



AB 709 (Brownley) Foster children: school placement

PURPOSE: AB 709 (Brownley) would specify that youth in foster care can enroll in school immediately even if they are missing immunization records.

BACKGROUND

- 60,000 children and teens spend some time in foster care annually in California
- Average length of stay in foster care is 33 months
- Under federal law, foster families are already required to establish care with a physician within 72 hours of new placement.

IMPACT:

- Eliminates barriers to school entry
- Decreases number of missed school days
- Does not endanger the health of foster children or their peers

Improved school attendance decreases risk for educational failure.

- Poor school performance is common prior to entering foster care.
- Foster parents report immunization records to be a major roadblock to new school entry.
- Studies show that one placement change equates to 6 months of lost educational progress.
- Children in foster care have an overall achievement gap of one year compared to their peers and are less likely to graduate high school or college.

Immediate school enrollment is not a health risk.

- Immunization status is reviewed at already mandated physician visits for foster children.
- Educational Liasons are in charge of obtaining medical records at previous schools.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California District **SUPPORTS** AB 709 (Brownley).

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