

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 210232, **Version:** 0

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Recognizing the week of March 21 through March 27, 2021, as “National Safe Place Week” in the City of Philadelphia, and calling for a citywide effort to create havens for young people from physical and emotional abuse, neglect, violence and trauma through mentoring, counseling, and community supports.

WHEREAS, Young people deserve a safe haven where they can live free from physical and emotional abuse and neglect, substance abuse, and crime. Youth must be provided with resources and supports when they are placed in unsafe environments and situations; and

WHEREAS, The Safe Place Program supports young people in crisis with critical resources to ensure their immediate safety. Through designating businesses and organizations as safe locations where youth can access resources and information, the Safe Place model provides critical protections and supports; and

WHEREAS, Safe Place has built partnerships with community centers, civic institutions, and businesses to offer these crucial services to youth. Locations range from businesses such as restaurants, convenience stores, and movie theaters to community-based institutions such as libraries, fire stations, and schools; and

WHEREAS, More than 1,500 communities in 38 states administer the Safe Place program at more than 22,000 locations. Over 40 locations are located within the City of Philadelphia. More than 359,000 youth have been helped at a Safe Place location or received counseling by phone through the program and 12,000 youth per year have received direct services from Safe Place; and

WHEREAS, Since the program’s inception in 1983, more than 15 million youth have been educated through National Safe Place Network’s outreach efforts, which seek to familiarize young people with the Safe Place sign and provide them with information about how to seek refuge; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic increase the risk for child abuse and neglect due to increased stresses and the loss of financial and social supports; and

WHEREAS, In order to meet the needs of our City’s most vulnerable youth, we must increase the number of mentors for young people. Relationships with mentors, and relationships between mentors and the institutions that they are connected to, create a strong community-based network that can effectively serve youth who lack supports or are exposed to trauma. Increased awareness will encourage communities to establish Safe Place locations where youth can readily access the help they need; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Recognizes the week of March 21 through March 27, 2021, as “National Safe Place Week” in the City of Philadelphia, and calls for a citywide effort to create havens for young people from physical and emotional abuse, neglect, violence, and trauma through mentoring, counseling and community supports.