

By Representative Lynn

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to child advocacy centers;  
3           prescribing standards for membership of child  
4           advocacy centers in the Florida Network of  
5           Children's Advocacy Centers, Inc.; providing  
6           responsibilities of the network board of  
7           directors and guidelines with respect to  
8           allocation to eligible child advocacy centers  
9           of certain moneys appropriated to the network;  
10          providing an effective date.

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12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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14           Section 1. In order to become eligible for a full  
15 membership in the Florida Network of Children's Advocacy  
16 Centers, Inc., a child advocacy center in this state shall:

17           (1) Be a private, nonprofit incorporated agency.

18           (2) Have a neutral, child-focused facility where joint  
19 Department of Children and Family Services and law enforcement  
20 interviews take place with children in appropriate cases of  
21 suspected child sexual and physical abuse. All  
22 multidisciplinary agencies shall have a place to interact with  
23 the child as investigative or treatment needs require.

24           (3) Have a minimum designated staff that is supervised  
25 and approved by the local board of directors.

26           (4) Have a multidisciplinary case review team that  
27 meets on a regularly scheduled basis or as the caseload of the  
28 community requires. The team shall consist of representatives  
29 from the Office of the State Attorney, the Department of  
30 Children and Family Services, mental health and law  
31 enforcement entities, and the child advocacy center staff.

1 Medical personnel and a victim's advocate shall also be part  
2 of the team.

3 (5) Provide case tracking of child abuse cases seen  
4 through the center. A center shall also collect data on the  
5 number of child abuse cases seen at the center by sex, race,  
6 age, and other relevant data; the number of cases referred for  
7 prosecution; and the number of cases referred for mental  
8 health therapy.

9 (6) Provide referrals for medical exams and mental  
10 health therapy. The center shall provide followup on cases  
11 referred for mental health therapy.

12 (7) Provide training for various disciplines in the  
13 community that deal with child abuse.

14 (8) Have an interagency commitment covering those  
15 aspects of agency participation in a multidisciplinary  
16 approach to the handling of child sexual and serious physical  
17 abuse cases.

18 (9) Provide assurance that volunteers at the center  
19 are trained and screened by appropriate resources.

20 Section 2. Any child advocacy center within this state  
21 that meets the standards of section 1 and is certified by the  
22 Florida Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, Inc., as being  
23 a full member in the organization shall be eligible to receive  
24 state funds that are appropriated by the Legislature for the  
25 Florida Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, Inc.

26 Section 3. Any new child advocacy center within this  
27 state that desires to become certified by the network may  
28 request and receive initial funding if approved by the board  
29 of directors of the network. Any center failing to meet the  
30 standards established in section 1 for a period of 1 year or  
31 longer shall not be eligible to receive state funding.

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1           Section 4. The network board of directors shall be  
 2 responsible for allocating state-appropriated funds to  
 3 existing and new child advocacy centers which meet the  
 4 standards of section 1.

5           Section 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
 6 law.

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9   HOUSE SUMMARY

10           Prescribe standards for membership of child advocacy  
 11 centers in the Florida Network of Children's Advocacy  
 12 Centers, Inc. Provides responsibilities of the network  
 13 board of directors and guidelines with respect to  
 14 allocation to eligible child advocacy centers of certain  
 15 moneys appropriated to the network.  
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