
HOUSE BILL 2186

State of Washington

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By Representatives Flemming, Holm, Thibaudeau, Brown, H. Myers, Leonard, Morris and Patterson

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1 AN ACT Relating to prevention of child abuse and neglect; amending
2 RCW 43.121.015 and 43.121.070; adding new sections to chapter 43.121
3 RCW; creating new sections; and making an appropriation.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** HEALTHY FAMILIES--WASHINGTON HOME VISITOR
6 PROGRAM--FINDINGS. The legislature finds that:

7 (1) Child abuse and neglect has been shown to be a significant risk
8 factor for violent behavior. Abused or neglected children have an
9 increased likelihood of arrest and involvement in violent crime as
10 youths or adults, and of victimization;

11 (2) One of the most effective strategies for preventing child abuse
12 and neglect is to provide parents with education and support beginning
13 with the birth of their first baby in parents' homes or in other
14 locations comfortable for parents; and

15 (3) Primary prevention efforts that provide parents with education
16 and support, and thereby reduce the rate of child abuse and neglect,
17 are an essential component of any youth violence prevention effort.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.121.015 and 1988 c 278 s 4 are each amended to read
2 as follows:

3 As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings
4 indicated unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

5 (1) "Child" means an unmarried person who is under eighteen years
6 of age.

7 (2) "Community" means an individual political subdivision of the
8 state, a group of such political subdivisions, or a geographic area
9 within a political subdivision.

10 (3) "Council" means the Washington council for the prevention of
11 child abuse and neglect.

12 (~~(3)~~) (4) "Parent" means the birth or adoptive parent, or legal
13 guardian of a child.

14 (5) "Primary prevention" of child abuse and neglect means any
15 effort designed to inhibit or preclude the initial occurrence of child
16 abuse and neglect, both by the promotion of positive parenting and
17 family interaction, and the remediation of factors linked to causes of
18 child maltreatment.

19 (~~(4)~~) (6) "Secondary prevention" means services and programs that
20 identify and assist families under such stress that abuse or neglect is
21 likely or families display symptoms associated with child abuse or
22 neglect.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** HEALTHY FAMILIES--WASHINGTON HOME VISITOR
24 PROGRAM. (1) There is established in the council a program to
25 coordinate and fund up to ten community-based healthy families--
26 Washington home visitor program sites. Selection of program sites
27 shall be made competitively based upon compliance with RCW 43.121.070,
28 43.121.080 and sections 4 and 5 of this act.

29 (2) Program criteria shall be established by the council in
30 consultation with the family policy council established pursuant to
31 chapter 70.190 RCW, and with private and public groups involved in
32 child abuse and neglect prevention and shall reflect the following
33 principles:

34 (a) Family policy principles enunciated by the family policy
35 council;

36 (b) Flexibility in program design and implementation to accommodate
37 unique community characteristics and needs;

38 (c) Voluntary participation by families;

1 (d) Availability of services to all parents of newborns who need
2 support, delivered at the level of intensity and duration that best
3 meets the needs of each family; and

4 (e) Increased coordination of existing services to prospective
5 parents and parents of newborn children.

6 (3) Where appropriate, the council may utilize funds in the
7 children's trust fund for program sites established pursuant to
8 sections 3 through 5 of this act.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** HEALTHY FAMILIES--WASHINGTON HOME VISITOR
10 PROGRAM SITES--REQUIREMENTS. (1) Each community-based healthy
11 families--Washington home visitor program site shall be designed to
12 reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in the defined
13 community.

14 (2) Program participation by parents shall be voluntary. In
15 offering or providing services, every effort shall be made to
16 coordinate with and utilize other programs that fund or provide any of
17 the services referenced in subsection (3) of this section. The primary
18 focus for expenditure of healthy families--Washington home visitor
19 program funds should be development of a coordinated system of family
20 support services for parents of newborn children in the community,
21 provision of home visits and provision of services referenced in
22 subsection (3) of this section that are not currently funded from other
23 sources.

24 (3) Each program site shall make the following services available
25 to families in the defined community:

26 (a) Visits for all expectant or new parents, either at the parent's
27 home or another location with which the parent is comfortable;

28 (b) Screening prior to or soon after the birth of a child to assess
29 the family's strengths and goals, and define areas of concern in
30 consultation with the family;

31 (c) Parenting education and skills development;

32 (d) Parenting and family support information and referral;

33 (e) Parent support groups;

34 (f) Service coordination for individual families, and assistance
35 with accessing services, provided in a manner that ensures that
36 individual families have only one individual or agency to which they
37 look for service coordination. Where appropriate for a family, service

1 coordination may be conducted through interdisciplinary or interagency
2 teams.

3 (4) The council shall evaluate each program site. Each program
4 site shall cooperate in the council's evaluation, and be evaluated
5 based solely on the rate by which child abuse and neglect reports in
6 the defined community are reduced, measured from the rates prior to the
7 implementation of the program. Program sites that demonstrate by
8 empirical evidence that they have been successful in reducing the child
9 abuse and neglect rate in the defined community shall be eligible for
10 consideration if reauthorized funding becomes available.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** HEALTHY FAMILIES--WASHINGTON HOME VISITOR
12 PROGRAM SITES--APPLICATIONS. Applications for healthy families--
13 Washington home visitor program funding shall:

- 14 (1) Define the community requesting funding;
- 15 (2) Designate a lead agency or organization for the program site;
- 16 (3) Contain evidence of the active participation of entities in the
17 community that will participate in the program;
- 18 (4) Demonstrate the participation of parents who are not affiliated
19 with participating entities in the development of the program;
- 20 (5) Describe the specific activities that will be undertaken by the
21 program site;
- 22 (6) Identify the community matching funds required under RCW
23 43.121.080;
- 24 (7) Include statistics on child abuse and neglect rates in the
25 community over at least the past five years. Upon request, the
26 department of social and health services shall assist in the
27 compilation of these statistics for applicants; and
- 28 (8) Include components that will demonstrate sensitivity to
29 religious, cultural, and socioeconomic differences in the defined
30 community.

31 **Sec. 6.** RCW 43.121.070 and 1982 c 4 s 7 are each amended to read
32 as follows:

33 In awarding contracts under RCW 43.121.060 and sections 3 through
34 5 of this act, consideration shall be given to factors such as need,
35 diversity of geographic locations, coordination with or enhancement of
36 existing services, and the extensive use of volunteers in the program.
37 Further consideration shall be given to the extent to which contract

1 proposals are based on prior research that indicates a probability of
2 goal achievement.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** APPROPRIATION. The sum of one million
4 dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for
5 the biennium ending June 30, 1995, from the general fund to the
6 Washington council for the prevention of child abuse and neglect for
7 the healthy families--Washington home visitor program. No single
8 program site shall receive funding in excess of one hundred thousand
9 dollars for the biennium ending June 30, 1995.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** CAPTIONS. Captions as used in this act
11 constitute no part of the law.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** Sections 3 through 5 of this act are each
13 added to chapter 43.121 RCW.

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