

CHAPTER 196

GOVERNMENT - STATE

HOUSE BILL 98-1321

BY REPRESENTATIVES G. Berry, Dyer, K. Alexander, Bacon, George, Kaufman, Reeser, Smith, Takis, Udall, S. Williams, T. Williams, Chavez, Epps, Gotlieb, Hagedorn, Keller, Mace, Nichol, and Romero; also SENATORS Hopper, Linkhart, B. Alexander, Bishop, Reeves, Hernandez, Martinez, Pascoe, Rupert, Tanner, and Wham.

AN ACT

CONCERNING YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Part 28 of article 32 of title 24, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

24-32-2805. "Colorado Youth Mentoring Services Act". (1) **Short title.** THIS SECTION SHALL BE KNOWN AND MAY BE CITED AS THE "COLORADO YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES ACT".

(2) **Legislative declaration.** (a) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT MENTORING PROGRAMS SUCH AS BIG BROTHERS, BIG SISTERS, AND PARTNERS HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN COLORADO FOR MANY YEARS. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT NATIONAL RESEARCH HAS INDICATED THAT STRUCTURED MENTORING PROGRAMS ARE EFFECTIVE TOOLS IN COMBATING YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND YOUTH CRIME AND VIOLENCE. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER FINDS, BASED UPON RECENT NATIONAL RESEARCH RESULTS, THAT AT-RISK YOUTH WHO ARE MATCHED IN A MINIMUM OF YEAR-LONG MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS ARE LESS LIKELY TO BECOME INVOLVED IN SUBSTANCE AND ALCOHOL ABUSE, LESS LIKELY TO BE TRUANT, LESS LIKELY TO COMMIT VIOLENT ACTS AGAINST OTHER PERSONS, AND MORE LIKELY TO SHOW IMPROVEMENTS IN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND POSITIVE PEER RELATIONS.

(b) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER FINDS THAT, DESPITE THE POSITIVE RESULTS

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

THAT MAY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH STRUCTURED YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS, AS MANY AS THIRTY-EIGHT COUNTIES IN THE STATE OF COLORADO DO NOT HAVE THE ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT SUCCESSFUL MENTORING PROGRAMS OR LACK THE ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO ESTABLISH SUCH PROGRAMS OR BOTH. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT EVEN COUNTIES IN WHICH THERE ARE ESTABLISHED YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS, SUCH PROGRAMS ARE UNABLE TO MEET THE DEMAND FOR MENTORS AND THAT SUCH ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS HAVE WAITING LISTS THAT EXCEED TWO THOUSAND YOUTHS.

(c) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEREFORE DECLARES AND DETERMINES THAT THE PROVISION OF YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES THAT WOULD USE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES TO RECRUIT, TRAIN, SCREEN, AND SUPERVISE ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE AS MENTORS FOR AT-RISK YOUTH WOULD BE BENEFICIAL AND IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF COLORADO.

(3) **Definition.** FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "AT-RISK YOUTH" MEANS A PERSON WHO IS AT LEAST FIVE YEARS OF AGE BUT WHO IS LESS THAN EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE AND WHO IS CHALLENGED BY SUCH RISK FACTORS AS POVERTY, RESIDENCE IN A SUBSTANCE-ABUSING HOUSEHOLD, FAMILY CONFLICT, ASSOCIATION WITH PEERS WHO COMMIT CRIMES, RESIDENCE IN A SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLD, EXHIBITION OF INDICIA OF DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR, OR BEING THE VICTIM OF CHILD ABUSE.

(4) **Provision of youth mentoring services.** THERE IS HEREBY CREATED THE COLORADO YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING STATE FUNDING FOR THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES THAT TARGET AT-RISK YOUTHS IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND TO DECREASE THE INCIDENTS OF YOUTH CRIME AND VIOLENCE. SUCH FUNDING SHALL BE USED TO PROVIDE NEW MENTORING SERVICES IN COMMUNITIES THAT DO NOT HAVE EXISTING MENTORING PROGRAMS AS WELL AS TO ENHANCE ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS THAT ARE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE.

(5) **Administration - duties of contracting entities.** (a) TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR MONEYS FROM THE YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES CASH FUND CREATED IN SUBSECTION (6) OF THIS SECTION, FOR THE PROVISION OF YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES, AN ENTITY SHALL APPLY TO THE BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TIMELINES AND GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY THE BOARD PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-32-2802 AND SHALL MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARAGRAPH (b) OF THIS SUBSECTION (5).

