



Testimony Concerning HB 377
“Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations”
Submitted to the House Ways & Means and Appropriations Committees
January 31, 2024

Position: Support

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports HB 377, which would ensure continued funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Program (TCCP). Early intervention through a sufficiently funded TCCP will provide benefits to children and families and cost savings to the State. HB 377 fully deserves your favorable consideration.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

MFN has long been a champion of early intervention for children with special needs as well as inclusive education for children of all ages. Child care programs that would be covered under TCCP, which are also known as therapeutic nurseries, work with children birth to age 5 whose significant social and emotional challenges, among other possible factors, put them at high-risk for poor school and life outcomes.

As recently as 2020, researchers found that 4 out of 5 children moved from therapeutic nurseries to “mainstream” kindergarten and maintained social and emotional gains through second grade. Therapeutic nurseries’ documented success in transitioning children into typical education placements not only improves the children’s outcomes but also saves the major costs associated with more intensive special education services.

MFN respectfully urges favorable consideration of HB 377.

