

REFERENCE TITLE: **early childhood mental health; appropriations**

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-fifth Legislature
First Regular Session
2021

HB 2155

Introduced by
Representatives Espinoza: Jermaine, Senator Marsh

AN ACT

**ESTABLISHING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION AND REFERRAL
PILOT PROGRAM; APPROPRIATING MONIES.**

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Early childhood mental health consultation and
3 referral pilot program; service provider;
4 reporting requirements; appropriations;
5 exemption; delayed repeal

6 A. The early childhood mental health consultation and referral
7 pilot program is established. The program shall meet all of the following
8 criteria:

9 1. Support the social and emotional well-being of children who are
10 not yet in kindergarten.

11 2. Build the skills and capacity of early childhood education
12 professionals and caregivers.

13 3. Include prevention, early identification and reduction of
14 challenging behaviors.

15 4. Improve the capacity of teaching staff and caregivers to manage
16 the emotional climate of the learning environment.

17 5. Decrease the rate of program suspension and expulsion.

18 B. The department of economic security shall award a contract on a
19 competitive basis to a service provider that demonstrates the ability to
20 implement an early childhood mental health consultation and referral
21 program, to educate early childhood education professionals and caregivers
22 on how to meet the social and emotional needs of children in their care
23 and to improve the educational and emotional climate for young children.

24 C. The department shall require the service provider to submit a
25 quarterly report containing the following:

26 1. The number of children and providers participating in the
27 program.

28 2. The number of referrals for mental health services.

29 3. The number of school suspensions and expulsions avoided.

30 4. Other outcomes as determined by the department.

31 D. On or before October 1 of each year, the department shall submit
32 to the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house
33 of representatives a report containing a detailed description of the
34 outcomes achieved for both children and early childhood education
35 professionals and caregivers of the program.

36 E. The sum of \$2,000,000 is appropriated from the state general
37 fund in each of fiscal years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025
38 and 2025-2026 to the department of economic security for the early
39 childhood mental health consultation and referral pilot program
40 established by this section. The appropriations made in this subsection
41 are exempt from the provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised
42 Statutes, relating to lapsing of appropriations.

43 F. This section is repealed from and after June 30, 2026.