

By Senator Torres

15-01661-18

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to child psychological abuse; amending
3 s. 39.01, F.S.; expanding the definition of the term
4 "harm" to include the infliction of certain mental
5 injury on a child; amending s. 39.201, F.S.; revising
6 a provision relating to mandatory reporting
7 requirements for child abuse, abandonment, or neglect
8 to include child psychological abuse; requiring the
9 Board of Psychology within the Department of Health to
10 revise the continuing education requirements for
11 renewal of a license to practice psychology to include
12 child psychological abuse; providing an effective
13 date.

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

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17 Section 1. Paragraph (m) is added to subsection (30) of
18 section 39.01, Florida Statutes, to read:

19 39.01 Definitions.—When used in this chapter, unless the
20 context otherwise requires:

21 (30) "Harm" to a child's health or welfare can occur when
22 any person:

23 (m) Inflicts mental injury, as defined in subsection (43),
24 on a child through the use of manipulation or psychological
25 abuse, including, but not limited to, parental alienation, which
26 creates a significant developmental pathology, personality
27 disorder pathology, or delusional-psychiatric pathology, as
28 diagnosed by a mental health professional licensed under chapter
29 490 or chapter 491.

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30 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
31 39.201, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

32 39.201 Mandatory reports of child abuse, abandonment, or
33 neglect; mandatory reports of death; central abuse hotline.—

34 (1) (a) Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to
35 suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a
36 parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible
37 for the child's welfare, as defined in this chapter, or that a
38 child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent,
39 legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known
40 and available to provide supervision and care shall report such
41 knowledge or suspicion to the department in the manner
42 prescribed in subsection (2). For purposes of the mandatory
43 reporting requirements established under this section, child
44 abuse includes any harm or mental injury as those terms are
45 defined in s. 39.01.

46 Section 3. The Board of Psychology within the Department of
47 Health shall revise the requirements for renewal of a license to
48 practice psychology, pursuant to s. 490.007, Florida Statutes,
49 to require continuing education regarding child psychological
50 abuse, including, but not limited to, abuse through the use of
51 manipulation or parental alienation.

52 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.