

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1609

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*As Reported By House Committee on:  
Human Services*

**Title:** An act relating to mental health services for children.

**Brief Description:** Developing additional mental health services for children.

**Sponsor(s):** Representatives Leonard, Winsley, Riley, Brekke, R. King, Anderson, Phillips, Dellwo, Spanel, Haugen, Hine, Jones, Pruitt, Basich, R. Johnson, Van Luven, Wang, Valle, Inslee, Belcher, Sheldon and O'Brien.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Human Services, February 14, 1991, DPS.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**Majority Report:** *That Substitute House Bill No. 1609 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.*  
Signed by 11 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Winsley, Ranking Minority Member; Tate, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Beck; Brekke; Hargrove; Hochstatter; R. King; and H. Myers.

**Staff:** David Knutson (786-7146).

**Background:** Children with emotional and mental disorders may come in contact with several child-serving systems such as schools, child welfare programs, mental health programs and juvenile justice programs. The current system of mental health care tends to look at the problem experienced by the child in isolation from other aspects of the child's life. This categorical approach to mental health results in a fragmented, uncoordinated array of services provided to children, by whichever service system they come in contact with. States which elect to offer the Federal Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program, can provide mental health services to eligible children through the medicaid program.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The Office of Financial Management will develop a plan for using the

Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program for delivering mental health services to children and report to the Legislature by December 1991. The local lead agency for children's mental health services will be the Regional Support Network (RSN) or county authority in counties without an RSN. The implementation of local children's mental health services are delayed until fiscal year 1993. The Office of Financial Management will allot 5 percent of the state funds, appropriated to programs and services participating in the children's mental health program, to a pooled account.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested February 1, 1991.

**Appropriation:** Yes.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Testimony For:** Children with mental and emotional problems are served through several different social, health and educational systems. A comprehensive, coordinated planning and service delivery process for children's mental health services is needed. This will maximize existing resources and provide better service to children needing assistance.

**Testimony Against:** The Department of Social and Health Services supports the concept of HB 1609, but has reservations because it is not funded in the governor's budget.

**Witnesses:** Beverly Kincaid, UFCW Local 381; Peter Berliner, Children's Alliance; Steve Norsen Washington Community Mental Health Council; Don Leebrick, Peaks, Valleys and Choices Foundation; Doug Stevenson, King County Council; and Dick Thompson, Department of Social and Health Services.