



March 26, 2026

The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Re: Support for H7127 - Public Safety Budget

Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter in support of the \$400,000 included in H7127, the Governor's FY27 proposed budget for the Department of Public Safety for GO TEAM® funding. We appreciate the Governor's and General Assembly's continued support over the past two years with this budget allocation. We are also deeply grateful for the strong and collaborative partnership we share with Colonel Weaver and the Rhode Island State Police, whose leadership and commitment have been instrumental to the success of this work. Together, along with our local law enforcement partners, we have built a model that ensures victims of crime, particularly children, receive immediate, trauma-informed support in moments of crisis. **I respectfully request that for FY27, this funding be increased to \$760,000 to allow for the expansion of the GO TEAM® partnership to six additional Rhode Island communities.**

For the past 20 years, FSRI has partnered with police departments across the state to provide 24/7/365 joint response services for victims of crime, with a particular focus on children exposed to traumatic events. The GO TEAM® currently partners with the Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, Woonsocket, Newport, Barrington, and Rhode Island State Police Departments. With additional state investment, these partnerships could expand to include the North Providence, East Providence, Middletown, Jamestown, South Kingstown, and New Shoreham Police Departments.

Through this innovative model, an FSRI police liaison rides along with officers, responding directly on-scene to provide crisis intervention and stabilization aimed at reducing the immediate and long-term impact of trauma. Each year, the GO TEAM® serves hundreds of crime victims, prioritizing our state's most vulnerable residents- children and families experiencing trauma. This partnership allows officers to focus on public safety and investigative responsibilities, while remaining confident that victims are receiving compassionate, professional support during and immediately following their victimization. In recent months, the GO TEAM® has played a critical role in coordinating on-scene crisis response and trauma support following the mass violence incidents at Brown University and the Pawtucket ice rink.

Additional funding will allow Rhode Island to expand this highly effective, trauma-informed model and ensure that more communities have access to critical crisis response services when



they are needed most. I urge the committee to move forward with the expanded \$760,000 budget allocation for the GO TEAM®.

Attached is a flyer with additional information about the GO TEAM® and this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance or answer any questions.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Margaret Holland McDuff'.

Margaret Holland McDuff
CEO
Family Service of Rhode Island

FSRI GO TEAM®

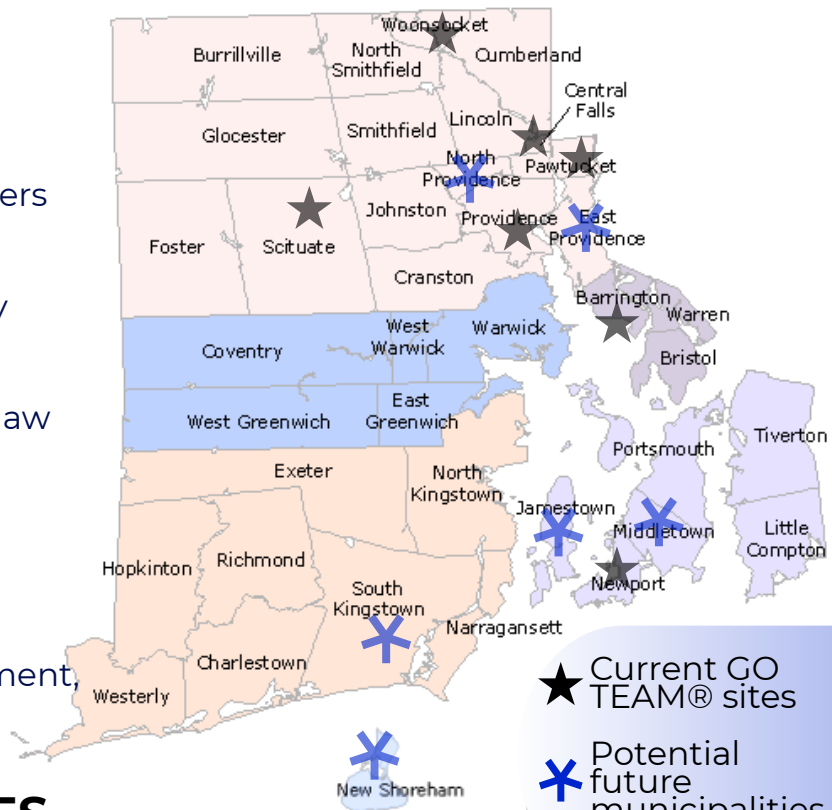
PARTNERS IN PROTECTING AND HEALING

SUMMARY

GO TEAM® is a nationally award-winning program first developed by FSRI in 2004 as a best practice for responding with police on scene to child victims and witnesses exposed to violence and other traumas. We currently have trauma trained police liaisons co-located in Woonsocket, Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, Newport, Barrington, and the State Police.

IMPACT

- ✓ Serving over 1,000 children and caregivers annually
- ✓ Increased law enforcement community trust
- ✓ High effectiveness ratings reported by law enforcement
- ✓ High satisfaction ratings reported by families served
- ✓ Reduction of repeat police calls, youth hospitalization, juvenile justice involvement, and re-victimization



CRISIS RESPONSE EXAMPLES



FSRI's GO TEAM® provided on-scene crisis response, trauma support, and led system coordination for the recent mass violence incidents at **Brown University** and the **Pawtucket ice rink**.

FSRI GO TEAM®

PARTNERS IN PROTECTING AND HEALING



FUNDING

Family Service of Rhode Island would like to thank the Governor and the Legislature for the investment of \$400,000 for FSRI's GO TEAM®. The funding supports our current GO TEAM® partnerships.

We respectfully request to increase our funding to a total of \$760,000. This will support implementation and partnership with:

- North Providence Police
- East Providence Police
- Middletown Police
- Jamestown Police
- South Kingstown Police
- New Shoreham Police

This expansion will:

- Increase, if not double, the number of children and families we serve
- Allow our trauma trained police liaisons to provide:
 - On-scene crisis intervention and behavioral stabilization
 - Co-riding with police on patrol
 - Court and language support
 - Care coordination, safety planning, and basic needs assistance
 - Support to address the effects of child- trauma exposure

SUPPORT FROM THE FIELD

"Thanks to FSRI, the Providence Police Department approaches victims from a trauma-informed perspective, especially children. Officers are now more aware of the effect trauma and violence exposure has on children and how officers can help or hinder healing. They know they can rely on FSRI's professional and reliable trauma-trained GO TEAM® staff to show up every time, assist with resolving conflict and stabilizing the scene, and then going the extra mile..."

-Former Federal Department of Justice Director of the Community Oriented Policing and former Providence Police Chief, Col. Hugh T. Clements, Jr.