

## AB 2083 (Cooley)

### Building Trauma-Informed Services for Foster Youth

#### Bill Summary

AB 2083 requires county-level and state-level Memorandums of Understanding between agencies directly responsible for the most-traumatized children in foster care in order to better provide placement and services.

#### Problem

Children and youth in foster care who have experienced severe trauma often have acute service needs that cross over an array of county departments. Absent a coordinated local system of care with strong state support, child protection social workers must navigate siloed funding streams and multiple programs including education, regional centers, and behavioral health, in order to secure services needed by youth and their caregivers. Further, it can be difficult to find practitioners who are trained to deliver trauma-informed services.

Delays or gaps in critically needed services can result in poor outcomes for youth – untreated trauma, disrupted placements, being moved from family caregivers into institutional settings, and potentially being moved farther from their families and communities of origin due to a lack of available placements. All of these issues make it far more difficult for youth to heal from their trauma and move forward.

#### Solution

1. Sets the expectation for coordinated services at the local level for youth who require services from multiple agencies through formalized Memorandums of Understanding.
2. Requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a joint inter-agency resolution team at the State level with certain

responsibilities, including but not limited to, providing technical assistance to county agencies to establish local MOUs, and link youth to needed services.

3. Requires the interagency team to review the availability of appropriate placements (from family homes to congregate care) that are trained and/or supported to provide trauma-informed care to foster youth and make recommendations to the Legislature for improvements in this area.
4. Requires the interagency team to consult with stakeholders, including practitioners, to develop a plan to increase the availability of trauma-informed services to youth in care.

#### Background

While progress has been made to reduce the use of congregate care settings, for some youth with extensive, complex and persistent needs, finding a home and services in their community of origin continues to be a challenge for county agencies. These youth can be refused entry into programs by group home care providers and/or experience forced and unplanned exits from placements. These instances further traumatize youth, compounding their acute needs.

CCR requires that services be individually tailored to the needs of each child, as identified through a Child and Family Team. CCR further requires accountability and improved performance by county agencies including provide providers to meet CCR deliverables. The success of CCR is therefore dependent upon all child-serving agencies at the State and local levels working together to jointly meet the needs of children and families, and to intervene at the earliest possible opportunity to prevent the need for higher-cost interventions later.

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#### **Support**

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- County Welfare Directors Association  
(Sponsor)

#### **For More Information**

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Amanda Kirchner  
Legislative Director  
916-319-2008  
[Amanda.Kirchner@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Amanda.Kirchner@asm.ca.gov)