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SENATE BILL 5830

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State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Kauffman, Brown, Rasmussen, Keiser, Kohl-Welles,  
McAuliffe and Shin

Read first time 02/02/2007. Referred to Committee on Human Services  
& Corrections.

1 AN ACT Relating to home visitation services for families; amending  
2 RCW 43.121.015; adding new sections to chapter 43.121 RCW; and  
3 repealing RCW 43.70.530.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.121 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7 The legislature finds that the years from birth to three are  
8 critical in building the social, emotional, and cognitive developmental  
9 foundations of a young child. Research into the brain development of  
10 young children reveals that children are born learning. The  
11 legislature also finds that the farther behind children are in their  
12 social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development the more  
13 difficult it will be for them to catch up. The legislature further  
14 finds that a significant number of children age birth to five years are  
15 born with two or more of the following risk factors and have a greater  
16 chance of failure in school and beyond: Poverty; single or no parent;  
17 no parent employed full time or full year; all parents with disability;  
18 mother without a high school degree; and no parent fluent in English.  
19 The legislature finds that parents and children involved in home

1 visitation programs exhibit better birth outcomes, enhanced parent and  
2 child interactions, more efficient use of health care services,  
3 enhanced child development, and early detection of developmental  
4 delays, as well as reduced welfare dependence, higher rates of school  
5 completion and job retention, reduction in frequency and severity of  
6 maltreatment, and higher rates of school graduation. The legislature  
7 intends to promote the use of home visitation services as an early  
8 intervention strategy to alleviate the effect risk factors have on  
9 child development.

10 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.121.015 and 1988 c 278 s 4 are each amended to read  
11 as follows:

12 As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings  
13 indicated unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

14 (1) "Child" means an unmarried person who is under eighteen years  
15 of age.

16 (2) "Council" means the Washington council for the prevention of  
17 child abuse and neglect.

18 (3) "Evidence-based program" means a program or practice that is  
19 based on valid and reliable scientific evidence demonstrating that the  
20 practice is effective, adapted when necessary to respond to individual  
21 family needs and cultural values.

22 (4) "Home visitation" means providing services in the permanent or  
23 temporary residence, or in other familiar surroundings, of the family  
24 receiving such services.

25 (5) "Primary prevention" of child abuse and neglect means any  
26 effort designed to inhibit or preclude the initial occurrence of child  
27 abuse and neglect, both by the promotion of positive parenting and  
28 family interaction, and the remediation of factors linked to causes of  
29 child maltreatment.

30 ((+4)) (6) "Promising program" means a program or practice that  
31 presents, based upon preliminary research, potential for becoming an  
32 evidence-based program.

33 (7) "Research-based program" means a program or practice that has  
34 some research demonstrating effectiveness, but that does not yet meet  
35 the standard of evidence-based program.

36 (8) "Secondary prevention" means services and programs that

1 identify and assist families under such stress that abuse or neglect is  
2 likely or families display symptoms associated with child abuse or  
3 neglect.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.121 RCW  
5 to read as follows:

6 Within available funds, the council shall fund evidence-based,  
7 research-based, and promising programs for home visitation for  
8 improving parenting skills and outcomes for children. Home visitation  
9 programs may include but are not limited to programs designed to  
10 address the needs of families with risk factors listed in section 1 of  
11 this act.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** RCW 43.70.530 (Home visitor program) and  
13 1998 c 245 s 75 & 1993 c 179 s 2 are each repealed.

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