

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 537 Session of
2013

INTRODUCED BY GRELL, MARSICO, ROZZI, REGAN, VEREB, BLOOM,
MIRABITO, MILLARD, PICKETT, DAVIS, JAMES, COHEN, READSHAW,
O'NEILL, BENNINGHOFF, KIRKLAND, SCHLOSSBERG, SONNEY, BISHOP,
KORTZ, MILNE, GINGRICH, BAKER, EVERETT, MAJOR, YOUNGBLOOD,
D. COSTA, FLECK, GOODMAN, SCHLEGEL CULVER, STEVENSON,
BIZZARRO, THOMAS, SABATINA, ROCK, WATSON, CALTAGIRONE,
DELOZIER AND M. K. KELLER, OCTOBER 30, 2013

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, NOVEMBER 19, 2013

A RESOLUTION

~~1 Recognizing ChildFirst PA for its commitment to training members <--~~
~~2 of multidisciplinary investigative teams and nationally~~
~~3 recognized child abuse forensic interview training program in~~
~~4 Pennsylvania.~~

~~5 WHEREAS, Children bring happiness into our lives and hope to~~
~~6 our future; and~~

~~7 WHEREAS, Children are our greatest resource and our most~~
~~8 important responsibility; and~~

~~9 WHEREAS, It is our responsibility as parents, friends,~~
~~10 neighbors, citizens and lawmakers to nurture and protect~~
~~11 children, providing an atmosphere of love and respect in which~~
~~12 they are able to grow into healthy, well adjusted and productive~~
~~13 adults; and~~

~~14 WHEREAS, We, as a legislative body, have an ongoing~~
~~15 commitment to protect the rights and needs of children; and~~

~~16 WHEREAS, Child abuse crosses all racial, economic and~~

~~geographic boundaries and has reached epidemic proportions
across this nation and throughout this Commonwealth; and~~

~~WHEREAS, There were 26,664 cases of possible child abuse or
maltreatment referred for investigation in this Commonwealth in
2012; and~~

~~WHEREAS, There were 3,565 substantiated cases of child abuse
and neglect in this Commonwealth in 2012; and~~

~~WHEREAS, Thousands of Pennsylvanians in schools, social
service agencies, churches and neighborhood groups throughout
this Commonwealth are working hard to nurture and support the
victims of child abuse and prevent future abuse; and~~

~~WHEREAS, In spite of the dedication and sacrifice of these
individuals, much more still needs to be done to guarantee a
childhood free of abuse and victimization to every child in this
Commonwealth; and~~

~~WHEREAS, As a legislative body, we acknowledge that each
county is required by the Child Protective Services Law to form
and operate a multidisciplinary investigative team (MDIT); and~~

~~WHEREAS, ChildFirst is a nationally recognized forensic
interview training program developed by the National Child
Protection and Training Center (NCPTC) and Cornerhouse; and~~

~~WHEREAS, In July 2009, the Pennsylvania Children and Youth
Solicitors Association applied to bring ChildFirst to
Pennsylvania; and~~

~~WHEREAS, ChildFirst PA is sponsored by the Pennsylvania
Children and Youth Solicitors Association in collaboration with
the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association and the
Pennsylvania State Police; and~~

~~WHEREAS, In March 2011, Pennsylvania became the 17th
ChildFirst state; and~~

1 ~~WHEREAS, On December 12, 2011, House Resolution 522 of~~
2 ~~Session 2011 was passed, directing the formation of the~~
3 ~~Governor's Task Force on Child Protection to review the current~~
4 ~~child abuse related statutes and to make recommendations on how~~
5 ~~to improve the child abuse system; and~~

6 ~~WHEREAS, On November 27, 2012, the Governor's Task Force on~~
7 ~~Child Protection submitted its report of more than 400 pages to~~
8 ~~the Governor; and~~

9 ~~WHEREAS, The Governor's Task Force on Child Protection~~
10 ~~acknowledged the need to have well trained forensic interviewers~~
11 ~~who are prepared to interview a child alleged to be a victim of~~
12 ~~abuse in an age appropriate and developmentally appropriate~~
13 ~~manner; and~~

14 ~~WHEREAS, The Governor's Task Force on Child Protection~~
15 ~~acknowledges the need for fully trained and functional MDITs in~~
16 ~~each county across this Commonwealth; and~~

17 ~~WHEREAS, ChildFirst PA has trained more than 28 of~~
18 ~~Pennsylvania's 67 counties and more than 300 professionals~~
19 ~~charged with the responsibility of investigating suspected child~~
20 ~~abuse; and~~

