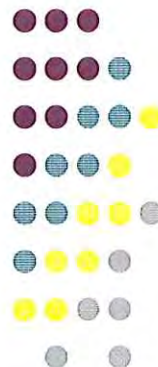


Child Welfare Services in Wisconsin

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Child Welfare Services in Wisconsin

Introduction

Child welfare services include a broad range of services and activities aimed at assuring safety and permanence for children and the well-being of children and their families. These include efforts to educate the public on the prevention and reporting of child abuse and neglect; methods to receive, screen, and respond to child abuse and neglect reports; the provision of, or referral to, parenting education classes, counseling, material supports, respite care, mental health or substance abuse treatment, or any other activity designed to strengthen, preserve, or reunite families; assessment, case planning, and review to determine services for children in foster care; and transitional services to children who age out of foster care.

Child protective services (CPS) refer to services that are intended to keep children safe when their families are unable to protect them from harm and to help the family by providing any necessary services. CPS agencies: (a) receive reports of child abuse and neglect; (b) screen and investigate the reports of child abuse and neglect; (c) assess whether a child is in immediate danger; and (d) provide case management and services to children and families in cases where children are found to be unsafe or at risk of maltreatment.

Child welfare services do not include economic welfare or support services, such as services provided under Wisconsin Works (W-2), although many families receive both child welfare services and economic support services.

In Wisconsin, the child welfare system is county-operated and state-supervised. Responsibility for children in the child welfare system is shared between the juvenile court and the county department of human services or social services, or

in Milwaukee County, with the Department of Children and Families (DCF). At the local level, the CPS unit in the county department is responsible for providing services to abused and neglected children. In addition to DCF and counties, child welfare services are also provided to Native American children by tribal social services departments.

DCF is responsible for providing statewide leadership and supervision of child welfare standards and practices, administering state and federal funds for child welfare services, and assuring compliance with state and federal law and regulations. In addition, the Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care in the DCF Division of Safety and Permanence provides adoption services for children with special needs from counties other than Milwaukee.

Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the federal Social Security Act provide much of the federal funding and federal law regarding child welfare. Eligibility for Title IV-E funding depends on certain financial criteria (eligibility criteria that were in effect in July of 1996 under the former aid to families with dependent children [AFDC] program) and out-of-home care placement criteria. Funding for child welfare services, including Title IV-E and Title IV-B funding, is discussed in further detail below. Appendix A provides the history of federal law regarding child welfare.

In addition to federal law and funding, this paper describes the child welfare system in Wisconsin. Attachment 1 provides an overview of the child welfare system statewide, with a flowchart that illustrates the different paths a CPS case may take, beginning with an allegation of child abuse or neglect, to the closure of the case. The details of the steps are described throughout this paper.

Each county has established its own child welfare system that includes the county department of human or social services or, in Milwaukee County, DCF's Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW), the courts, and other resources within the community. While all county and state child welfare systems operate under the same federal and state laws, regulations, standards, and policies, the organization, funding, and size of the systems differ.

Child Abuse and Neglect

A child and family usually enter the child welfare system through a report of child abuse or neglect. County caseworkers and, in Milwaukee County, state caseworkers conduct an assessment to determine if a child is in need of protection or services. The requirements of the assessment vary, depending on whether the alleged maltreatment or threat of harm to the child is by a household member, a person exercising temporary control or care over a child, or a person with no caregiver responsibilities. DCF standards and policies establish parameters for determining whether or not to substantiate that abuse or neglect occurred, but the determination or substantiation of a case can vary from county to county within those parameters.

This section defines child abuse and neglect, discusses mandatory reporters of abuse or neglect, presents data on child abuse and neglect in Wisconsin, and discusses a new alternative response pilot project that makes CPS responses to a family less adversarial.

State Definition of Child Abuse and Neglect. Under s. 48.02 of the statutes, child abuse means any of the following:

- Physical injury inflicted on a child by other than accidental means;
- Serious physical harm inflicted on an un-

born child, and the risk of serious physical harm to the child when born, caused by the habitual lack of self-control of the expectant mother in the use of alcohol beverages, controlled substances, or controlled substance analogs, exhibited to a severe degree;

- Sexual intercourse or sexual contact as prohibited under the crimes of sexual assault, sexual assault of a child, repeated acts of sexual assault against the same child, or sexual assault of a child placed in substitute care;
- Sexual exploitation of a child;
- Permitting, allowing, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution;
- Forcing a child to view or listen to sexual activity;
- For purposes of sexual arousal or gratification, either causing a child to expose genitals or pubic area or exposing genitals or pubic area to a child;
- Manufacturing methamphetamine under specific circumstances that put a child at risk; and
- Emotional damage, for which the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian has neglected, refused, or been unable for reasons other than poverty to obtain the necessary treatment or to take steps to ameliorate the symptoms.

Neglect is defined under s. 48.02 of the statutes as failure, refusal, or inability on the part of a parent or other relative, guardian, legal custodian, or other person exercising temporary control over a child, for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care, or shelter so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.

Mandatory Reporters. State law requires some professionals to report if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child seen in the course of

their professional duties has been abused or neglected or if they have reason to believe that a child seen in the course of their professional duties has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that abuse or neglect of the child will occur. These mandatory reporters include:

- A physician, coroner, medical examiner, nurse, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, acupuncturist, or other medical or mental health professional;
- A social worker, marriage and family therapist, or professional counselor;
- A public assistance worker, including a W-2 financial and employment planner;
- A school teacher, administrator, or counselor;
- A family court mediator;
- A child care worker in a child care center, group home, or residential care center, or a child care provider;
- An alcohol or other drug abuse counselor;
- A member of treatment staff employed by or working under contract with a county department or residential care center for children and youth;
- A physical therapist or physical therapist assistant, occupational therapist, dietician, speech-language pathologist, or audiologist;
- An emergency medical technician, first responder, or police or law enforcement officer;
- A court-appointed special advocate (CASA); and
- In cases of suspected sexual abuse, clergy members.

In addition to mandatory reporters, any other person may make a report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child or an unborn child. No one may be fired for reporting abuse or neglect.

Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect in Wisconsin. In 2009, there were 38,100 reports of child maltreatment in Wisconsin involving 43,100 specific allegations of maltreatment affecting 31,900 children. Approximately 55% of these reports were allegations of neglect, 29% of physical abuse, 14% of sexual abuse, and 2% of emotional abuse. Table 1 shows the number of reports of child maltreatment from 1995 through 2009.

Table 1: Number of Reports of Child Maltreatment, 1995-2009

1995	44,700
1996	46,300
1997	45,800
1998	42,500
1999	40,200
2000	38,000
2001	40,200
2002	42,700
2003	40,500
2004	42,400
2005	40,900
2006	41,300
2007	40,600
2008	39,500
2009	38,100

Not all reports of abuse or neglect are substantiated. Overall, 12% of the reports in 2009 were substantiated. Substantiated cases refer to cases where child welfare staff has determined that, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, abuse or neglect occurred. A preponderance of evidence is a lower standard of evidence than that needed for proof in juvenile court (clear and convincing evidence) or criminal court (evidence beyond a reasonable doubt) procedures. Therefore, while there may be sufficient information to substantiate an alleged child abuse or neglect case, there may not be sufficient evidence to obtain a child in need of protection or services (CHIPS) court order proceeding or to support criminal court

prosecution. (CHIPS is discussed more fully in the next section of the paper.)

The child welfare agency may determine that maltreatment has occurred or is likely to occur to the child without identifying a particular person as the actual or likely maltreater. In these situations, the agency may make a substantiated or likely to occur finding without naming the maltreater.

It should be noted that at the beginning of calendar year 2007, BMCW discontinued the use of the "abuse likely to occur" allegation type. In September, 2007, this allegation type was removed statewide because it lacked a definition that would allow consistent application and make it clearly distinguishable from other allegation types. These allegation types are now categorized under one of the other maltreatment types, typically neglect.

Unsubstantiated cases may involve situations where the parents are having difficulty caring for their child, but abuse or neglect has not yet occurred. Cases may also be unsubstantiated because the child welfare caseworker may not be able to gather the information needed to make a full determination, because the subjects of the report cannot be found, or the incident may not have happened.

A case does not need to be substantiated to obtain a CHIPS petition and/or require the child welfare agency to provide services to the child and family, but substantiating a case has legal ramifications for the alleged maltreater that do not occur when a case is unsubstantiated. Substantiated maltreaters have the right to appeal the finding. Regardless of whether the allegation is substantiated, the CPS unit may open a case if it is determined during the investigation that the children are not safe in the home.

