

S B

169

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title : An Act relating to the
training of foster parents.
Sponsor : Fischer
Requestor : _____

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services
BRU : _____
Components : _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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REVENUE	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

N/A

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Chase, ACSW, Director
Division: Family & Youth Services

Phone: 465-3170
Date: _____

Approved by Commissioner: Myra M. Munson, Commissioner
Agency: Health & Social Services

Date: 5/6/88

Distribution (by preparer):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)

Alaska State Legislature

Senator Paul A. Fischer
Senate District D
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State Senate

While in Juneau
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-3791

To: Representative Niilo Koponen &
Representative Johnny Ellis
Chairmen House HESS Committee

From: Senator Paul Fischer *PF*

Subject: SB 169, Foster Parent Training

Date: April 29, 1987

SB 169 would require potential foster parents to undergo training approved by the department before they are issued a license to run a foster home.

Many foster parents apply for licensing with the department hoping to contribute and help children in need of a stable home environment. Many of them are unaware of the time, commitment and potential problems both the foster child and the Division of Family & Youth Services might impose upon them.

It has been well established that foster parents who know what they are getting into are much more likely to go the distant without "burning out" due to the unanticipated trials and tribulations of foster care. Unanticipated burn-outs are very disruptive for both the child and the foster parents.

The subjects of such training might include:

- legalities and liabilities of foster care,
- often present problems of foster children, and
- services and role of DFYS.

Foster care is the most cost effective and practical care available for displaced children. The only other alternative is some type of institutional care which does not provide the same nurturing of a home environment, not to mention the prohibitive expense.

Attached please find a more detailed description of the courses content.

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date referred: 4/3/87

FURTHER REFERRALS: Finance

DATE: 5/6/87

The Health, Education and Social Services Committee has considered

HB 242

"An Act relating of the training of foster parents."

RECOMMENDS:

- replace with CS HB 242 the same title
- attached amendment(s) a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

- fiscal impact same as previous fiscal note published _____
- zero fiscal note same as previous zero fiscal note published _____
- zero with analysis

SIGNING DO PASS:

Roll E. Kelly

Bryce A. Hawley

J. Ellis

Nita Kapanen

Bill Anderson

David D. Bailey

Mark Greenberg

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

J. Ellis
 NCC - Chairman's signature
Nita Kapanen

POSITION PAPER

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 169

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the training of foster parents."

The Division of Family and Youth Services (DFYS), within the Department of Health and Social Services, has primary responsibility for foster placements. On June 30, 1986, there were 738 children in foster care and 948 state licensed foster homes.

The Division is very supportive of foster parent training. Placement in out-of-home care is, unfortunately, a reality for many of Alaska's children, and if they are to receive not only the food, shelter and nurturance that they need, but an environment which will assist them in meeting their own special needs, training for foster parents is not only important, but essential.

The goal of foster parent training is to increase knowledge, and enhance skills of foster parents to work with children who usually enter foster care with a number of emotional and behavioral disturbances. These children often require specialized skills and foster parents, as significant participants in the child welfare service delivery system, are better equipped to participate as an active member of the service team when appropriately trained. In addition, national studies in other states have shown that foster parent retention is significantly lengthened when foster parents receive appropriate training.

There is no simple formula for determining who has the greatest need and the Department is supportive of a requirement of a minimal level of training which will be required of all foster parents. The Division of Family and Youth Services is presently developing foster care regulations which will be ready for public hearing by July 1, 1987. All foster parents statewide will receive a copy of the proposed regulations and will have the opportunity to comment on the appropriateness and feasibility of training requirements, especially in rural locations. Through regulations, levels of training for different types of care and different geographical areas of the State can be established.

RECOMMENDED:

Yvonne M. Chase
Yvonne M. Chase, Director
Division of Family
and Youth Services

DATE:

April 10, 1987

APPROVED:

Myra M. Munson
Myra M. Munson, Commissioner
Department of Health
and Social Services

DATE:

April 15, 1987

STATE OF ALASKA 1987 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST: _____

Bill Version: CS SB 169
Publish Date: _____

Revision Date: _____
Title: An Act relating to the
training of foster parents.
Sponsor: Fischer
Requestor: _____

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services
BRU: Child and Youth Custody
Components: Foster Care

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92
PERSONAL SERVICES	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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REVENUE	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

n/a

Prepared by: Yvonne M. Chase, Director *Ymc*
Division: Division of Family and Youth Services

Phone: 465-3170
Date: 4/9/87

Approved by Commissioner: Myra M. Munson, Commissioner
Agency: Department of Health and Social Services

Date: 4/15/87

Distribution (by preparer):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)
- Senate Secretary



Alaska Foster Parents Association

P. O. BOX 140651 • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508



FEB 13 1987

MANDATORY TRAINING FOR FOSTER PARENTS 1987

This issues is a continuing priority of Alaska Foster Parent Association to promote the best care and treatment possible for children and youth in foster care.

