

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 2574

C 309 L 02

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Establishing demonstration sites for a statewide children's system of care.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Ogden, Dunn, Tokuda, Hankins, O'Brien, Jarrett, Fromhold, Santos, Schual-Berke and Kenney).

House Committee on Children & Family Services
Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections

Background:

The Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program of the federal Center for Mental Health Services provides grants to states, communities, territories, and Indian tribes and tribal organizations to improve and expand systems of care to meet the needs of children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance and their families. The program supports at least 45 sites across the country, including Clark County, Washington.

This federal program promotes the development of service delivery systems through a "system of care" approach. A "system of care" is a coordinated network of agencies and providers that make comprehensive mental health and support services available to children and their families. Decisions about services are made based on the strengths and needs of the family as a whole, as well as the individual child with a mental health problem. Among the other child-serving systems that may participate in a system of care are: special education, substance abuse, juvenile justice, developmental disabilities, and child welfare.

The system of care model is based on three main concepts:

- The mental health service system must be driven by the needs and the preferences of the child and family.
- The management of services must be within a multiagency collaborative environment, within a strong community base.
- The services offered, the agencies participating, and the programs generated must be responsive to children's different cultural backgrounds.

Summary:

The secretary of the DSHS is required to establish demonstration sites for a system of care for children with emotional and behavioral disorders. Criteria for site selection are provided. "Children's system of care" is defined.

The goals of the children's system of care are set forth. Among these goals are: multiagency collaboration, expansion of system capacity, strengthening the role of families in system implementation, changes in financing and contracting, and cost effectiveness.

The secretary of the DSHS is required to assure the collaboration of providers of state operated and contracted services with the sites.

The Legislature states the expectation that local school districts will collaborate with the demonstration sites.

Evaluation criteria for the children's system of care are to be created by a citizens' advisory board and the demonstration site's participating agencies within 60 days of passage of the act. The evaluation criteria must be consistent with the demonstration site goals. The demonstration sites are required to submit an interim report to the House Children & Family Services Committee and to the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee by December 1, 2002. A final report is due to the legislative committees by December 1, 2003.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 98 0
Senate 46 0 (Senate amended)
House 94 0 (House concurred)

Effective: June 13, 2002