Statewide substantiation rates have fallen significantly since 1996, when approximately 38% of cases were substantiated. DCF indicates that this decrease may be due to several factors, including state and federal requirements associated with ap-

peal rights for substantiated maltreaters, which results in a more rigorous application of substantiation decision-making, and the state caregiver background law, which prohibits a person substantiated of child abuse or neglect from certain types of employment, including working in child care centers and nursing homes. In addition, 2005 Wisconsin Act 232 eliminated the requirement that CPS agencies complete an initial assessment in situations where the alleged maltreater is not a caregiver for the child (these cases are referred to law enforcement). Finally, a clarification in policy related to mutual sexual contact between teenage peers made these allegations a request for services, rather than a CPS report.

Alternative Response Pilot Program. Provisions of 2009 Wisconsin Act 28 established a pilot program that authorizes participating county departments to use alternative responses to reports of suspected or threatened child abuse or neglect. The pilot program is intended to focus on responses to low-risk families by providing services in a less adversarial environment in order to prevent future abuse or neglect.

The counties selected to participate in the pilot program must evaluate a report of abuse or neglect, or threat of abuse or neglect, immediately after receiving the report to determine the most appropriate alternative response from the following: (a) refer the family to a service provider in the community for the provision of appropriate services on a voluntary basis if there is no reason to suspect that abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur; (b) conduct a comprehensive assessment of the safety of the child and his or her family, the risk of subsequent abuse or neglect, and the strengths and needs of the child's family to determine whether services are needed to address those issues, as well as provide those services on a voluntary basis, if there is reason to suspect that abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur, but there is no immediate threat to the safety of the child (no referral to the sheriff or police department is required); or (c) investigate the report under current practices if there is reason to suspect that sub-

stantial abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur. If it is determined that the investigation is not necessary for the safety of the child, the investigation may be terminated and an assessment under (b) may be conducted.

Counties participating in the pilot project include Eau Claire, La Crosse, Marathon, Pierce, and Milwaukee. Prior to implementation of the pilot, these counties received: (a) training on policy and practice issues related to alternative response; (b) support on how to document the case process in the electronic Wisconsin Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (eWISACWIS); (c) safety training to reinforce this area of CPS practice; (d) worker-supervisor training; and (e) training for other agency staff not involved in the pilot process. After implementation, staff in these counties also participate monthly meetings with DCF, a one-day community meeting, and additional training. DCF also filled a position in the Division of Safety and Permanence to provide a resource for the pilot program and is coordinating planned meetings with county agencies to create a timeline of training and coaching activities and meetings for 2011 and the first part of 2012.

In its 2011-13 agency budget request, DCF requested authority to expand the alternative response program to other counties in the state at the Department's discretion.

Out-Of-Home Care

If, after investigating an allegation of abuse or neglect, child welfare staff determines that a child is safe, the case is closed. However, if a child is not safe and/or at risk of further abuse and neglect, a CPS case is opened and staff determines whether the child can remain at home if the family receives appropriate services, or if the child needs to be removed and placed in out-of-home care. If staff determines that a child can remain safely at home, the child and family may receive in-home services

to address the safety needs of the family and child. If staff determines that a child cannot remain safely at home, the child is removed from the home and placed in out-of-home care. This section of the paper discusses out-of-home care.

Entry into Out-of-Home Care. Children may be placed in out-of-home care as a result of one of four types of actions: (a) a CHIPS court order, generally when the removal of a child from his or her home and placement into out-of-home care is necessary to assure the child's safety; (b) a juvenile in need of protection or services (JIPS) court order, as a result of certain behaviors, including being uncontrollable, running away, or truancy; (c) a delinquency court order, as a result of a criminal act; or (d) a voluntary placement agreement (VPA) between a parent and a caregiver and involving the child welfare agency. Under state law, VPAs are limited to 180 days. VPAs require placement in a licensed foster home or group home.

The Children's Code (Chapter 48 of the statutes) governs the CHIPS process and the Juvenile Justice Code (Chapter 938 of the statutes) governs the JIPS and juvenile delinquency processes. In addition, tribal courts place children in out-of-home care pursuant to the procedures included in each tribe's children's code. Information on programs available for juveniles that are adjudicated delinquent because they were found to have committed a criminal offense can be found in the Legislative Fiscal Bureau's information paper entitled "Juvenile Justice and Youth Aids Program."

Except under a VPA, a child is placed in out-of-home care under a court order. Before that order is made, however, a number of steps occur. This paper details the steps in the CHIPS process, but the JIPS process is similar.

Removal from Home. A child can be removed from his or her home under s. 48.19 of the statutes for a variety of reasons, including the child's safety. Under s. 48.205 of the statutes, a child can be held in custody as a result of a finding of probable cause of the following: (a) if the child is not held, he or

she will cause injury to himself or herself or be subject to injury by others; (b) if the child is not held, he or she will be subject to injury by others, based on a determination under (a) or, if the judge is determining whether to continue custody, a finding that if another child in the home is not held, that child will be subject to injury by others; (c) the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the child or other responsible adult is neglecting, refusing, unable, or unavailable to provide adequate supervision and care and that services to ensure the child's safety and well-being are not available or would be inadequate or, if the judge is determining whether to continue custody, that another child in the home meets these criteria; (d) that the child will run away or be taken away so as to be unavailable for proceedings of the court; or (e) that if an expectant mother is not held, there is a substantial risk that the physical health of the unborn child, and of the child when born, will be seriously affected or endangered by the expectant mother's habitual lack of self-control in the use of alcohol beverages or controlled substances, and that she is refusing or has refused to accept any substance abuse treatment services offered to her or is not making or has not made a good faith effort to participate in any of these services offered to her. Tribal courts also place children, but under the provision of each tribe's children's code.

Court Process. A court must hold a hearing within 48 hours of a child's removal from his or her home to determine if the child should remain in the custody of the county or state, based on a finding of probable cause of any of the criteria identified above.

At this hearing, the parent will be requested, if present, to provide the names and other identifying information of three relatives of the child or other individuals 18 years of age or over whose homes the parent wants the court to consider as placements for the child. A diligent search must be made to locate them. These individuals, along with adult relatives of the child, must be notified within 30 days after the child is removed from the custody of the child's parent: (a) that the child has been

removed; (b) of the options to participate in the care and placement of the child; (c) of the requirements to obtain a foster home license, receive kinship care, or long-term kinship care, and of the additional services and supports available for children placed in one of these placements; (d) that they may incur additional expenses if the child is placed with them and that some of those expenses may be reimbursed; and (e) of the name and contact information of the agency that removed the child.

Also at this hearing, the county or state will file a CHIPS petition. If a court does not hold a hearing within 48 hours or a CHIPS petition is not filed at the hearing, the court may order that the child be held for up to an additional 72 hours if certain conditions exist.

A CHIPS petition must state that the court has exclusive original jurisdiction over a child alleged to be in need of protection or services that can be ordered by the court, and that any of the following apply:

- The child has no parent or guardian;
- The child has been abandoned;
- The child's parents have relinquished custody of the child under s. 48.195 of the statutes;
- The child has been the victim of abuse, including injury that is self-inflicted or inflicted by another;
- The child is at substantial risk of becoming the victim of abuse, including injury that is self-inflicted or inflicted by another, based on reliable and credible information that another child in the home has been the victim of such abuse;
- The child's parent or guardian signs the petition requesting the court's jurisdiction and is unable or needs assistance to care for or provide necessary special treatment or care for the child;

- The child's guardian is unwilling or unable to sign the petition requesting the court's jurisdiction and is unable or needs assistance to care for or provide necessary special treatment or care for the child;

- The child has been placed for care or adoption in violation of law;

- The child is receiving inadequate care while a parent is missing, incarcerated, hospitalized, or institutionalized;

- The child is at least age 12, signs the petition requesting the court's jurisdiction, and is in need of special treatment or care which the parent, guardian, or legal custodian is unwilling, neglecting, unable, or needs assistance to provide;

- The child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian neglects, refuses, or is unable for reasons other than poverty to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care, or shelter, or is at substantial risk of doing these things, so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child; or based on reliable and credible information that this has occurred to another child in the home;

- The child is suffering emotional damage for which the parent, guardian, or legal custodian has neglected, refused, or been unable, and is neglecting, refusing, or unable, for reasons other than poverty, to obtain necessary treatment or to take necessary steps to ameliorate the symptoms;

- The child is suffering from an alcohol or other drug abuse impairment, exhibited to a severe degree, for which the parent, guardian, or legal custodian is neglecting, refusing, or unable to provide treatment; or

- The child has not been immunized and has not been exempted from such immunizations.

