

SENATE No. 81

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Harriette L. Chandler

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act creating a Center on Child Wellness and Trauma.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Harriette L. Chandler</i>	<i>First Worcester</i>	
<i>Kay Khan</i>	<i>11th Middlesex</i>	
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Michael O. Moore</i>	<i>Second Worcester</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>

SENATE No. 81

By Ms. Chandler, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 81) of Harriette L. Chandler, Kay Khan, Lindsay N. Sabadosa and Michael O. Moore for legislation to create a Center on Child Wellness and Trauma. Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act creating a Center on Child Wellness and Trauma.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 18C of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official
2 Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 14 following section:-

3

4 Section 15.

5

6 (a) Subject to appropriation, the child advocate shall establish a statewide program on
7 child wellness and trauma. The program shall focus on guiding and supporting all organizations
8 that interact with children and their caregivers, including but not limited to organizations
9 addressing child welfare, juvenile justice, healthcare, child caregiver support, and healthy
10 childhood development, to address traumatic stress of children and youth throughout the
11 Commonwealth. The program shall support organizations in preventing childhood trauma and re-

12 traumatization and implementing an organizational structure and treatment framework that
13 involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma and in
14 accordance with recognized principles of a trauma-informed approach and trauma-specific
15 interventions to address trauma's consequences and facilitate healing. The program may also
16 develop and implement a process, including issuing any necessary regulations, to track
17 participation in training and technical assistance provided by the program and certify individuals
18 or organizations as being “trauma-informed and responsive,” provided that the child advocate
19 shall make reasonable efforts to ensure certification requirements are in alignment with any
20 applicable federal requirements.

21

22 (b) At the direction of the child advocate, the program may:

23 i. Provide and/or coordinate training, coaching, and other forms of technical
24 assistance to staff and organizations that interact with children or their caregivers;

25 ii. Develop and disseminate information related to child wellness and trauma
26 through a website or other mechanism;

27 iii. Make recommendations regarding best practices for identifying and responding to
28 children and their caregivers who have experienced trauma;

29 iv. Identify, evaluate, and disseminate promising practices for identifying and
30 addressing childhood trauma;

31 v. Identify gaps in available trauma prevention, early intervention, treatment
32 services, or treatment service capacity for children and their caregivers statewide;

- 33 vi. Collect, analyze and report data related to child wellness and trauma;
- 34 vii. Make recommendations to state agencies regarding necessary training for staff
- 35 and/or contractors, changes in policies and procedures, inclusion of specific language in requests
- 36 for proposal or contracts with providers, and/or implementation of evidence-informed services to
- 37 improve the state response to childhood trauma;
- 38 viii. Undertake other activities designed to support the goals of the program.

39

40 (c) The child advocate shall set priorities and areas of focus for the program in

41 consultation with the secretary of health and human services, the secretary of education, and the

42 members of the childhood trauma task force established in section 14.

43

44 (d) The child advocate may establish the program, or any aspect of the program, in

45 partnership with a state institution or a public or private institute of higher education. The child

46 advocate may also contract with any agencies, individuals or groups for the provision of

47 necessary services.

48

49 (e) The child advocate shall report annually to the Legislature on the activities and

50 accomplishments of the Child Wellness and Trauma program, as well as any barriers to success.