
SENATE BILL 5569

State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1993 Regular Session

By Senators M. Rasmussen, Roach and Franklin

Read first time 02/03/93. Referred to Committee on Health & Human Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to comprehensive prevention services for at-risk
2 children and their families; and adding new sections to chapter 43.63A
3 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** This act may be known and cited as the
6 children's investment act.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The legislature finds that:

8 (1) The failure of a significant number of our children to develop
9 to their full potential threatens Washington state's future
10 productivity and competitiveness;

11 (2) The failure of children to thrive and develop leads to
12 avoidable long-term costs to society in terms of illness, welfare,
13 teenage pregnancies, school dropouts, drug and alcohol addiction, child
14 abuse and crime;

15 (3) Investments in comprehensive preventive services for children
16 and their families are highly effective in alleviating such social
17 costs if children are reached early;

1 (4) While much is spent on children through a variety of programs,
2 the focus has most often been on crisis response. While support for
3 children in crisis is essential, a more long-range view dictates a
4 focus on preventive services. Only through early intervention and
5 prevention can we stem the flow of children needing crisis help and
6 treatment. Our overloaded crisis systems will remain overloaded unless
7 we move toward prevention strategies;

8 (5) Much is spent on treatment approaches identifying a specific
9 problem and mandating a specific service in response. While
10 identifying single problems and specific interventions are important,
11 research suggests that the most effective early interventions for
12 children are those which are more comprehensive in approach, with the
13 flexibility to respond to a host of potential barriers or dysfunctions
14 in the family setting; and

15 (6) Together, the lack of comprehensiveness in approach and the
16 crisis nature of current assistance create a system widely viewed as
17 fragmented, short-sighted, and ineffective. With a few exceptions, we
18 have a system designed not to help children thrive and develop, but to
19 help them survive after being hurt.

20 The legislature is aware that model programs such as the federal
21 head start program and our own early childhood education and assistance
22 program incorporate many of the positive concepts suggested herein; the
23 legislature is anxious to incorporate the positive aspects of these
24 more comprehensive models into currently existing single-service
25 programs at the community level, making them more comprehensive, more
26 culturally sensitive, and more prevention-oriented in nature.

27 Finally, the legislature is aware that many vital community-based
28 nonprofit agencies providing assistance to children and families are
29 under severe financial stress. The human services infrastructure at
30 the community level is at risk.

31 Therefore, through this act, it is the intent of the legislature to
32 develop a mechanism that will: Provide start-up funding for pilot or
33 model programs, based on local need; complement existing community
34 programs; help to develop comprehensive, culturally sensitive,
35 prevention-oriented programs for at-risk children and their families;
36 foster self-sufficiency among families; encourage and support local
37 prevention initiatives that develop creative community partnerships;
38 and protect and enhance the community-based nonprofit infrastructure so
39 vital to human service delivery for at-risk children.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Unless the context clearly requires
2 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout sections 4
3 and 5 of this act.

4 (1) "Comprehensive service" means a service that responds to the
5 needs of families or children, or both, as they are identified,
6 regardless of the specific service being provided when new issues
7 arise.

8 (2) "Magnet programs" means important existing programs which
9 currently attract families to human service providers, such as housing
10 programs, energy assistance, or child abuse and neglect programs.
11 Magnet services can be leveraged into a starting point to identify and
12 respond to other needs of the child and family, often by using existing
13 resources through new or existing partnerships.

14 (3) "Model program services" means services targeted to young
15 children, zero to eight years of age, and that: Are responsive to the
16 family unit as a whole; are comprehensive and culturally sensitive in
17 nature; generally occur before the young child is in crisis due to
18 abuse or neglect; incorporate mutually developed family goals; and
19 include coordinated efforts from other community resources. "Model
20 program services" may incorporate new and innovative community
21 partnerships into the service design, as between a school district and
22 a private nonprofit agency, or between a private nonprofit agency and
23 the sheriff's department, for example.

