

FEB 05 2013

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO YOUTH.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii is one of the  
2 safest and healthiest places in the nation for children and  
3 youth. However, many of Hawaii's youth are not immune to daily  
4 threats to their health and safety. Every year, youth run away  
5 from homes where abuse, neglect, and domestic violence are  
6 commonplace, or from schools where intolerable bullying becomes  
7 a major barrier to educational achievement. Without access to  
8 safe places, youth in these situations are vulnerable and may be  
9 victimized by predatory adults who lure them into alcohol and  
10 substance abuse or prostitution.

11           In October 2012, these concerns were discussed during the  
12 annual children and youth summit sponsored by the legislature's  
13 keiki caucus. In these discussions, youth expressed concerns  
14 over a lack of safe places. Youth were interested in accessing  
15 places where they could seek safety from intolerable home or  
16 school environments without fear of being judged, detained, or  
17 criminalized as a runaway. Youth also expressed interest in  
18 being able to access other youth-specific advice, guidance,



1 programs, and services, including guidance and counseling for  
2 suicide prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, tobacco  
3 cessation, and alcohol and substance abuse support. Finally,  
4 youth wished to access safe places where they could have fun  
5 without the fear of being harassed, bullied, or pressured by  
6 other youth or adults. At the end of the summit, participating  
7 youth identified the need for safe places as one of their  
8 highest priorities.

9 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to:

- 10 (1) Require the office of youth services to coordinate a  
11 two-year safe places for youth pilot program, which  
12 will coordinate a network of safe places where youth  
13 can access safety and obtain advice, guidance,  
14 programs, and services;
- 15 (2) Establish the position of safe places for youth  
16 program coordinator; and
- 17 (3) Appropriate funds for the safe places for youth  
18 program coordinator position, residential options for  
19 the pilot program, and behavioral health counseling  
20 and education.

21 SECTION 2. (a) The office of youth services shall  
22 coordinate a safe places for youth pilot program in partnership



1 with private organizations. The primary objective of the pilot  
2 program shall be to coordinate a network that youth may access  
3 for safety and to obtain advice, guidance, programs, and  
4 services. All youth are eligible for services at the safe  
5 places.

6 (b) There is established the position of safe places for  
7 youth program coordinator. The coordinator shall:

- 8 (1) Coordinate the safe places for youth network;
- 9 (2) Partner with an entity to maintain an updated listing  
10 of safe places statewide;
- 11 (3) Provide ongoing training of organizations designated  
12 as safe places for youth in areas including emergency  
13 response and trauma;
- 14 (4) Partner with the department of education, Hawaii state  
15 student council, peer education programs, private  
16 schools, and other youth services organizations to  
17 build awareness of the safe places for youth network;  
18 and
- 19 (5) Convene an annual meeting of safe places for youth  
20 organizations and other interested parties to identify  
21 emerging needs, provide feedback on program



1 effectiveness, and provide an opportunity to recommend  
2 improvements to the pilot program.

3 (c) The safe places for youth pilot program shall provide  
4 access to and linkage with services and programs needed by  
5 youth, including but not limited to:

- 6 (1) Domestic violence prevention or reduction;
- 7 (2) Violence and trauma recovery and support;
- 8 (3) Human trafficking resources and prevention;
- 9 (4) Suicide prevention;
- 10 (5) Resources targeted at teenagers, including teen  
11 pregnancy prevention;
- 12 (6) Tobacco cessation;
- 13 (7) Alcohol and substance abuse support;
- 14 (8) Behavior health counseling and education;
- 15 (9) Assistance for youth to achieve their educational and  
16 vocational goals; and
- 17 (10) Other relationship building and life skills.

18 (d) The office of youth services shall coordinate a  
19 comprehensive network of safe places for youth to assist youth  
20 in obtaining the advice and guidance they need.

21 (e) The safe places for youth pilot program shall cease to  
22 exist on June 30, 2015.



1 (f) For the purposes of this section:

2 "Safe places" means physical and virtual places of safety  
3 for youth.

4 "Youth" means any person twenty-one years of age or  
5 younger.

6 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$250,000 or so much  
8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2013-2014 and the  
9 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
10 2014-2015 for the position of safe places for youth program  
11 coordinator and residential options for the pilot program.

12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
13 of human services office of youth services for the purposes of  
14 this Act.

15 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2013.

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**Report Title:**

Keiki Caucus; Office of Youth Services; Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program; Safe Places for Youth Program Coordinator; Appropriation; Behavioral Health Counseling and Education

**Description:**

Requires the office of youth services to coordinate a two-year safe places for youth pilot program, which will coordinate a network of safe places where youth can access safety and obtain advice, guidance, programs, and services. Establishes the position of safe places for youth program coordinator. Appropriates funds for the coordinator position and residential options for the pilot program. (SD1)

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