
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 126 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY KEARNEY, BREWSTER, FONTANA, DINNIMAN, LEACH, MUTH,
SANTARSIERO, SABATINA, J. WARD, STREET, BARTOLOTTA, SCHWANK
AND BROWNE, MAY 8, 2019

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, MAY 8, 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of May 2019 as "Childhood Trauma Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Research over the last two decades from the evolving
4 fields of neuroscience, molecular biology, public health and
5 epigenetics reveals that experiences in the first 1,000 days of
6 life build changes into the biology of the human body, which in
7 turn influence a lifetime of physical and mental health; and

8 WHEREAS, These early experiences shape the physical
9 architecture of a child's developing brain and establish either
10 a resilient or a fragile foundation for all the learning, health
11 and behavior that follows; and

12 WHEREAS, Exposure to chronic stress and trauma in early
13 childhood caused by numerous conditions, including extreme
14 poverty, repeated abuse, neglect, parental substance abuse and
15 domestic violence, are toxic to a child's developing brain; and

16 WHEREAS, A critical factor in buffering children from the
17 effects of toxic stress is the existence of safe, stable

1 relationships between children and their families, caregivers
2 and other important people in their lives with support by
3 trauma-informed service systems; and

4 WHEREAS, It is more effective and less costly to positively
5 influence the architecture of a young child's developing brain
6 than to attempt to correct poor learning, health and behaviors
7 later in life; and

8 WHEREAS, Nearly 50% of all children in Pennsylvania and 45%
9 of all children in the United States have experienced one or
10 more adverse childhood experiences, including abuse and neglect,
11 which are potentially traumatizing experiences; and

12 WHEREAS, The cumulative economic and social costs of complex
13 trauma in childhood places a significant burden on the country,
14 including an estimated \$103.8 billion annually in direct and
15 indirect treatment and support costs, as well as lost
16 productivity to society; and

17 WHEREAS, Childhood trauma results in poor educational
18 outcomes, with children that experience four or more adverse
19 childhood experiences being twice as likely to have learning and
20 behavioral problems, and students with three or more adverse
21 childhood experiences being significantly more likely to be
22 unable to perform at grade level, placed in special education,
23 be suspended, expelled or drop out of school; and

24 WHEREAS, Up to 90% of youth in the criminal justice system
25 report exposure to traumatic childhood events; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the month of May 2019 as
27 "Childhood Trauma Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.