

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H.B. 1159
Apr 30, 2026
HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH30562-MGa-175

Short Title: Investing in Teen Mental Health.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Lofton.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
3 SERVICES, DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING, TO EXPAND
4 ACCESS TO TEEN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING AND YOUTH MENTAL
5 HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING.

6 Whereas, ten percent (10%) of North Carolina's high school students reported having
7 attempted suicide in the last year and twenty-two percent (22%) of these same students reported
8 having seriously contemplated suicide; and

9 Whereas, 1 in 5 teens in the United States will likely experience a mental health
10 challenge by the age of 18 and sixty-four percent (64%) of these teens are unlikely to seek
11 professional help; and

12 Whereas, Teen Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an evidence-based course
13 developed to teach teens who are in grades nine through twelve, or ages 14 through 18, how to
14 identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among
15 their friends and peers; and

16 Whereas, the Teen MHFA curriculum covers common signs and symptoms of mental
17 health and substance use challenges in this age group and how to connect teens with trusted and
18 responsible adults for support and assistance during a mental health or substance use crisis; and

19 Whereas, The University of North Carolina has trained a total of 7,527 individuals in
20 Youth and Teen MHFA in 44 counties across NC and established a cohort of 212 Youth and/or
21 Teen MHFA instructors since 2023; and

22 Whereas, completion of the Teen MHFA course has shown a fifty percent (50%)
23 increase in the willingness of teens to tell someone and seek help from an adult or health care
24 professional about mental health and substance use challenges; Now, therefore,
25 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

26 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
27 Health and Human Services, Division of Child and Family Well-Being, the sum of one million
28 two hundred ninety thousand six hundred twenty-six dollars (\$1,290,626) in nonrecurring funds
29 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year to be used to expand access to Teen Mental Health First Aid training
30 and Youth Mental Health First Aid training in North Carolina.

31 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2026.

