

RCW 13.34.830 Child protection and child welfare—Racial disproportionality—Evaluation—Report. (1) Within amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, or within funding made available by private grant or contribution, the Washington state institute for public policy shall evaluate the department of social and health services' use of structured decision-making practices and implementation of the family team decision-making model to determine whether and how those child protection and child welfare efforts result in reducing disproportionate representation of African American, Native American, and Latino children in the state's child welfare system. The institute shall analyze the points in the system at which current data reflect the greatest levels of disproportionality. The institute shall report its findings to the legislature and the department of social and health services by September 1, 2010.

(2) If adequate funding is not made available through state appropriation or through private grant or contribution to simultaneously study the impact on racial disproportionality of both the structured decision-making process and family team decision-making model, the institute shall first study and report on the family team decision-making model. The department of social and health services and the Washington state institute for public policy jointly, shall:

(a) Promptly complete and execute a data-sharing agreement to comply with the department's confidential or records requirements and to provide the institute with data and other information necessary to conduct its evaluation; and

(b) Identify potential sources of private funding to supplement any state-appropriated amounts. [2009 c 213 § 2.]

Findings—2009 c 213: "(1) The legislature finds that research conducted by the Washington state institute for public policy released in June 2008, demonstrates that racial disproportionality exists in Washington's child welfare system and that the greatest disproportionality occurs when the initial referral to child protective services is made and when the decision is made to place a child in out-of-home care. The institute's research also demonstrates that children of African American, Native American, and Latino families have disproportionately longer lengths of stay in foster care.

(2) The legislature finds further that the department of social and health services, in a December 2008 report issued pursuant to chapter 465, Laws of 2007, identified initial recommendations for remediation of racial disproportionality, including examining specific current child welfare practices, structured decision making and family team decision making, to determine whether and how these practices might result in reducing or eliminating racial disproportionality." [2009 c 213 § 1.]