24 (4) "Prevention services" means program interventions that target
25 families with young children, generally zero to eight years of age,
26 before those children are in need of crisis intervention, and which
27 address dysfunctions related to both child and family. While targeting
28 families with young children as a starting point, services to older
29 children and other family members would be expected as part of a
30 comprehensive approach.

31 (5) "Single service" means those programs such as energy assistance
32 or landlord-tenant counseling, as examples, that allow funds to be used
33 only for that specific service, even if, while providing that service,
34 the service provider identifies other problems in the family that need
35 attention.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The purposes of chapter . . . , Laws of 1993
37 (this act) are to:

1 (1) Respond to a widely felt need to more aggressively fund
2 prevention services to and for young at-risk children and their
3 families, specifically tailored to the unique problems existing at the
4 local community level;

5 (2) Provide a source of potential funding to leverage and improve
6 upon the integration and coordination of existing community services,
7 and to develop new and innovative partnerships that focus on
8 prevention, leading toward self-sufficiency; and

9 (3) Assist existing programs to take a more comprehensive,
10 culturally sensitive service approach by providing a source of funding
11 that encourages a customized local response to the wide array of
12 problems that may be impacting at-risk children and their families.

13 Overall, the legislature desires to actively support programs for
14 young at-risk children that: Focus on local responses which are
15 culturally sensitive; provide comprehensive help rather than a single
16 service; result in the development of a positive working relationship
17 between the provider and the family based on mutual responsibility;
18 empower the family to become more self-sufficient; reach young children
19 and their families before they are in major crisis; and rely on
20 existing community-based services as vital magnet programs that already
21 attract children and families in need.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The department of community development
23 shall seek grant proposals that incorporate model program services and
24 carry out the purposes enumerated in section 4 of this act. To
25 facilitate continuity of program, proposals should be for three years
26 of continuous service. To facilitate widespread distribution of the
27 funds and services, no grant shall exceed seven hundred fifty thousand
28 dollars for the three-year period or two hundred fifty thousand dollars
29 annually. In addition, no competitively grant-funded agency may submit
30 a second competitive proposal until the initial program is within one
31 year of expiration. Funded programs may not be automatically renewed,
32 but may compete for ongoing funding on a three-year cycle.

33 (2) Entities eligible for competitive grant funds include any
34 nonprofit institution showing the ability to extend existing services
35 into more effective prevention-oriented programs for at-risk children
36 and their families to carry out the purposes enumerated in section 4 of
37 this act.

1 (3) The department of community development shall, to carry out the
2 purposes enumerated in section 4 of this act, adopt rules governing the
3 development of a competitive request for proposal process; fiscal
4 accounting; annual site visits to funded programs; the review and
5 analysis of annual program reports provided by funded agencies; and the
6 development of reports provided to the legislature in partnership with
7 local program providers.

8 (4) The department of community development shall designate a
9 reasonable amount of each contractor's funding under chapter . . . ,
10 Laws of 1993 (this act) for third party independent evaluation.
11 Evaluation design shall be incorporated into each project's application
12 and shall include both process and outcome components of each
13 individual contractor's program.

14 (5) The Washington council for the prevention of child abuse and
15 neglect shall use its existing competitive grant process, using funds
16 from section 5 of this act to extend the grant period for outstanding
17 community proposals.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** All sums appropriated from the general fund,
19 as well as all grants, gifts, or bequests shall be apportioned as
20 follows:

21 (1) Forty-five percent to the department of community development
22 for grants under the existing community services block grant program,
23 specifically to target at-risk children in poverty;

24 (2) Forty percent to the department of community development for
25 competitive grants to nonprofits;

26 (3) Ten percent to the Washington council for the prevention of
27 child abuse and neglect for competitive grants to nonprofits through
28 its existing grant process specifically to extend grant periods beyond
29 one year in length;

30 (4) Five percent to the department of community development for
31 administration of the new competitive fund.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 6 of this act are each
33 added to chapter 43.63A RCW.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If any provision of this act or its
35 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the

1 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
2 persons or circumstances is not affected.

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