

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Establish the Help Me Grow Program

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA c. 101-A is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 101-A

HELP ME GROW PROGRAM

§ 264. Help Me Grow program established

1. Program established. The Help Me Grow program, referred to in this chapter as "the program," is established in the department as a comprehensive, statewide, coordinated system of early identification, referral and follow-up for children from prenatal care up to 8 years of age and their families with an emphasis on increasing access to the early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment services required by Medicaid and on a schedule set by the department. In developing and administering the program, the department shall maintain affiliate status with a national center that offers a program that includes technical assistance and a model for strengthening early childhood systems and services and meet any requirements necessary to maintain fidelity to the program offered by the center.

2. Staffing; coordination. The department shall appoint a coordinator of the program to work collaboratively across offices within the department, the Children's Cabinet established in Title 5, section 19131, the Department of Education and other applicable departments.

§ 265. Duties of Help Me Grow program

The Help Me Grow program shall:

1. Expansion of services. Increase the rate of children screened at all appropriate locations, including, but not limited to, early childhood education facilities, child care facilities, Head Start facilities, Early Head Start facilities, regional sites of the Child Development Services System under Title 20-A, section 7209 and health care providers to ensure access to early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment and other related services to promote children's healthy development;

2. Coordinated system. Develop a coordinated system of early identification, referral and follow-up services across early childhood education, child care facilities, Head Start, Early Head Start, the Child Development Services System under Title 20-A, section 7209, health care providers and family supports;

3. Delivery of services. Improve the delivery of services covered by early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment required by Medicaid and other related services to promote children's healthy development;

4. Centralized access point. Develop a centralized access point for families, caregivers and professionals to obtain information about early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment services. The centralized access point must be available by telephone, the Internet and other communication platforms;

5. Electronic directory; information dissemination. Compile and maintain an electronic directory of resources with respect to service providers and use appropriate methods of communication to disseminate information in the directory to connect families and caregivers to early intervention services, primary care and appropriate early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment services to children at risk; and

6. Data collection. Collect data necessary to align the program with evaluation requirements from the national center described in section 264, subsection 1 as well as identifying gaps in services by type and region and barriers to obtaining appropriate services.

§ 266. Annual reports

The department shall submit any annual and evaluation reports provided by the department to the national center described in section 264, subsection 1 to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services and education matters, no later than December 15th of each year, beginning in 2020. The joint standing committees are authorized to report out legislation in any legislative session.

Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for one Social Services Program Specialist II position to be the Help Me Grow program coordinator in the Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations responsible for design, implementation and supervision of the intake, resource and referral systems and the provision of support services to families, providers and children.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT | 0.000 | 1.000 |
| Personal Services | \$0 | \$25,745 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$6,547 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$32,292 |

| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Personal Services | \$0 | \$77,234 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$19,640 |

SP0785, LD 2159, item 1, 129th Maine State Legislature
An Act To Establish the Help Me Grow Program

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| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$96,874 |
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Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for 3 Social Services Program Specialist I positions to be the Help Me Grow program resource specialists in the Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations who will be the primary point of contact for families looking for early childhood resources.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT | 0.000 | 3.000 |
| Personal Services | \$0 | \$64,943 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$5,390 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$70,333 |

| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Personal Services | \$0 | \$194,830 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$16,169 |
| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$210,999 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for one Office Assistant II position to provide administrative support for the Help Me Grow program.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT | 0.000 | 1.000 |
| Personal Services | \$0 | \$15,929 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$1,797 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$17,726 |

| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| Personal Services | \$0 | \$47,786 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$5,390 |
| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$53,176 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for the Department of Health and Human Services to contract with an evaluator to conduct an annual fidelity assessment to measure and track the State's progress with implementing the Help Me Grow program and contract with the national Help Me Grow program to provide technical assistance.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$50,000 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$50,000 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for annual training of state personnel and stakeholders.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$16,500 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$16,500 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for annual training of Office of Child and Family Services staff.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$12,540 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$12,540 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for annual fees for Ages and Stages Questionnaires Online and the Help Me Grow National Center.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$23,500 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$23,500 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides one-time funding for the information technology costs associated with the system for tracking access to referrals and for the initial interfaces for the Help Me Grow program.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$25,000 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$25,000 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides ongoing funding for the information technology costs associated with the Help Me Grow program.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$33,230 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$33,230 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for website, social media and print communication campaigns within the Help Me Grow program.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$50,000 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$50,000 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides funding for the Department of Health and Human Services to contract with 211 Maine to ensure individuals are connected with existing child resources, decide how 211 Maine can connect to the system for tracking access to referrals and research how other states have used the 211 systems in connection with the Help Me Grow program.

| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| All Other | \$0 | \$10,000 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$10,000 |

Department of Health and Human Services Central Operations 0142

Initiative: Provides one-time funding for the Department of Health and Human Services to contract with the Help Me Grow National Center for technical assistance to accelerate the ability of the State to fully implement the Help Me Grow program.

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|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| GENERAL FUND | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
| All Other | \$0 | \$150,000 |
| GENERAL FUND TOTAL | \$0 | \$150,000 |

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|---|----------------|------------------|
| HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF DEPARTMENT TOTALS | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
| GENERAL FUND | \$0 | \$491,121 |
| FEDERAL EXPENDITURES FUND | \$0 | \$361,049 |
| DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS | \$0 | \$852,170 |

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Help Me Grow program in the Department of Health and Human Services. The program is a comprehensive, statewide, coordinated system of early identification, referral and follow-up for children from prenatal care up to 8 years of age and their families. The program ensures access to early periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment services and related services to promote healthy development and develop a coordinated system of screening, referral and services. The bill establishes 5 positions within the Department of Health and Human Services and provides funding for software and program evaluation. The department must submit annual reports to the joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over health and human services and education matters.