

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3525

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to maintain a peer-to-peer support line to provide emotional support, information, brief intervention, and mental health resources to youth who are experiencing stress or who are at risk of, or affected by, mental health disorders, and to establish a grant program for local educational agencies to employ school-based mental health coordinators.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 14, 2023

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to maintain a peer-to-peer support line to provide emotional support, information, brief intervention, and mental health resources to youth who are experiencing stress or who are at risk of, or affected by, mental health disorders, and to establish a grant program for local educational agencies to employ school-based mental health coordinators.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Supporting All Stu-
3 dents Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. YOUTH PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT LINE.**

5 Title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.
6 290aa et seq.) is amended by inserting after section
7 520E–4 the following:

8 **“SEC. 520E-5. YOUTH PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT LINE.**

9 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through
10 the Assistant Secretary, shall maintain, directly or by
11 grant or contract, a national peer-to-peer support line, ad-
12 ministered through the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
13 maintained pursuant to section 520E–3(b)(2), to provide
14 emotional support, information, brief intervention, and
15 mental health resources to youth who are experiencing
16 stress or are at risk of, or affected by, mental health dis-
17 orders.

18 “(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR PEER-TO-PEER SUPPORT
19 LINE.—The peer-to-peer support line under subsection (a)
20 shall—

21 “(1) be a real-time line that is available 24
22 hours a day, 7 days a week, with adult staff re-
23 sponding to calls, texts, and messages during the
24 hours in which youth peers are not available;

25 “(2) provide support through voice, text, and
26 chat functions;

1 “(3) be accessible directly through a phone line
2 and web interface that is specific to the peer-to-peer
3 support line, as well as through referrals from the
4 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline; and

5 “(4) be staffed by trained youth peers, super-
6 vised by licensed health care professionals or li-
7 censed mental health professionals who are trained
8 in—

9 “(A) youth mental health disorder preven-
10 tion and intervention;

11 “(B) providing support to help school-age
12 youth and young adults cope with stress, in-
13 cluding stress related to academics, athletics, fi-
14 nancial or health challenges, interpersonal rela-
15 tionships, social isolation, social media, and bul-
16 lying or cyberbullying;

17 “(C) providing culturally and linguistically
18 appropriate support; and

19 “(D) providing mental health peer support
20 services to meet the specific needs of youth, in-
21 cluding the needs of—

22 “(i) underserved populations;

23 “(ii) people with disabilities; and

24 “(iii) foster youth and former foster
25 youth.

1 “(c) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—In maintaining
2 the peer-to-peer support line under subsection (a), the
3 Secretary shall—

4 “(1) consult with the Domestic Violence Hotline
5 to ensure that youth are connected in real-time to
6 the appropriate specialized hotline service, when ap-
7 plicable;

8 “(2) conduct a public awareness campaign for
9 the peer-to-peer support line; and

10 “(3) consult with Federal departments and
11 agencies to increase awareness regarding the peer-
12 to-peer support line.

13 “(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit
14 an annual report to Congress on the peer-to-peer support
15 line under subsection (a) and implementation of this sec-
16 tion, including—

17 “(1) an evaluation of the effectiveness of activi-
18 ties conducted or supported under subsection (a);

19 “(2) a directory of entities or organizations to
20 which staff maintaining the peer-to-peer support line
21 funded under this section may make referrals; and

22 “(3) such additional information as the Sec-
23 retary determines appropriate.

24 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To
25 carry out this section, there are authorized to be appro-

1 priated such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal
2 years 2024 through 2029.”.

3 **SEC. 3. SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATORS**
4 **GRANT PROGRAM.**

5 (a) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY DEFINITION.—In
6 this section the term “local educational agency” has the
7 meaning given that term in section 8101 of the Elemen-
8 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
9 7801).

10 (b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Edu-
11 cation, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and
12 Human Services, shall award grants, on a competitive
13 basis, to local educational agencies to enable local edu-
14 cational agencies to recruit and employ mental health co-
15 ordinators who are not licensed to provide mental health
16 counseling or psychological services, who can support the
17 work of licensed mental health professionals, in accord-
18 ance with subsection (d).

19 (c) APPLICATION; PRIORITY.—

20 (1) APPLICATION.—A local educational agency
21 desiring a grant under this section shall submit an
22 application to the Secretary of Education at such
23 time, in such manner, and containing such informa-
24 tion as the Secretary of Education may reasonably
25 require.

1 (2) PRIORITY.—In selecting local educational
2 agencies for an award under this section, the Sec-
3 retary of Education shall give priority to local edu-
4 cational agencies that serve schools located in high-
5 poverty communities.

6 (d) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—A local educational
7 agency receiving a grant under this section shall use grant
8 funds to recruit and employ mental health coordinators
9 who are not licensed to provide mental health counseling
10 or psychological services, who can partner with licensed
11 mental health professionals to extend mental health sup-
12 port to all students. Those mental health coordinators
13 shall carry out the following activities at schools served
14 by the local educational agency:

15 (1) Providing information about school and
16 community-based wellness and mental health re-
17 sources to students, parents, faculty, and staff.

18 (2) Working with licensed mental health profes-
19 sionals to identify and regularly meet with students
20 who are experiencing stress, social isolation, family
21 instability, homelessness, or other adverse childhood
22 experiences.

23 (3) Supporting students in strengthening their
24 social support network and increasing their access
25 to, and engagement in, positive activities.

1 (4) Establishing relationships with community-
2 based mental health providers, including child and
3 adolescent therapists, family therapists,
4 neuropsychologists, and child and adolescent psychi-
5 atrists, and facilitating the transition from school- to
6 community-based care as needed.

7 (5) Providing information about community-
8 based resources available to support basic needs,
9 such as housing and nutrition.

10 (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall
11 disseminate information regarding the grant program
12 under subsection (b) to local educational agencies, includ-
13 ing those serving high-poverty communities, and provide
14 technical assistance to local educational agencies regard-
15 ing an application under subsection (c)(1).

16 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—To carry
17 out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated
18 such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years
19 2024 through 2029.

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