

# THE BECCA LAW

*Designed to  
Empower Parents to  
Help Their Children*



The BECCA Law was enacted by the Washington State Legislature to:

- ◆ Protect children who are endangering themselves
- ◆ Keep families together through assessment and treatment services
- ◆ Provide tools for schools, parents, and Juvenile Court to keep children in school
- ◆ Hold children and parents accountable to the order of the Court

For information or assistance,  
please contact:

Juvenile Truancy  
Prosecuting Attorney  
477-6046

Truancy Prosecuting Paralegal  
477-2815

Truancy Court Liaison  
477-2412

ARY/CHINS Court Liaison  
477-2459

To download forms, go to:

[www.spokanecounty.org/  
juvenilecourt](http://www.spokanecounty.org/juvenilecourt)  
Click on BECCA  
(Juvenile Non-Offender)  
Information



**Spokane County Juvenile Court**  
902 North Adams Street  
Spokane, WA 99260

# THE BECCA LAW



- ◆ *Protecting Children*
- ◆ *Supporting Parents*
- ◆ *Strengthening Families*
- ◆ *Keeping Children in School*



### Truancy

Schools must file a truancy petition with Juvenile Court when a child has seven unexcused absences in a month, or ten in a school year, and the parent has been notified.

Juvenile Court will inform the child and parents that a petition has been filed and direct them to work with the school to correct the attendance problem.

Should those efforts fail, Juvenile Court will order the child to attend school and participate in services to reduce barriers to regular school attendance.

The parent can also be ordered to send their child to school and participate in services to ensure regular school attendance.



### At-Risk Youth (ARY)

Parents may petition Juvenile Court to order their child to remain at home when:

- ◆ The child is younger than age 18
- ◆ The child has been absent from home, without parental permission, for more than 72 hours
- ◆ The child's behavior is beyond the parent's control and endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the child or another person
- ◆ The child has a serious substance abuse or mental health problem
- ◆ Families have made an effort to remedy the problem through means such as counseling

Both children and parents can be ordered by Juvenile Court to attend counseling, classes, and other measures to reduce family conflict.

***“...the family unit  
is the fundamental resource  
of American life  
which should be nurtured...”  
RCW 13.32A***



### Children in Need of Services (CHINS)

Children, parents, or a DCYF social worker may petition Juvenile Court to approve an out-of-home placement when the conflict between parent and child is so severe the family cannot remain intact. Placement may occur with supervision from Juvenile Court with: a relative, an appropriate friend or neighbor; DCYF.

The legal parent/guardian may be financially responsible for the cost of the placement.

Juvenile Court will order certain conditions the child and parent must comply with including attending classes, counseling, and other measures to reunite the family.

The goal of a CHINS is to **reunify** families in a timely manner by providing support and services to reduce the conflict.