



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: School Health Educators
School Nurses and Nursing Supervisors
School Counselors
School Social Workers

FROM: John D. Frassinelli, Bureau Chief 
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: October 18, 2018

SUBJECT: Connecticut Safe Havens Act for Newborns

In Connecticut, the Safe Havens Act for Newborns, codified in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Sections 17a-57 to 17a-61, creates a safe alternative to leaving or abandoning unwanted infants in unsafe places. The Act allows a parent to voluntarily give up custody of an infant 30 days or younger and avoid prosecution for abandonment by bringing the infant to one of the state's 37 hospital emergency rooms. The law went into effect in Connecticut in 2000 and has since saved the lives of 37 infants, according to data from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF). The Connecticut Safe Havens Act statutes can be found at https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_319.htm#sec_17a-57.

Section 2 of Public Act 18-182 requires the Connecticut State Board of Education (SBE) to provide local and regional boards of education with information on Connecticut's Safe Havens Act and how instructional materials can be obtained from DCF. For the full public act language, please visit <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2018/act/pa/pdf/2018PA-00182-R00HB-05446-PA.pdf>.

In an effort to save the lives of additional infants, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) encourages districts to provide instruction to students regarding Connecticut's Safe Havens Act as part of the high school curriculum. The slogan from proponents of the legislation supporting this instruction is: "10 Minutes in 10th Grade." Additional details and resources regarding Connecticut's Safe Havens Act for Newborns, including printable materials in English and Spanish and contact information, can be found on the DCF website at <https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/1-DCF/SAFE-HAVENS-ACT-for-Newborns>.

Please share this information with school staff and community partners to facilitate the conversation on this important issue. Questions for the CSDE can be directed to Shelby R. Pons, Education Consultant, at 860-807-2103 or shelby.pons@ct.gov.

JDF:er

cc: Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer, CSDE
Shelby R. Pons, Education Consultant, CSDE