

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2630
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Juvenile Justice & Family Issues
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Evidence-based parent education programs have undergone rigorous evaluations and have demonstrated positive outcomes, such as lowering rates of child maltreatment and risk factors associated with child maltreatment. Interest groups assert, however, that most parenting classes in Texas are not evidence-based and have not been shown to improve parenting skills, decrease rates of social, emotional, and behavioral problems in children, or lower rates of child maltreatment. The groups contend that funding programs that have not been proven to be effective is not a good use of state funds and diverts valuable resources from programs that could better improve the well-being of Texas families.

The groups note that the Texas Legislature made great strides in strengthening prevention and early intervention programs and recognizing the importance of evidence-based programs by creating the Texas Home Visiting Program but they maintain that the need for quality standards for state-funded parent education classes, especially for programs that high-risk parents are mandated to complete, remains. C.S.H.B. 2630 seeks to provide more effective parent education programs in Texas.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 4 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2630 amends the Family Code to require a parenting education program provided by the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) or ordered by a court under statutory provisions relating to child welfare services or prevention and early intervention services to be an evidence-based program or a promising practice program and establishes the characteristics of both types of programs.

C.S.H.B. 2630 requires DFPS to ensure that a parenting education program achieves favorable behavioral outcomes in at least two of the following areas: improved cognitive development of children; increased school readiness of children; reduced child abuse, neglect, and injury; improved child safety; improved social-emotional development of children; improved parenting skills, including nurturing and bonding; improved family economic self-sufficiency; reduced parental involvement with the criminal justice system; and increased paternal involvement and support. The bill requires DFPS to adopt outcome indicators to measure the effectiveness of such parenting education programs in achieving desired outcomes. The bill authorizes DFPS to work

directly with the model developer of a parenting education program to identify appropriate outcome indicators for the program and to ensure that the program substantially complies with the model. The bill requires DFPS to develop internal processes to share information with parenting education programs to assist DFPS in analyzing the performance of the programs. The bill requires DFPS to use the information obtained to monitor parenting education programs, to continually improve the quality of the programs, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs.

C.S.H.B. 2630 requires DFPS, not later than December 1, 2016, to prepare and submit a report on state-funded parenting education programs to the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives with jurisdiction over child protective services. The bill requires the report to include the status and a description of the parenting education programs implemented and a description of the models associated with the programs and information on the number of families served by the programs, including their demographic information. The bill's provisions establishing the initial reporting requirement expire January 1, 2017.

C.S.H.B. 2630 requires DFPS, not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, to prepare and submit a report on state-funded parenting education programs to the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives with jurisdiction over child protective services and sets out the information required to be included in the report. The bill authorizes the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission to adopt rules as necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

C.S.H.B. 2630 requires a parenting education program, if DFPS requires or a court orders parenting skills training services through the program, to be an evidence-based or promising practice parenting education program that is provided in the community in which the family resides, if available. The bill requires DFPS to ensure that not less than 75 percent of the money appropriated for such parenting education programs funds evidence-based programs and that the remainder of that money funds promising practice programs. The bill requires DFPS to actively seek and apply for any available federal funds to support parenting education programs provided to at-risk families. The bill specifies that the evidence-based programs funded by DFPS include parenting education, home visitation, family support services, mentoring, positive youth development programs, and crisis counseling offered by community-based organizations that are designed to prevent or ameliorate child abuse and neglect and includes other persons determined appropriate by DFPS among the entities authorized to offer such programs.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2630 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED	HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
SECTION 1. Section 264.201(d), Family Code, is amended.	SECTION 1. Same as introduced version.
SECTION 2. Chapter 265, Family Code, is amended.	SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 3. Section 265.004, Family Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-1) and (a-2) to read as follows:

(a) To the extent that money is appropriated for the purpose, the department shall fund parenting education [evidence-based] programs offered by community-based organizations that are designed to prevent or ameliorate child abuse and neglect. The [evidence-based] programs funded under this subsection may be offered by a child welfare board established under Section 264.005, a local governmental board granted the powers and duties of a child welfare board under state law, ~~[or]~~ a children's advocacy center established under Section 264.402, or other persons determined appropriate by the department.

(a-1) The department shall ensure that not less than 75 percent of the money appropriated for parenting education programs under Subsection (a) funds evidence-based programs described by Section 265.051(b) and that the remainder funds promising practice programs described by Section 265.051(c).

(a-2) The department shall actively seek and apply for any available federal funds to support parenting education programs provided under this section.

SECTION 4. Chapter 265, Family Code, is amended.

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

SECTION 3. Section 265.004, Family Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-1) and (a-2) to read as follows:

(a) To the extent that money is appropriated for the purpose, the department shall fund evidence-based programs, including parenting education, home visitation, family support services, mentoring, positive youth development programs, and crisis counseling, offered by community-based organizations that are designed to prevent or ameliorate child abuse and neglect. The [evidence-based] programs funded under this subsection may be offered by a child welfare board established under Section 264.005, a local governmental board granted the powers and duties of a child welfare board under state law, ~~[or]~~ a children's advocacy center established under Section 264.402, or other persons determined appropriate by the department.

(a-1) The department shall ensure that not less than 75 percent of the money appropriated for parenting education programs under Subsection (a) funds evidence-based programs described by Section 265.051(b) and that the remainder of that money funds promising practice programs described by Section 265.051(c).

(a-2) The department shall actively seek and apply for any available federal funds to support parenting education programs provided under this section.

SECTION 4. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 5. The changes in law made by this Act apply only to a program provided under Chapter 265, Family Code, on or after the effective date of this Act.

SECTION 6. Same as introduced version.