Within 30 days after filing the CHIPS petition, the court conducts a plea hearing to determine whether any party wishes to contest the allegations

made in the petition. If no one wishes to contest the CHIPS petition, the court sets a date for a dispositional hearing within 30 days, or immediately goes forward with that hearing if all parties consent. If any party wishes to contest the CHIPS petition, a date is set for a fact-finding hearing within 30 days, where the court will determine if the allegations in the CHIPS petition are proved by clear and convincing evidence. If the court finds that the allegations are not proved, the case is dismissed and the child returns home. If the court finds that there is clear and convincing evidence, the court will hold a dispositional hearing within 30 days or immediately if all parties consent.

Once the court adjudicates the CHIPS case, the court orders a disposition of the case, which outlines the needs of the child and a plan for ensuring appropriate services for the child. The dispositional process includes, among other options, determining whether legal custody of the child should be transferred to the county, or in Milwaukee County, DCF, and whether the child should be placed in out-of-home care, permitting the parent to provide the names and other identifying information of three relatives of the child or other individuals 18 years of age or over for consideration. If the child is removed from his or her home, the dispositional order placing a child in out-of-home care must include a finding that: (a) continued placement of the child in his or her home would be contrary to the welfare of the child; (b) the child welfare agency has made reasonable, or, in the case of an Indian child, active efforts, to prevent the removal of the child from the home, while assuring that the child's health and safety are the paramount concerns; and (c) if a permanency plan has been previously prepared, the child welfare agency has made reasonable efforts to achieve the goals of the permanency plan.

The finding that reasonable efforts have not been made is not required if one of the exceptions is met. These exceptions, which do not apply in the case of a Native American child, include: (a) the parent has subjected the child to aggravated circumstances (such as abandonment, chronic abuse,

torture, or sexual abuse); (b) the parent has committed, aided, or abetted one of several serious criminal offenses; (c) the parental rights of the parent to another child have been involuntarily terminated; and (d) the parent has been found to have relinquished custody of the child when the child was 72 hours old or younger (that is, infant relinquishment under s. 48.195 of the statutes).

A dispositional order, and any extension or revision to a dispositional order, made before the child reaches 18 years of age that places, or continues the placement of, a child in his or her home terminates at the end of one year after the order is entered, unless the judge specifies a shorter period of time or terminates the order sooner. If the order places or continues placement of the child in an out-of-home placement, the order terminates when the child reaches 18 years of age, at the end of one year after entry of the order, or, if the child is a full-time student at a secondary school or its vocational or technical equivalent and is reasonably expected to complete the program before reaching age 19, when the child reaches age 19, whichever is later, unless the judge specifies a shorter period of time or terminates the order sooner.

Permanency Plans. For each child placed in out-of-home care, the agency responsible for the placement or assigned responsibility for the child must prepare a written permanency plan. This permanency plan must be filed with the court ordering the placement within 60 days after the date of the child's removal from his or her home. The permanency plan identifies the goal for a permanent placement for the child and the services to be provided to the child, his or her family, and the foster parent or other caregiver in order to achieve the permanence goal. The permanence goal can include: (a) reunification with the child's family; (b) permanent placement with a fit and willing relative; (c) placement of the child for adoption; (d) placement of the child with a guardian; or (e) another alternate permanent placement, including long-term foster care or independent living. If age and developmentally appropriate, courts must consult with the child regarding the permanency

plan. Courts must also consider an out-of-state placement, if appropriate. Permanency plans are also required for children placed in the home of a relative under a court order.

Permanency plans must be reviewed no later than six months after the date on which the child was first removed from his or her home and every six months after a previous review for as long as the child is placed outside of the home. The court is required to hold a permanency plan hearing within 12 months after the child's removal from the home and at least every 12 months after the previous hearing. This hearing may be held either in place of, or in addition to, a review.

Types of Out-of-Home Care Placements. Out-of-home care includes children in foster homes (including licensed relatives), group homes, residential care centers, children living with an unlicensed relative (kinship care), and other placements, such as short-term placements in secure detention facilities or hospitals.

A child placed in out-of-home care can be placed with a relative, who may or may not be a licensed foster parent, or, if a relative is not available or a viable option, in foster care, group homes, or residential care centers. These types of placements can range from a home setting to a more restrictive, institutional setting. Reasonable efforts must be made to place siblings together.

Kinship Care. If a placement is with a relative, other than a parent, and the relative is not a licensed foster parent, then the relative may qualify for the kinship care program. The kinship care program is designed to help support a child who resides outside of the home with a relative, rather than placing the child in foster care or other out-of-home placement. However, this program is not designed to be used when another placement is in the child's best interests.

Kinship care relatives who provide care and maintenance for one or more children may receive a kinship care payment of \$220 per month,

beginning January 1, 2011, for each child (\$215 per month prior to January 1, 2011) if:

- The kinship care relative applies to the county, tribe, or DCF for kinship care payments and, if the placement is court-ordered, applies for a foster home license as well;
- The county, tribe, or DCF determines that there is a need for the child to be placed with the kinship care relative and that the placement with the relative is in the best interests of the child;
- The county, tribe, or DCF determines that the child meets, or would be at risk of meeting, one or more of the CHIPS or JIPS criteria;
- The county, tribe, or DCF conducts a background investigation of the kinship care relative, any employee and prospective employee of the kinship care relative who has or would have regular contact with the child for whom kinship care payments would be made, and any other adult resident in the kinship care relative's home to determine if the kinship care relative, employee, prospective employee, or adult resident has any arrests or convictions that could adversely affect the child or the kinship care relative's ability to care for the child;
- The kinship care relative states that he or she and any employee, prospective employee, or other adult in the residence who would have regular contact with the child have no arrests or convictions that could adversely affect the child or the ability to care for the child;
- The kinship care relative cooperates with the county, tribe, or DCF in the application process, including applying for other forms of assistance for which the child may be eligible;
- The kinship care relative is not receiving any other kinship care or foster care payment with respect to the same child; and
- The child for whom the kinship care relative is providing care and maintenance is not re-

ceiving supplemental security income (SSI) benefits.

Under the program, a "child" is defined as either any person under the age of 18 or a person who has attained the age of 18 but who is not yet 19 and who is a full-time student in good academic standing at a secondary school or its vocational or technical equivalent and who is reasonably expected to complete his or her program of study and be granted a high school or high school equivalency diploma.

At least every 12 months, the county, tribe, or DCF reviews the case of a relative receiving kinship care to determine if the conditions under which the case was initially determined eligible still exist. If those conditions no longer exist, the county, tribe, or DCF discontinues making the kinship care payments.

A relative does not categorically assume guardianship of the child under kinship care. Kinship care is a living arrangement for the child in the relative's household. The state recognizes this relationship as being in the best interests of the child by funding kinship care payments.

Foster Care. The least restrictive out-of-home licensed placement is foster care. Under foster care, a family provides care and maintenance for four or fewer children or, if necessary to enable a sibling group to remain together, eight or fewer children in the family's home. Exceptions may be granted to place more than eight children in a foster home if necessary to keep siblings together.

Provisions of 2009 Wisconsin Acts 28 and 71 established a new process to create a levels of care system for foster care licensing. Previously, applicants would be licensed as either foster parents or treatment foster parents (which provided a higher level of care at an increased payment rate). Under the new system, DCF will establish levels of care that a foster home will be licensed to provide based on the level of knowledge, skill, training, experience, and other qualifications required of the licen-

see, the level of responsibilities expected of the licensee, the needs of the children placed with the licensee, and any other requirements relating to the ability of the licensee to provide for those needs. Implementation of the new graduated foster care licensing system will take place in two phases.

Under the first phase, DCF created a process for certification of foster homes at levels one and two, beginning January 1, 2010. Level one certification applies to a foster home with a child-specific license. A "child-specific license" is a license that is issued to a relative of a child or an individual who has a previous existing relationship with the child or the child's family. Level two certification applies to licensees who provide additional references and meet additional training requirements.

