



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0178, **Version:** 1

Clerk 04/15/2021

A MOTION relating to programs and services for prevention, outreach, and early intervention to address mental health and substance use impacts in children and youth five through twenty-four years old, which have been exacerbated due to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

WHEREAS, in 2010, Ordinance 16897 was enacted, establishing the King County Strategic Plan, 2010-2014. In 2015, the council passed Motion 14317, updating and revising King County's vision, mission, guiding principles and goals. Included within the county's goals are improving the health and well-being of all people in King County, implementing alternatives to divert people from the criminal justice system and ensuring that county government operates efficiently and effectively and is accountable to the public, and

WHEREAS, according to the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and eighty studies on the topic, social isolation and loneliness, like that caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, significantly increase the risk of depression and anxiety in previously healthy children and adolescents, and

WHEREAS, a 2014 study done by the University of Southern California of four hundred seventy-six adolescents, with the mean age of fourteen years old, concluded that depression levels directly associated with an increased likelihood of a lifetime use of inhalants, prescription pain killers and many other substances, and

WHEREAS, in a study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in June 2020, 40.9 percent of respondents, eighteen years old or older, reported at least one adverse mental or behavioral health condition. Those included 30.9 percent reporting symptoms of anxiety disorder or depressive disorder, 26.3

percent reporting symptoms of a trauma-and stressor-related disorder related to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic and 13.3 percent reported having started or increased substance use to cope with stress or emotions related to COVID-19, and

WHEREAS, the existing Best Starts for Kids levy, which serves the county's children, youth and families with upstream promotion, prevention and early intervention programs, will expire at the end of 2021 and levy renewal requires voter approval, and

WHEREAS, the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic has impacted the health and well-being of the children, youth and families of King County as well as the regional economic and human services systems including child care, and

WHEREAS, the executive's Best Starts for Kids levy renewal proposal, which is Proposed Ordinance 2021-0062, would, subject to voter approval of a renewal levy, allow levy proceeds to be expended for prevention and intervention early on negative outcomes, including, but not limited to, poor birth outcomes, developmental delays, chronic disease, social emotional isolation, mental health challenges, substance abuse, dropping out of school, homelessness, domestic violence and effects of systemic racism and incarceration, and

WHEREAS, subject to enactment of Ordinance XXXXX (Proposed Ordinance 2021-0062), the executive, not later than July 31, 2021, is required to transmit to the council for review and adoption by ordinance a proposed Best Starts for Kids implementation plan that identifies the strategies to be funded and outcomes to be achieved with the use of levy proceeds described in Ordinance XXXXX (Proposed Ordinance 2021-0062);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

The executive is requested, in developing the Best Starts for Kids implementation plan, to:

A. Identify in the transmitted plan strategies relating to prevention, outreach and early intervention to address mental health and substance use impacts, in children and youth five through twenty-four years old, that have been exacerbated due to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic; and

B. Consider programs and services that provide, expand access to or provide and expand access to substance use disorder supports for children and youth, including, but not limited to, awareness campaigns on substance use.