



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #270

Primary Prevention Staff (Child Abuse Neglect and Prevention Board)

[LFB 2001-03 Budget Summary: Page 159, #2]

CURRENT LAW

The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board awards grants to fund early childhood family education centers (family resource centers) and organizations throughout the state for community-based child abuse and neglect prevention programs. In addition, the Board promotes statewide public awareness of the need for child abuse and neglect prevention through publications, statewide media campaigns and videos. The Board's staff consists of 4.0 positions, including a director, a communications specialist, a social services specialist and a program assistant.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$58,600 FED in 2001-02 and \$66,800 FED in 2002-03 to support 1.0 social services specialist position, beginning in 2001-02, to serve as a single point for resource and referral information pertaining to primary prevention of child abuse and neglect. The position would be supported by federal funds the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) receives under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act and transfers to the Board.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The number of Wisconsin communities with a primary prevention resource center increased from 12 in 1990 to 90 in 2000. The Board attributes this increase to the recognition that changes in social structure in the last 50 years have reduced the informal natural supports that extended families provide to help parents raise their children. For example, in the 1940's, most family members lived within 100 miles of each other, the average person lived in the same

neighborhood for a lifetime and the neighborhood served as a social outlet for people. Today, blood relatives frequently live more than 100 miles from each other, the average person moves every five years and contact with neighbors is often rare, nonexistent or avoided. These changes in social structure have resulted in the development of family support systems within communities.

2. The Board is currently piloting a family resource center outcome evaluation for use at all family resource centers in Wisconsin. Initial results from the 1999-00 survey data indicate statistically significant outcomes. Specifically, participants completing the post-test survey reported that, as a result of participating in family resource center programs and services:

- 58% are more knowledgeable about effective parenting techniques;
- 70% are more familiar with the community resources available to their families;
- 45% have learned positive ways to handle their anger;
- 42% reported that relationships within their family have improved;
- 74% will contact the family resource center if they need additional parenting information; and
- 73% received the information or support that they were seeking from the family resource center.

The final report on data collected during 2000-01 will be available in the fall of 2001.

3. Establishing a resource and referral center relating to the prevention of child abuse and neglect was discussed during meetings of the 1997 Special Committee on Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. It was noted then that many communities were anxious to start building on the existing pieces of prevention initiatives in their communities and wanted more information to do so. In addition, members indicated that process and outcomes evaluation and research components are important to furthering child abuse and neglect prevention. The Special Committee's discussion concluded that the resource and referral center would: (a) provide information and materials to parents, agencies and other interested individuals on child abuse and neglect prevention programs and research; and (b) provide technical assistance to communities that build or expand prevention programs.

4. The position recommended by the Governor would: (a) be responsible for collecting, managing and distributing child abuse and neglect prevention information to other state agencies, communities and programs; (b) be a single source resource for state agencies to develop comprehensive parent education programs and information, especially through collaboration with the technical assistance team for the Brighter Futures initiative at DHFS; (c) help eliminate duplication of research and evaluation efforts by other agencies; (d) become the one-stop location for up-to-date resources and referrals; (e) have the capacity to offer on-site technical assistance to communities; and (f) assist in the development of community-based family resource and support

programs.

5. Currently, there is no agency or person solely responsible for responding to questions and for providing information and technical assistance to communities, programs and agencies. Under the Governor's recommendation, this function would be assigned to the Board. This placement appears to be appropriate, since the Board is the only state agency whose sole purpose is child abuse and neglect prevention. In addition, the Board is currently already performing these duties on a limited basis. Staff at the Board indicated that they receive an average of three calls a week for information on child abuse and neglect prevention programs. In response, the Board sends out informational packets and verbally responds to informational requests on child abuse and neglect prevention and positive parenting.

6. Under the Governor's recommendation, this position would be supported with federal funds DHFS receives under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act. These funds are grants to states for promoting safe and stable families under four categories of services: (a) family preservation services; (b) community-based family support services; (c) time-limited family reunification services; and (d) adoption promotion and support services. The new position would be an allowable use of Title IV-B funds under the second category, family support services, which are intended to reach families that are not yet in crisis and to prevent child abuse or neglect from occurring.

7. In Wisconsin, Title IV-B funds are currently used to support the safe and stable families grant program to counties and tribes, adoption services (as part of the special needs adoption partnership) and state administration costs. In federal fiscal year 2000-01, Wisconsin received \$3,113,700 FED in Title IV-B funds.

8. Based on reestimates of supplies and rent costs, the funding provided in the bill could be reduced by \$10,100 FED in 2001-02 and \$4,200 in 2002-03 so that a total of \$48,500 FED in 2001-02 and \$62,600 FED in 2002-03 would be provided to support the new social services special position.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Modify the Governor's recommendation by deleting \$10,100 FED in 2001-02 and \$4,200 FED in 2002-03 to reflect reestimates of supplies and services and rent costs associated with the position.

Alternative 1	FED
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	- \$14,300

2. Delete provision.

<u>Alternative 2</u>	<u>FED</u>
2001-03 FUNDING (Change to Bill)	- \$125,400
2002-03 POSITIONS (Change to Bill)	- 1.00

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Arsenault