
**Children & Family Services
Committee**

HB 2792

Brief Description: Initiating a process to develop collaboration among public and private providers of child welfare services.

Sponsors: Representatives Kagi, Boldt, Dickerson, Shabro, Darneille, Roach, Pettigrew, Bailey, Cody, McIntire, Moeller, Schual-Berke, Chase, Kenney and Morrell.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to convene DSHS staff and community-based agency staff to develop recommended policies and protocols concerning collaborative decision making and integration of research-based practices.

Hearing Date: 1/26/04

Staff: Cynthia Forland (786-7152).

Background:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is required to provide child welfare services throughout the state. Child welfare services are provided for the purpose of:

- preventing or remedying, or assisting in the solution of, problems that may result in families in conflict, or the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or criminal behavior of children;
- protecting and caring for dependent or neglected children;
- assisting children who are in conflict with their parents, and assisting parents who are in conflict with their children with services designed to resolve those conflicts;
- protecting and promoting the welfare of children, including the strengthening of their own homes where possible or where needed; and
- providing adequate care of children away from their homes in foster family homes or day care or other child care agencies or facilities.

Services provided to children and families in the state are provided by both staff of the DSHS and by community-based agencies under contract with the DSHS, with over 50 percent of the budget of the Children's Administration of the DSHS used to fund contracted services.

Summary of Bill:

The DSHS is required to convene regional and local DSHS staff and community-based agency staff to develop recommended policies and protocols concerning the following:

- collaborative decision making relating to both administrative processes and services provided to families, including, but not limited to, contracting practices, referral practices, and resource allocation; and
- integration of research-based practices into child welfare throughout the state.

The DSHS is required to submit its recommended policies and protocols to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2004.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 20, 2004.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.