

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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FIRST REGULAR SESSION

ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document No. 780

S.P. 291 In Senate, February 28, 1985
Referred to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

JOY J. O'BRIEN, Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator Gill of Cumberland.
Cosponsored by Senator Bustin of Kennebec, Senator Maybury of Penobscot and Representative Melendy of Rockland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIVE

AN ACT to Fund Children's Programs of the
Maine Coalition for Family Crisis
Services.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Appropriation. The following funds are appropriated from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

	<u>1985-86</u>	<u>1986-87</u>
<u>HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT</u>		
<u>OF</u>		
Maine Coalition for Family Crisis Services		
Positions	(7 1/2)	(7 1/2)
Personal Services	\$126,000	\$132,300
All Other	<u>11,250</u>	<u>11,813</u>

1 Provides funds for
2 children's programs.

3 TOTAL \$137,250 \$144,113

4 STATEMENT OF FACT

5 The 1983 Maine Crime Index indicates that re-
6 ported incidents of domestic violence assaults in-
7 creased by 25.4% over the previous year. Domestic
8 assault is one of the most under-reported crimes.
9 The Uniform Crime Reporting Division of the Maine De-
10 partment of Public Safety estimates that 50,000 women
11 are battered by their mates each year in Maine. This
12 pervasive problem has a devastating effect on the
13 children of these households. Studies by the Univer-
14 sity of New Hampshire have shown that children living
15 in an abusive environment have a greater tendency,
16 85%, to grow up to be abusers or victims of abuse and
17 in 13% of wife abuse cases the children have also been
18 assaulted.

19 The 9-member programs of the Maine Coalition for
20 Family Crisis Services serve battered women and their
21 children in all 16 counties in the State. The pro-
22 grams are located in Presque Isle, Machias, Bangor,
23 Dover-Foxcroft, Augusta, Rockland, Auburn, Portland
24 and Saco. Six have shelter buildings and 3 use
25 safe-home networks. All programs offer emergency
26 shelter, 24-hour crisis hotlines, counseling, advoca-
27 cy, information and referral and community education.
28 All programs are minimally staffed and rely heavily
29 on volunteers to provide these services.

30 In 1984, coalition programs sheltered 500 women
31 and 800 children for a total of 13,483 bed-days. An
32 additional 2,236 women were provided services other
33 than shelter. Each woman served has an average of
34 1.6 children. Current levels of funding, \$378,043
35 for fiscal year 1985, do not allow for the provision
36 of adequate services beyond emergency shelter to
37 these children. Only 2 programs are able to provide
38 any staff hours specifically for children.

39 This bill provides funding in the amount of
40 \$137,250 for the purpose of establishing a children's

1 worker-staff position in each of the 9 coalition pro-
2 grams, 6 full-time and 3 part-time new positions.
3 These funds will:

4 1. Provide crisis intervention for children who
5 have experienced the trauma of family violence;

6 2. Develop staff capability to identify child
7 victims of sexual, physical and emotional abuse;

8 3. Provide parenting education to mothers;

9 4. Establish community education programs for
10 both adults and children on the dynamics of family
11 violence and its impact on children;

12 5. Provide training of project volunteers on the
13 impact of family violence on children, the indicators
14 of physical and sexual abuse and techniques to help
15 work with child victims;

16 6. Further the development of children's re-
17 sources in each community with emphasis on the cre-
18 ation of services specific to the needs of child vic-
19 tims of family violence;

20 7. Develop support groups and play therapy pro-
21 grams and counsel children on an individual basis;

22 8. Provide follow up to monitor potentially dan-
23 gerous situations; and

24 9. Provide interventive services to children in
25 or from violent homes which will help to break the
26 cycle of violence and prevent future generations of
27 family violence.

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