POSITION:

A bill must be introduced and passed to require education for foster parents and must include:

1. Initial training (orientation) before licensing including all pertinent information on agency policies, what to expect from foster children/youth, and well-rounded information on all aspects of foster care.
2. Ongoing in-service training with a minimum of 15 hours per family per year, with a minimum of 5 hours per adult. The type of training needs to be flexible so foster parents can acquire knowledge they need to care for the type of children they take, and to allow for various training modes (such as books, community education, video tapes, etc.)

JUSTIFICATION:

See problem statement on next page. Mandatory initial and in-service training will not only provide better care and treatment for children, but helps prevent burn-out of foster parents. In states where mandatory training has been effect for several years, they find that fewer foster parents are recruited, but more experienced and knowledgeable foster parents remain in the program with an overall result of the same numbers of foster parents. However, those foster parents are experienced and take less time from the agency and the community. It reduces costs for continual recruitment.

Regulation changes have been proposed by two task forces and Alaska Foster Parent Association since 1984, but we feel this must have the force of law to implement.

FUNDING: Currently AFPA has a statewide training grant for \$105,000., which is part of the funds allocated in the DFYS budget for support and training of foster parents that has existed for at least 4 years. Part of those funds have been used for other purposes, but could be reallocated for training. Other training is available, so additional funds should not be required for at least a initial program that could be later expanded as needed.



Alaska Foster Parents Association

P. O. BOX 8651 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508

January 1985

MANDATORY TRAINING FOR FOSTER PARENTS



PROBLEM: Prospective foster parents are being licensed and receiving children/youth without understanding the unique problems and care needed by children/youth in foster care; understanding the foster care system with its regulations and policies that affect the every day life of the foster parent and children; or a real commitment to the realities of foster care.

Children/youth who are in foster care have unique problems not usually encountered by the raising of your own children because of the life situations resulting in their placement in foster care. Their attitudes, ideas, development level (including emotional and educational, as well as physical), concepts of the world are impaired. They are from neglective, abusive, alcoholic, manipulative situations--disfunctional families. Foster parents need the knowledge to be able to deal with situations, feelings, and concepts the average parent will never encounter.

Since children/youth in foster care are in the custody of the Division of Family & Youth Services, or private agencies, foster parents must operate their families according to the laws, regulations, policies and procedures of the state plus coordinate their dealings with the youth with the social worker.

Foster parents "burn-out" quickly in the realities of dealing with disfunctional families and their children if they are not very prepared in what to expect and how to deal with those situations. If a foster family quit a child/youth must be moved, or the family finds they cannot deal with certain situations that are common to foster children/youth. If agency policies are not known or understood foster families "give up" or are eased out of the system--again to the detriment of children/youth.

RECOMMENDATION: The Division of Family & Youth Services is contemplating adding foster care training to regulations, but we feel it must have the force of a law change to insure inclusion.

The law (bill) should include 3 factors:

1. Initial training before licensing including all pertinent information on agency policies, what to expect from children, and well rounded information on "What is Foster Parenting".
2. Ongoing training with a minimum of 15 hours per family--5 minimum per adult.
3. Inability to be waived for certain families or locations.

ATTACHMENTS: Similar recommendation to the Division of Family & Youth Service from the 1977-78 Foster Family Care Task Force.
Expanded recommendation with specific topics of training

Add to Foster Care regulations:

- (1) Prospective foster parents shall attend pre-licensing training. This training should contain the following information:
 - a. What is Foster Parenting
Emergency, short and long term care
Why and how children arrive in Foster care
How Foster children differ from natural children
 - b. How children react to placement
Separation issues
 - c. Agency expectations
Roles, rights and responsibilities of:
Social workers
Placement agency
Foster parents
 - d. Natural parents
Visitations
Feelings and attitudes
Parental rights
 - e. Legal issues
Legal status of child/youth
Juvenile judges and Guardian ad Litem
Foster parent legal issues:
Placement and Licensing appeals
Foster parent Bill of Rights
 - f. Placement issues
Information needed at placement:
Medical release
Medicaid coupons
Clothing vouchers
Billing authorizations
Emergency placements
Foster parent stipend:
Philosophy and use
 - g. Discipline
 - h. Licensing procedure
Application
Standard by standard
Home visit
Foster parent handbook
- (2) To remain licensed, foster care givers must acquire a minimum of 15 hours of on-going training relating to foster care; to be shared between the adult care givers with a minimum of 5 hours for each adult. This training may be acquired through:
 - a. local foster parent educational meetings
 - b. Agency sponsored training sessions
 - c. Alaska Foster Parent Association conferences and/or workshops
 - d. Areawide foster parent conferences co-sponsored by Alaska Foster Parent Association and local associations
 - e. National Foster Parent Association conferences and/or workshops
 - f. Community offered child/youth related training
 - g. Institutes of higher learning
 - h. Books, films, video tapes related to foster care and/or child/youth management
- (3) This regulation is unable to be waived. Each area agency is responsible to maintain materials and offer information and training free of charge to prospective and currently licensed foster parents.



