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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 National Center for Housing and Child  
2 Welfare reports that there are between one million and seven  
3 million homeless youth who have run away or have been asked to  
4 leave their homes. According to the National Runaway  
5 Switchboard, it is estimated that on any given night, there are  
6 approximately 1.3 million homeless youth living unsupervised on  
7 the streets, in abandoned buildings, with friends or with  
8 strangers. Homeless youth lack parental, foster, or  
9 institutional care and are thus prone to be at a higher risk for  
10 physical abuse, sexual exploitation, mental health disabilities,  
11 substance abuse, and death.

12           The legislature finds that Hawaii is not immune to the  
13 seriousness and prevalence of youth homelessness. A 2016  
14 National Conference of State Legislatures article, "Homeless and  
15 Runaway Youth," indicates that studies have shown that forty-six  
16 per cent of runaway and homeless youth reported being physically



1 abused, thirty-eight per cent reported being emotionally abused,  
2 and seventeen per cent reported being forced into unwanted  
3 sexual activity by a family or household member. Furthermore,  
4 seventy-five per cent of homeless or runaway youth have dropped  
5 out or will drop out of school. The legislature recognizes the  
6 necessity of establishing safe places that offer shelter,  
7 programs, and support to at-risk youth.

8 The purpose of this Act is to:

9 (1) Require the office of youth services to coordinate a  
10 two-year safe places for youth pilot program which  
11 will coordinate a network of safe places that youth  
12 can access for safety and where they may obtain  
13 advice, guidance, programs, and services; and

14 (2) Establish and appropriate funds for a safe places for  
15 youth pilot program coordinator position and  
16 residential options for the pilot program.

17 SECTION 2. (a) The office of youth services shall  
18 coordinate a safe places for youth pilot program in partnership  
19 with private organizations. The primary objective of the pilot  
20 program shall be to coordinate a network of safe places that  
21 youth may access for safety and where they may obtain advice,



1 guidance, programs, and services. All youth shall be eligible  
2 for services at the safe places.

3 (b) There is established the position of a safe places for  
4 youth pilot program coordinator. The coordinator shall:

5 (1) Coordinate the safe places for youth network;

6 (2) Partner with an entity to maintain an updated listing  
7 of safe places statewide;

8 (3) Provide ongoing training for organizations designated  
9 as safe places for youth, including training in  
10 emergency response and trauma;

11 (4) Partner with the department of education, Hawaii state  
12 student council, peer education programs, private  
13 schools, and other youth services organizations to  
14 build awareness of the safe places for youth network;  
15 and

16 (5) Convene an annual meeting of safe places for youth  
17 organizations and other interested parties to identify  
18 emerging needs, provide feedback on program  
19 effectiveness, and provide an opportunity to recommend  
20 improvements to the pilot program.



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1           (c) The safe places for youth pilot program shall provide  
2 access to and linkage with services and programs needed by  
3 youth, including:

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

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

18          (e) The safe places for youth pilot program shall cease to  
19 exist on June 30, 2019.

20          (f) For the purposes of this section:



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

3 "Youth" means any person years of age or younger.

4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the  
7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
8 2018-2019 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) safe places for  
9 youth pilot program coordinator position and for residential  
10 options for the pilot program.

11 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
12 of human services for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.  
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INTRODUCED BY:

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**Report Title:**

Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program; At-Risk Youth; Coordinator Position; Appropriation

**Description:**

Requires the Office of Youth Services to coordinate a two-year Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program in partnership with private organizations to coordinate a network that youth can access for safety and where youth can obtain advice, guidance, programs, and services. Establishes a Safe Places for Youth Pilot Program Coordinator position. Appropriates funds.

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