21 ~~WHEREAS, ChildFirst PA is anchored at the Pennsylvania State~~
22 ~~Police Academy and training centers across this Commonwealth;~~
23 ~~and~~

24 ~~WHEREAS, The ChildFirst PA motto should be considered at all~~
25 ~~times during a child abuse investigation and prosecution:~~

26 ~~"The Child is our first priority.~~

27 ~~It is not the needs of the family.~~

28 ~~Not the child's 'story.'~~

29 ~~Not the evidence.~~

30 ~~Not the needs of the courts.~~

~~Not the needs of the police, Children and Youth
Services or attorneys.
The Child is our priority."~~

~~; and~~

~~WHEREAS, ChildFirst PA is the only nationally recognized
forensic interview and MDIT training program in this
Commonwealth; therefore be it~~

~~RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate
ChildFirst PA as a recognized forensic interview training
program and MDIT; and be it further~~

~~RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives continue to do
its part in support of the training done by ChildFirst PA; and
be it further~~

~~RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commend the
Pennsylvania Children and Youth Solicitors Association,
Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association, Pennsylvania State
Police, ChildFirst PA and all of its faculty who train the
forensic interviewers and professional members of the
multidisciplinary investigative teams to investigate suspected
child abuse.~~

RECOGNIZING CHILDFIRST PENNSYLVANIA FOR ITS FORENSIC INTERVIEWER <--
CHILD ABUSE TRAINING PROGRAM AND COMMITMENT TO TRAINING
MEMBERS OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATIVE TEAMS IN
PENNSYLVANIA.

WHEREAS, CHILDFIRST IS A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FORENSIC
INTERVIEW TRAINING PROGRAM DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP BY
CORNERHOUSE, A CHILD ABUSE TRAINING FACILITY IN MINNEAPOLIS,
MINNESOTA, AND THE NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION AND TRAINING CENTER
(NCPTC); AND

WHEREAS, THE CHILDFIRST PROGRAM'S PURPOSE SINCE 2003 HAS BEEN
TO ASSIST STATES IN DEVELOPING CERTIFIED FORENSIC INTERVIEW
TRAINING PROGRAMS IN CASES OF CHILD ABUSE AND TO ASSIST LAW

1 ENFORCEMENT, CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES WORKERS AND OTHERS IN
2 INTERVIEWING THE ALLEGED VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE IN AN AGE AND
3 DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE MANNER; AND

4 WHEREAS, IN JULY 2009, THE PENNSYLVANIA CHILDREN AND YOUTH
5 SOLICITORS ASSOCIATION FIRST APPLIED TO BRING CHILDFIRST TO
6 PENNSYLVANIA; AND

7 WHEREAS, IN MARCH 2011, PENNSYLVANIA BECAME THE 17TH STATE IN
8 THE NATION TO UTILIZE THE CHILDFIRST TRAINING; AND

9 WHEREAS, CHILDFIRST PENNSYLVANIA TRAINING HAS SINCE BEEN USED
10 IN MORE THAN 28 OF PENNSYLVANIA'S 67 COUNTIES, WITH MORE THAN
11 300 PROFESSIONALS CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF
12 INVESTIGATING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE HAVING UNDERGONE THE
13 EXTENSIVE FIVE-DAY TRAINING COURSE, WRITTEN EXAMINATION AND
14 CERTIFICATION PROCESS; AND

15 WHEREAS, CHILDFIRST PENNSYLVANIA HAS BEEN AN INVALUABLE
16 TRAINING TOOL FOR THE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATIVE TEAMS IN
17 THE COMMONWEALTH; THEREFORE BE IT

18 RESOLVED, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RECOGNIZE
19 CHILDFIRST PENNSYLVANIA AS A RECOGNIZED RESPECTED FORENSIC
20 INTERVIEWER AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATIVE TEAM TRAINING
21 PROGRAM; AND BE IT FURTHER

22 RESOLVED, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMEND THE
23 FACULTY MEMBERS WHO DELIVER THE CHILDFIRST PENNSYLVANIA TRAINING
24 TO THOSE WHO INVESTIGATE SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE IN THIS
25 COMMONWEALTH; AND BE IT FURTHER

26 RESOLVED, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMEND THE
27 PENNSYLVANIA CHILDREN AND YOUTH SOLICITORS ASSOCIATION FOR
28 WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT ATTORNEYS
29 ASSOCIATION AND THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE TO BRING THE
30 CHILDFIRST TRAINING PROGRAM TO THIS COMMONWEALTH.