Act 28 also created a requirement that foster parents receive training in the care and support needs of children who are placed in foster care. 2009 Wisconsin Act 336 further required ongoing training and specified that training must include: (a) parenting skills, including child development; infant care, if appropriate; effect of trauma on children; communicating with children in an age-appropriate manner; and recognizing issues such as drug use or addiction or attachment disorder; (b) for foster parents caring for children 11 years of age or older, teaching and encouraging independent living skills, including budgeting, health and nutrition, and other skills to promote the child's long-term economic independence and well-being; (c) issues that may confront foster parents or treatment foster parents, in general, and that may confront the foster parents of children with special needs; (d) child abuse and neglect prevention; (e) proper use of foster care payments; (f) availability of resources for foster parents in the local community; and (g) other topics determined by DCF.

The second phase of the levels of care licensing system creates new certification levels that specify the training and other requirements for foster homes with certification levels above level two, establish the customized assessment tool, and provide the process to determine monthly rates of re-

imbursement above the basic maintenance payment, described below. Proposed rules regarding the second phase were submitted in December of 2010. Implementation of the second phase is set to begin January 1, 2011. Until the second phase has been implemented, foster homes may still be licensed as treatment foster homes.

As of August of 2010, most children (approximately 60%) in out-of-home care statewide were in licensed foster care.

Foster care basic maintenance payments, which vary depending on whether certification is at level one or above level one and, for certification above level one, the child's age, are designed to reimburse a foster parent for the cost of a foster child's food, clothing, housing, basic transportation, and personal items. This payment structure is applicable for children in foster homes. The payments are made by counties and tribes for children in out-of-home care or by DCF for children in Milwaukee County or in the state special needs adoption program's foster care program.

All foster care payments include the basic maintenance rate, which is established by statute. The current basic payment rates are shown in Table 2. Counties, tribes, and DCF also consider the needs of the child and may provide a supplemental payment or an exceptional payment, in addition to the basic payment, for foster homes certified at level two or higher. A supplemental payment may be made, in an amount determined by DCF, for a foster child who requires more than the usual amount of care and supervision for the child's age because of special emotional, behavioral, or physical and personal needs. These special needs are further defined in administrative rule (DCF 56). An exceptional payment, determined by the placing agency, may be provided to: (a) enable the child to be placed in a foster home instead of a more restrictive setting; or (b) replace a child's basic wardrobe that has been lost or destroyed through other than normal wear. The new levels of care licensing system will provide additional categories for payments above the basic maintenance rate. The cur-

Table 2: Basic Maintenance Payments and Clothing Allowance -- Calendar Year 2011

	Monthly Amount	Maximum Clothing Allowance
Level One	\$220	\$0
Levels Two and Above		
Under Age 5	\$366	\$225
Ages 5 through 11	400	263
Ages 12 through 14	455	300
Ages 15 and over	475	300

rent maximum monthly foster care payment for a child is \$2,000. About two-thirds of children in foster homes and treatment foster homes have supplemental rates and about one-half have exceptional rates.

In addition to the monthly foster care payments, the county or DCF may provide a clothing allowance when the child is initially placed in out-of-home care. The maximum clothing allowance amounts are shown in Table 2. Counties may reimburse a foster parent one time for the actual costs of the clothing purchases up to the maximum allowance.

Group Homes and Residential Care Centers. Two other types of placements are group homes and residential care centers (RCCs) for children and youth. Group homes may be: (a) family-operated group homes, where the licensee is one or more individuals who operate only one group home; (b) agency-operated group homes, where the licensee is a public agency other than DCF; or (c) corporation-operated group homes, where the licensee is a non-profit or proprietary corporation that operates one or more group homes. RCCs are typically licensed private child welfare agencies.

As of August of 2010, 6% of the children in out-of-home care statewide were in group homes, and 6% were in RCCs. Both of these placements are more restrictive than foster homes. Group homes provide care and maintenance for five to eight children, not including children of minors. RCCs provide treatment and custodial services for

children, youth, and young adults up to 21 years of age. Placement into an RCC must be made before the child reaches age 18, unless under juvenile court jurisdiction, and the RCC is prohibited from having five or more young adults age 18 or older at its facilities at one time unless it is also licensed as a community-based residential facility.

Provisions of 2009 Wisconsin Act 28 directed DCF to phase-in the regulation of rates charged by group homes and RCCs. The first phase required child welfare agencies to establish a per client administrative rate for the administrative portion of their treatment foster care services in the same manner that group homes and RCCs had been establishing their own per client rates, which had been published annually by DCF. A child welfare agency is an agency authorized to license treatment foster homes. As noted above, treatment foster homes are being replaced by different levels of certification for foster homes under the new graduated foster care licensing system. The second phase froze rates for child welfare agencies, group homes, and RCCs in calendar year 2010. The third phase requires DCF to establish these rates, rather than just report them, beginning January 1, 2011, based on whether the rate is appropriate to the level of services to be provided, the qualifications of the RCC, group home, or child welfare agency to provide those services, and the reasonable and necessary costs of providing those services.

In addition, 2009 Wisconsin Act 335 required these rates to be set using a performance-based contracting system and established an advisory committee to assist DCF in developing the rules, implementing the regulation of rates, and identifying the performance-based measurements for the new contracting system. In 2010, the average incorporated group home daily rate was \$202.03, ranging from \$106.73 per day to \$335.01 per day. The average RCC daily rate in 2008 was \$312.58, ranging from \$204.07 per day to \$688.00 per day.

Out-of-Home Care Caseloads. Table 3 shows the out-of-home care caseloads from 2004 through 2009 for each type of placement (court-ordered

Table 3: Out-of-Home Care Caseloads on December 31, 2004, through 2009

Year		Court-Ordered		Treatment		Residential		Total
		Kinship Care	Foster Homes	Foster Homes	Group Homes	Care Centers	Other Placements	
2004	Milwaukee County	763	1,915	260	109	72	77	3,196
	All Other Counties	627	2,521	521	301	355	212	4,537
	Wisconsin Total	1,390	4,436	781	410	427	289	7,733
2005	Milwaukee County	784	1,477	278	132	70	116	2,857
	All Other Counties	710	2,478	631	331	372	277	4,799
	Wisconsin Total	1,494	3,955	909	463	442	393	7,656
2006	Milwaukee County	771	1,252	331	110	57	143	2,664
	All Other Counties	708	2,390	621	272	383	287	4,661
	Wisconsin Total	1,479	3,642	952	382	440	430	7,325
2007	Milwaukee County	841	1,125	449	142	77	140	2,774
	All Other Counties	776	2,360	615	258	359	277	4,645
	Wisconsin Total	1,617	3,485	1,064	400	436	417	7,419
2008	Milwaukee County	724	1,081	507	174	75	148	2,709
	All Other Counties	795	2,276	622	239	384	299	4,615
	Wisconsin Total	1,519	3,357	1,129	413	459	447	7,324
2009	Milwaukee County	509	880	545	185	94	109	2,322
	All Other Counties	755	2,179	564	226	316	206	4,246
	Wisconsin Total	1,264	3,059	1,109	411	410	315	6,568

kinship care, foster homes, treatment foster homes, group homes, RCCs, and other placements). Since implementation of the new graduated foster care licensing system did not begin until January 1, 2010, Table 3 shows the caseloads for both foster homes and treatment foster homes, rather than the different levels of care under the new system.

The overall number of children in out-of-home care has ranged from approximately 6,600 to 7,700. There has been a shift, however, from children placed in foster homes to children placed in treatment foster homes, which require higher foster care payments. This is due, in part, to the decrease in available foster homes. Treatment foster homes are the next least restrictive, non-relative placements. Implementation of the new graduated foster care licensing system would provide more foster care options and could, therefore, reduce these costs.

As of December 31, 2009, there were 6,568

children in out-of-home care in Wisconsin: 2,322 in Milwaukee County and 4,246 in the rest of the state. About 35% of the state's children in out-of-home care are in Milwaukee County. Not included in these numbers are Native American children placed in out-of-home care by a tribal court and whose payments are being paid for by the tribe.

