

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 180

Introduced by Cavanaugh, 6; Morfeld, 46.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this interim study is to examine the practice of mindfulness to reduce the number of children and adults in crisis. The Legislature is concerned about suicide, school safety, and behavioral health. In Nebraska, health systems have recognized increases in children dealing with behavioral health issues. Incidences of children dealing with anxiety, depression, and social-emotional issues have placed increased strain on our public health system, schools, and medical infrastructure.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the impact of such experiences on the brain of a child have been identified as risk factors in the long-term physical and emotional health of people. The impacts of ACEs have created heavy demands on public resources and created challenges to workforce development.

Studies have shown that mindfulness techniques teach children and adults to heighten their awareness of the present moment, including what they are hearing, seeing, feeling, or smelling. These few brief moments of focused attention can interrupt impulsive behaviors or negative thoughts and are calming for children and adults. Mindfulness strategies have been taught by many different educational and mental health professionals. Mindfulness techniques can be used as a preventative program to lower demands on mental health resources.

The issues addressed by this interim study shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Best practices for mindfulness strategies;
- (2) How mindfulness techniques can be helpful in assisting children with ACEs;
- (3) Ways to provide mindfulness strategies to more people;

(4) How the public health infrastructure and mental health professionals can align to provide preventative programs of mindfulness; and

(5) How the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational systems can engage the health care system to provide more preventative support through mindfulness.

To carry out the interim study, professionals in mental health, public health, wellness, and insurance, the Department of Health and Human Services, the State Department of Education, teachers, administrators, school board members, and others may be consulted to share data, develop strategies and make recommendations to develop a long-term vision on how to address behavioral health needs through mindfulness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

1. That the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.