

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL No. 600



---

**Introduced by REP. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO**

---

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The most crucial phase of a man's development is childhood. It is in this stage that a man's character is most susceptible to influences and thus, easier to mold. It is necessary then, that the State provide the individual with the proper educational background for his/her development.

This Bill aims to institutionalize Early Childhood Development and Educational Centers for children from childbirth to the age of five. A private initiative in the establishment and operation of these centers is encouraged.

The National Early Childhood Development and Education Council, in cooperation with the local government units concerned and the resident-parents therein, shall initiate the establishment and operation of the Centers.

The Centers shall develop a program of activities that will focus primarily on the children's total development according to their individual stages of development, with the child's first language as the medium of instruction. They shall also provide the parents with training programs which shall endeavor to inculcate responsible parenthood, as well as, provide guidance in child rearing, health, nutrition and education.

The Center's staff members shall be composed of facilitators of learning who are trained parents and local volunteers assisted by early

childhood specialists and consultants. The Centers shall train these prospective facilitators of learning.

The country's main resource is its people. It is imperative for us, then to develop our children to become upright, outstanding, responsible, decent and honest citizens with the correct values which will help them to become future leaders of this country.

This Bill would be a major step forward in inculcating in our children, at an early stage, all the values that they would need to become active participants and movers of our society.

For these reasons, immediate approval of this Bill is earnestly urged.



**FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO**

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session

600

HOUSE BILL No. \_\_\_\_\_

---

Introduced by REP. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

---

**AN ACT**  
**INSTITUTIONALIZING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND**  
**EDUCATION CENTERS FOR CHILDREN AGED ZERO TO FIVE YEARS,**  
**CREATING THE IMPLEMENTING MACHINERY THEREOF, PROVIDING**  
**GUIDELINES, INCENTIVES, GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND**  
**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

*Be it enacted by SENATE and HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES of the  
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

**SECTION 1.** *Title* - This Act shall be known as the "Early Childhood Development and Education Act."

**SECTION 2.** *Declaration of Policy and Objectives* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize the establishment of early childhood development and education programs as a part of non-formal education, through multi-sectoral and collaborative arrangements among the educational institutions, government organizations, local government units, non-government organizations, the community, and parents.

Towards this end, the government shall encourage private initiative in the establishment and operation of early childhood development and education centers to enhance the normal growth and development of children zero (0) to five (5) years of age, and to supplement parental, health, nutrition, child care and population education. In areas where no such Centers are available to the low-income group, the government shall initiate the establishment of at least one (1) early childhood development and education center in every barangay, preferably run as cooperative, and to provide such centers with technical assistance and financial aid.

**SECTION 3. *Definition*** - For the purpose of this Act:

- (a) "*Preschool*" - refers to that level of early childhood development and education preceding the first primary level made available to children 0-5 years of age to develop their cognition, attitudinal, psychomotor and social skills.
- (b) "*Early Childhood Development and Education Centers*" - refers to centers, cooperatives, and consortia organized for the purpose of developing the preschool children's cognitive, attitudinal, psychomotor and social skills according to their stage of development and to foster desirable values. The centers also serve as venues for parent education.

**SECTION 4. *Establishment and Operation of Early Childhood Development and Education Centers*** - Private initiatives in the establishment and operation of Early Childhood Development and Education Centers, hereinafter referred as to as Centers, is hereby recognized and encouraged subject to the provisions of this Act.

In areas where no Center is being established, the National Early Childhood Development and Education Council shall, in cooperation with the local government units concerned and the resident-parents therein, initiate the establishment and operations of centers and shall extend necessary technical assistance until such centers are fully operational: *Provided*, That in highly depressed areas, financial support shall likewise be extended.

**SECTION 5. *Program of Activities.*** - The Centers shall develop a program of activities rather than a curriculum that will focus primarily on the children's total development according to their individual stages of development.

For children aged 0-3, the Centers shall provide guided play and discovery activities that will enable them to know themselves in relation to others, within and outside the home, and to their physical environment.

In addition thereto, the Center shall provide the means for health and nutrition related services such as immunization and supplementary feeding, in coordination with government agencies, to maximize the children's capacities for growth and development. Moreover, the program shall focus not only on the child but on the parents as well, to make them familiar with the process of child growth and development, and the basic knowledge on health and nutrition.

**SECTION 6. *Parents Training Program*** - Parallel to the program of activities for the preschool children, the Center shall, in coordination with private and government education, social welfare, and health institutions, provide for parents training programs which shall endeavor to inculcate

responsible parenthood as well as, provide guidance in child rearing, health, nutrition, and education, and to train prospective facilitators of learning in the locality.