Licensing. Counties, tribes, DCF, and child welfare agencies license foster homes. DCF licenses child placing agencies (child welfare agencies that place children in foster homes and group homes), group homes, and RCCs. The requirements for licensure and the procedures and policies are specified in state administrative code and include who may apply for a license, how to apply, the required qualifications of the licensee, the requirements for the physical environment of the licensed home or agency, safety requirements, principles for the care of children, payment levels, and training for care providers. For group homes and RCCs, the admin-

istrative rules also specify requirements relating to staff and the maintenance of child records. Each license includes the number of children that a home or agency may receive, the age of the children, and the gender of children that may be placed there. A foster home or treatment foster home license may be issued for up to two years. A group home or RCC license is reviewed every two years but does not expire unless it is revoked or suspended.

Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children. The purpose of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children is to: (a) provide a process through which children are placed in safe and suitable homes in a timely manner; (b) facilitate ongoing supervision of a placement, the delivery of services, and communication between states; (c) provide operating procedures that ensure that children are placed in safe and suitable homes in a timely manner; (d) provide for the promulgation and enforcement of administrative rules implementing the provisions of the compact and regulating the covered activities of the member states; (e) provide for uniform data collection and information sharing between member states; (f) promote coordination between this compact, the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance, and other compacts that affect the placement of, and provide services to, children who are otherwise subject to this compact; (g) provide for a state to retain the continuing legal jurisdiction and responsibility for placement and care of a child that the state would have had if the placement were intrastate; and (h) provide for the promulgation of guidelines, in collaboration with tribes, for interstate cases involving Indian children as is or may be permitted by federal law.

Under 2009 Wisconsin Act 339, the state enacted the enabling legislation to become a member state of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children.

Other Provisions. Provisions of 2009 Act 28 established a new requirement that foster parents receive training in the care and support needs of

children who are placed in foster care. In addition, Act 28 provided \$77,800 annually from vital records fees in the Department of Health Services (DHS) on a one-time basis to conduct public information activities to promote understanding of the foster care program and awareness of the need for foster parents.

Exiting Out-Of-Home Care

Each CHIPS, JIPS, and delinquency dispositional order and permanency plan identifies the permanence goal for a child in out-of-home care. Permanency plan goals can include: (a) reunification with the birth family; (b) transfer of legal guardianship to a relative; (c) adoption; (d) long-term foster care for children for whom adoption is not an option; or (e) independent living.

Reunification. Family reunification was first emphasized in the federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980. In 1997, the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act changed the emphasis in federal child welfare legislation from reunification towards permanence for children in a timely manner with the concept of concurrent planning: considering two potential permanence goals simultaneously for a child.

In calendar year 2009, 3,500 children, were reunified with their parent or parents. Family reunification occurs when the child returns to his or her home from out-of-home care, although the court order may continue and services may be continued in the home. This takes place when the court finds that the goals of the permanency plan were achieved, that the safety and well-being of the child can be met in the care of the parent, and that the reasons for the removal of the child from the home and the CHIPS, JIPS, or delinquency order are no longer valid.

Guardianship. Under s. 48.023 of the statutes, a guardian is defined as a person appointed by the

court who has the authority to make important decisions in matters having a permanent effect on the life and development of the child and the duty to be concerned about the child's general welfare, including but not limited to: (a) the authority to consent to marriage, enlistment in the U.S. armed forces, major medical, psychiatric, and surgical treatments, and obtaining a driver's license; (b) the authority to represent the child in legal actions and make other decisions of substantial legal significance concerning the child but not the authority to deny the child the assistance of counsel as required under the Children's Code; (c) the right and duty of reasonable visitation of the child; and (d) the rights and responsibilities of legal custody, except under certain situations when legal custody has been vested in another person or when the child is jailed or incarcerated.

An adult can be granted guardianship of a child without the termination of the child's parents' rights. Without the termination of parental rights (TPR), the child is still legally the child of his or her parents, but the guardian, in general, is responsible for the care and well-being of that child.

When the court appoints a guardian under s. 48.977 of the statutes, the court closes the CHIPS case. If the guardian is a relative and not a foster parent, the relative remains eligible for a monthly kinship care payment. If the guardian is not a relative, the guardian, under current law, is not eligible for a monthly support payment for the care of the child. The only exception is the subsidized guardianship waiver program, which operates in Milwaukee County.

In 2009, approximately 360 children were discharged to guardianships. In addition, approximately 250 children were discharged from care to relatives. These numbers include re-entry and exit rates so one child could have been discharged more than once during the year.

Adoption. When a child is removed from his or her home and enters the child welfare system, the child is in the physical custody of the county or

tribe. If the court terminates a child's parents' rights, the child is legally available for adoption. The court may transfer guardianship and custody of the child pending adoptive placement to: (a) a county department authorized to accept guardianship; (b) a child welfare agency licensed to accept guardianship; (c) DCF; (d) a relative with whom the child resides, if the relative has filed a petition to adopt the child, is a kinship care relative, or is receiving foster care payments; (e) an individual who has been appointed guardian of the child by a court of a foreign jurisdiction; or (f) the guardian if the court appoints a guardian. The court may also transfer guardianship to (a) through (c) above, but transfer custody to an individual in whose home the child has resided for at least 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the termination of parental rights or to a relative. Finally, if the child is unlikely to be adopted, the court may enter an order placing the child in sustaining care.

Adoptions may be: (a) by relatives or stepparents; (b) for infants through licensed private adoption agencies; (c) international adoptions through licensed private adoption agencies; and (d) from out-of-home care. For children legally available for adoption, but for whom it is difficult to find an adoptive home and who meet specific criteria, the state provides adoption services through the special needs adoption program. In 2009, approximately 700 children discharged from out-of-home care were adopted.

Special Needs Adoption Program. DCF administers the special needs adoption program, under which state and contracted staff provide case management and adoptive placement for children with special needs who are available for adoption. DCF is authorized 16.0 FTE positions in the Division of Safety and Permanence and 4.0 quality assurance staff in the Office of Performance and Quality Assurance for the program. DCF also contracts with private vendors in three regions for approximately 23 caseworkers. The amount budgeted for the contracts in 2010-11 totals \$2,225,400.

The special needs adoption program provides

Table 4: Special Needs Adoption Program

Region	Regional Office Location	Lead Contracted Agency
Eastern	Green Bay	Lutheran Social Services of Appleton
Southern	Madison	Children's Services Society of Wisconsin
Western	Eau Claire	Lutheran Social Services of Eau Claire
Milwaukee	West Allis	Children's Services Society of Wisconsin

adoptive services for children with special needs from counties, other than Milwaukee County, and tribes. BMCW contracts with Children's Service Society of Wisconsin to provide similar services for children with special needs from Milwaukee County.

The special needs adoption program is organized by regions throughout the state. Table 4 shows the region, the location of the regional offices, and the contracted agency assigned to each region. Each contracted agency may subcontract with other agencies. Currently, the contracted agencies in the eastern and southern regions subcontract with at least one other vendor to handle some of the workload.

The state staff includes 3.0 FTE regional supervisors and 13.0 FTE social worker positions. State staff consults with counties to identify children for whom adoption is an appropriate permanency option, to assist in the permanency planning for each child before TPR, and to search for adoptive families for these children. The contracted staff provide case management services for children who are in the state's custody, provide services to the court, identify potential adoptive parents, and conduct home studies of these parents.

Federal and state laws emphasize providing permanence for children under specified timelines. Concurrent planning supports this goal by allowing caseworkers to plan and prepare for permanence through, for example, reunification with the birth parents and adoption simultaneously. State adoption caseworkers develop and maintain supportive and informative working relationships with local and tribal child welfare agency staff, court representatives, service providers, and fami-

lies so that they can identify children who may be in need of an adoptive placement and potential resources to address this need. These consultation activities are intended to decrease the time between the TPR and the finalized adoption. Currently, the average time between the TPR and the finalized adoption in the special needs adoption program is 6.6 months statewide (including Milwaukee County). The current federal child and family services review performance measures (discussed in further detail below) require each state to demonstrate that children in out-of-home care are adopted in a timely manner (within 24 months) after they are removed from their homes.

In addition to the caseworker and supervisor positions, there are 4.0 FTE quality assurance positions that review adoption program outcomes and vendor performance. Adoption vendors ensure that appropriate services are provided to cases while adoptions are being finalized.

Table 5 shows the number of special needs adoptions finalized over the period from 1998 to 2009. The table shows that 711 adoptions were fi-

Table 5: Number of Finalized Adoptions Statewide 1998-2009

Year	Non-Milwaukee Counties	Milwaukee County	Statewide Number	% Change
1998	415	307	722	---
1999	350	304	654	-9.4%
2000	421	288	709	8.4
2001	464	263	727	2.5
2002	544	500	1,044	43.6
2003	562	591	1,153	10.4
2004	563	461	1,024	-11.2
2005	480	422	902	-11.9
2006	455	271	726	-19.5
2007	476	248	724	-0.3
2008	481	218	699	-3.5
2009	463	248	711	1.7

nalized in 2009, including 248 in Milwaukee and 463 in other counties.

