

SUBJECT: Texas Youth Commission training in violence prevention

COMMITTEE: Corrections — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — Hightower, Gray, Allen, Culberson, Longoria, Serna, Telford

0 nays

2 absent — Farrar, Pitts

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, February 9 — voice vote

WITNESSES: For — Georgie Rasco, Texas Council on Family Violence

Against — None

DIGEST: SB 243 would require the Texas Youth Commission to provide violence prevention and conflict resolution education, including child abuse and domestic violence discussion, to children in custody. The bill would take effect January 1, 1996.

SUPPORTERS SAY: Other states, such as Oregon, Illinois and Florida, have enacted legislation requiring or recommending the implementation of anti-violence and peer mediation programs. These preventive programs teach children the importance of resolving conflict without violence and allow administrators to concentrate on teaching.

Many children in custody under the juvenile system have witnessed different forms of violence in the home and as a result, become violent offenders. Personal counseling and education would teach them how to conduct themselves, helping them and society. Most children in custody have not had good role models and have never been taught how to develop healthy personal relationships. Training and education would help reduce domestic violence. Preventive programs have been found to be more effective in school than through court intervention.

OPPONENTS SAY: No apparent opposition

NOTES: SB 242 by Shapiro et al., on the May 18 House calendar, would require violence prevention training for juvenile probation departments and juvenile boards.