**SECTION 7.** *Facilitators of Learning* - Rather than teachers, the members of the staff of the Centers shall be, as a general rule, composed of Facilitators of Learning who are trained parents and local volunteers assisted by Early Childhood Specialists and Consultants, subject to the qualification/guidelines prescribed by the National Council.

**SECTION 8.** *Language of Instruction and Learning Materials* - The medium of instruction shall be, as much as practicable, the child's first language, and that the learning materials be those that are culturally indigenous to the child's environment.

**SECTION 9.** *Admission Policy* - The Centers not being part of the formal education systems, admission in the programs shall be at the parent's discretion.

**SECTION 10.** *Tax Incentives* - For Plant Base Centers established and operated free of charge by industrial and commercial firms for the children of their employees, total expenses actually incurred in the establishment and operation of such Centers shall be allowed as deductions from gross income subject to tax, the provisions of existing laws to the contrary notwithstanding,

**SECTION 11.** *National Early Childhood Development and Education Council; Creation; and Composition* - For the purpose of achieving the policy and objectives of this Act, there is hereby created a multisectoral and

autonomous council to be known as the National Early Childhood Development and Education Council, hereinafter referred to as the National Council, to be composed of the following:

- a) The Secretary of Social Welfare and Development or his/her representative as Chairman;
- b) The Secretary of Health or his/her representative as Vice-Chairman;
- c) The Secretary of Interior and Local Government or his/her representative;
- d) The Secretary of Department of Education or his/her representative;
- e) One (1) representative from any National Parent Organization;
- f) One (1) representative from a non-government organization involved in preschool development and education; and
- g) One (1) duly recognized Early Childhood Development and Education Specialist, as members.

The last three (3) members of the Council provided above shall be appointed by the President for a term of two (2) years from among nominees submitted by their own organization.

**SECTION 12.** *Powers and Functions* - The National Council shall have the following powers and functions;

- a.) To prepare and maintain an Early Childhood Development and Education Accreditation System;
- b.) To encourage private initiative in the establishment and operation Centers;

- c.) To formulate guidelines and set minimum of standards;
- d.) To determine such areas needing technical assistance and financial support;
- e.) To undertake the establishment of Centers in areas where no such Centers is in operation, or in areas where existing Center beyond the reach of low-income groups;
- f.) To set the limit of contribution or fees collected by government organized Centers;
- g.) To coordinate with government agencies undertaking similar or complementary programs in a Day Care, Nutrition and Family Planning, Primary Health Care, Basic Livelihood, and the like, with the end view of developing an integrated program of activities;
- h.) To formulate the criteria for the selection, qualification and training of facilitator of learning;
- i.) To draw-up a system of criteria and awards to be given to the most deserving Center on a per municipality, city and provincial levels;
- j.) To exercise general supervisory powers over the Centers and Local Early Childhood Development and Education Council; and
- k.) To prescribe such rules and regulations necessary to achieve the policy and objectives of this Act, and to perform such other functions necessary for the implementation of this Act.

SECTION 13. *Local Early Childhood Development and Education Council ; Creation; and Composition* - As an implementation arm of the National Council, there is hereby created in every barangay a Local Early Childhood Development and Education Council, hereinafter referred to as Local Council, to be composed of the following:

- a.) The Barangay Chairman;

- b.) The Principal/Head Teacher of the barangay elementary school within or nearest the barangay;
- c.) The Representative of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Department of Health assigned to the municipality;
- d.) The representative of the Sangguniang Kabataan of the Barangay who must be between the ages of fifteen (15) to twenty-one (21); and
- e.) Two (2) other residents of the Barangay, one (1) of whom shall be a female, to be chosen by the first five (5) mentioned members.

**SECTION 14. *Powers and Functions*** - The Local Council shall have the following powers and functions:

- a.) To act as the implementing arm of the National Council;
- b.) To monitor and supervise the operations of Centers;
- c.) To serve as link between and among the residents, the Centers and the National Council;
- d.) To encourage and support parent-initiated barangay activities for the Center and assist in the implementation thereof;
- e.) To undertake some visitations so as to properly monitor the effectivity and implementation of Center programs; and
- f.) To perform such other functions as may be required by the National Council to achieve the policy and objective of this Act.

**SECTION 15. *Appropriation*** - For the initial operation of the Council, the amount of Twenty Million (P20,000,000.00) Pesos is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated. Thereafter, subsequent budgetary allocations shall be included in the

General Appropriations Act under the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

**SECTION 16.** *Repealing Clause* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or deemed amended.

**SECTION 17.** *Effectivity* - This Act shall take effect immediately after its complete publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,