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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that many families with  
2 children in Hawaii are impacted by the continuing health and  
3 economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and need an array  
4 of services. In response to these consequences, staff from the  
5 departments of human services, education, health, labor and  
6 industrial relations, the governor's coordinator on  
7 homelessness, the executive office on aging, the executive  
8 office on early learning, workforce development council, and  
9 community providers have worked on various initiatives to  
10 respond to the needs of Hawaii's residents.

11       In August 2020, the National Governors Association for Best  
12 Practices and Casey Family Programs launched the child and  
13 family well-being learning cohort I and II to coordinate  
14 strategic solutions to prevent child abuse and neglect and  
15 ensuring child and family well-being. Several months into the  
16 pandemic, there was a national concern that cases of child abuse  
17 and neglect were going unreported as schools, health care, and

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1 other mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect were  
2 providing limited in-person activities. Following the early  
3 months of lockdown in 2020, reports of child abuse and neglect  
4 declined in some states by twenty to seventy per cent. As part  
5 of the cohort, the National Family Support Network presented  
6 information and training opportunities about family resource  
7 centers, also referred to as family support centers, as a model  
8 to assist families and prevent incidents of child abuse and  
9 neglect.

10 Family resource centers play a critical role in: (a)  
11 Preventing child abuse and neglect; (b) Strengthening children  
12 and families; (c) Connecting family-impacting agencies and  
13 programs; (d) Creating opportunities for community-level  
14 coordination; (e) Creating connections to resources and support  
15 systems; and (f) Increasing family engagement, which leads to  
16 greater student success in school. Various studies of  
17 communities with family resource centers showed lower rates of  
18 child abuse and neglect investigations, lower numbers of  
19 children entering foster care, and an increase in parents or  
20 custodians gaining employment within one year after  
21 participating in services provided through the centers.

22 The primary goal of family resource centers is to assist  
23 families with supportive services before problems become crises

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1 that require intervention by child or other protective services.  
2 For school-based family resource centers, an added goal is to  
3 support a child's educational needs.

4 Family resource centers serve diverse populations, are  
5 family-focused, culturally sensitive resource hubs that provide  
6 families and caregivers targeted services or referrals to  
7 services based on the needs and interests of families or  
8 caregivers. Family resource centers may provide services that  
9 include assistance accessing government programs, job training  
10 and placement, educational support, housing assistance, child  
11 care, skills training for parents or caregivers on a variety of  
12 subjects, counseling, and referrals to case management or  
13 treatment services.

14 The purposes of this Act are to establish and fund a five-  
15 year pilot program within the department of human services and  
16 one FTE family resource center coordinator position to further  
17 develop and implement a statewide network of school- and  
18 community-based family resource centers, to establish  
19 definitions, standards, and best practices, to identify and  
20 align available services, goals, and outcomes, and to develop  
21 referral and data tracking protocols.

22 SECTION 2. Definitions. For purposes of this Act:

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1 "Community support system" means the support system that  
2 may be organized through extended family members, friends,  
3 neighbors, religious organizations, community programs, cultural  
4 and ethnic organizations, or other support groups or  
5 organizations.

6 "Department" means the department of human services.

7 "Family preservation services" means in-home or community-  
8 based services drawing on the strengths of the family and its  
9 individual members while addressing family needs to keep the  
10 family together where possible and may include:

11 (1) Respite care of children to provide temporary relief  
12 for parents and other caregivers;

13 (2) Services designed to improve parenting skills with  
14 respect to such matters as child development,  
15 household budgeting, coping with stress, health,  
16 safety, and nutrition; and

17 (3) Services designed to promote the well-being of  
18 children and families, increase the strength and  
19 stability of families, increase parents' confidence  
20 and competence in their parenting abilities, promote a  
21 safe, stable, and supportive family environment for  
22 children, and otherwise enhance children's  
23 development.

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1 "Family resource center" means a unified single point of  
2 entry where families, individuals, children, and youth in  
3 communities can obtain information, an assessment of needs,  
4 referral to, or direct delivery of family services in a manner  
5 that is welcoming and strength-based.

