
HOUSE BILL 1465

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

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

Read first time 01/19/2007. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to consultation services for early learning and
2 child care programs; creating new sections; and providing an expiration
3 date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds there is compelling
6 evidence demonstrating that infants and young children who experience
7 high-quality early care and learning environments exhibit more school
8 readiness skills upon entering the school, including better language
9 skills, more advanced cognitive development, and greater abilities to
10 regulate their behavior. These outcomes are inextricably linked to a
11 child's overall success in school and beyond. The legislature also
12 finds that an increasing number of children in early childhood settings
13 are presenting with significant social, emotional, or behavioral
14 concerns. When caregivers lack adequate support or training to
15 appropriately respond to such behaviors, the result is often that these
16 children are expelled, and thus they experience little or no stability
17 or continuity in their early care and learning experiences. The
18 legislature further finds that social, behavioral, and emotional health
19 are critical components of a child's readiness for school, and when not

1 adequately addressed, these issues can create the potential of
2 significant and lifelong negative consequences. The legislature finds
3 that providing consultation services to early care and learning
4 settings can provide information, education, and support for caregivers
5 and parents to enable them to work more effectively with children
6 presenting challenging or concerning behaviors. The legislature
7 intends to promote the integration of consultation services into early
8 care and learning settings as a means of ensuring school readiness for
9 more children.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The growing skills for kids pilot
11 program is established. The pilot program shall be administered by the
12 department of early learning and shall promote the integration into
13 early care and learning settings of research-based and promising
14 practices for responding to infants and young children with challenging
15 behaviors. The integration of research-based and promising practices
16 shall be done using a collaborative approach to supporting children and
17 their families.

18 (2) The pilot program shall consist of at least two communities
19 selected by the department of early learning on the basis of need as
20 determined by:

21 (a) The relative availability or unavailability of comparable
22 consultation services locally; and

23 (b) The risk factors present in the community, including but not
24 limited to elevated rates of expulsion from early care and learning
25 programs and the prevalence in the community of poverty, homelessness,
26 uninsured families or children, child abuse or neglect, parental mental
27 illness or chemical dependency, adolescent parents, or violence.

28 (3) Funding shall be contracted to a local child care resource and
29 referral network, public health department, or other community-based
30 agency with knowledge or expertise in infant and child development and
31 early care and learning programs. Contracted agencies shall be
32 responsible for:

33 (a) Coordinating with the community to develop a program model
34 consistent with the legislative intent in section 1 of this act and the
35 description of program structure in subsection (4) of this section;

36 (b) Hiring consultants with expertise who are knowledgeable in
37 infant and early childhood development;

- 1 (c) Supervising the work of consultants;
2 (d) Responding to requests for consultation services from early
3 care and learning providers, including licensed family home providers;
4 (e) Maintaining information required for evaluation of program
5 outcomes;
6 (f) Managing funds;
7 (g) Promoting equitable access to consultation services for early
8 care and learning providers in the community; and
9 (h) Reporting to the department of early learning, which shall
10 brief the appropriate committees of the legislature.

11 (4) The pilot program shall provide a structure for consultants to:

12 (a) Consult with caregivers on-site or with case management teams
13 around addressing specific needs related to an individual child or
14 family;

15 (b) Observe children in early care and learning settings to assess
16 functioning relationships with peers and caregivers and the
17 appropriateness of the setting and program for meeting the child's
18 needs;

19 (c) Meet with parents on-site or at home to exchange information
20 and offer developmental guidance and referrals, including but not
21 limited to referrals to clinical and other services for families and
22 children;

23 (d) Provide support and guidance to child care staff through
24 structured opportunities for training, team building, communication,
25 and problem solving that is person-centered and strengths-based; and

26 (e) Coordinate with specialists in public health, infant and
27 toddler early intervention, children's behavioral and emotional health,
28 and others with knowledge and expertise in the care and well-being of
29 young children.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act may be known and cited as the
31 growing skills for kids act.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act expire July
33 1, 2011.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** If specific funding for the purposes of this

1 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
2 June 30, 2007, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
3 void.

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