

A LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH GROUP

CENTER FOR HOPE

Advancing hope, healing and resilience



SB905 – Juvenile Services - Workgroup to Develop Evidence-Based, Research-Based, and Culturally Competent Practices

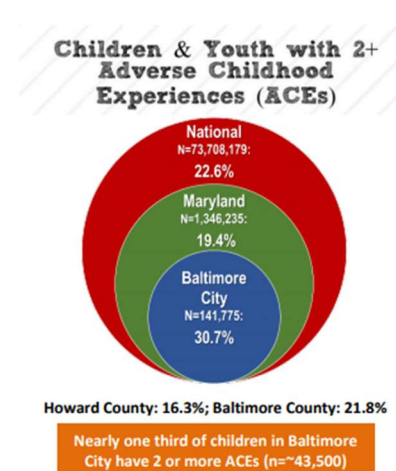
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Testimony of Joyce Lombardi, Director of Government Relations, Center for Hope

Position: **SUPPORT**

The Center for Hope supports SB905's effort to prioritize the trauma-responsive and trauma-informed delivery of state services that impact children and youth. This bill ensures that the Department of Juvenile Services and the Department of Human Services convene a workgroup of child welfare, juvenile rehabilitation, and juvenile mental health stakeholders to increase accountability for prevention and intervention services delivered to children by the Department of Juvenile Services through evidence-based, research-based, and culturally competent practices.

The Center for Hope, a subsidiary of LifeBridge Health, is a comprehensive violence program that addresses violence through the lifespan, and includes a child advocacy center, domestic violence programs, street violence interruption programs and an elder abuse program. The Baltimore Child Abuse Center, is a nationally accredited trauma-informed child advocacy center, that, among other things, serves thousands of youth who have experienced or witnessed violence, trains adults and youth serving organizations to recognize and respond to trauma and to implement trauma-informed policies for staff and clients. Our programs are evidence based and trauma informed.



ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Research Is Plentiful.

Decades of research shows us that ACEs like witnessing community violence or experiencing abuse affects a child's brain development, and ultimately can lead to poor outcomes in school; incarceration; addiction; disease and even early death. Though the ACE score of Marylanders vary by county, no community is immune from trauma.

ACES Disproportionately Affect Justice-Involved Youth.

More than 80% of juvenile justice-involved youth report experiencing trauma, with many having experienced multiple, chronic, and pervasive interpersonal traumas. *National Child Traumatic Stress Network*. There is a "disturbingly high" correlation between a high ACE score and youth incarceration. (*The Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) in the Lives of Juvenile Offenders*, Baglivio, et al.

(Spring 2014). Coupled with disparities of incarceration among young men of color and overuse of physical force and solitary confinement, the need for trauma informed approach to juvenile justice is critical. Not just for the young people, but also the staff members who work within juvenile justice system.

For these reasons, we request a **FAVORABLE** report for SB905 and thank Senator Sydnor for the bill.

LifeBridge Health is a regional health system comprising Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, Levindale Geriatric Center and Hospital in Baltimore; Northwest Hospital; Carroll Hospital and Grace Medical Center.