

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-third General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**PREAMENDED**

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee  
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 22-0974.02 Jane Ritter x4342

**HOUSE BILL 22-1369**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Sirota and Pelton,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Story and Sonnenberg,**

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**House Committees**

Public & Behavioral Health & Human Services  
Appropriations

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS,**  
102 **AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

The bill directs the department of early childhood to contract with a Colorado-based nonprofit entity to provide children's mental health programs.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

*Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

1           **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 26.5-1-105 as  
2 follows:

3           **26.5-1-105. Children's mental health program - appropriation**  
4 **- legislative declaration - definitions - repeal.** (1) (a) THE GENERAL  
5 ASSEMBLY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT:

6           (I) NEUROBIOLOGICAL RESEARCH CONFIRMS THAT STRESSFUL  
7 EXPERIENCES EARLY IN LIFE CAN HAVE PROFOUND AND DESTRUCTIVE  
8 IMPACTS ON THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE BRAIN;

9           (II) ADDITIONAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH HAS SHOWN, HOWEVER,  
10 THAT RESPONSIVE, NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN YOUNG  
11 CHILDREN AND THEIR CAREGIVERS THAT LEAD TO SECURE ATTACHMENT  
12 SERVE AS POWERFUL, PROTECTIVE BUFFERS TO STRESSFUL EXPERIENCES  
13 EARLY IN LIFE;

14           (III) PROVIDING AN EVIDENCE-BASED, TWO-GENERATION, AND  
15 HOME-BASED PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION MENTAL HEALTH  
16 PROGRAM CAN PREVENT OR AMELIORATE THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY  
17 STRESSFUL EXPERIENCES; AND

18           (IV) IT IS POSSIBLE TO DECREASE THE STRESS EXPERIENCED BY  
19 FAMILIES BY CONNECTING FAMILY MEMBERS TO NEEDED SERVICES  
20 THROUGH INTENSIVE CARE COORDINATION. BY PROVIDING  
21 PSYCHOTHERAPY TO A CAREGIVER AND CHILD TOGETHER, IT IS POSSIBLE  
22 TO REPAIR THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON THE CHILD AND STRENGTHEN THE  
23 CAREGIVING RELATIONSHIP.

24           (b) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS, THEREFORE, THAT:

25           (I) GIVEN THE HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ECONOMIC  
26 DISRUPTIONS RESULTING FROM AND EXACERBATED BY THE COVID-19  
27 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY, IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE STATE TO

1 AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TO CONTRACT WITH  
2 A NONPROFIT ENTITY TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE-BASED, TWO-GENERATION,  
3 AND HOME-BASED PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION CHILDREN'S  
4 MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS; AND

5 (II) THE PURPOSE OF CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IS TO  
6 ENHANCE THE MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CAREGIVERS AND  
7 YOUNG CHILDREN. CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS MUST  
8 COMBINE COMPREHENSIVE, COORDINATED SERVICES AND  
9 PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION FOR CAREGIVERS AND CHILDREN,  
10 INCREASE ADULT SELF-REGULATION AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING, AND  
11 RESULT IN LONG-TERM POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

12 (c) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE  
13 DEPARTMENT AND A NONPROFIT ENTITY WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO  
14 SHARE INFORMATION AS NECESSARY TO PROMOTE EFFICIENT AND  
15 EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH  
16 PROGRAMS IN COLORADO.

17 (d) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER FINDS AND DECLARES THAT  
18 CONTRACTING WITH A NONPROFIT ENTITY TO PROVIDE CHILDREN'S  
19 MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS CONSTITUTES CRITICAL GOVERNMENT  
20 SERVICES.

21 (2) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE  
22 REQUIRES:

23 (a) "CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM" MEANS AN  
24 EVIDENCE-BASED, TWO-GENERATION, AND HOME-BASED PREVENTION AND  
25 EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN FROM  
26 PRENATAL TO SIX YEARS OF AGE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC STRESS  
27 AND TRAUMA. A CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM MUST BE PROVEN

1 TO SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE CHILD EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH,  
2 CHILD LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, AND CAREGIVER MENTAL HEALTH, AS  
3 WELL AS DECREASE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, RESULTING IN  
4 LONG-TERM POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

5 (b) "ENTITY" MEANS A COLORADO-BASED NONPROFIT  
6 ORGANIZATION.

