

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1143
By: Dukes
Juvenile Justice & Family Issues
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerned parties, noting that the teen birth rate for girls in foster care is twice that of the general population, assert that foster youth are particularly vulnerable to becoming teenage parents due to their history of trauma, unstable family environments, and inconsistent therapeutic services and supports. In an effort to address these concerns, C.S.H.B. 1143 seeks to improve the services and supports provided to these vulnerable children.

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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1143 amends the Family Code to require the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to collect information on the number of children in the managing conservatorship of DFPS who are minor parents and the number of children in the managing conservatorship of DFPS who are also the children of minor parents in the managing conservatorship of DFPS. The bill requires DFPS to collect statistics regarding the age, ethnicity, type of substitute care placement, county of residence, and length of time in substitute care of each child who is a minor parent and each child of a minor parent in the managing conservatorship of DFPS. The bill requires DFPS to prepare an annual report on the collected information and to make the report available on the DFPS website. The bill prohibits the report from including any individually identifiable information regarding a minor parent or child who is the subject of information in the report.

C.S.H.B. 1143 requires DFPS at developmentally appropriate stages to provide to children in the managing conservatorship of DFPS who are pregnant or who are minor parents information on and support in providing safe environments for children. The bill requires DFPS to provide parenting skills training and other services, including depression screening services, to children in the managing conservatorship of DFPS who are pregnant or minor parents. The bill requires DFPS to appropriately recruit, prepare, train, and support individuals, including foster parents, substitute caregivers, and mentors, who work directly with children who are pregnant or minor parents in the managing conservatorship of DFPS to ensure the individuals provide the specialized care and support needed by those children. The bill requires DFPS, as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date, to collect the information, prepare the report, and provide the services necessary to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1143 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

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.126 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.126. PREGNANCY AND PARENTING INFORMATION AND SERVICES. (a) The department shall collect information:

(1) on the number of children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are minor parents;

(2) on the number of children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are also the children of minor parents as described by Subdivision (1); and

(3) with respect to each child who is a minor parent and each child of a minor parent in the managing conservatorship of the department, statistics regarding each child's:

(A) ethnicity;

(B) type of substitute care placement;

(C) county of residence; and

(D) length of time in substitute care.

(b) The department shall prepare a quarterly report on the information collected under Subsection (a) and make the report available on the department's Internet website. The report may not include any individually identifiable information regarding a minor parent or child who is the subject of information in the report.

(c) The department at developmentally appropriate stages shall provide to children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are pregnant or who are minor parents information on and support in providing safe environments for children, including information and support regarding:

(1) safe sleeping arrangements;

(2) suggestions for childproofing potentially dangerous settings in a home;

(3) methods to cope with crying infants;

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.126 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.126. PREGNANCY AND PARENTING INFORMATION AND SERVICES. (a) The department shall collect:

(1) information on the number of children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are minor parents;

(2) information on the number of children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are also the children of minor parents as described by Subdivision (1); and

(3) with respect to each child who is a minor parent and each child of a minor parent in the managing conservatorship of the department, statistics regarding each child's:

(A) age;

(B) ethnicity;

(C) type of substitute care placement;

(D) county of residence; and

(E) length of time in substitute care.

(b) The department shall prepare an annual report on the information collected under Subsection (a) and make the report available on the department's Internet website. The report may not include any individually identifiable information regarding a minor parent or child who is the subject of information in the report.

(c) The department at developmentally appropriate stages shall provide to children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are pregnant or who are minor parents information on and support in providing safe environments for children, including information and support regarding:

(1) safe sleeping arrangements;

(2) suggestions for childproofing potentially dangerous settings in a home;

(3) methods to cope with crying infants;

(4) selection of appropriate substitute caregivers;

(5) a child's early brain development, including the importance of meeting an infant's developmental needs by providing positive experiences and avoiding adverse experiences;

(6) the importance of paternal involvement in a child's life; and

(7) the benefits of reading and talking to young children.

(d) The department shall provide parenting skills training and other services, including depression screening services, to children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are pregnant or minor parents.

(e) The department shall appropriately recruit, prepare, train, and support individuals, including foster parents, substitute caregivers, and mentors, who work directly with children who are pregnant or minor parents in the managing conservatorship of the department to ensure the individuals provide the specialized care and support needed by those children.

SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the Department of Family and Protective Services shall collect the information, prepare the report, and provide the services necessary to implement Section 264.126, Family Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

(4) selection of appropriate substitute caregivers;

(5) a child's early brain development, including the importance of meeting an infant's developmental needs by providing positive experiences and avoiding adverse experiences;

(6) the importance of paternal involvement in a child's life; and

(7) the benefits of reading and talking to young children.

(d) The department shall provide parenting skills training and other services, including depression screening services, to children in the managing conservatorship of the department who are pregnant or minor parents.

(e) The department shall appropriately recruit, prepare, train, and support individuals, including foster parents, substitute caregivers, and mentors, who work directly with children who are pregnant or minor parents in the managing conservatorship of the department to ensure the individuals provide the specialized care and support needed by those children.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.