

PROPONENT TESTIMONY OF PHILLIP COSBY
AMERICAN FAMILY ACTION of KANSAS and MISSOURI, February 2019

PROPONENT: HB 2094, "Child with Problem of Sexual Behavior"

As used in this section, "**child with problem sexual behavior**" means a child under 18 years of age who has allegedly committed sexual abuse against another child.

It is easier to mend an injured boy than to fix a broken man... A stitch in time...

For sixteen years I have focused the issue of the harms of pornography and the hyper sexualized culture. I have interacted with parents, students, lawmakers, the courts, law enforcement, media, churches and clinicians to address a tsunami of harms.

Daily we wake to news of sexual assaults. K-12, university campuses, Hollywood celebrities, Olympic guardians, business leaders, pastors and entrusted public servants are a few of the fallen. Fifteen years ago, denial in most institutions was the norm. Denial has now given way to head shaking, anger or a numbing resignation as to what can be done?

The correlating reality of increasing child on child sexual harm is almost too painful to contemplate. Last year the KS Dept. of Children and Families identified 433 cases that fit this scenario of child on child sexual assault. Foster care transfers of children due to inappropriate sexual activity are disturbing. Task force findings from other states are too shockingly graphic to relate. Hoping that it will all go away will only result in more of the same. A bill has been introduced in the House Tax cmte. providing a paygo solution.

1. Referencing the ABC news report : **Child-On-Child Sexual Abuse Bigger Problem Than Thought in Missouri : "While experts had believed the number of cases this would affect each year was about 600, the first five months under the new law brought almost 2,000.**

2. Referencing the booklet : "*Do Children Sexually Abuse Other Children?*"

- Over 1/3 of all sexual abuse of children is committed by someone under 18.
- Discerning natural sexual curiosity and potential abusive behavior.
- Insure that children involved in a harmful sexual situation, whatever their role, are given help to live healthy lives.

What is Healthy Sexual Development? ; What is Age Appropriate? ; What is Sexually Harmful Behavior? ; Why Do Some Children Harm Others? ; How Do You Recognize the Warning Signs? ; Why Don't Children Tell? ; How Can We Protect Our Children?

A quick search beyond Missouri shows other states that have similar statutes and have implemented focused task forces to address this problem (FL, TN, ND, SD, MT, UT, MI, AL, IA, WV, DE...) Countries such as Iceland, Australia and the United Kingdom have aggressively implemented nation wide remedies.

This bill reflects a spirit of painful transparency and a sunshine remedy that resonates with the Resolve of the **2017 Kansas House and 2018 Senate Resolutions on Pornography, A Public Health Crisis**. "*Be it further resolved: That we recognize the need for additional education, prevention, research, and policy change at the community level and societal levels, and we urge this chamber and other governing bodies to take appropriate steps to ensure progress is made*"... further promoting the general welfare of our great state of Kansas. We need to know, we must respond!

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