

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1128 (Delegates Hutchins and Grosfeld)
Environmental Matters

**Child Care Workers - Special Training Requirements - Caring for Children
Under the Age of 3 Years**

This bill provides that the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene must require special training for childcare center employees and family day care providers who care for children under the age of three. The additional training, which must be included as part of initial training requirements and as an annual one-hour training requirement, must cover how to recognize and prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome, how to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and how to recognize and prevent child abuse and neglect.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not materially affect governmental finances. Local departments of social services could expand their training to include the new requirements within existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal. Day care providers that are small businesses would have to incorporate the additional training requirements into their existing training activities.

Analysis

Current Law: Child abuse is defined as the physical or mental injury of a child by any parent or other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility

for the supervision of a child, or by any household or family member, under circumstances that indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed. Sexual abuse of a child, whether physical injuries are sustained or not, also is considered child abuse.

Each health practitioner, police officer, educator, or human service worker, acting in a professional capacity: who has reason to believe that a child has been abused, must notify the local department of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency. If the individual has reason to believe that a child has been neglected, that person must notify the local department of social services. If the individual is acting as a staff member of a hospital, public health agency, child care institution, juvenile detention center, school, or similar institution, the person must immediately notify and give all information required by this section to the head of the institution or the designee of the head if the person suspects a child has been abused or neglected.

Each registered family day care provider must hold a current certificate indicating successful completion of approved basic first aid training through the American Red Cross or a program with equivalent standards. The provider also must hold a current certificate indicating successful completion of cardiopulmonary resuscitation training through the American Heart Association or a program with equivalent standards.

Child care centers are required to have in attendance at all times at least one person who supervises children and holds a current certificate indicating successful completion of approved basic first aid training through the American Red Cross or through a program with equivalent standards. The person supervising children also must have a current certificate indicating successful completion of approved cardiopulmonary resuscitation training through the American Heart Association or through a program with equivalent standards. A childcare center serving more than 20 children must have in attendance certificate holders in a ratio of one certificate holder per 20 children.

Background: Shaken Baby Syndrome is a severe form of head injury caused by violently shaking an infant or child that usually occurs in children younger than two years old. The violent shaking may result in severe head injuries, including permanent brain damage or death. Shaken Baby Syndrome is almost always caused by child abuse when an angry parent or caregiver shakes a baby to punish or quiet them. In rare instances, the injury may be caused accidentally by tossing the baby in the air or jogging with a baby in a backpack. It does not result from gently bouncing or playing with a baby.

SIDS is the unexpected, sudden death of any infant or child typically under one year old, in which an autopsy does not show an explainable cause of death. The peak incidence of SIDS occurs between two and four months of age, 90% of all incidents occur by six

months of age. There are increased incidents of SIDS during the winter months and among Native Americans and African-Americans. What causes SIDS is unknown. Many physicians and researchers now believe that SIDS is infant death caused by several different factors. These factors may include problems with sleep arousal and the inability of the child's body to sense a build up of carbon dioxide in the blood. Almost all SIDS deaths occur without any warning or symptoms, when the infant is thought to be sleeping.

The incidence of SIDS has dropped by more than 40% since 1992 when parents were first warned to put their babies on their side or back when laying them down to sleep. SIDS risk factors include babies who sleep on their stomachs, soft bedding in the crib, multiple births, premature births, a sibling who had SIDS, maternal smoking and substance abuse, young maternal age, short intervals between pregnancies, later prenatal care, and low socioeconomic status. Male infants are affected more by SIDS than females.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, National Institutes of Health, Department of Legislative Services

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