

certain task force in developing the statewide protocol and to enter into a memorandum of understanding for a certain purpose; requiring the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to adopt certain regulations; defining certain terms; *providing for the application of this Act*; and generally relating to the establishment of integrated child welfare and substance abuse treatment services.

BY adding to

Article – Family Law

Section 5–1201 through 5–1209, inclusive, to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 12. Integration of Child Welfare and Substance Abuse Treatment Services”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 1999 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Substance abuse is a key factor fueling intensification of child abuse and neglect in the 1990s; and

WHEREAS, 62 percent of children (over 2,700) in Maryland entering out-of-home placement in 1999 had a parent with an identified substance abuse problem; and

WHEREAS, The child welfare system in the United States spends an estimated \$20 billion per year to care for abused and neglected children of drug-abusing and alcohol-abusing parents; and

WHEREAS, The projected cost of a child entering the foster care system in Maryland is \$60,000 per episode; and

WHEREAS, Nearly one-third of substance abusers achieve sustained abstinence in their first attempt at recovery and an additional one-third eventually achieve long-term abstinence; and

WHEREAS, 44 percent of females in drug treatment report being in treatment in order to retain or regain custody of their children; and

WHEREAS, 48 percent of the clients in residential treatment with their children said they would not have been interested in treatment if they had not been able to bring their children with them; and

WHEREAS, Women who complete residential treatment have significantly higher abstinence, employment, and arrest-free rates than do the women who do not; and

WHEREAS, Victims of child abuse and neglect and children of substance-abusing parents have increased risk of substance abuse problems; and

WHEREAS, Linking child welfare and substance abuse programs would make both more effective; and