

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1279
By: West
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been noted that evidence-based practice requirements help the state provide high quality services for children and families across Texas in situations where there is a risk of abuse or neglect. It has been suggested that statutory provisions relating to prevention and early intervention services could be updated to ensure that the state provides the best possible prevention programming and services intended to prevent child abuse or neglect. S.B. 1279 seeks to provide for such an update.

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

S.B. 1279 repeals a Family Code provision requiring a parenting education program provided by the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to be an evidence-based program or a promising practice program and amends the Family Code to make requirements relating to parenting education programs provided by DFPS, including requirements relating to program outcomes, evaluation by DFPS, and submission of a legislative report, applicable instead to prevention and early intervention programs or practices. The bill revises the criteria for a program or practice to be considered evidence-based or promising and establishes the following criteria for a program or practice to be considered evidence-informed:

- combines well-researched interventions with clinical experience and ethics, and client preferences and culture, to guide and inform the delivery of treatments and services;
- has an active impact evaluation program or demonstrates a schedule for implementing an active impact evaluation program;
- substantially complies with a program manual or design that specifies the purpose, outcome, duration, and frequency of the program services; and
- employs well-trained and competent staff and provides continual relevant professional development opportunities to the staff.

The bill revises the outcome requirements for evidence-based prevention and early intervention programs and practices and includes among the areas in which DFPS is required to ensure that a program or practice achieves favorable behavioral outcomes improved maternal and child health and increased protective factors for youth.

S.B. 1279 repeals Section 265.151(a), Family Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.