House

TESTIMONY FOR ~~SENATE~~ HESS COMMITTEE
~~MARCH 10, 1987~~

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to request your total support for ~~SB 165~~, to provide for training for foster parents.

HB 242

Alaska Foster Parent Association has been actively seeking an addition to statutes and regulations to require training of foster parents for the past 7 years. We believe that orientation and ongoing training will greatly upgrade the quality of services provided to children and youth in the foster care system.

A research project was completed in approximately 1980 through the Social Work Department of the University of Alaska, Anchorage that explored why foster parents really quit being foster parents. A high percentage of former foster parents stated that foster care was not what they thought it was going to be or they did not know how to cope with all the various aspects of foster caring, therefore they resigned. When a foster parent quits it usually results in a move of their foster children to another home, which damages the children emotionally, not to even mention the feelings of guilt, failure, and defeat of both the foster parents, their family, and foster children. Another research paper completed in 1986 in Juneau showed training to be a high priority of both foster parents and social workers.

Training for foster parents, nationwide, has been found to have the following benefits:

1. Preventing or reducing the movement of children between foster homes.
2. Retention of foster parents, therefore, more stable placements of children and more experienced foster homes available to accept placement of children.
3. Foster parents who can take more responsibility, therefore, relieving the social worker who must deal with crisis first and ongoing needs as they can find time.
4. Insuring foster parents know how to meet the needs of the children and youth placed with them--therefore providing treatment and help to those children rather than childcare.
5. Enhances the ability of foster parents to work as team members with others involved with the child, including the birth parent, social worker, psychologist, teachers, etc.

HB 242 2/6

6. Enables foster parents to detect potential or actual problem areas before they escalate, therefore enhancing prevention of future abuse, neglect, delinquency, or other problems that will cost the state even more to treat.

Over half of the other states in the United States have mandatory training requirements for foster homes in recognition of these benefits.

Alaska Foster Parent Association and its 10 local chapters support this bill as written. We wish to point out a few features of this bill:

It requires potential foster parents to receive initial orientation to prepare them to be foster parents and to screen out those applicants for which foster care is not what they thought it was. The many states that have this mandatory orientation have found that fewer foster parents are licensed, but those that are licensed stay longer in the system and are capable of handling more difficult children, therefore actually increasing the numbers of foster parents in a couple of years time.

This bill also requires each foster family to acquire 15 hours of ongoing training per year, with each adult to acquire a minimum of 5 hours. This will insure that all adults in the household have a good base of knowledge about issues in fostering. This requirement should be easily reached by existing and future foster families through resources already available--we are not asking for the Department to provide this training, as we feel the resources are already available in most communities and can be tapped by foster parents based on the area they feel they need more information. For example, a foster parent taking teens would find in the community workshops or classes dealing with things such as discipline, alcohol or drugs, or teen pregnancies. A foster family working with sexually abused children would look for classes on detecting or treating the sexually abused child.

This bill should not require any fiscal notes. For orientation we have licensing workers and experienced foster parents who can facilitate orientation training using prepared curriculums such as NOVA training from NOVA University or ISSUES IN FOSTERING from Eastern Michigan University. Several DFYS offices throughout the state are currently providing such training using licensing worker-foster parent co-trainers in the evening once a week and giving that licensing worker comp-time the next morning. This would require no new funding.

For ongoing training most communities have numerous training workshops, seminars, or classes each year through such places as crisis centers, sexual abuse or women's centers, native organizations, mental health, colleges, etc. Alaska Foster Parent Association has a \$105,000. contract to provide training statewide, which offers a state conference of 12-20 hours of training, a newsletter with educational

112 2112 2/13

materials quarterly, local training conferences in at least 10 areas of the state, and local associations which host monthly training sessions of approximately 2 hours each. AFPA has also developed a packet of 15 training flyers to cover most aspects of foster care and has a library of books and materials for hand-out or lending. Most training on the state level has been video-taped and is available to local associations or to individuals. Numerous books, curriculums, and video and cassette tapes could be available to foster parents who cannot reach other training. AFPA has explored the idea of having videoed training put on educational television particularly to the bush communities, and also translating many materials into the various languages of Alaska.

It would be ideal if the contract amount with Alaska Foster Parent Association was increased, to better meet our goals of training, BUT we can minimumly meet mandantory training with existing funds in the DFYS budget.

We encourage you to support SB-169 and to pass it out of committee today. The Foster children and youth of Alaska deserve to have the best care possible, which is through trained, knowledgeable, and experienced foster parents.

If you have further questions I would be happy to answer or feel free to contact AFPA legislative liason Miriam Sumner. Thank you.

HB 242



Handwritten notes: It was signed by local FPA... agency. It adds!

Your packet should include a copy of a petition signed by 41 individuals, 12 representing local FPA or agencies that we urge you to consider

Miriam Sumner