7 (3) (a) ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2022, THE DEPARTMENT  
8 SHALL CONTRACT WITH A COLORADO-BASED NONPROFIT ENTITY TO  
9 PROVIDE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS. THE ENTITY MUST  
10 HAVE PREVIOUS AND CURRENT EXPERIENCE SERVING THE TARGET  
11 DEMOGRAPHIC USING A CURRICULUM THAT:

12 (I) INCLUDES COMPONENTS THAT PROVIDE FOR INTERVENING WITH  
13 FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC  
14 STRESS AND TRAUMA. THE CURRICULUM MUST CONNECT THE FAMILIES TO  
15 NEEDED SERVICES THROUGH INTENSIVE CARE COORDINATION WHILE ALSO  
16 PROVIDING PSYCHOTHERAPY FOR THE CHILD AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN.

17 (II) HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY IMPLEMENTED WITH SUCCESS BY  
18 PROVIDERS IN COLORADO.

19 (b) THE ENTITY WITH WHICH THE DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS SHALL:

20 (I) PERFORM COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTATION READINESS  
21 ASSESSMENTS AND PROVIDE TRAINING, COACHING, AND MONITORING FOR  
22 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS;

23 (II) PROVIDE ONGOING QUALITY ASSESSMENTS AND IMPROVEMENT  
24 RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENSURE HIGH-QUALITY IMPLEMENTATION AND  
25 SUSTAINABILITY OF CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS;

26 (III) PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT WITH SITE-SPECIFIC AND  
27 STATEWIDE PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATIONS OF CHILDREN'S MENTAL

1 HEALTH PROGRAMS; AND

2 (IV) ANNUALLY PREPARE AND SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT AND  
3 THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AN EVALUATION OF THE  
4 OUTCOMES OF ALL OF THE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS  
5 IMPLEMENTED.

6 (4) (a) FOR THE 2022-23 STATE FISCAL YEAR, THE GENERAL  
7 ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE TWO MILLION DOLLARS TO THE  
8 DEPARTMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF IMPLEMENTING THIS SECTION FROM  
9 THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RELIEF CASH FUND CREATED IN SECTION  
10 24-75-228. THE DEPARTMENT IS AUTHORIZED TO EXPEND UP TO FIVE  
11 PERCENT TO PAY THE COSTS INCURRED IN IMPLEMENTING THIS SECTION,  
12 INCLUDING THE COSTS INCURRED IN CONTRACTING WITH A NONPROFIT  
13 ENTITY.

14 (b) MONEY SPENT PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (4) MUST  
15 CONFORM WITH THE ALLOWABLE PURPOSES SET FORTH IN THE FEDERAL  
16 "AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021", PUB.L. 117-2, AS AMENDED.  
17 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL EITHER SPEND OR OBLIGATE SUCH  
18 APPROPRIATION PRIOR TO DECEMBER 30, 2024, AND EXPEND THE  
19 APPROPRIATION ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2026.

20 (c) THIS SUBSECTION (4) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1,  
21 2027.

22 (5) THE DEPARTMENT AND THE CONTRACTED ENTITY SHALL  
23 COMPLY WITH THE COMPLIANCE, REPORTING, RECORD-KEEPING, AND  
24 PROGRAM EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE OFFICE OF  
25 STATE PLANNING AND BUDGETING AND THE STATE CONTROLLER IN  
26 ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 24-75-226 (5).

27 **SECTION 2. Appropriation.** For the 2022-23 state fiscal year,

1 \$2,000,000 is appropriated to the department of early childhood for use  
2 by the community and family support division. This appropriation is from  
3 the economic recovery and relief cash fund created in section 24-75-228,  
4 C.R.S., is of money the state received from the federal coronavirus state  
5 fiscal recovery fund, and is based on an assumption that the department  
6 will require an additional 0.3 FTE. To implement this act, the division  
7 may use this appropriation for the children's mental health program  
8 authorized in section 26.5-1-105, C.R.S. Any money appropriated in this  
9 section not expended prior to July 1, 2023, is further appropriated to the  
10 division from July 1, 2023, through December 30, 2024, for the same  
11 purpose.

12 **SECTION 3. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
13 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
14 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.