

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Date: April 8, 1998 Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: Children and Families

	<u>Analyst</u>	<u>Staff Director</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>Barnes</u>	<u>Whiddon</u>	<u>CF</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
2.	<u>Wilson</u>	<u>Wilson</u>	<u>GO</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
3.	_____	_____	<u>WM</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

**I. Summary:**

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 1660 creates, within available resources, the Healthy Families Florida program, a voluntary home visitation program for families of newborns who are assessed at risk for child abuse or neglect. The Department of Children and Family Services (the department) would contract with a private, non-profit corporation to develop and implement the Healthy Families Florida Program. The bill creates the Healthy Families Florida Advisory Committee to assist and advise the corporation and assure coordination and collaboration with state and private agencies and organizations. The bill requires that the department and the Agency for Health Care Administration seek a federal waiver to secure Title XIX matching funds. The department and Agency for Health Care Administration may implement the waiver only if it permits the state to limit enrollment or limit the amount, duration, and scope of services to ensure that expenditures do not exceed legislative appropriations or available local funds.

This bill creates section 383.145, Florida Statutes.

**II. Present Situation:**

In 1996-1997, the Department of Children and Family Services identified 68,551 children as abused or neglected. Many children who die from abuse or neglect in Florida are under 4 years of age, and over half are under 2 years of age. The Florida Governor's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence reports that this in part reflects the physical vulnerability of younger children and also their lack of ability to obtain potentially helpful social services. Drug exposed infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers endangered by chemically involved parents are the fastest growing foster care population.

The National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse reports that home visitation programs can be successful in addressing a host of poor childhood outcomes such as failure to thrive, lack of school readiness, and child abuse. Families receiving this type of intensive home visitor service also show other positive changes such as consistent use of preventive health services, increased high school completion rates for teen parents, higher employment rates, lower welfare use, and fewer pregnancies. Further, the United States General Accounting Office in its report entitled, "Home Visiting - A Promising Intervention Strategy for At-Risk Families; July, 1990," found that early intervention programs that used home visiting show that this strategy can be associated with a variety of improved outcomes for program participants improved birth outcomes, better child health, improved child welfare, and improved development when compared to similar individuals who did not receive services.

The Healthy Families America initiative is a partnership between the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse and Ronald McDonald House Charities. At its inception, Healthy Families America drew largely from the experience of the Hawaii Healthy Start Program. Healthy Families America is an initiative that promotes positive parenting and child health and development, thereby preventing child abuse and other poor childhood outcomes. It is reported by Healthy Families America that for every \$3 spent on prevention, there is a \$6 savings that might have been spent on child welfare services, special education services, medical care, foster care, counseling, and housing juvenile offenders. To ensure that all parts of the country can offer in-depth training and quality controls necessary for effective Healthy Families programs, the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse has partnered with the Council on Accreditation of Services for Families and Children, Inc. to implement a quality assurance program for home visiting programs, called HFA credentialing.

Florida's Healthy Start program was enacted in 1991 to improve the status of Florida's mothers and babies through increased access to comprehensive, risk-appropriate maternity and well-child care. Healthy Start works through local coalitions and community-based systems of care. The Florida Healthy Start model was designed to deliver cost-effective health care services and incorporates universal screening of all pregnant women and infants, professional assessment of service needs, and referrals to health care and social service providers. There are now 30 Healthy Start coalitions around the state. Section 383.011, F.S., requires the Department of Health to establish a Healthy Start Care Coordination Program in each county health department in which a care coordinator is responsible for receiving screening reports and risk assessment reports, conducting assessments, directing family outreach efforts, and coordinating the provision of services.

The Healthy Families Program currently exists in five Florida counties; each is modeled after the Healthy Families America initiative. Extensive evaluations of the Pinellas and Orange County programs show that 97-98 percent of the families served were not involved in a report of abuse or neglect, 97 percent of families served did not have a subsequent pregnancy, and 95 percent of the families served for 6 months or longer showed appropriate or improved bonding with their babies. In Pinellas county, 95 percent of the families served were in compliance with medical visits and immunizations.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for SB 1660 creates, within available resources, the Healthy Families Florida program, a voluntary program for newborn children and their families. The bill specifies that the purpose of Healthy Families Florida is to strengthen families, promote healthy childhood growth and development, improve childhood immunization rates and well-child care, improve child health outcomes, improve school readiness, increase family self-sufficiency, increase the involvement of both parents with their children, and reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect through a primary prevention approach that offers home visits and linkages to family supports for families and their newborn children and continues until the children reach 5 years of age. The bill requires that service delivery be community-based, collaborative, and integrated and coordinated with Florida's Healthy Start Initiative and other home visiting and family support services.

