

By: Senator(s) Huggins

To: Public Health and
Welfare; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2807

1 AN ACT TO INCREASE THE PREVENTIVE SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH
2 THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES FAMILIES FIRST FAMILY
3 RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAM BY AUTHORIZING "FAMILY SUPPORT SPECIALIST"
4 POSITIONS; TO FURTHER DEFINE THE SCOPE OF SERVICES THAT SHALL BE
5 PROVIDED BY ALL FAMILY RESOURCE AND PARENTAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS
6 PARTICIPATING IN THE FAMILIES FIRST FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
7 PROGRAM, TO ENSURE THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THESE PROGRAMS EQUIP
8 CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO GROW UP
9 AND SUCCEED; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT TO USE TANF FUNDS TO
10 IMPLEMENT THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

12 **SECTION 1.** The Department of Human Services shall develop a
13 model for adding one or more "Family Support Specialist"
14 position(s) to the scope of services of the "Families First"
15 Family Resource Center program. The model shall include
16 provisions for basing the Family Support Specialist at an
17 elementary school in the local school district where the Families
18 First Center is located; establishing educational requirements for
19 the position that require a degree in social work, guidance and
20 counseling, family life education or a related field; provide a
21 mechanism for the Department of Human Services to refer families
22 to the Families First Center for services, including service
23 provided by the Family Support Specialist. The Department of
24 Human Services shall test this model in one or more Families First
25 Family Resource Centers in each of the state's four (4)
26 congressional districts.

27 **SECTION 2.** The Department of Human Services shall establish
28 a uniform scope of services to define the core services provided
29 by a Families First Family Resource Center; establish a service
30 model and the extent to which these core services must be made
31 available; and an estimate of the cost necessary to provide these



32 services. Any test establishing in conjunction with the
33 implementation of the Family Support Specialist model shall also
34 meet the requirements of this section and provide services,
35 including, but not limited to, comprehensive information and
36 referral; drop-in play and learn service for preschool-age
37 children in the care of grandparents and other relatives during
38 the hours of parental employment; parents-caregivers as teachers
39 and its adaptation, Supporting Care Providers for parents and
40 other caregivers referred by the Department of Human Services or
41 enrolling on a voluntary basis; and the availability of these and
42 other services that provide assistance to foster and adoptive
43 parents.

44 **SECTION 3.** The Department of Human Services, in conjunction
45 with the Department of Pediatrics at the University Medical
46 Center, shall establish developmental benchmarks that identify the
47 key milestones of development in children birth to age eight (8).
48 The department shall use the benchmarks to ensure the programs and
49 services provided through the Families First Family Resource
50 Center are providing opportunities for participating children to
51 reach their full potential. These benchmarks shall be provided to
52 the Interagency Advisory Council for their review and comment.

53 **SECTION 4.** The Department of Human Services shall report the
54 results of any assessment, test or activity conducted in
55 conjunction with fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of
56 this act to the Legislature no later than July 1, 2003. Any data
57 documenting the number of preschool-age children served through
58 this act shall meet the data reporting requirements of the
59 Interagency Coordinating Council and all such data shall be posed
60 on the department's website.

61 **SECTION 5.** The Department of Human Services shall use the
62 TANF funds appropriated to the Families First Family Resource
63 Center programs to meet the fiscal requirements of this act.



64 **SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
65 and after its passage.

