
HOUSE BILL 1550

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By Representatives Phillips, Holland, Leonard, Winsley, Riley, Peery, Sprenkle, Cole, Nelson, Locke, G. Fisher, Pruitt, Rust, Rasmussen, Dorn, H. Myers, Jones, Valle, Rayburn, Dellwo, Jacobsen, Fraser, Sheldon, Roland and Anderson.

Read first time February 1, 1991. Referred to Committee on Human Services\Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to mental health; adding a new chapter to Title 71
2 RCW; and making an appropriation.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the need for
5 prevention and early intervention services for children in community
6 mental health programs and schools. It is the intent of the
7 legislature to establish a system of school-based early intervention
8 projects designed for the early detection and prevention of emotional,
9 behavioral, and learning problems in primary grade children with
10 services provided by a team of children's mental health professionals
11 and paraprofessionals. The goal of school-based early intervention
12 projects is to help young children derive maximum profit from the
13 school experience and, in so doing, reduce the incidence of later-life
14 problems of school failure, dropouts, unemployment, delinquency,

1 criminal behavior, substance abuse, or other mental or behavioral
2 problems.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Unless the context clearly requires
4 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this
5 chapter.

6 (1) "Department" means the department of social and health
7 services.

8 (2) "Parent" means the biological or adoptive parent who has legal
9 custody of the child, or a person or agency judicially appointed as
10 legal guardian of the child.

11 (3) "Child" or "children" means children who are not eligible for
12 services under chapter 28A.155 RCW or federal regulations under Public
13 Law 94-142, unless the individualized education program team, as
14 required by chapter 28A.155 RCW or federal regulations under Public Law
15 94-142, determines that the services provided by this chapter are an
16 appropriate related service for a particular handicapped child and that
17 the services are provided in accordance with applicable program
18 standards as required by such laws, rules, and regulations.

19 (4) "Children's mental health professional" means a physician or
20 osteopath licensed under chapter 18.57 or 18.71 RCW to practice
21 psychiatry, a psychologist licensed under chapter 18.83 RCW, or a
22 person who holds at least a master's degree in the social work,
23 behavioral, medical, or nursing sciences or a related field from an
24 accredited college or university and has at least two years of
25 experience in the direct treatment, under the supervision of a mental
26 health professional, of emotionally or behaviorally disturbed children,
27 or an individual who is certificated under RCW 28A.305.130 and chapter
28 28A.410 RCW as a school psychologist, social worker, or elementary
29 counselor.

1 (5) "Paraprofessional" means a person who serves in a supportive
2 role, such as an aide, assistant, trainee, or volunteer, to the
3 children's mental health professional and whose support role is under
4 the direct supervision of the children's mental health professional.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** School-based early intervention projects
6 shall be developed or continued in accordance with the guidelines and
7 principles set forth in this chapter. To this end, school districts
8 may apply to the department of social and health services to be
9 considered for one of the projects outlined in this chapter.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The secretary of social and health
11 services shall develop guidelines with consultation from the
12 superintendent of public instruction for school-based early
13 intervention projects in accordance with this section.

14 (1) The projects shall serve eligible children in grades
15 kindergarten through three.

16 (2) The projects may serve children beyond grade three who could
17 benefit from the program, but the number of children accepted into the
18 program from grades four and above shall not represent more than
19 fifteen percent of the total number of children served.

20 (3) The projects shall serve children referred by either a
21 screening process, a teacher, pupil services personnel, parents, or
22 community agencies such as the children's protective service. If a
23 screening process is used to identify children with early adjustment
24 problems, age-appropriate screening devices including but not limited
25 to teacher behavior rating scales and standardized assessment measures
26 shall be used.

27 (4) Before any screening directly involving the child and before
28 acceptance of a child into a school-based early intervention project,

1 parental consent is required. Parents shall be involved as part of the
2 treatment team and shall be provided assistance in working with the
3 child in the home.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) Each school-based early intervention
5 project shall have a core team consisting of a children's mental health
6 professional and a staff of paraprofessionals. One of the trained
7 paraprofessionals shall act as the project coordinator.

8 (2) The children's mental health professional shall be responsible
9 for:

10 (a) Preparing school personnel for the project and instructing them
11 with respect to project practices;

12 (b) Planning and conducting the project's screening component;

13 (c) Supervising the scoring and interpretation of screening data;

14 (d) Interpreting screening data for parents and teachers;

15 (e) Developing a system for referring children to the project;

16 (f) Making decisions about the acceptability of referred children
17 to the project;

18 (g) Identifying goals and objectives for each referred child and
19 determining if group or individual services would be most appropriate;

20 (h) Developing a home program whereby parents are provided
21 assistance in working with their children and the school;

22 (i) Recruiting, training, and supervising paraprofessionals;

23 (j) Assigning referred children to the paraprofessionals;

24 (k) Conducting periodic conferences to assess children's progress
25 in the project and end-of-year status;

26 (l) Developing a system for referring children from the project to
27 outside public or private community mental health providers licensed
28 under chapter 71.24 RCW; and

1 (m) Evaluating the effectiveness of all paraprofessionals and the
2 project.

