



**HB 548 – Human Services – Trauma-Informed Care –
Commission and Training**

Committee: House Health and Government Operations

Date: February 9, 2021

POSITION: Favorable

The Maryland Coalition of Families: Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) helps families who care for someone with behavioral health needs. Using personal experience as parents, caregivers and other loved ones, our staff provide one-to-one peer support and navigation services to parents and caregivers of young people with mental health issues and to any loved one who cares for someone with a substance use or gambling issue.

MCF strongly supports HB 548.

Last year, the legislature passed a significant piece of legislation, HB 277, which required the State Department of Education to develop and distribute guidelines on a trauma-informed approach, and to assist schools with understanding and responding to students with symptoms of trauma. Schools with personnel well-trained in trauma-informed practices know how to recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma, and implement policies, procedures and practices designed to alleviate the impact of trauma. These have been well-researched and have a strong evidence-base, and include relationship-building, helping traumatized children regulate their emotions, and collaborating across child-serving systems to coordinate care.

HB 548 expands on this important work, by creating a Commission on trauma-informed care that will (among other things) identify all state programs that impact children, youth, families and older adults and make recommendations on how to infuse these programs with a trauma-informed approach. In addition, the Commission is tasked with developing training on trauma-informed care and disseminating information about trauma-informed care throughout state agencies.

In the last few decades we have begun to recognize the tremendous impact of trauma on mental health, physical health, and behaviors. We also have learned how systems can re-traumatize people, and how this can be avoided. It is time for Maryland to bring an understanding of trauma-informed care throughout our government and work to improve systems. Therefore we urge a favorable report on HB 548.

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