

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Provisions Affecting Children Diagnosed with ADD or ADHD

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Overview

Ritalin is a medication prescribed for children with an abnormally high level of activity or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The medication stimulates the central nervous system. Although experts do not fully understand how it works, Ritalin is believed to have a calming effect on hyperactive children and to help children focus who are diagnosed with ADHD. Some people argue that children, including children who are not diagnosed with ADHD, are encouraged to take Ritalin, not because they necessarily need it, but because of its calming effect and its impact on children's concentration in the classroom.

Section

- 1 **Appropriate and necessary services.** (a) Permits parents, physicians, health care professionals, and education and human services providers to provide amphetamine prescription drugs, where appropriate, to children who are diagnosed with ADD or ADHD only after evaluating other appropriate education programs and services available for such children. This section is effective immediately.
- 2 **Truancy programs and services.** (b) Declares that a parent's refusal to consent to a special education evaluation of the parent's child under chapter 125A, governing special education, does not constitute educational neglect. This section is effective immediately.
- 3 **Presumptions regarding truancy or educational neglect.** (b) Declares that a parent's refusal to consent to a special education evaluation of the parent's child under chapter 125A, governing special education, does not constitute educational neglect. This section is effective immediately.
- 4 **Study; appropriation.** Appropriates an unspecified sum from the general fund in fiscal year 2002 to the commissioner of children, families and learning for contracting with a qualified expert to report the number and overall incidence rate of Minnesota school children, by age, grade level, gender and race, diagnosed with ADD or ADHD currently taking amphetamine prescription drugs such as Ritalin. Directs the contractor to determine the number and overall

incidence rate of students not identified with ADD or ADHD currently taking amphetamine prescription drugs such as Ritalin. Requires the commissioner to report to the legislature by February 15, 2002. This section is effective July 1, 2001.