

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6056

As Reported by House Committee On:
Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to the department of social and health services coordination of services for children and families in child dependency cases.

Brief Description: Providing for department of social and health services coordination of services for children and families in child dependency cases.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Hargrove, Costa, Stevens and Kohl-Welles).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 3/19/01, 3/28/01 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required, within current funding, to develop methods to coordinate services to children and families involved in child dependency cases.

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:

Many families that become involved with the child dependency system require services from multiple service systems. Services are funded by separate sources and are separately provided, with little coordination or collaboration among the systems. The service systems involved may include criminal justice, child welfare, mental health, substance abuse, and education.

This approach to service delivery can create confusion for these families and form a barrier to resolution of problems. Families are required to understand multiple eligibility requirements and program limitations, and to manage relationships with multiple entities.

Summary of Bill:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required, within current funding, to develop methods to coordinate services to children and families involved in child dependency cases.

Assessment criteria should screen for multiple needs.

The department is required to: coordinate and integrate services addressing multiple needs, develop treatment plans that minimize contacts the client must make, and access training for staff to improve assessment skills related to multiple disciplines.

The department is required to report to the Legislature on methods of coordinating services. Reports are due by region every six months.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: We support anything that improves coordination of services to children and families. In 1992 the Legislature established coordination as one of eight principles of good practice. We still think it is good practice. The department supports the intent and will incorporate this approach in the Kidscreen and No Wrong Door initiatives.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Long, prime sponsor; Laurie Lippold, Children's Home Society; and Marianna Conner, Department of Social and Health Services.