

**HB 2395-S - DIGEST**

(AS OF HOUSE 2ND READING 2/09/06)

Finds that there is a lack of common understanding among victim advocates, child welfare authorities, law enforcement, and the courts in dealing with the effects of domestic violence on families. Problems raised by domestic violence are compounded by differing perspectives about how to address its impact on families.

Finds that discussion and resolution of these perspectives is essential to the common goal of protecting children. Efforts to enhance the safety and support of nonoffending parents lead to increased safety and well-being for children.

Finds that in cases of child abuse or neglect, reasonable intervention should include appropriate training for individuals in agencies involved with domestic violence, routine screening for domestic violence, and referrals to appropriate services and relevant intervention for every family member. The legislature acknowledges the efforts of the Washington state gender and justice commission in its work on the Washington state coordinated response protocol project and developing a template for regional and local protocols for coordinated response to child maltreatment and domestic violence.

Acknowledges the efforts of the Washington state gender and justice commission in its work on the Washington state coordinated response protocol project and the template for coordinated response to child maltreatment and domestic violence.

Provides that the department shall, in collaboration with experts in the field of domestic violence and advocates for victims of domestic violence, review its current policies and procedures for intake, risk assessment, referrals, and investigation to determine whether they provide an adequate and appropriate means of screening cases to determine the presence, extent, and impact of domestic violence on the health, safety, and welfare of the children who are the subjects of the reports of alleged abuse and neglect. The review shall include, but is not limited to, methods and tools for:

- (1) Identifying indicators of domestic violence;
- (2) Interviewing techniques that do not increase the risk of danger to the adult victim of domestic violence or child;
- (3) Identifying protective factors and behaviors that may reduce the risk of harm to the child;
- (4) Appropriate interventions and referrals for members of the family.

Requires the department to report to the Washington state coordinated response protocol project by June 1, 2007,

regarding the results of its review and what changes the department made or will be making to improve its screening and investigation of cases, to determine if domestic violence is a contributing factor to child abuse or neglect and any training needed to implement the changes. The Washington state coordinated response protocol project shall report the information received from the department to the legislature by July 1, 2007.