

WHEREAS, In order to create a culture of excellence and to develop child welfare best practices in the child welfare system, the Governor and the General Assembly must make a long-term commitment to enhanced and stable funding and support for abused and neglected children; and

WHEREAS, The Governor's Office for Children and the Children's Cabinet will work together to prevent child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, A culture of excellence in the child welfare system cannot be accomplished without a long-term commitment to the communities within the State that contribute the highest number of children to out-of-home care; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Family Law

SUBTITLE 13. CHILD WELFARE ACCOUNTABILITY.

5-1301.

(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) "ABUSE" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

(C) "ADMINISTRATION" MEANS THE SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(D) "CHILD" MEANS ANY INDIVIDUAL UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

(E) "INDICATED" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

(F) "KINSHIP CARE" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-501 OF THIS TITLE.

(G) "LOCAL DEPARTMENT" ~~MEANS A LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR A COUNTY~~ HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 1-101 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(H) "NEGLECT" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

(I) "OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT" MEANS PLACEMENT OF A CHILD INTO FOSTER CARE, KINSHIP CARE, GROUP CARE, OR RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CARE.

(J) "RULED OUT" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

(K) "SECRETARY" MEANS THE SECRETARY OF HUMAN RESOURCES.

(L) "UNSUBSTANTIATED" HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 5-701 OF THIS TITLE.

5-1302.

(A) THE SECRETARY AND THE SECRETARY OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN OUTCOME-BASED SYSTEM OF