

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 100

BY SENATOR MOUNT

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request BrightStart, Louisiana's Early Childhood Advisory Council, to study the merits of, and possible plans for, expansion of the evidence-based Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and to report to the Senate and House committees on health and welfare prior to January 31, 2012.

WHEREAS, parenting education can promote parents' ability to enhance their children's development, thereby helping parents to prepare their children for success in school and in life; and

WHEREAS, in the 2010 Kids Count Data Book, Louisiana ranked 49th for overall child health and well-being, continuing a pattern of twenty years with a ranking of 49th or 50th; and

WHEREAS, since state Fiscal Year 2002, the number of children in Louisiana under the age of six entering foster care has increased by seventy percent, and it is estimated that Louisiana spends in excess of six hundred million dollars annually on these young children through law enforcement, child welfare, physical and mental health care, property damage, and work loss, not to mention the pain and suffering to the victim and the family; and

WHEREAS, preventing child abuse and neglect before it happens is the best and most cost-effective course of action; and

WHEREAS, to be a "parent educator" in Louisiana there is no licensing, accreditation, or minimal training requirements of any kind and, in a survey done by the Louisiana Parenting Education Network, forty-one percent of parenting programs reported no specific training requirements for their parent educators prior to teaching, and forty-five percent reported no specific annual training for their educators; and

WHEREAS, the Positive Parenting Program is a system of parenting education with accredited educators, offering five intervention levels of increasing intensity designed to enhance parenting skills; and

WHEREAS, this parenting education program is currently used in twenty countries across North America, Europe, Australia and Asia; and

WHEREAS, the United States Triple P System Trial, a recently published study funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, found between a twenty-five to thirty-five percent reduction in county-wide rates of substantiated child abuse cases, child out-of-home (foster care) placements, and reductions in hospitalizations and emergency room visits for child injuries in nine study counties in South Carolina where the Triple P parenting interventions were implemented; and

WHEREAS, the evidence base for Triple P also includes forty-three studies addressing efficacy, effectiveness, and dissemination, as well as twenty-two service-based field evaluations; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana there is a cross-agency, early childhood system building effort, known as BrightStart, that has been designated by Governor Jindal as Louisiana's Early Childhood Advisory Council and includes members from each of the state departments that serve children, a member of the Louisiana Senate and a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives, as well as a number of statewide child-serving nongovernmental organizations; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 46:2403 creates the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund and mandates that it shall be used solely for programs designed to prevent the abuse and neglect of children; and

WHEREAS, BrightStart convened a meeting of the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund, various state agencies and private funders to meet with representatives from Triple P to seek collaboration and support to launch a pilot program in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund, these state agencies and private funders have recognized the great need for more evidence-based, effective parenting programs in Louisiana and have collaborated to initiate a pilot program for Triple P; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund has made a significant investment in the Triple P pilot program and is committed to expanding evidenced based programs in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, sixty practitioners from twelve parishes have been trained in Triple P and fifty-eight have been accredited, representing many different child-serving entities, including Head Start, Early Head Start, the office of behavioral health in the Department of

Health and Hospitals, nonprofit and faith-based counseling agencies, and pediatric, nursing and education professionals.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request that BrightStart study the merits of, and possible plans for, expansion of the evidence-based Triple P system and report to the Senate and House committees on health and welfare prior to January 31, 2012.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include, but not be limited to:

(1) An examination of how other states are implementing the Triple P system.

(2) Recommendations of which levels of the Triple P system are most appropriate to implement in Louisiana.

(3) Recommendations of the best recruitment and selection process for providers of Triple P to ensure its effectiveness in Louisiana.

(4) Recommendations for the infrastructure needed, including the training, consultation and technical assistance, to support a Triple P system in Louisiana.

(5) Recommendations for outcomes that can be achieved and the data collection needed to measure the outcomes of Triple P in Louisiana.

(6) An examination of the financial resources needed for expansion.

(7) Recommendations of potential funding sources available for expansion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the executive director of the Children's Cabinet within the office of the governor, and the secretaries of the departments that provide parenting education services, including the secretaries of the Department of Education, the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, and the chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE