
**Children & Family Services
Committee**

HB 1770

Brief Description: Specifying services that should be available for children with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives O'Brien, Sump, Upthegrove, Hinkle, Hatfield, Eickmeyer, Mielke, Simpson and Edwards.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the Department of Social and Health Services, within existing resources, to offer in-home services at the request of a family at risk of putting their child with developmental disabilities into an out-of-home placement.

Hearing Date: 2/18/03

Staff: Cynthia Forland (786-7152).

Background:

In 1998 the Legislature eliminated the requirement that parents of a child with developmental disabilities, who believed they were no longer able to care for the child in their home, go to court and give up custody of the child to secure an out-of-home placement for the child.

Under the Voluntary Placement Program (VPP), the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) provides a range of services to its clients. These services include:

- Shared parenting between foster care providers and parents on daily routines;
- Medical coverage, under a medical coupon issued from the Foster Care Medical Unit;
- Medically intensive services;
- Coordination with special education services in the local school district when the child meets eligibility criteria;
- Early intervention services;
- Supervised special activities in the community when appropriate;
- Safe, developmentally appropriate care;
- Supervision by a DDD social worker who has responsibility for visiting the child/youth at

- least every 90 days;
- An individual services plan for the child within 60 days from the date that DSHS/DDD assumes responsibility for the child's placement and care; and
- Social work services such as needs assessment, referral, service coordination, and case monitoring.

The services are provided in three types of out-of-home placements:

- Family Foster Care - a private agency foster home or an individual licensed provider;
- Family Group Care - licensed group care facility; and
- Other Residential - community-based supported living and intensive tenant support.

In addition, in-home supports may be available to support a child in the parent's home, including respite services, specialized behavioral support, and other services necessary to support the child's continued living arrangement in the parent's home.

The VPP is not currently accepting new entries into the program, since funding is not available to serve additional children.

Summary of Bill:

The DSHS is authorized to serve children with developmental disabilities, who are eligible for developmental disability services through the DSHS, in their own homes at a level comparable to services provided to persons with developmental disabilities who enter the VPP, excluding room and board. The DSHS must assure that these services assist families in keeping children in the family home until it is appropriate and feasible for the children to live elsewhere.

The DSHS is authorized to offer these services, within existing resources, at the request of a family at risk of placing their child into an out-of-home placement through the VPP.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.