

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1898

As Reported by House Committee On:
Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to the licensing of crisis nurseries.

Brief Description: Licensing crisis nurseries.

Sponsors: Representatives Hankins, Skinner, Tokuda, Boldt, Kenney, Dunn, Keiser, Van Loven, McMorris, Delvin, Mitchell and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 2/21/01, 2/22/01 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- The bill adds crisis nurseries to the list of agencies that arrange for, or directly provide, out-of-home care to children, expectant mothers, or persons with developmental disabilities that are licensed by the Department of Social and Health Services.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Boldt, Republican Co-Chair; Tokuda, Democratic Co-Chair; Kagi, Democratic Vice Chair; Morell, Republican Vice Chair; Ballasiotes, Campbell, Darneille, Dickerson, Miloscia and Pflug.

Staff: Deborah Frazier (786-7152).

Background:

Agencies that arrange for, or directly provide, out-of-home care to children, expectant mothers, or persons with developmental disabilities are licensed by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Licensed entities include family day care providers, day care centers, group care facilities, crisis residential centers, and family foster homes.

Crisis nurseries are a type of respite care for children at risk of abuse and/or neglect. The nurseries serve children from birth through age 17, and are operated up to 24 hours

a day, and up to seven days a week. Caregivers who need a short break from their children to avoid abuse and/or neglect voluntarily bring the children to the nursery for relief.

Currently, five crisis nurseries are operating in the Tri-Cities, Spokane, Everett, Seattle, and Yakima. Because this type of program is not included specifically in the definition of agencies that provide out-of-home care for children, expectant mothers, or persons with developmental disabilities, the crisis nurseries are licensed as child care centers, group care facilities, or foster care providers through the use of a number of waivers.

Summary of Bill:

The bill defines crisis nurseries and adds them to the list of agencies that arrange for, or directly provide, out-of-home care to children, expectant mothers, or persons with developmental disabilities that are licensed by the DSHS.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: There is a huge need for this service. Our first year of operation we expected to serve 250 children and served 642. This year we're expecting to serve 2,500. Now we have to go through a lengthy licensing process that entails numerous waivers, since our service is not defined and we have no separate licensing standards. The department supports a separate licensing process for these entities that is tailored to their specific functions. This will meet the needs of the children and families better, and speed up implementation of new programs.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Hankins, prime sponsor; Sue Delucchi, Safe Harbor Crisis Nursery; Margie Reeves, Washington Association for the Education of Young Children; Larry Pederson, Thurston County Community Network; and Nancy Zahn, Department of Social and Health Services.