#### **Program Requirements**

The bill requires that Healthy Families Florida provide intensive home visits and include the specified critical elements of the Healthy Families America model, including initiation of services, service content, and selection and training of service providers.

Healthy Families Florida will add a child abuse prevention strategy to the existing continuum of services that targets families of newborns who are at highest risk for child abuse or neglect and offers specialized home visiting services with the intensity and duration required to prevent child abuse and neglect. Healthy Families Florida is designed to provide weekly home visits the first year with tapering intensity in service delivery for up to 5 years. Healthy Families' home visitors typically carry smaller caseloads (25:1 overall and 15:1 for intensive services) and are able to tailor intervention to each family's need for assistance in parenting and life management skills development. Healthy Families Florida will provide the opportunity for communities to work together to identify existing resources, integrate and coordinate services, and streamline service delivery based on individual community strengths and needs. These system improvements will further enhance the ability of parents and their newborn babies to obtain the individual and community supports that are needed.

#### **Administration**

The bill requires that the Department of Children and Family Services contract with a private, nonprofit corporation to develop, implement, and administer the Healthy Families Florida program. The contract must be performance-based and must include, at a minimum, the performance standards adopted by the Legislature. All funds appropriated for Healthy Families Florida, except funds and associated expenses retained in the department to support a contract manager position, are to be expended in support of the contract.

The bill establishes a Healthy Families Florida Advisory Committee to assist and advise the corporation and assure coordination and collaboration with appropriate state agencies and public and private organizations. The Healthy Families Florida Advisory Committee consists of eleven members composed of the Secretary of Health, the Secretary of Children and Family Services, a representative of the department's interagency workgroup, a representative of the Florida Coalition of Healthy Start Coalitions, two active board members of the corporation, two community representatives, one consumer representative appointed by the Governor, two business community representatives who have direct experience and significant knowledge of the Healthy Family program appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

### **Implementation**

The bill specifies the contractual responsibilities of the corporation for implementing a community-based Healthy Families Florida program. These responsibilities include activities such as awarding community grants and determining requirements for matching funds, developing a plan for equitably distributing funds, establishing criteria for selecting recipients of grants funds, evaluating and approving the grant applications, coordinating service delivery with Healthy Start care, identifying qualified trainers and training opportunities, developing and implementing a quality assurance and improvement process, and evaluating the progress of the program and providing an annual progress report to the Governor and the Legislature.

The bill specifies that the corporation may subcontract the performance of tasks.

### **Waiver**

The bill directs the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Family Services to work jointly with the Agency for Health Care Administration to seek a federal waiver to secure Title XIX matching funds for the Healthy Families Florida program. The department and Agency for Health Care Administration may implement the waiver only if it permits the state to limit enrollment or limit the amount, duration, and scope of services to ensure that expenditures do not exceed legislative appropriations or available local funds.

## **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

An unspecified level of community match is required of Healthy Families grantees. Matching funds may be in-kind or cash as determined by the advisory committee with the approval of the board of directors of the corporation.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The following table displays the estimated cost of Healthy Families Florida Program for the next 4 years. The department reports that these estimates assume that 20 percent of the total number of births throughout the state will be assessed for risk of child abuse or neglect the first year. That percentage increases by 10 percent each year and remains constant after 50 percent is reached. The department estimates that no more than 50 percent of the births are at risk of child abuse or neglect and require the risk assessment determination.

Category	FY 1998-1999	FY 1999-2000	FY 2000-2001	FY 2001-2002
<b>1 FTE Salaries and Benefits -</b> Department of Children and Family Services	\$41,480 (9 months)	\$55,306	\$56,965	\$58,674
<b>Expenses</b>	\$13,780	\$18,373	\$18,373	\$18,373
<b>Operating Capital Outlay</b> (nonrecurring)	\$4,177			
<b>Contractual Services</b> (administration, training, technical assistance, quality assurance, evaluation, Healthy Family Florida services for non-substance abusing families and specialized Healthy Families Florida services for substance abusing families)	\$16,104,384	\$46,764,542	\$75,233,115	\$107,460,871
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$16,163,821	\$46,838,221	\$75,308,453	\$107,537,918

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

The bill does not address issues affecting the accessibility of meetings, records, and liability protection on the part of the corporation. To the extent that the corporation uses the standard contract instrument of the DCFS this may not pose a practical problem. The relationship of the corporation to s. 768.28, F.S., should be addressed, nonetheless, so clarification of whether this entity is acting as an instrumentality of the State of Florida is considered for purposes of the waiver of sovereign immunity in tort actions.

**VIII. Amendments:**

None.