

2021 Resolution on Health Care for Children in the Foster Care System

Whereas, the Illinois PTA Legislation Platform Section 7, Protection of Children and Youth, Item b., maintains that we support adequate legislative and/or financial support for improvement of the protection, health and welfare of children in substitute care; and

Whereas, foster children are uniquely vulnerable and have much higher rates than the general pediatric population of developmental disorders, certain medical disorders, mental health disorders, and behavioral disorders, and are more than twice as likely to require inpatient care; and

Whereas, eighteen thousand children who are in foster care with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in Illinois, were transferred to a managed care plan. Parents and caregivers are reporting great difficulties getting accurate information about their children's health coverage and timely assessments identifying and confirming their specific needs; and

Whereas, child advocates report the number of healthcare providers with the managed care network is inadequate to care for the children's needs, resulting in parents experiencing barriers to accessing care; and

Whereas, pediatricians have identified that Medicaid managed care organizations may impose limits on certain health services, especially specialist care, mental health care, and vision care, and that these limits create a barrier to adequate health care in foster care; and

Whereas, researchers have found that primary care case management programs added to fee-for-service Medicaid results in children having better access to adequate care coordination as defined by the American Academy of Pediatrics than children in regular fee-for-service Medicaid and much better access than children enrolled in Medicaid managed care organizations; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies disseminate information with respect to health concerns for children in the Illinois foster care system; and be it further

Resolved, that the Illinois PTA will work with other like-minded organizations to protect the health of children in foster care and former foster children; and be it further

Resolved, that the Illinois PTA and its constituent bodies support legislation which ensures that children in the foster care system have access to healthcare without limiting health services or restricting the providers available to the child, which ensures that foster parents have adequate information, and which would enhance coordination between all parties to a child's health care

Submitted by: South Side PTA