



AB 174 Fact Sheet

Bonta Bill Funds Mental Health Services for Students Impacted by Trauma in School-Based Health Centers

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Summary

AB 174 will promote the health, academic achievement, and overall well-being of California's young people by creating a grant program to fund school-based mental health and related services for students who have been impacted by trauma.

Background on Trauma

Trauma has serious consequences for health, educational achievement, and long-term well-being. Trauma has been defined as "experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm an individual's ability to cope," as well as "chronic adversity (e.g., discrimination, racism, oppression, poverty)."¹

Children and youth living in low-income neighborhoods, as well as children and youth of color, are disproportionately impacted by trauma, including gun violence.² 20% of California children with family incomes below \$25,000 feel unsafe in their neighborhoods, compared to just 1.6% of California children with family incomes above \$125,000.³ Compared to Caucasian children and youth, Latinos are twice as likely and African Americans are three times as likely to be exposed to shootings, bombs, and riots.⁴ Boys and young men of color are at highest risk: in fact, the likelihood of boys and young men suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is 2.5 times greater among African Americans and 4.1 times greater among Latinos, compared to Caucasians.⁵

¹ Drexel University School of Public Health & College of Medicine. "Healing the Hurt: Trauma-Informed Approaches To the Health Of Boys and Young Men of Color" (2009).

² National Child Traumatic Stress Network. "Child Traumatic Stress: What Every Policymaker Should Know" (2008).

³ KidsData.org

⁴ Davis LM, Kilburn R, and Schultz D. RAND Corporation. "Reparable Harm: Assessing and Addressing Disparities Faced by Boys and Men of Color in California" (2009).

⁵ Drexel University School of Public Health & College of Medicine, et al. "Healthy Communities Matter: The Importance of Place to the Health of Boys of Color" (2010).

Unfortunately, however, among adolescents living below the poverty line, 92% of those who report needing help for emotional or mental health issues did not receive counseling in the past year.⁶

Background on School-Based Health Centers

Across California, many children and youth cannot access the health and mental health care they need. SBHCs address this gap by putting medical, mental health, and/or dental care on school grounds. SBHCs are an effective model for delivering mental health care. Not only can school-based mental health services reduce both depression and PTSD, but SBHCs are significantly better than other care settings at reaching adolescents, and adolescent males in particular.

What AB 174 Will Do

Currently, there is no state funding explicitly directed to either SBHCs or school-based programs focused on trauma. Barriers inherent in existing funding streams prevent schools and SBHCs from reaching all students with all necessary services. AB 174 will create a grant program to fund a variety of essential school-based mental health services, including individual, group, and family counseling; youth development programming focused on preventing and addressing violence; school-wide violence prevention programs; and support for teachers and other school staff in identifying and responding to students' trauma-related needs

Support

- California School Health Centers Association (Co-Sponsor)
- California Pan-Ethnic Health Network (Co-Sponsor)

Opposition

- None on file

⁶ California Health Interview Survey (2009).