6 SECTION 3. (a) There is established the family resource  
7 centers pilot program in the department and one FTE family  
8 resource centers coordinator position to develop, implement,  
9 align, and coordinate a statewide network of school- and  
10 community-based family resource centers, and develop a referral  
11 and data tracking process.

12 The director of human services may appoint the family  
13 resource centers coordinator to carry out the functions of the  
14 pilot program. The family resource centers coordinator shall be  
15 appointed without regard to chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

16 (b) The department, along with the departments of  
17 education and health, may coordinate with other public or  
18 private entities, as appropriate, to develop and implement  
19 family resource centers, including establishing standards of  
20 practice, and a strategic plan to identify minimum services,  
21 align goals and outcomes, and document referral and data  
22 tracking protocols.

23 For purposes of this pilot program:

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- (1) A family resource center is designed to meet the needs, cultures, and interests of the communities that the family resource center serves;
- (2) Family services, including family preservation services and identification of community support systems, may be delivered directly to a family at the family resource center by family resource center staff or by providers who contract with or have provider agreements with the family resource center, or with any of the departments identified in this section; and
- (3) Each family resource center may have one or more family advocates who screen and assess a family's needs and strengths. If requested by the family, the family advocate may assist the family with setting its own goals and, together with the family, develop a written plan to pursue the family's goals in working towards a greater level of self-reliance or in attaining self-sufficiency, through education, job training, or employment.

SECTION 4. (a) Contracts entered by the departments identified in section 3(b) in the furtherance of this act shall be exempt from the requirements of chapters 103D and 103F.

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(b) The departments identified in section 3(b) may accept grants, donations, and contributions from private or public sources for the purposes of this Act, which may be expended by the receiving department consistent with the donors' wishes.

(c) The departments identified in section 3(b) shall establish no later than December 1, 2023, the following:

(1) Criteria that the departments will use to evaluate potential family resource centers;

(2) Milestones that the departments expect to meet in establishing one or more family resource centers over the course of the five-year pilot program;

(3) Specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, and time-based performance measures that the departments expect to meet at the end of each fiscal year;

(4) Monitoring and oversight controls that the departments will have over family resource centers; and

(5) Data and referral system tracking needs and protocols in compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

(d) The family resource centers coordinator shall submit reports to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular sessions of 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027. The report shall include a description of items

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1 identified in (c) and include any funds, grants, or donations  
2 received in the prior fiscal year.

3 (e) The pilot program shall cease to exist on June 30,  
4 2027.

5 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$350,000 or so much  
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the  
8 establishment of the family resource centers pilot program, one  
9 FTE family resource centers coordinator, and for expenses  
10 related to development and implementation of statewide family  
11 resource centers.

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

14 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: \_\_\_\_\_



17

BY REQUEST

JAN 24 2022



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**Report Title:**

Family Resource Centers; Department of Human Services;  
Appropriations

**Description:**

Establishes the Family Resource Centers Pilot Program,  
establishes one FTE Family Resource Centers Coordinator  
position, and appropriates funds.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS.

PURPOSE: To establish a five-year pilot program within the Department of Human Services to support the further development and implementation of a statewide model of practice and a network of school- and community-based Family Resource Centers; and appropriate funds for the pilot program and one FTE coordinator position.

MEANS: Establish a five-year pilot program to be administered by the Department of Human Services and appropriate funds.

JUSTIFICATION: The 2018 Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) study found that nearly forty-eight percent of Hawai'i households struggled to make ends meet. Now, due to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19, more Hawai'i families need a complex array of assistance, and more students need additional support to be successful in school. To respond to the increased demand for assistance and need for coordination, the Departments of Human Services, Education, Health, Labor & Industrial Relations, the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, the Executive Office on Aging, the Workforce Development Council, and community providers have worked on various initiatives to coordinate access to multiple government services.

