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SB 09-55 – Concerning The Family Resource Center Program

By Senator Isgar and Representative Judd

February 16, 2009

Purpose of the Bill

SB 09-055 makes the following changes to the Family Resource Center Program statutes: adds a definition of family support and parent education; allows the Family Resource Center Programs to apply for and receive money from the Colorado Works Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SB 08-177); requires Family Resource Centers that receive funding from the Department of Public Health and Environment to coordinate efforts of public and private entities to connect families to services and supports; and repeals the July 2010 sunset date.

Mission & Description

The Family Resource Center Program established in 1993 in C.R.S. 26-18-104 is a public-private initiative established to coordinate existing programs/services, implement new family support programs if none exist, and serve as a single point of entry for comprehensive, integrated state and community based services to **vulnerable families and children**.

- Family Resource Centers utilize a comprehensive and proven community-based approach to improving health, social, educational, and economic outcomes for entire families, not just individuals.
- Working as a catalyst within communities, each center tailors programs to fill service gaps **without duplicating services** by providing access to existing resources and offering vital services in response to specific community needs.
- Family support and case management services address the needs of the whole family, stressing prevention, independence and self sufficiency as families define and fulfill their own aspirations.
- Programs build on family strengths, while respecting beliefs, values, customs, cultures, and community identity.

A collaborative network of 24 Family Resource Centers serves over 70,000 families and individuals annually by providing a safety net of services to vulnerable families in 42 Colorado counties. Families and individuals receive outreach information and education services, as well as coordinated direct services that include family advocacy and case management, resource and referral, early childhood services, parent education and support, youth services, health related services, and emergency assistance services. Of the 24 Family Resource Centers, five centers are located on the eastern plains, seven centers in the Denver metro area, and twelve centers are located in the mountains and on the western slope region.

- Core services provided by Family Resource Centers include:
 1. Early Childhood Education (ECE) & Development, such as Head Start, School Readiness Programs and licensed childcare;
 2. Youth Services, such as, Before/After-School/Summer Programs;
 3. Parenting Education and Support Groups, GED/ABE/ESL Classes, and Job Readiness/Life Skills Classes; and
 4. Health Access (CHP+ and Medicaid), Health Education/Screening.

History

The Colorado General Assembly established the Family Resource Center Program in 1993, as a pilot public-private initiative to address gaps in the delivery of human services in communities throughout Colorado. The program was initially located in the Department of Human Services and was subsequently transferred to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment in 2000. The Family Resource Center Association (FRCA), a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, was founded in 1998 as a statewide alliance to support and enhance Family Resource Centers. The Centers collaborate through the FRCA to strengthen programs and service delivery through statewide advocacy and outreach, capacity building, training and technical assistance, joint programming and evaluation, and resource development.

Funding

Funding for the Family Resource Centers comes from a variety of sources including, but not limited to: support generated from individual donations, community foundations and corporations, and the public sector, primarily federal funds. In 2003, and again in 2006, the Colorado General Assembly approved legislation enabling the Family Resource Centers to participate in and receive voluntary individual contributions from the Colorado state tax check-off program. The Program did not receive the \$75,000 threshold amount required in the 2007 tax year, thus eliminating that funding stream.

Annual budgets for the 24 Family Resource Centers range from \$60,000 to \$1,400,000. The average annual budget is \$500,000. Family Resource Centers receive funding support from four main sources:

1. Federal/State/County Funding (46%) – Tony Grampas Youth Services (TGYS), Colorado Department of Human Services – Healthy Marriages & Responsible Fatherhood Demonstration Project, and the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment - Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant (CBCAP), and County Departments of Social Services.
2. Private Foundations and Corporations (36%) – The Anschutz Family Foundation, El Pomar Foundation, Adolph Coors Foundation, Colorado Health Foundation, The Colorado Trust, Daniels Fund, JFM Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, and the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation.
3. Local Contributors and Fundraising Events (9%) – includes individual and in-kind donations, corporate sponsorship of events/activities, community contributions toward food & clothing banks, and emergency assistance.
4. Earned Income (9%) – includes fees for services and entrepreneurial enterprises (e.g. licensed childcare, thrift store, etc.)

Why the Legislation is Needed

The Family Resource Center Program is scheduled to sunset on July 1, 2010. SB 09-055 allows the Family Resource Center Program to continue. An independent evaluation conducted by the OMNI Institute demonstrates statistically significant gains in 16 areas of services identified in the Colorado Family Support Assessment. The results show that families receiving longer term case management services demonstrate even greater gains toward self-sufficiency. The bill also makes clarifying changes to the statute to update terminology and permits the Family Resource Centers to apply for and receive grants from the Colorado Works Strategic Use Fund. The Senate amended the bill to add the words “adult education and family” to literacy programs that are services that may be provided by Family Resource Centers. The bill passed the Senate by a 33-0 vote.

Please Support SB 09-55

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