

1 H.817

2 An act relating to mental health literacy and peer-to-peer supports in  
3 schools

4 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

5 Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT; MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND  
6 PEER SUPPORT INITIATIVES

7 It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Department of Mental  
8 Health, in collaboration with the Agency of Education, shall oversee a mental  
9 health literacy training grant program to provide mental health literacy training  
10 to educators, other school personnel, and afterschool staff and a peer-to-peer  
11 mental health program to support structured opportunities for student peer  
12 connection in a supervised school or afterschool setting to take effect on July  
13 1, 2028.

14 Sec. 2. FUNDING; MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND PEER SUPPORT  
15 INITIATIVES

16 As part of its fiscal year 2028 budget presentation, the Department of  
17 Mental Health, in collaboration with the Agency of Education, shall explore  
18 potential funding sources for the mental health literacy and peer-to-peer  
19 programming described in Sec. 1 of this act, including whether any existing  
20 special funds are appropriate sources of funding, and provide  
21 recommendations accordingly.

1       Sec. 3. INVENTORY; MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY AND PEER

2                   SUPPORT INITIATIVES

3               On or before January 15, 2027, the Department of Mental Health, in  
4       collaboration with the Agency of Education and stakeholders, shall submit an  
5       inventory of existing mental health programming and services in schools to the  
6       House Committees on Appropriations and on Health Care and to the Senate  
7       Committees on Appropriations and on Health and Welfare. The inventory  
8       shall include a recommendation to integrate the mental health literacy and  
9       peer-to-peer programming described in Sec. 1 of this act into the existing  
10       programming and services listed in the inventory required pursuant to this  
11       section.

12       Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

13               This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.