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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 ensure 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



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:

- 11 (1) Preventing child abuse and neglect;
- 12 (2) Strengthening children and families;
- 13 (3) Connecting family-impacting agencies and programs;
- 14 (4) Creating opportunities for community-level  
15 coordination;
- 16 (5) Creating connections to resources and support systems;  
17 and
- 18 (6) Increasing family engagement,  
19 which leads to greater student success in school.

20 Various studies of communities with family resource centers  
21 showed lower rates of child abuse and neglect investigations,



1 lower numbers of children entering foster care, and an increase  
2 in parents or custodians gaining employment within one year  
3 after participating in services provided through the centers.

4 The primary goal of family resource centers is to assist  
5 families with supportive services before problems become crises  
6 that require intervention by child or other protective services.  
7 For school-based family resource centers, an added goal is to  
8 support a child's educational needs.

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

19 The purpose of this Act is to establish and fund a five-  
20 year pilot program within the department of human services and  
21 one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) family resource center



1 coordinator position to further develop and implement a  
2 statewide network of school- and community-based family resource  
3 centers; to establish definitions, standards, and best  
4 practices; to identify and align available services, goals, and  
5 outcomes; and to develop referral and data tracking protocols.

6 SECTION 2. For purposes of this Act:

7 "Community support system" means the support system that  
8 may be organized through extended family members, friends,  
9 neighbors, religious organizations, community programs, cultural  
10 and ethnic organizations, or other support groups or  
11 organizations.

12 "Department" means the department of human services.

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

- 17 (1) Respite care of children to provide temporary relief  
18 for parents and other caregivers;
- 19 (2) Services designed to improve parenting skills with  
20 respect to such matters as child development,



1 household budgeting, coping with stress, health,  
2 safety, and nutrition; and  
3 (3) Services designed to promote the well-being of  
4 children and families; increase the strength and  
5 stability of families; increase parents' confidence  
6 and competence in their parenting abilities; promote a  
7 safe, stable, and supportive family environment for  
8 children; and otherwise enhance children's  
9 development.

10 "Family resource center" means a unified single point of  
11 entry where families, individuals, children, and youth in  
12 communities can obtain information, an assessment of needs, and  
13 direct delivery of or referrals for family services in a manner  
14 that is welcoming and strength-based.

15 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department  
16 the family resource centers pilot program and one full-time (1.0  
17 FTE) family resource centers coordinator position to develop,  
18 implement, align, and coordinate a statewide network of school-  
19 and community-based family resource centers, and develop a  
20 referral and data tracking process.



1           The director of human services may appoint the family  
2 resource centers coordinator to carry out the functions of the  
3 pilot program. The family resource centers coordinator shall be  
4 appointed without regard to chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

5           (b) The department, along with the department of education  
6 and the department of health, may coordinate with other public  
7 or private entities, as appropriate, to develop and implement  
8 family resource centers, including establishing standards of  
9 practice, and a strategic plan to identify minimum services,  
10 align goals and outcomes, and document referral and data  
11 tracking protocols.

12           (c) For purposes of this pilot program:

13           (1) A family resource center shall be designed to meet the  
14 needs, cultures, and interests of the communities that  
15 the family resource center serves;

16           (2) Family services, including family preservation  
17 services and identification of community support  
18 systems, may be delivered directly to a family at the  
19 family resource center by family resource center staff  
20 or by providers who contract with or have provider



1 agreements with the family resource center, or with  
2 any of the departments identified in this section; and

3 (3) Each family resource center may have one or more  
4 family advocates who screen and assess a family's  
5 needs and strengths. If requested by the family, the  
6 family advocate may assist the family with setting its  
7 own goals and, together with the family, develop a  
8 written plan to pursue the family's goals in working  
9 towards a greater level of self-reliance or in  
10 attaining self-sufficiency, through education, job  
11 training, or employment.

12 SECTION 4. (a) Contracts entered by the departments  
13 identified in subsection (b) of section 3 of this Act shall be  
14 exempt from the requirements of chapters 103D and 103F, Hawaii  
15 Revised Statutes.

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



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

4 (1) Criteria that the departments shall use to evaluate  
5 potential family resource centers;

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

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

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

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

16 (d) The family resource centers coordinator shall submit  
17 reports to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to  
18 the convening of the regular sessions of 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026,  
19 and 2027. The report shall include a description of items  
20 identified in subsection (c) and shall include any funds,  
21 grants, or donations received in the prior fiscal year.





1 (e) The pilot program shall cease to exist on June 30,  
2 2027.

3 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$350,000 or so much  
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 for the  
6 establishment of the family resource centers pilot program, one  
7 full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) family resource centers  
8 coordinator position, and for expenses related to development  
9 and implementation of statewide family resource centers.

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

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on December 31,  
13 2050.



**Report Title:**

Department of Human Services; Family Resource Centers; Pilot Program; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes the Family Resource Centers Pilot Program with the Department of Human Services. Establishes one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Family Resource Centers Coordinator position. Appropriates funds. Effective 12/31/2050. (SD1)

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