

106TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 981

To provide training to professionals who work with children affected by violence, to provide for violence prevention, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 6, 1999

Mr. DODD introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To provide training to professionals who work with children affected by violence, to provide for violence prevention, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Violence Prevention  
5       Training for Early Childhood Educators Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7       The purpose of this Act is to provide grants to insti-  
8       tutions that carry out early childhood education training  
9       programs to enable the institutions to include violence pre-  
10      vention training as part of the preparation of individuals

1 pursuing careers in early childhood development and edu-  
2 cation.

3 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) Aggressive behavior in early childhood is the  
6 single best predictor of aggression in later life.

7 (2) Aggressive and defiant behavior predictive  
8 of later delinquency is increasing among our Na-  
9 tion's youngest children. Without prevention efforts,  
10 higher percentages of juveniles are likely to become  
11 violent juvenile offenders.

12 (3) Research has demonstrated that aggression  
13 is primarily a learned behavior that develops through  
14 observation, imitation, and direct experience. There-  
15 fore, children who experience violence as victims or  
16 as witnesses are at increased risk of becoming vio-  
17 lent themselves.

18 (4) In a study at a Boston city hospital, 1 out  
19 of every 10 children seen in the primary care clinic  
20 had witnessed a shooting or a stabbing before the  
21 age of 6, with 50 percent of the children witnessing  
22 in the home and 50 percent of the children wit-  
23 nessing in the streets.

24 (5) A study in New York found that children  
25 who had been victims of violence within their fami-

1 lies were 24 percent more likely to report violent be-  
2 havior as adolescents, and adolescents who had  
3 grown up in families where partner violence occurred  
4 were 21 percent more likely to report violent delin-  
5 quency than individuals not exposed to violence.

6 (6) Aggression can become well-learned and dif-  
7 ficult to change by the time a child reaches adoles-  
8 cence. Early childhood offers a critical period for  
9 overcoming risk for violent behavior and providing  
10 support for prosocial behavior.

11 (7) Violence prevention programs for very  
12 young children yield economic benefits. By providing  
13 health and stability to the individual child and the  
14 child's family, the programs may reduce expendi-  
15 tures for medical care, special education, and in-  
16 volvement with the judicial system.

17 (8) Primary prevention can be effective. When  
18 preschool teachers teach young children inter-  
19 personal problem-solving skills and other forms of  
20 conflict resolution, children are less likely to dem-  
21 onstrate problem behaviors.

22 (9) There is evidence that family support pro-  
23 grams in families with children from birth through  
24 5 years of age are effective in preventing delin-  
25 quency.

1 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

2 (a) **AT-RISK CHILD.**—The term “at-risk child”  
 3 means a child who has been affected by violence through  
 4 direct exposure to child abuse, other domestic violence, or  
 5 violence in the community.

6 (b) **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TRAINING PRO-**  
 7 **GRAM.**—The term “early childhood education training pro-  
 8 gram” means a program that—

9 (1)(A) trains individuals to work with young  
 10 children in early child development programs or ele-  
 11 mentary schools; or

12 (B) provides professional development to indi-  
 13 viduals working in early child development programs  
 14 or elementary schools;

15 (2) provides training to become an early child-  
 16 hood education teacher, an elementary school teach-  
 17 er, a school counselor, or a child care provider; and

18 (3) leads to a bachelor’s degree or an associ-  
 19 ate’s degree, a certificate for working with young  
 20 children (such as a Child Development Associate’s  
 21 degree or an equivalent credential), or, in the case  
 22 of an individual with such a degree, certificate, or  
 23 credential, provides professional development.

24 (c) **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.**—The term “elementary  
 25 school” has the meaning given the term in section 14101

1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965  
2 (20 U.S.C. 8801).

3 (d) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the  
4 Secretary of Education.

5 (e) VIOLENCE PREVENTION.—The term “violence  
6 prevention” means—

7 (1) preventing violent behavior in children;

8 (2) identifying and preventing violent behavior  
9 in at-risk children; or

10 (3) identifying and ameliorating violent behav-  
11 ior in children who act out violently.

12 **SEC. 5. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

13 (a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary is author-  
14 ized to award grants to institutions that carry out early  
15 childhood education training programs and have applica-  
16 tions approved under section 6 to enable the institutions  
17 to provide violence prevention training as part of the early  
18 childhood education training program.

19 (b) AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall award a grant  
20 under this Act in an amount that is not less than  
21 \$500,000 and not more than \$1,000,000.

22 (c) DURATION.—The Secretary shall award a grant  
23 under this Act for a period of not less than 3 years and  
24 not more than 5 years.

1 **SEC. 6. APPLICATION.**

2 (a) APPLICATION REQUIRED.—Each institution de-  
3 siring a grant under this Act shall submit to the Secretary  
4 an application at such time, in such manner, and accom-  
5 panied by such information as the Secretary may require.

6 (b) CONTENTS.—Each application shall—

7 (1) describe the violence prevention training ac-  
8 tivities and services for which assistance is sought;

9 (2) contain a comprehensive plan for the activi-  
10 ties and services, including a description of—

11 (A) the goals of the violence prevention  
12 training program;

13 (B) the curriculum and training that will  
14 prepare students for careers which are de-  
15 scribed in the plan;

16 (C) the recruitment, retention, and train-  
17 ing of students;

18 (D) the methods used to help students find  
19 employment in their fields;

20 (E) the methods for assessing the success  
21 of the violence prevention training program;  
22 and

23 (F) the sources of financial aid for quali-  
24 fied students;

25 (3) contain an assurance that the institution  
26 has the capacity to implement the plan; and

1           (4) contain an assurance that the plan was de-  
2       veloped in consultation with agencies and organiza-  
3       tions that will assist the institution in carrying out  
4       the plan.

5   **SEC. 7. SELECTION PRIORITIES.**

6       The Secretary shall give priority to awarding grants  
7   to institutions carrying out violence prevention programs  
8   that include 1 or more of the following components:

9           (1) Preparation to engage in family support  
10       (such as parent education, service referral, and lit-  
11       eracy training).

12          (2) Preparation to engage in community out-  
13       reach or collaboration with other services in the com-  
14       munity.

15          (3) Preparation to use conflict resolution train-  
16       ing with children.

17          (4) Preparation to work in economically dis-  
18       advantaged communities.

19          (5) Recruitment of economically disadvantaged  
20       students.

21          (6) Carrying out programs of demonstrated ef-  
22       fectiveness in the type of training for which assist-  
23       ance is sought, including programs funded under  
24       section 596 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as  
25       such section was in effect prior to October 7, 1998).

1 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2       There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out  
3 this Act \$35,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2000  
4 through 2004.

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