3 (3) The project coordinator, working under the direct supervision
4 of the children's mental health professional, shall provide direct
5 services to children and shall be responsible for coordinating
6 communications about the project and its activities among school
7 personnel, children's mental health professionals, project
8 paraprofessionals, and parents. The project coordinator shall also be
9 responsible for other functions such as arrangements for scheduling
10 with the paraprofessionals, arranging case conferences, and maintaining
11 project records.

12 (4) Carefully selected paraprofessionals, working under the direct
13 supervision of the children's mental health professionals, shall
14 provide ongoing helping services in small groups or individually to the
15 children in the early intervention projects. Paraprofessionals may be
16 full or part-time paid employees or unpaid community volunteers,
17 including persons such as students, retired persons, and others with
18 the attributes, time, and interest to qualify them for such work.

19 (5) Paraprofessionals shall be screened by the children's mental
20 health professionals for interpersonal help-giving skills before they
21 are accepted into the project. Children's mental health professionals
22 shall also provide focused training for paraprofessionals selected for
23 the project, dealing with such topics as child development, children's
24 behavior problems, parent-child relationships, intervention skills
25 including individual and group counseling skills, crisis intervention
26 and consultation, and supervision and confidentiality of information
27 and records.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** School districts receiving grants under
29 this program shall demonstrate a capability to refer children to public

1 and private community mental health providers licensed under chapter
2 71.24 RCW when the project determines that such referrals are needed
3 and appropriate. Referrals to community mental health providers shall
4 be made with the knowledge and consent of the children's families.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) No later than September 1, 1991, the
6 department of social and health services shall issue to school
7 districts a request for proposals consistent with the provisions of
8 this chapter.

9 (2) No later than January 1, 1992, the department of social and
10 health services shall contract with at least three school districts to
11 provide school-based early intervention projects for a period of two
12 years. Costs of the projects shall be financed on a basis of seventy
13 percent state mental health funds and thirty percent school district
14 funds. The school district share may be partially financed through
15 cash or in-kind contributions, including staff, space, equipment,
16 materials, and reasonable administrative services.

17 (a) Contributed space to be used for child aide sessions must be
18 comfortable, attractive, and engaging to young children.

19 (b) Equipment and materials may be contributed if they include
20 items that encourage child participation in expressive play.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The department of social and health
22 services shall, on the basis of applications submitted to a request for
23 proposals, select school sites based on the following minimum criteria:

24 (1) Availability of professional and other program staff with
25 related experience and interest in early intervention;

26 (2) Reasonable evidence of future stability of the program and its
27 personnel;

1 (3) Representation within the application site of a wide range of
2 economic, ethnic, and cultural populations;

3 (4) Demonstration of strong support by teaching, pupil services,
4 and administrative school personnel and a written agreement with a
5 community mental health provider licensed under chapter 71.24 RCW for
6 outgoing referrals under section 5(2)(1) of this act;

7 (5) Assurance that grants will supplement existing local resources;
8 and

9 (6) Assurance that the project will not replace or adversely affect
10 any existing special education program the school district is
11 providing.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** The early intervention projects shall be
13 administered by the department of social and health services. A
14 committee at the state level composed of administrators from the
15 department, including the division of mental health and the bureau of
16 children's services, the superintendent of public instruction, local
17 school districts, licensed community mental health providers, and other
18 community representatives shall be formed to assist in choosing
19 projects and provide ongoing coordination, monitoring, and evaluation
20 of the projects.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** The cost of ongoing training and
22 consultation shall be provided by the department of social and health
23 services. Training shall be provided consistent with demonstrated
24 models. One of the original project sites shall become a demonstration
25 training research center in future years.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** The department may adopt rules it deems
27 necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** (1) The sum of two million four hundred
2 thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is
3 appropriated from the general fund to the department of social and
4 health services for the biennium ending June 30, 1993, to carry out the
5 purposes of this act.

6 (2) This appropriation is separate from and in addition to any
7 other appropriations available to the department of social and health
8 services.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** Sections 1 through 11 of this act shall
10 constitute a new chapter in Title 71 RCW.