



Substitute House Bill No. 5532

Public Act No. 06-182

AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH POLICY AND THE KINSHIP NAVIGATOR PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than July 1, 2006, the director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness, in consultation with the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, shall convene a youth futures committee. The youth futures committee shall consist of six members of the General Assembly one each appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, the president pro tempore of the Senate, the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the majority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the Senate; the Commissioners of Education, Children and Families, Public Health, Social Services and Mental Health and Addiction Services or said commissioners' designees; the Labor Commissioner or the commissioner's designee; the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management or the secretary's designee; the director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness or the director's designee; the executive director of the Commission on Children or the executive director's designee; the executive director of the Court Support Services Division of the judicial branch or the executive director's designee; and a representative from the Connecticut Youth Services Association

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designated by the president of the association.

(b) The youth futures committee shall: (1) Develop guidelines for the delivery of services that incorporate best practices based on defined, developmentally appropriate, positive outcomes for youth relating to health, safety and education; (2) improve communication among agencies that administer programs serving youth; (3) assess existing funding resources, networks and returns on investments to maximize the development of community level services that assist in achieving state goals and objectives with respect to youth policy; and (4) collaborate with public and private partnerships in order to facilitate positive outcomes for youth. For purposes of this subsection, positive outcomes include, but need not be limited to, improved school attendance, improved academic and technical proficiencies, improvement in the percentage of youth obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent, increases in the percentage of youth who enroll in and complete postsecondary school educational and training programs, employment programs that build skills, full employment for youth not enrolled in educational programs, opportunities to be engaged in public service, stable and safe housing, access to quality mental and physical health providers, and opportunities to develop leadership and mentoring skills.

(c) On or before January 1, 2008, the director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the General Assembly on (1) the progress made in achieving the positive outcomes for youth pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, and the total state expenditures dedicated to achieving such positive outcomes, and (2) state agency programs that are serving youth not participating in educational activities. Such report shall also include a delineation on the progress made by each city or town in achieving such positive outcomes for youth.

Sec. 2. Section 17a-98a of the general statutes is repealed and the

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following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2006*):

(a) The Department of Children and Families, in consultation with the Departments of Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services and Mental Retardation, shall establish, within available appropriations, a kinship [foster care] navigator program. Such program shall ensure that: [when the department] (1) When the Department of Children and Families determines that it is in the best interest of the child to be placed with a relative for foster care, the department [shall inform] informs the relative regarding procedures to become licensed as a foster parent, and (2) grandparents and other relatives caring for a child related to such persons are provided with information on the array of state services and benefits for which they may be eligible, including the subsidy program established pursuant to section 17a-126 of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes. The Commissioner of Children and Families shall, within available appropriations, ensure that information on the array of services available under the kinship navigator program is accessible through the 2-1-1 Infoline program.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2008, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Children and Families shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a, on the implementation of the kinship navigator program to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services.

Approved June 7, 2006