

Submitter: Jessica Shellhorn
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or SB1573
Topic:

I support this measure. I live in SE Portland, and i cannot let my child do developmentally healthy things, like playing slightly away from me at a park, because of the dangers of needles. I am a permanent helicopter mom to keep my son safe because we do not live somewhere safe. I previously did a monthly trash pickup in my neighborhood, and in a three block radius we might find 200 needles. I have already given up on Portland or Multnomah County ever doing anything good for children. I am hoping at the state level this bill will pass. Originally I thought a needle exchange was supposed to be just that...an exchange where one gives back one needle to get one more. A method of harm reduction to prevent transmission of hepatitis and HIV. However, it seems that the actual implementation of these programs has strayed so far from the original intention that they are just more fuel for our current open air drug market on every corner, in sight daily for my toddler as he watches out the window from his carseat on our way to preschool all we see is people bent half over, too high to stand up. From his carseat he can see the abcesses in the arms, legs, and feet of the people suffering from the addiction pandemic that Oregon has left to die out of misguided, feigned compassion. My son is three years old and he knows what addiction is, what drugs are, and what orange caps on the playground might mean. This is not the childhood I wanted for him. The decisions Portland, Multnomah County, and Oregon are making regularly are having such a negative impact on the public square that the whole state is now suffering the consequences. Families who can afford to are leaving Oregon, families are disenrolling their children from public school, and families like mine are basically not leaving the small safe spaces we've carved out amidst the chaos. Please change this trajectory and take one small step towards making Oregon a safer place for children once more.