

LATE

Kids hurt too

HEALING YOUNG HEARTS

January 28, 2008

To: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Norman Sakamoto, Chair
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

From: Cynthia White, Executive Director of Kids hurt too

Re: Support for SB 2242 & SB 2241, Relating to school-age children and non-school hour programs

Kids hurt too is a non-profit organization providing peer support and mentoring services to children in low income single-parent and foster parent families, which includes orphans, foster children, children of divorce, and other children separated from one or both parents. We define our service population as grieving children; therefore our services focus children on learning to cope with the loss of parents through positive and healthy choices.

Kids hurt too received a non-school hour programs grant in 2007. In September of that year, we started an after school mentoring program, providing services at the Beretania Community Park on Aala Street in the downtown area that is across the street where we will open a permanent facility for after school mentoring services and peer support programs. Our goal was to establish a presence with the youth in the community, get their input and involvement in activities we will offer in the permanent center in the Kukui building. We provided activities after school in a rented classroom at the district park. In order to encourage participation in our activities, staff and HFYC youth mentors walked around the grounds of the park where children gathered. Our first involvement with the local youth was to interrupt the bullying and teasing of younger youth while offering them safer things to do. A few youth attended, participating in social skills training activities, music lessons, learning healthy eating habits and having healthy snacks, and learning guidelines for safe conduct during our hours of operation. To our amazement, within a few weeks, the youth did not walk to our program, they ran. Soon we had up to 40 youth running to our classroom to join in the activities. We conducted evaluations, getting input and feedback from the youth on their learning and interests.

We believe our after school program was a tremendous success and please ask for your support in continuing funding for SB 2242 and SB 2241.

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