

ENROLLED ACT NO. 28, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIFTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WYOMING
2004 BUDGET SESSION

AN ACT relating to children and families; authorizing a study and development of a plan to address the needs of children and families; specifying duties of the department of family services in conducting the study and plan; requiring recommendations in the plan; requiring reports; providing an appropriation; and providing for an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1.

(a) The department of family services shall develop a comprehensive plan to improve the lives and futures of all children and families in Wyoming. In developing the plan, the department shall collaborate with the business councils of the Northern Arapaho tribe and Eastern Shoshone tribe, state and local agencies, including the department of health, the department of workforce services, the department of employment, the department of education, the department of corrections, the Wyoming business council, the University of Wyoming, Wyoming community colleges, the judiciary and private groups, service providers and businesses, including faith-based organizations and not-for-profit organizations, that express an interest in participating in the development of the plan. The plan shall:

(i) Consider development of mechanisms to employ the use of public and private resources in an efficient manner to meet the needs of children and families;

(ii) Include life span recommendations, including, in particular, prenatal and early childhood intervention and development practices that promote

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meaningful lifetime changes and minimize delays in life skills development;

(iii) Review the current judicial system and make recommendations for reforms that may enable courts to better meet the needs of children and families;

(iv) Examine how schools, community organizations, state agencies and the judicial system can work more closely together to enhance a sharing of resources and information to meet the needs of parents, preschool children and elementary and secondary school students;

(v) Examine causes of the most serious problems facing children and families, including poverty, mental health needs, violence, the lack of adequate health care, the use of tobacco and illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol;

(vi) Examine issues of parent accountability;

(vii) Encourage and support family stability;

(viii) Not discriminate against private service providers in favor of governmental providers; and

(ix) Review the state's existing efforts to determine where present funding and human resources could be employed in a more client-centered and efficient manner.

(b) The department of family services shall submit a preliminary plan with recommendations for any initial legislation to the joint labor, health and social services interim committee no later than November 1, 2004. The final plan shall be submitted no later than October 1, 2005. Any

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recommendations contained in the plan shall be science-based or reflect practices that have a record of success. The plan shall specifically include recommendations:

(i) For institutionalizing collaboration among state and local agencies and the private sector, including the business and faith community to provide seamless and integrated services in which funding is blended, when appropriate, to support client-centered plans that meet the needs of individual children and families;

(ii) For addressing gaps or deficiencies in services;

(iii) For early intervention and other services that seek to strengthen the bond between children and parents and place the primary responsibility for raising children on the family;

(iv) For the consolidation of programs or funding sources where appropriate;

(v) For the development of comprehensive, integrated state and community level approaches that will leave no child unsupported in critical aspects of life, particularly from birth through five (5) years of age;

(vi) That will result in more integrated, efficient and effective programs and cost savings.

(c) The department shall widely disseminate requests, including through electronic media, for the active participation of private groups and organizations in the development of the plans. Before submitting the preliminary and final plans to the joint labor, health and social services interim committee, the department shall issue

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drafts of the plans for public review and hold at least one (1) public meeting in a central location in the state to receive public comments on each plan.

(d) In addition to the appropriation contained in subsection (e) of this section, the department of family services, the department of health, the department of workforce services, the department of employment, the department of education, the department of corrections, the Wyoming business council, the University of Wyoming, Wyoming community colleges and the judiciary may utilize existing resources and apply for any federal or private grants that may be available to augment funding for the study and plan required under this act. The department may also contract with recognized experts and consultants to conduct the study and develop the plan and recommendations required by this act.

(e) There is appropriated from the general fund to the department of family services two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) to implement the purposes of this act.

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Section 2. This act is effective immediately upon completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming Constitution.

(END)

Speaker of the House

President of the Senate

Governor

TIME APPROVED: _____
DATE APPROVED: _____

I hereby certify that this act originated in the House.

Chief Clerk