

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1465

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Early Learning & Children's Services

**Title:** An act relating to consultation services for early learning and child care programs.

**Brief Description:** Establishing a pilot program to provide consultation services for early learning and child care programs.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Roberts, Haler, Pettigrew, McDonald, Appleton, Darneille, McIntire, Kagi, P. Sullivan, Walsh, Green, Schual-Berke, Dickerson, Ormsby, Haigh, Morrell, Hasegawa and Lantz.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Early Learning & Children's Services: 2/2/07, 2/9/07 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Establishes a pilot program in at least two communities that provides consultation services in early care and learning settings for responding to young children with special needs.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Hinkle, Pettigrew and Roberts.

**Staff:** Chris Alejano (786-7115).

**Background:**

A 2005 study conducted by Yale University found that three- and four-year olds are expelled from pre-school programs at more than three times the rate school-age children are expelled from school. The most common cause of expulsion was aggression toward other children. The Yale study also found that in classrooms where teachers had no access to a psychologist or psychotherapist, students were expelled about twice as frequently. Researchers concluded

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that the likelihood of expulsion decreases significantly with access to classroom-based behavioral consultants that provide teachers with assistance in behavior management.

The aim of early childhood consultation programs is to build capacity of staff, families, programs, and systems to prevent, identify, treat, and reduce the impact of behavioral problems among children from birth to age 6 and their families. Programs that have used consultation services have shown improvement in a variety of areas, including teacher self-efficacy; teacher understanding of child development and ability to manage difficult behavior; staff ability to work effectively with parents; general quality of care; and children's social and emotional behavior.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

A pilot program called the Growing Skills for Kids is established. The program will be administered by the Department of Early Learning (DEL) for the purpose of integrating into early care and learning settings research-based and promising consultation service practices for responding to infants and young children with challenging behaviors. The pilot program will be implemented in at least two communities selected by the DEL based on the availability or unavailability of comparable consultation and risk factors in the community.

The DEL shall contract with a local child care resource and referral network, public health department, or other community-based agency with knowledge or expertise in infant and child development. Contracted agencies are responsible for coordinating with the community to develop a program model and build a structure for consultation services to occur.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

Adds additional criteria for the selection of consultants.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void if not funded in the budget.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) There exists a body of research on child care consultants and their impact on quality child care. Child care consultants have been able to work with children, families, and child care staff to improve upon difficult child behaviors. There is a need in the state for consultation services with limited resources so the pilot programs serve as an opportunity to learn about this issue. Past funding cuts have limited consultation services. The bill is flexible in that it gives local communities choice to decide what entity will lead the grant.

(Neutral) The University of Washington Center on Infant Mental Health and Development is willing to serve as an additional state resource for the Legislature to seek information about making decisions regarding consultation services and programs.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Kagi; Cathy Garland, Children's Home Society; Ryan Pricco, Washington State Child Care Resource and Referral Network; Bracken Marren, The Opportunity Council; and Lonnie Johns-Brown, Washington Association for Education of Young Children.

(Neutral) Sheri Hill, University of Washington, Center for Infant Mental Health Department; and Sue Winn, Washington State Family Child Care Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.