

SB 5971-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Directs the secretary of the department of social and health services to convene an advisory committee to analyze and make recommendations on the disproportionate representation of children of color in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems of Washington.

Requires the department to collaborate with the Washington institute for public policy and private sector entities to develop a methodology for the advisory committee to follow in conducting a baseline analysis of data from the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to determine whether racial disproportionality and racial disparity exist in these systems.

Requires, at a minimum, the advisory committee to examine and analyze: (1) The level of involvement of children of color at each stage in the state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems, including the points of entry and exit, and each point at which a treatment decision is made;

(2) The number of children of color in low-income or single-parent families involved in the state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems;

(3) The family structures of families involved in the state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems; and

(4) The outcomes for children in the existing systems. This analysis shall be disaggregated by racial and ethnic group, and by geographic region.

Provides that, not later than September 1, 2007, the advisory committee created in this act shall report to the secretary of the department of social and health services on the results of the analysis. If the results of the analysis indicate disproportionality or disparity exists for any racial or ethnic group in any region of the state, the committee, in conjunction with the secretary of the department of social and health services, shall develop a plan for remedying the disproportionality or disparity.

Requires that, not later than January 1, 2008, the secretary shall report the results of the analysis conducted under this act and shall describe the remediation plan required under this act to the appropriate committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over policy and fiscal matters relating to children, families, and human services. Beginning January 1, 2009, the secretary shall report annually to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the implementation of the remediation plan, including any measurable progress made in reducing and eliminating racial disproportionality and disparity in the state's child welfare and juvenile justice systems.