
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 33 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY STRUZZI, DELLOSO, FEE, KHAN, KINSEY, PICKETT AND
SCHMITT, MARCH 10, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, MARCH 10, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of July 2023 as "Juvenile Arthritis
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Juvenile arthritis is an umbrella term that refers
4 to pediatric rheumatic diseases that can develop in children 16
5 years of age or younger; and

6 WHEREAS, Juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) is an
7 autoinflammatory disease of an unknown origin and the most
8 common type of arthritis in children; and

9 WHEREAS, An autoinflammatory disease causes the immune system
10 to become overactive even when there is no infection or illness
11 to fight or mistakenly attack healthy cells and tissues; and

12 WHEREAS, There is no evidence as to what causes JIA and no
13 links have been found that foods, toxins, allergies or the lack
14 of vitamins play a role in developing the disease; and

15 WHEREAS, Current research indicates that there is a genetic
16 predisposition to JIA; and

17 WHEREAS, Researchers believe that a trigger, such as a virus,
18 can initiate JIA in a child who has the genetic tendency; and

1 WHEREAS, Systemic JIA, oligoarticular JIA, polyarticular JIA,
2 juvenile psoriatic arthritis, enthesitis-related JIA and
3 undifferentiated arthritis are the six subtypes of JIA; and

4 WHEREAS, Nearly 300,000 children in the United States have
5 some form of arthritis; and

6 WHEREAS, Typical symptoms of arthritis include limping,
7 stiffness when awakening, reluctance to use an arm or leg,
8 reduced activity level, persistent fever, joint swelling and
9 difficulty with fine motor skills; and

10 WHEREAS, Most children with arthritis can expect to live
11 normal lives and some even have their arthritis go into
12 remission; and

13 WHEREAS, There is a small number of specialists who treat
14 JIA, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is a leader in
15 the field; and

16 WHEREAS, According to the American College of Rheumatology,
17 the best care for a child who has JIA is provided by a pediatric
18 rheumatology team that has extensive experience and can diagnose
19 and manage their complex needs; and

20 WHEREAS, A pediatric rheumatology team may consist of a
21 pediatric rheumatologist, a physical therapist, an occupational
22 therapist, a social worker and a nurse specialist who coordinate
23 care with other health professionals and school and community
24 officials; and

25 WHEREAS, The overall treatment goal for a child who has JIA
26 is to control the symptoms, prevent joint damage and maintain
27 function; and

28 WHEREAS, Medications, including steroids, disease-modifying
29 drugs and biologics along with physical and occupational therapy
30 are used to treat JIA; and

1 WHEREAS, Parents and caregivers of children who have JIA
2 should be familiar with 29 U.S.C. Ch. 16 (relating to vocational
3 rehabilitation and other rehabilitation services), which may
4 provide for special accommodations at school; and

5 WHEREAS, Children who have JIA may be eligible for assistance
6 through services provided by State agencies; therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
8 month of July 2023 as "Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month" in
9 Pennsylvania.