(b) THE ENTITIES THAT ARE SELECTED BY THE BOARD TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

(I) ACTIVELY RECRUITING QUALIFIED AND APPROPRIATE ADULT VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE WILLING TO SERVE AS YOUTH MENTORS FOR A PERIOD OF NOT LESS THAN ONE YEAR AND TO COMMIT TO SPENDING AN AVERAGE OF THREE HOURS PER WEEK WITH THE AT-RISK YOUTH;

(II) EFFECTIVELY SCREENING ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE AS MENTORS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO CONDUCTING CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS OF SUCH ADULT VOLUNTEERS;

(III) PROVIDING TRAINING AND ONGOING SUPPORT TO ADULT VOLUNTEERS TO PREPARE THEM TO SERVE IN ONE-YEAR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH AT-RISK YOUTHS;

(IV) CAREFULLY MATCHING EACH ADULT VOLUNTEER WITH AN AT-RISK YOUTH BASED UPON THE UNIQUE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ADULT VOLUNTEER AND THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF THE YOUTH;

(V) SUPERVISING CLOSELY AND THROUGH CASE MANAGERS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ADULT VOLUNTEER AND THE MUTUAL BENEFITS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP;

(VI) MAKING AVAILABLE LIFE SKILL WORKSHOPS, RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES TO THE AT-RISK YOUTH AND ADULT VOLUNTEER;

(VII) IMPLEMENTING A METHOD OF EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM AND TRACKING THE YOUTHS SERVED BY THE PROGRAM TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH THE PROGRAM; AND

(VIII) REPORTING ANNUALLY TO THE BOARD CONCERNING THE RESULTS OF THE ENTITY'S EVALUATION OF YOUTHS SERVED BY THE COMMUNITY-BASED YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM AS WELL AS THE FISCAL CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY THE ENTITY TO THE PROGRAM AND SUCH OTHER INFORMATION THAT THE BOARD MAY REQUIRE.

(c) COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS MAY OBTAIN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDS, GRANTS, GIFTS, OR DONATIONS FOR YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS IS AUTHORIZED TO ACCEPT AND EXPEND ON BEHALF OF THE STATE ANY FUNDS, GRANTS, GIFTS, OR DONATIONS FROM ANY PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPLEMENTING THIS SECTION, EXCEPT THAT NO GRANT OR DONATION SHALL BE ACCEPTED IF THE CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO THE GRANT OR DONATION REQUIRE THE EXPENDITURE THEREOF IN A MANNER CONTRARY TO LAW.

(d) ENTITIES SELECTED TO RECEIVE GRANTS PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION FOR THE PROVISION OF YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES SHALL MATCH ANY GRANT RECEIVED WITH A CONTRIBUTION THAT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF TWENTY PERCENT OF THE GRANT AWARDED.

(6) **Youth mentoring services cash fund.** THERE IS HEREBY CREATED IN THE STATE TREASURY THE YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES CASH FUND. THE MONEYS IN THE YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES CASH FUND SHALL BE SUBJECT TO ANNUAL APPROPRIATION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS IS AUTHORIZED TO ACCEPT ON BEHALF OF THE STATE ANY GRANTS, GIFTS, OR DONATIONS FROM ANY PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION. ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDS RECEIVED THROUGH GRANTS, GIFTS, OR DONATIONS SHALL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE STATE TREASURER, WHO SHALL CREDIT THE SAME TO THE YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES CASH FUND. ALL INVESTMENT EARNINGS DERIVED FROM THE DEPOSIT AND INVESTMENT OF MONEYS IN

THE FUND SHALL REMAIN IN THE FUND AND SHALL NOT BE TRANSFERRED OR REVERT TO THE GENERAL FUND OF THE STATE AT THE END OF ANY FISCAL YEAR.

SECTION 2. 24-32-2801, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

24-32-2801. Youth crime prevention and intervention program - creation - standards - applications. (7) ENTITIES SEEKING TO PROVIDE YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES OR TO ENHANCE EXISTING YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE BOARD FOR GRANTS DIRECTLY FROM THE YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM, IN ADDITION TO ANY FUNDING THE ENTITIES MAY BE SEEKING FROM THE YOUTH MENTORING SERVICES CASH FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-32-2805 (6), TO ESTABLISH OR ENHANCE YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS. ENTITIES SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS DIRECTLY FROM THE YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION NEED NOT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 24-32-2805 (5) (b).

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: May 18, 1998