In August 2020, Hawai'i was invited to participate in the Child and Family Well-Being Learning Cohort I (and later Cohort II) sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and Casey Family Programs. NGA convened governors' office representatives, state human services executives, child welfare

leaders, education leaders and others to discuss strategic solutions to preventing child abuse and neglect and ensuring child and family well-being. The cohort was convened to address a national concern that incidents of child maltreatment were going unreported several months into the pandemic as reports of child abuse or neglect declined in some states by twenty percent to seventy percent as schools, health care, and other mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect were locked-down or were providing limited in-person activities.

Cohort participants from the Departments of Human Services, Education, and Health, and several community non-profit organizations were introduced to the National Family Support Network, which provided the history, framework, and training resources of the Family Resource Center model. Family Resource Centers are also referred to as Family Support Centers. Hawai'i joined the National Family Support Network in 2021.

Family Resource Centers play a critical role in: (a) Preventing child abuse and neglect; (b) Strengthening children and families; (c) Connecting family-impacting agencies and programs; (d) Creating opportunities for community-level coordination; (e) Creating social connections to resources and support systems; and (f) Increasing family engagement, which leads to greater student success. Across the country, school- and community-based Family Resource Centers are trusted, effective, and convenient centers for families to access. A 2018 study from the University of Chicago, Chapin Hall, that compared child welfare investigation rates in similar Allegheny County neighborhoods found that those with Family Support Centers had a lower rate of child abuse and neglect investigations than similar neighborhoods without Family Support Centers.

The Department of Human Services currently funds community-based Family Resource

Centers as part of its broad strategy to prevent child abuse and neglect. In 2021 the Kailua-Kalaheo Complex of the Department of Education decided to develop school-based Family Resource Centers in four complex area schools to respond to the increase in the number and complexity of requests for assistance by families of students. Recently, the Kailua-Kalaheo Complex of the Department of Education was awarded a grant from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund that will fund a complex coordinator position, and pay for materials, technology, furnishings, and professional development and training.

During the summer of 2021, a state steering committee, the Hawai'i 'Ohana Support Network, was formed to support and further develop the Family Resource Center model.

To formalize the Family Resource Center model statewide and develop a Family Resource Center network, the Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Departments of Education and Health, propose a five-year pilot program to engage in strategic planning that will lead to adoption of definitions, standards, best practices, professional development, alignment of services and performance measures, and development of a referral and data sharing process. The pilot program will require funds for one FTE coordinator position and necessary resources to coordinate and develop the standardization of definitions and practices of Family Resource Centers and to develop the referral and referral tracking process, in compliance with applicable federal and state law, to create the Family Resource Centers network.

Statewide coordination and strategic planning are necessary to establish the Family Resource Center model in multiple State departments serving children and families, so that Family Resource Centers follow the same standards and best

practices. Focused attention is required to establish how the network and system of referrals will be tracked so families receive the recommended services, and resources located in different communities may be accessed across the network. For example, Family Resource Centers may use on-line training platforms or other resources that may be shared with families receiving services across the network and State. Data sharing and data tracking will aid in measuring effectiveness and outcomes.

The Department of Human Services requests a general fund appropriation for \$350,000 for fiscal year 2022-2023 for one FTE coordinator position, to continue development, implementation, and evaluation of the Family Resource Center model and network in Hawai'i.

Impact on the public: The public will benefit from a standardized and coordinated network of school- and community-based Family Resource Centers. Standards and a formalized network will improve the quality and access to an array of government and other services needed to support parents' and caregivers' ability to meet the needs of their children.

Impact on the department and other agencies: Improving the coordination of services between departments serving children and families and their contracted providers will allow for better program alignment and outcomes and an efficient use of resources. Families, community providers, and the public sector workforce will also have more positive interactions with each other that will lead to a better understanding and utilization of public resources available to Hawaii's residents.

GENERAL FUND: \$350,000.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM  
DESIGNATION:

HMS 904.

OTHER AFFECTED  
AGENCIES:

Department of Education; Department of  
Health.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Upon approval.