DCF indicates that in Milwaukee County, final-

ized adoptions typically total between 200 and 250 per year, and, in all other counties, finalized adoptions total between 450 and 500 per year. However, this number increased from 2002 through 2005 after the adoption contract in Milwaukee County switched from the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services to Children's Service Society of Wisconsin. A backlog of children awaiting adoptions under the former contract, along with additional funds for the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office to prosecute TPR cases, increased the number of adoptions for several years until the backlog worked through the child welfare system. In 2009, the number of finalized adoptions is similar to what is considered typical for the state.

If, after being in the state's custody for two years in the special needs adoption program, a child has not been adopted, custody of the child is transferred back to the county. The state maintains guardianship, and adoption caseworkers continue to search for an adoptive placement for the child, but the county administers the daily case management and has financial responsibility for the case.

State Foster Care Payments. When the state gains legal custody of a child and the child is in an out-of-home care placement, the state assumes responsibility for the monthly payments to the out-of-home care provider. In 2010-11, \$4,934,400 (\$3,670,700 GPR and \$1,263,700 FED) is budgeted for DCF to make these payments. In September, 2010, DCF made payments on behalf of 275 children in the state foster care program.

Adoption Assistance Payments. DCF makes monthly adoption assistance maintenance payments to the adoptive or proposed adoptive parents of a child after an adoption agreement has been signed and the child is placed in the home of the adoptive or proposed adoptive parents. These payments are intended to assist in the cost of care for that child. Adoption assistance can only be provided for a child with special needs and when DCF has determined that such assistance is necessary to assure the child's adoption.

In 2010-11, \$94,717,000 (\$47,169,100 GPR and \$47,547,900 FED) is budgeted for adoption assistance payments. The federal funding is available under Title IV-E as reimbursement for a portion of the costs of the payments. This partial reimbursement is available for payments made on behalf of children that meet certain eligibility criteria, including financial eligibility criteria based on the former AFDC program, as determined by DCF.

To be eligible for adoption assistance, a child must have at least one of the following special needs at the time of the adoption: (a) the child is 10 years of age or older, if age is the only factor in determining eligibility; (b) the child is a member of a sibling group of three or more children that must be placed together; (c) the child exhibits, or is at high risk of developing, moderate or intensive physical, emotional, and behavioral needs; or (d) the child belongs to a minority race in which children of that race cannot be readily placed due to lack of appropriate placements. Most children available for adoption through the state adoption system meet one or more of these criteria.

In September, 2010, DCF made adoption assistance payments on behalf of 8,506 children in Wisconsin. The circumstances of the adoptive parents and the needs of the child are considered together in determining the level of adoption assistance a family receives. The amount of the maintenance payment is based on the applicable uniform foster care rate in effect at the time the adoption agreement was made and on the care needs of the child. Monthly adoption assistance payments range from \$0 to \$2,000. Currently, adoption assistance may be continued after the child reaches 18 years of age if the child is a full-time high school student.

Under federal law, states cannot use a means test to determine adoptive parents' eligibility for the adoption assistance program, but may consider the adoptive parents' circumstances in determining the amount of the adoption assistance payment. In addition, states cannot reduce the adoption assistance payment because of a change in the adoptive parents' income without the adoptive parents'

agreement. Under administrative rule [DCF 50.05(4)], DCF must consider family circumstances, such as the following, in determining the amount of the monthly adoption assistance payment: (a) the burden on the family's financial resources is significant because of a need to provide for the adoptee; (b) although the family's financial resources are substantial, unusual circumstances have placed demands on the family income to the extent that providing for an adoptee would result in a significant financial burden; (c) the family lacks health insurance or sufficient insurance to cover the expected medical needs of the adoptee; and (d) resources needed by the adoptee are not available in the family's community and the expense of gaining access to the necessary resources would place a significant financial burden on the family.

In addition to monthly adoption assistance payments, families may be eligible for reimbursement for one-time adoption expenses, such as legal or agency fees, up to \$2,000 per child. Also, most children for whom DCF makes adoption assistance payments remain eligible for medical assistance (MA), which pays for eligible medical expenses not covered by the family's health insurance.

Other Adoption Resources. DCF contracts with Adoption Resources of Wisconsin (ARW) to administer the state adoption information center and adoption exchange center. These centers provide information to prospective adoptive families on all types of adoption, to birth parents on the adoption process, to adoptive families after adoption, and to professionals and the general public. ARW publishes *Adopt!*, a semiannual paper publication that showcases children available for adoption in Wisconsin, and promotes the adoption of children through newspaper columns, television feature stories, and posters. The adoption resources website provides child-specific information on children available for adoption, information on the special needs adoption process, and information on post-adoptive services, and identifies available resources on adoption that can be loaned out. In 2010-11, DCF allocated \$348,000 to ARW to provide

these services.

Post-Adoption Resource Centers. The post-adoption resource centers (PARCs) are agencies that: (a) provide education, support activities, and services to adoptive families; (b) improve community awareness of and promote a positive image of adoption; (c) create a better understanding of unique issues facing adoptive families among public and private human service providers, schools, and medical care providers; (d) increase availability of services for adoptive families; and (e) establish collaborative efforts among public and private organizations to address the needs of adoptive families. DCF allocates a \$70,000 annual federal grant to each center. The federal funding is available under Title IV-B, Subpart II. The five Wisconsin regions served by each administering agency are shown in Table 6. The Southeastern region includes Milwaukee County.

Table 6: PARC Regions and Administering Agencies

Region	Agency
Southeastern	Adoption Resources of Wisconsin
Southern	Catholic Charities, Diocese of Madison
Western	Catholic Charities, Diocese of La Crosse
Northern	Catholic Charities, Diocese of La Crosse
Northeastern	Family Services of NE Wisconsin, Inc.

Each PARC has a toll-free telephone number available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to respond to questions or concerns from families who have adopted, including special needs adoption, international adoption, and private adoption. The PARCs provide services in their region, but each service is available to families statewide. PARCs provide: (a) training on a variety of issues that affect families with adopted children; (b) access to community resources; (c) referrals to adoption-related support groups, recreational and educational opportunities, and resources; and (d) opportunities to meet with other adoptive families.

Adoption Record Search Program. The adoption record search program is established under ss. 48.432 and 48.433 of the statutes. It became effective

tive in May of 1982 and was revised in 1984, 1989, 1995, and 2005. The primary purpose of the program is to assist persons who have been adopted or whose birth parents have terminated their parental rights in obtaining information about themselves and their birth relatives. This information includes:

- Nonidentifying social history information (age of birth parents, nationality, race, education, general physical appearance, talents, hobbies, special interests, reason for the adoption or termination of parental rights, religion, family history, and personality traits).
- Medical and genetic information about birth parents and other family members, including routine health information and any known genetically transferable disease.
- Most recent names and addresses of birth parents on file when the birth parents have filed affidavits allowing the release of that information.
- A copy of the impounded birth certificate, if the birth parent authorizes release of the original birth certificate at the time of adoption.

When a licensed physician has determined that the life or health of an adopted person or their offspring is in imminent danger or that treatment without medical and genetic information would be injurious to his or her health, DCF will attempt to obtain needed pertinent medical and genetic information from the birth parents. Similarly, if a physician submits a report stating that a birth parent or another offspring of the birth parent has acquired or may have a genetically transferable disease, the adopted person (or, if under 18 years of age, the adopted person's guardian, custodian or adoptive parent) must be notified of the existence of the disease.

Youth Aging Out of Out-Of-Home Care. Under state law, a child can remain in an out-of-home care placement until he or she is 18 years of age, or, if the youth is expected to graduate from high school, 19 years of age. After this time, the youth

"ages out" of out-of-home care and is expected to begin to live independently and, unless the youth pursues higher education, to enter the job force. Over 350 youth "age out" of out-of-home care each year in Wisconsin.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Prior to 2001, states could participate in the Title IV-E independent living program, under which the state could provide independent living services to all youth in out-of-home care between the ages of 16 and 18 and could provide follow-up services to youth until they reached 21 years of age. Funding was allocated to states according to each state's share of Title IV-E eligible children in 1984.

