

Concurrent Resolution Encouraging Practices that Promote Child Independence

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This resolution encourages practices that promote child independence.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- highlights the importance of free play and child independence;
- supports children engaging in independent activities;
- encourages school districts, school administrators, and teachers to utilize the Let Grow school program to help build independence;
- encourages the State Board of Education to incorporate childhood independence throughout the core standards for Utah public schools; and
- urges local governments and school districts to enact practices that encourage children to be able to explore, play, wander, and build independence.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, levels of anxiety and depression are increasing in children and young adults;

WHEREAS, constant supervision thwarts a child's ability to develop important qualities, such as resourcefulness, self-awareness, and perseverance;

WHEREAS, there is ample research to suggest that children are safer when unsupervised today than they were in previous generations, yet play that allows children to take appropriate risks has declined;

WHEREAS, children are not fragile but rather resilient and capable individuals;

WHEREAS, parents stepping back allows children to step up;

WHEREAS, children who are allowed to take risks and figure things out themselves at home will have more grit and determination at school;

WHEREAS, engaging in independent activities promotes resilience and encourages the development of coping mechanisms in children;

WHEREAS, when children are able to improvise without an adult present they learn that are capable;

WHEREAS, independent children feel confident and hopeful;

WHEREAS, independent play can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression;

WHEREAS, play is crucial for healthy child development and learning the skills to be an adult;

WHEREAS, self-directed kids make better learners;

WHEREAS, school culture becomes more supportive and inclusive when students may interact with each other and solve their own challenges without premature adult intervention;

WHEREAS, children learn creativity and to celebrate their peers' unique skills and interests when allowed to direct their own play;

WHEREAS, mixed-age play benefits all age groups, as younger children learn executive functioning skills trying to emulate older children and older children develop responsibility and empathy as they interact with younger children;

WHEREAS, children learn social skills and problem-solving during self-organized play without an adult stepping in to immediately solve problems;

WHEREAS, children deserve time and space to explore, play, and wander;

WHEREAS, experts in childhood independence have created the Let Grow school program to provide guidance and curriculum for parents and educators to engage in, promote, and build childhood independence; and

WHEREAS, Let Grow supports empathy and helps develop a child's agency, self-confidence, creativity, communication, cooperation, resilience, and problem-solving skills:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, supports children who are of sufficient age and maturity to avoid harm or unreasonable risk of harm to engage in independent activities, including traveling to and from school, traveling to and from nearby commercial or recreational facilities, engaging in outdoor play, remaining at home unattended, or engaging in a similar independent activity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, encourages school districts, school administrators, and teachers to utilize the Let Grow school program to promote and build independence in children.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, encourages the State Board of Education to look for ways to incorporate

66 childhood independence throughout the core standards for Utah public schools.

67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor
68 concurring therein, encourages local governments and school districts to enact practices that
69 encourage children to be able to explore, play, wander, and build independence.