

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 290

Approved June 25, 2024

WHEREAS, Meeting the developmental, mental, emotional, and behavioral health needs of children is critical to their well-being and, therefore, critical to the well-being of our state and city; and

WHEREAS, There are approximately 209,785 children under age 18 living in Rhode Island, with approximately 41,021 residing in the City of Providence; and

WHEREAS, Children's mental health can influence children's behavior and daily functioning in school, at home, and in the community; and

WHEREAS, According to the RI Department of Health, in 2023, 36% of Rhode Island high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless for more than two weeks, and 9% reported attempting suicide one or more times during the year. Additionally, in 2022, there were 3,625 emergency department visits and 2,271 hospitalizations of Rhode Island children with a primary diagnosis of mental disorder; and

WHEREAS, According to the RI Department of Education, more than 70% of Providence students reported that stress interferes with their ability to participate in school, and 27% of Providence middle school students worry about violence in school; and

WHEREAS, Children in need of mental health care often wait for months to receive care, and children who need intensive residential care are often stuck in hospital-level care or placed in out-of-state residential programs to receive treatment; and

WHEREAS, In 2023, according to the RI Department of Children, Youth, and Families, approximately 408 Providence children were found to be victims of abuse or neglect and in need of services; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island is alleged to have violated the Olmstead Act by not ensuring that children receive the least restrictive services to meet their developmental and behavioral health care needs.



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City of Providence urges the State of Rhode Island, Governor McKee and his Administration, the Speaker of the House, the Senate President, and members of the legislature to adequately fund an array of community-based children's services, address the long waitlists for children's services, and create resources so Rhode Island's children, including many from Providence, can receive the services they need to grow, develop, and thrive in the least restrictive setting and close to home; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon passage, a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Office of Governor Dan McKee, Senate President Dominic Ruggerio, and Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi.

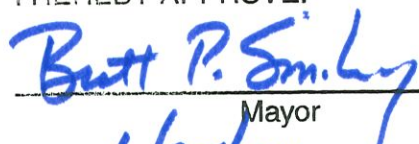
IN CITY COUNCIL

JUN 20 2024

READ AND PASSED

  
RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT  
  
CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

  
Mayor  
Date: 6/25/24