human services field that
22 assumes that an individual is more likely than not to have a
23 history of trauma, recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms
24 and acknowledges the role trauma may play in an individual's
25 life; and

26 WHEREAS, If the Commonwealth is truly committed to developing
27 a trauma-informed system, the Commonwealth must demonstrate a
28 relentless commitment to strengthening families as the primary
29 caregivers of children, support the communities in which
30 families live and offer our fellow citizens the power of hope,

1 healing, redemption and recovery; therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
3 State Government Commission to establish an advisory committee
4 consisting of the following members within 90 days of the
5 adoption of this resolution:

6 (1) The Secretary of Human Services or a designee.

7 (2) The Secretary of Health or a designee.

8 (3) The Secretary of Education or a designee.

9 (4) The Attorney General or a designee.

10 (5) The chair of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime
11 and Delinquency or a designee.

12 (6) A representative from the National Association of
13 Social Workers-Pennsylvania Chapter.

14 (7) A representative from the Office of Child
15 Development and Early Learning of the Department of
16 Education.

17 (8) A representative from the Pennsylvania Association
18 of School Nurses and Practitioners.

19 (9) A representative from the Pennsylvania Chapter of
20 the American Academy of Pediatrics.

21 (10) A representative from the Pennsylvania Parent
22 Teacher Association.

23 (11) A representative from the Pennsylvania
24 Psychological Association.

25 (12) A representative from the Pennsylvania School
26 Counselors Association.

27 (13) A representative from the Children's Advocacy
28 Centers of Pennsylvania.

29 (14) The Child Advocate of the Governor's Office of
30 Advocacy and Reform or designee.

1 (15) A representative from the Pennsylvania Court
2 Appointed Special Advocates Association.

3 (16) Representatives from other departments, agencies or
4 entities that the Joint State Government Commission deems
5 appropriate in conducting the study;

6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, in
8 collaboration with the advisory committee, conduct a
9 comprehensive study of statutes and regulations promulgated
10 under Titles 23 and 67 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes
11 and the Human Services Code in the past five years currently in
12 effect in this Commonwealth that have exacerbated trauma in
13 children and families; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission make
15 recommendations of methods to draft statutes and regulations in
16 a trauma-informed manner to mitigate trauma; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, in
18 collaboration with the advisory committee, submit a report of
19 the findings along with statutory or regulatory recommendations
20 to the following within one year of the adoption of this
21 resolution:

22 (1) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

23 (2) The Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the
24 Senate.

25 (3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

26 (4) The Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the House
27 of Representatives.

28 (5) The chair and minority chair of the Aging and Youth
29 Committee of the Senate.

30 (6) The chair and minority chair of the Children and

1 Youth Committee of the House of Representatives.