

RES18-037

Wilmington, Delaware
May 17, 2018

#4522

Sponsor:

Council
President
Shabazz

WHEREAS, around the United States, public safety is among the most important responsibilities of city governments and remains the foundation for all social goods, from health and education to community cohesion, and beyond; and

WHEREAS, each year, millions of children are exposed to violence in their homes, schools, and communities. African-American children and youth, are among the most likely members of our society to be exposed to trauma, are also among the least likely to receive the services that could prevent the development of trauma-related emotional and behavioral difficulties. Exposure to youth violence, which characteristically includes children who witness or are victimized by violence, has been shown to interfere with the development of a child's ability to self-regulate and learn from life experiences, and must be treated as a public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, a study conducted by the Center for American Progress found that twenty-six percent of children in the United States will witness or experience a traumatic event before the age of four, and the way a child responds to trauma depends upon their developmental level, environmental factors and family setting; and

WHEREAS, children of color living in poverty, which account for 38 percent of African American children, 32 percent of Hispanic children and 35 percent of Native American, are more likely to experience multiple traumatic events, a major risk factor for psychological distress; and

WHEREAS, reinvestment and increased support for outreach programs such as the Child Development - Community Policing Program, (CD-CP) operated by the Wilmington

Police Department, engage the community in creating and sustaining environments that prevent violence and promote positive youth engagement; and

WHEREAS, National Youth Violence Prevention Week, March 19-23, is an opportunity to raise awareness about the problem of youth exposure to violence, and to educate our whole community about ways to stop or prevent violence; and

WHEREAS, an understanding of how trauma affects children and youth is the first step towards creating a community sensitive to the effects of trauma. Schools and community organizations play a vital role in preparing staff to identify and address the needs of children and youth, and to aid in the prevention of developmental behavioral and mental health problems.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON, that Council calls upon the Mayor, district superintendents, school boards, and community organizations serving youth throughout the City of Wilmington, to ensure that all of Wilmington's children who have been impacted by violent acts be provided the resources necessary to more effectively overcome barriers to trauma-informed treatment.

Passed by City Council,
May 17, 2018

Attest: Maribel Seijo
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution emphasizes the importance of public safety and the need to strengthen and enact trauma-informed practices to better support children exposed to violence. Further, the resolution calls upon collaborative efforts between the Mayor, district superintendents, school boards and community organizations to create communities sensitive to the effects of trauma raise and support relationships that can facilitate trauma recovery.