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**Early Learning & Children's  
Services Committee**

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**HB 1365**

**Brief Description:** Providing home visitation services for families.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kagi, Haler, Roberts, Walsh, Appleton, Hunter, McDermott, Santos, Ormsby, Hasegawa, Kenney, Dickerson and Darneille.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Authorizes the Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (WCPCAN) to fund evidence-based and promising home visitation programs for improving parenting skills and outcomes for children

**Hearing Date:** 1/25/07

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

**Background:**

Home visitation programs deliver services in the home to parents and children and aims to alleviate the effects various family risk factors have on child development. Home visitation programs share a focus on the importance of children's early years, the pivotal role parents play in shaping children's lives, and the belief that one of the best ways to reach families with young children is by bringing the services to them, rather than expecting those families to seek assistance in the community. Offering the services in the home eliminates barriers such as transportation and time and provides a more personalized experience by allowing families to interact in a comfortable and natural environment. Current research provides significant evidence of the effectiveness of home visitation programs as an early intervention strategy.

The legislature created the WCPCAN and the Children's Trust Fund in 1982. The WCPCAN is funded by the state's general fund, the federal Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program grant, the Children's Trust Fund and private donations. The WCPCAN is a 14-member, Governor appointed Council legislated to promote prevention of child abuse and neglect, and to encourage and support effective community prevention efforts.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

In 1993, the Legislature enacted HB 1991 authorizing the five agencies comprising the Family Policy Council (the Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Services, the Department of Community, trade, and Economic Development, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Employment Security Department) to develop a program plan for the Home Health Visitor Program for the purpose of preventing child abuse and neglect. Due to funding constraints and other limitations, however, no coordinated program of home visitation services was implemented.

**Summary of Bill:**

The bill makes certain legislative findings regarding the importance of the years between birth to three for human development and the potential benefits of research-based home visitation programs, including reduced incidence of child maltreatment and associated risk factors, and improved outcomes for children and families.

Definitions for the terms *evidence-based practice*, *home visitation*, and *promising practice* are created.

Within available funds, the WCPCAN is granted authority to fund evidence-based and promising home visitation programs designed to improve parenting skills and outcomes for children. Programs selected for funding may include but are not limited to addressing the a broad variety of risk factors.

The home visitor program in the Department of Health statute is repealed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 17, 2007.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.