



## Unified Policy Agenda- 2019 General Assembly Session Results

**Education: Increase support staff in schools such as counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses to help schools recognize and respond to trauma and implement trauma-informed interventions.**

☑ The final budget includes **an increase of \$12 million to support additional school counselors**. While this is an important step forward, it is a third of what the Governor initially included in his budget. A bill also passed this session to limit the time counselors to spend on administrative duties to no more than 20% of their time. While a legislative commission to address student behavioral health did not move forward a request for the Children's Cabinet to look at school-based health centers passed.

**Education: Provide training in trauma recognition and trauma-informed approaches to all school personnel.**

☑ **All School Resource Officers (SROs) will be required to complete training in July 2020.** A bill passed to require minimum training standards for SROs specific to working in a school environment. The bill includes the provision that at least one administrator at each school must also complete training in safety procedures.

**Child Welfare: Support the initial steps to implement the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) by increasing evidence-based and trauma-informed services to prevent children from being placed in foster care.**

☑ Bills passed this session to allow Virginia to begin the implementation of the timeframes included in FFPSA. In addition, **\$851,000 was included in the final budget to kick-start the implementation of more evidence-based and trauma-informed mental health services** for children and families; these specific services are required to pull down federal resources for foster care prevention.

**Mental Health: Improve access to children's mental health crisis services through the continued implementation of STEP-VA.**

☑ **An additional \$7.8 million was included to create crisis services for children and adults at all 40 community services boards.** Funding to support specialized crisis services, like crisis stabilization units and mobile crisis services, is intended to help children avoid costly in-patient psychiatric stays.

**Mental Health: Improve the integration of mental health services in primary care by establishing a pediatric mental health access program in Virginia.**

☑ **The final budget included \$1.23 million to expand the Virginia Mental Health Access Program.** This program seeks to improve primary care providers' ability to address children's mental health needs through additional training, improved care coordination, and behavioral health consultation services.

**Community- Level Prevention: Help parents and caregivers understand their role as a "buffer" -preventing exposure to, and mitigating the impact of, various forms of childhood trauma.**

**CONTINUED PROGRESS...** While there was not a request to expand home visiting this year, thanks to on-going education many lawmakers recognize the importance of the home visitors' role supporting parents as their child's first teacher.

**Community- Level Prevention: Provide support for communities to build trauma-informed networks.**

**NEXT YEAR...** While no additional state funds were included to support community networks, FACT currently has resources to fund two networks out of the 20 communities where networks exist.

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