



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Committee Bill No. 329

LCO No. 5166

05166SB00329KID

Referred to Committee on Select Committee on Children

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) The Department of Social
2 Services, in conjunction with the Commission on Children and other
3 entities with expertise in child development, shall conduct a study to
4 identify best practices to promote the healthy development of children
5 from birth to three years of age and make recommendations on such
6 best practices to the General Assembly in accordance with subsection
7 (c) of this section. The department shall identify best practices in the
8 following areas: Health, mental health, parenting and family support,
9 early care and education.

10 (b) The recommendations may include the following: (1) The
11 implementation of uniform guidelines for the care of such children in
12 child care settings; (2) increased reimbursement rates for such children
13 in state-funded child development centers; and (3) collaboration with
14 the Department of Higher Education to promote careers in early
15 childhood development and education and to improve and expand
16 courses and programs in public institutions of higher education

17 relating to early childhood development and education.

18 (c) Not later than February 1, 2008, the Commissioner of Social
19 Services shall report to the joint standing committee of the General
20 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services and
21 to the select committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of
22 matters relating to children, in accordance with the provisions of
23 section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the best practices and
24 recommendations.

25 Sec. 2. (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) The Commissioner of Social Services
26 shall identify opportunities in the HUSKY Plan, Part A, for the
27 following: (1) Federal reimbursement for early intervention and mental
28 health services for children from birth to three years of age and their
29 families under the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and
30 Treatment program; (2) reimbursement for services for children from
31 birth to three years of age who are considered high risk and have a
32 medical necessity but do not fall under one of the mental health
33 diagnostic categories under said program; (3) implementation of early
34 literacy programs, such as Reach Out and Read and Even Start; (4)
35 increased provider reimbursement rates for comprehensive services,
36 including screening for all children from birth to three years of age,
37 diagnostic assessments, care coordination for such children who
38 require multiple services and support, home services and case
39 management; and (5) expansion of the Healthy Start program.

40 (b) Not later than February 1, 2008, the Commissioner of Social
41 Services shall report his or her findings and recommendations to the
42 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance
43 of matters relating to human services and to the select committee of
44 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
45 children, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
46 general statutes.

47 Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) The Department of Social Services,

48 in conjunction with the Department of Education, shall expand, within
49 available appropriations, the nationally recognized Parents as Teachers
50 program in (1) family resource centers, established pursuant to section
51 10-4o of the general statutes, (2) child development centers, as defined
52 in section 10a-194c of the general statutes; and (3) other appropriate
53 settings in order to promote family literacy and parenting skills.

54 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall make
55 recommendations for improved coordination of integrated family
56 support services with a home visiting component to meet the needs of
57 families with children beginning from prenatal to five years of age and
58 to provide a continuum of services and supports including information
59 for families, parenting education and clinical treatment.

60 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) The Commissioner of Social
61 Services, in conjunction with the Commissioners of Education and
62 Public Health, shall establish local sites in existing child development
63 centers, family resource centers and other appropriate settings to
64 provide parents with a single point of access to information that link
65 parents to a broader network of available state resources.

66 Sec. 5. (*Effective July 1, 2007*) The Commissioner of Social Services
67 shall conduct a study on the development and implementation of a
68 family-based service system for children from birth to five years of age
69 to improve the coordination of services for such children and their
70 families. Local or regional school readiness councils, established
71 pursuant to section 10-16r of the general statutes, shall facilitate the
72 coordination of the delivery of services of such system. Such system
73 shall ensure children from birth to five years of age reach
74 developmental milestones, and have access to quality health and
75 mental health services and child care in all settings, and that families
76 have access to appropriate support services such as parenting
77 programs. Not later than February 1, 2008, the commissioner shall
78 report its findings to the joint standing committee of the General
79 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services,

80 education and appropriations and to the select committee of the
81 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to children, in
82 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

83 Sec. 6. (Effective July 1, 2007) The sum of ___ dollars is appropriated
84 to the Department of Social Services, from the General Fund, for the
85 fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, for purposes of section 3 of this act.

86 Sec. 7. (Effective July 1, 2007) The sum of ___ dollars is appropriated
87 to the Department of Education, from the General Fund, for the fiscal
88 year ending June 30, 2008, for increased funding for early childhood
89 development services with priority given to home and community-
90 based services and programs that offer health and mental health
91 services for children from birth to five years of age.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To improve and provide funding for early childhood services and programs.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]