The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 replaced the Title IV-E independent living program with the Chafee foster care independence program. Under this program, states are required to provide independent living services to youth aging out of out-of-home care, as well as youths between the ages of 18 and 21 who were formerly in out-of-home care.

Funding for the program was first allocated to states in 2001. States can use the federal funds in any way that allows them to achieve the general purpose of the program, which is to help eligible children make the transition to self-sufficiency through services such as assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and financial management skills, obtaining safe and stable living environments, and preventive health activities.

DCF allocates federal Chafee foster care independence funds to counties and several tribes on an annual basis. The 2008 and 2009 allocations are shown in Attachment 2. Counties and tribes that would be serving fewer than 15 eligible children under the age of 18 may enter into consortia with surrounding counties to ensure that a comprehensive program is available to all eligible and participating youth. Counties and tribes are

required to provide a 20% match, either in cash or in-kind services, for the federal funds. The cash match may include funding from community aids, children and family aids, local tax levy, Title IV-E incentive funds, or other local or state funds that are not used as match for other federal dollars.

Counties and tribes must use these funds for independent living services for youths who were placed in out-of-home care for at least six months between the ages of 15 and 18, for as long as they remain in care, and until age 21 for youth that age out of care at age 18. If a youth leaves out-of-home care for any reason other than aging out of care (such as incarceration or reunification prior to age 18) he or she is no longer eligible for independent living services.

As a result, a youth is eligible for independent living services if he or she: (a) is currently in an out-of-home care placement and has been in the placement for at least six months after age 15; (b) is currently in subsidized guardianship or long-term kinship care if the youth had been in out-of-home care for at least six months after age 15; (c) was adopted after age 16 from an out-of-home care placement, subsidized guardianship, or long-term kinship care; or (d) left an out-of-home care placement, subsidized guardianship, or long-term kinship care at age 18.

Youths do not need to be Title IV-E eligible to receive services. Their participation in the program is voluntary.

If a youth has been in out-of-home care for at least six months after the age of 15, he or she is referred to the independent living program. Each county or tribe's program is organized differently. Counties and tribes can assign ongoing caseworkers, independent living coordinators, or outside agencies to administer the program to eligible youths. Each youth referred to the program receives an assessment of his or her independent living skills. Using the results of the assessment, the independent living caseworker, with the youth's input, develops the independent living transition

plan (ILTP). ILTPs become part of the permanency plan and are reviewed at minimum every six months. The ILTP in the permanency plan must include: (a) the anticipated age at which the child will be discharged from out-of-home care; (b) the anticipated amount of time available in which to prepare the child for the transition from out-of-home care to independent living; (c) the anticipated location and living situation of the child on discharge from out-of-home care; (d) a description of the assessment processes, tools, and methods that have been or will be used to determine the programs and services that are or will be provided to assist the child in preparing for the transition from out-of-home care to independent living; and (e) the rationale for each program or service that is or will be provided to assist the child in preparing for the transition from out-of-home care to independent living, the time frames for delivering those programs or services, and the intended outcome of those programs or services. Independent living is required to be part of a youth's permanency plan, but the ILTP provides greater detail than the information courts require. The ILTP can be updated at any time.

2009 Wisconsin Act 79 provides an additional requirement for youth who are about to age out of an out-of-home care, subsidized guardianship, or long term kinship care placement. During the 90 days immediately before the child ages out of out-of-home care, the child must receive assistance and support in developing a plan for making the transition from out-of-home care to independent living. The plan must: (a) be personalized at the direction of the child; (b) be as detailed as the child directs; and (c) include specific options for obtaining housing, health care, education, mentoring and continuing support services, and workforce support and employment services. DCF indicates that its policy is to have the planning phase begin when the youth is age 17 years and six months and to have this transition plan approved and signed by the youth 90 days prior to the youth's 18th birthday or 90 days prior to the date that the 18 year-old leaves care. A youth may leave care even if the goals of the plan are not fully met.

After the youth ages out of care and until their 21st birthday, the youth may continue to receive services through the county independent living program. The level of service is determined by the needs of the youth.

Counties and tribes may use independent living funds for a wide range of services to assist youth in becoming self-sufficient. DCF has identified skill areas that must be addressed through these services. Counties and tribes use most of the funds to support independent living coordinators and direct services to youth. The funds may also be used for room and board expenses for youth between 18 and 21 years old who were in out-of-home care until their 18th birthday, although no more than 25% of the total allocation may be used for this purpose. Attachment 3 provides information on the independent living program for 2009, including the number of eligible youths, the number of youths receiving services, and the amount of funding counties used for room and board expenses.

Education and Training Vouchers Program. The federal education and training voucher (ETV) program helps youths transition to self-sufficiency and receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment. ETV is federally funded under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act and the funding is used to support vouchers for post-secondary education and training available to youths who have aged out of out-of-home care. The funds were first available in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2003-04. Wisconsin received \$247,300 FED in FFY 2009-10 in ETV funds for distribution to counties, tribes, and BMCW. Each grant recipient is required to provide matching funds equal to 20% of their annual allocation. ETV allocations to counties, tribes, and BMCW and the match requirements are shown in Attachment 2. The remaining funds from the ETV federal award support the DCF scholarship program (described below) and state administrative costs (\$14,000 FED).

Youths may receive services funded under ETV if they meet state eligibility criteria for the

independent living program and federal ETV eligibility requirements. A youth is eligible for the ETV program if he or she exited an out-of-home care or long-term kinship care placement at age 18, went into court-ordered guardianship after the age of 15, or was adopted after the age of 16.

If a youth is participating in the ETV program on his or her 21st birthday, is enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program, and is making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program, he or she can remain eligible for ETV-funded services until he or she reaches the age of 23.

The ETV funds must be used to help establish, expand, or strengthen post-secondary educational assistance for youths eligible for independent living services. The ILTP developed for each youth eligible for the independent living program must include an education plan. Therefore, the ILTP for a youth eligible for the ETV program should address: a plan for successful completion of secondary education; communication with secondary or postsecondary educational counselors, officials, and support personnel; a plan for completion of required applications, tests, and financial aid forms; a plan for providing support during post-secondary educational or training attendance; and a plan for applying for other financial aid. Youth participation is required in designing their program activities. In addition, certain requirements can be placed on the youths to remain in the program. These requirements, such as a minimum grade point average, are established by each program.

The total amount of ETV and DCF scholarship (described below) expenditures for which a youth is eligible is the lesser of \$5,000 or the total cost of attendance at an institution of higher education.

DCF Scholarship Program. The Department of Children and Families awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 for youth who have been in out-of-home care and are entering a degree, license, or certificate program. The scholarship awards may be used for

tuition, fees, and books for youth that have been approved to attend a post-secondary education or training institution. A youth is eligible if he or she: (a) has been in out-of-home care in Wisconsin (includes foster home, treatment foster home, group home, RCC, or court-ordered kinship care) for at least six months after the age of 15 and left the placement at age 18; (b) has been in out-of-home care in Wisconsin for at least six months after the age of 15 and adopted after the age of 16; or (c) has been in an out-of-home care placement in another state but becomes a Wisconsin resident before attending a Wisconsin post-secondary institution. In addition, the individual must be accepted into an institution of higher education at the time the application is submitted and be no more than 20 years of age, unless he or she is enrolled in a post-secondary program on his or her 21st birthday, in which case the individual remains eligible until he or she is 23 years old. Youths may apply and receive funding more than one time over the course of their education or training.

In 2010, DCF awarded \$465,900 FED in scholarships to 213 youths. The federal funds are available under the ETV federal grant award. The DCF scholarship program received a total of 272 scholarship applications, of which 199 were approved, 25 did not meet requirements, 16 were incomplete and not yet resubmitted when the scholarships were awarded, and 32 were denied due to lack of funding. It should be noted that some youths sent in separate applications for each semester and some youths were awarded a scholarship but either did not go to college or the college did not send an invoice for payment. As a result, the number of scholarships provided and those approved differ.

Funding to Support Costs of Providing Child Welfare Services

With the exception of the costs of providing child welfare services in Milwaukee County and

serving children in state foster care, counties support the costs of providing child welfare and child protective services with a combination of state, federal, and local funding. In 2009, counties and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare reported spending \$281.4 million for services for children and families. This figure includes local, state, and federal funding.

Children and family aids, formerly part of community aids, is the primary source of state and federal funding to counties for child welfare services, other than services provided in Milwaukee County. DCF also allocates funding to counties and tribes under the kinship care program for children placed in the care of a relative and for whom no foster care payment is made. In addition, other federal funds support families and support youth as they age out of the out-of-home care system. These funding sources are described in further detail below. Funding for child welfare services (not including juvenile justice) in Milwaukee County is discussed in the BMCW section of this paper.

Children and Family Aids. The children and family aids program is comprised of state and federal funds that are distributed by DCF to counties for the provision of services related to child abuse and neglect and to unborn child abuse, including prevention, investigation, and treatment services. In 2010-11, the total amount of funding budgeted for children and family aids is approximately \$64.7 million.

Counties provide funding to match a portion of the children and family aids allocation, as required under state law. However, most counties provide funding above the match requirement. Counties reported spending \$426.1 million in county tax levy for human services in calendar year 2009. Of this amount, \$84.5 million was reported for abused and neglected children and for children and families.

Children and family aids includes a basic allocation, referred to as the children and families allocation (CFA), and one categorical allocation. The CFA includes general purpose revenues (GPR) and

federal funding available under Titles IV-E and IV-B (Subpart I) of the Social Security Act, the social services block grant (SSBG), and the temporary assistance for needy family (TANF) block grant. These federal funding sources are described below. In calendar year 2011, the CFA is budgeted \$64.7 million (all funds), or approximately 99.1% of the total children and family aids funding.

Children and family aids was formerly part the community aids program, which provided federal and state funds that were distributed by the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) to counties for the provision of human services in two broad, statutorily defined functional areas: (1) social services for low-income persons and CHIPS cases; and (2) services for persons with needs relating to mental illness, substance abuse, or developmental disabilities. When the child welfare program was transferred from DHFS to DCF on July 1, 2008, the former community aids funding was divided into two parts: (a) funding distributed to counties by the Department of Health Services (DHS), also known as community aids; and (b) funding distributed to counties by DCF, now known as children and family aids.

Title IV-E. Title IV-E of the federal Social Security Act provides entitlement matching funds to states for a portion of the cost of services for Title IV-E eligible children who are placed in out-of-home care and the associated administrative, child placement, and training costs. In FFY 2010, Wisconsin received \$107.8 million FED in Title IV-E funding.

Title IV-E funds are distributed to counties through the children and family aids CFA. In 2010-11, \$23.2 million in federal Title IV-E funds are budgeted in the children and family aids CFA (this includes \$5.0 million in federal stimulus funds under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act [ARRA] of 2009, described in further detail under *IV-E Reimbursability*). This amount is determined through the state budget process based on the total funding need for community aids and children and family aids and is not allocated to

each county based on the number of children in out-of-home care in that county.

Counties, excluding Milwaukee County, may receive additional Title IV-E funds if the state collects more Title IV-E funds than the amounts budgeted for children and family aids and other budgeted commitments. Of these excess funds, 50% are distributed to counties as incentive funds. The remaining 50% is retained by the state as income augmentation funds and is distributed according to the process specified under s. 48.567 of the statutes. Beginning with calendar year 2008, the state has not received any excess Title IV-E funds.

Of the excess Title IV-E funds distributed to counties, at least 50% must be used to provide prevention services for children who are at risk of abuse or neglect. Counties cannot use these funds to supplant any other funds expended by the county for services and projects to assist children and families.

DCF indicates that the amount of Title IV-E matching funds earned by the state has decreased due to: (a) federal policy changes under the federal Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005; (b) audit practices implemented through the IV-E eligibility review process; and (c) ongoing federal review of state IV-E claiming practices. Therefore, no additional incentive funds have been distributed to counties since calendar year 2009.

For costs incurred on behalf of children in Milwaukee County, Title IV-E funds are budgeted directly in the DCF appropriation for the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare. This amount is based on the Bureau's IV-E eligible activities, including administrative costs and maintenance costs based on the number of children in out-of-home care. The state also receives Title IV-E funds on behalf of children with special needs awaiting adoption or who have been adopted. These Title IV-E funds are budgeted directly for the state foster care and adoption assistance programs and the federal amount for both of these programs is based on projected caseloads. In addition, some Title IV-E reve-

nue is distributed to counties through the youth aids program allocation from the Department of Corrections on behalf of children in the juvenile justice system; to the University of Wisconsin through the training partnerships program; and to counties for local operational costs related to the electronic Wisconsin statewide automated child welfare information system (eWISACWIS), foster parent training, and legal services including support for 8.5 child welfare state-employed assistant district attorneys located throughout the state.

The level of federal funding that DCF can claim is based on a number of factors, including the number of IV-E eligible children and the level of reimbursement.

IV-E Eligibility. Title IV-E eligibility is determined when the child leaves the home of his or her parents or caretaker. The state eligibility unit (SEU) and the Milwaukee eligibility unit (MEU), which are operated by MAXIMUS, Inc., under contracts with DCF, recommend each child's eligibility under Title IV-E, based on information available from counties and tribes and in court documents, which is then reviewed and approved by DCF staff. The contracts with MAXIMUS expired December 31, 2010. A new contract, effective January 1, 2011, will again be awarded to MAXIMUS, provided the contract negotiations underway as of December 22, 2010, were successful.

Once a child is determined initially eligible, Title IV-E eligibility must be redetermined annually for the child over the duration of the out-of-home care episode from removal to discharge from out-of-home care. If a child is determined not eligible, then the child is not IV-E eligible for the duration of the out-of-home care episode. A new IV-E eligibility determination must be conducted if the child reenters out-of-home care after being discharged from another out-of-home care placement.

Except for special needs adoptions, Title IV-E eligibility requirements include meeting certain financial eligibility criteria that were in effect in July of 1996 under the former AFDC program. The

federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 eliminates the AFDC requirement for special needs adoptions over an eight-year period, beginning October 1, 2010, with older children and those who have spent at least 60 consecutive months in care, and their siblings, being eligible first. Once fully phased in, IV-E eligibility for adoption assistance will be based solely on children meeting special needs criteria and having the required court findings made.

Other eligibility requirements include: (a) the removal and foster care placement be based on a voluntary placement agreement signed by the child's parents or legal guardians and the child welfare agency or on a judicial determination that remaining in the home would be contrary to the child's welfare, within certain time frames as specified under federal law; (b) reasonable or active efforts were made to prevent the removal of the child from the home or to return the child to his or her home; (c) the care and placement of the child are the responsibility of specified public agencies.

The IV-E eligibility rate is the number of IV-E eligible children in Wisconsin as a percent of the total number of children in out-of-home care or adoptive placements statewide. Federal regulations define who is included in each of these categories. As of September of 2010, approximately 45.3% of children in out-of-home care were IV-E eligible.

IV-E Reimbursability. Title IV-E reimbursement is provided to fund 50% of the costs of administration and placement services and up to 75% of certain training costs. Maintenance payments intended to cover the costs of food, shelter, clothing, daily supervision, school supplies, personal incidentals, liability insurance for the child, and reasonable travel to the child's home for visits are reimbursed at the same rate as most services provided under the state's MA program, which is currently approximately 71% (due to the enhanced rate under the federal ARRA, which will step down to 68% in January, 2011, and again to 66% in April, 2011, until the enhanced rate is phased out in July, 2011). Title IV-E reimbursement is not provided for

children who receive SSI benefits.

States receive reimbursement for children who are IV-E eligible and reimbursable. Reimbursability is determined monthly and is contingent upon the state agency maintaining responsibility for placement and care, complying with IV-E case requirements, and the placement being in a licensed foster home, group home, or RCC.

The claim for reimbursement under Title IV-E is based on information reported by counties, tribes, and BMCW. Placement costs are reported through eWISACWIS and administrative activities are determined through a random moment time study. The random moment time study involves DCF or a contracted staff worker calling county child welfare caseworkers to determine if the caseworker's current activity is eligible for reimbursement under Title IV-E. From this quarterly time study, DCF can determine the percentage of time caseworkers spend on IV-E eligible activities, which is the basis for the state's claim for federal reimbursement of administrative costs.

Title IV-B, Subpart I. Federal funding available under Title IV-B, Subpart I of the Social Security Act is allocated to states as a sum-certain allocation to promote flexibility in the development and expansion of a coordinated child and family services program that uses community-based agencies and attempts to ensure that all children are raised in safe, loving families. Funding may be used to: (a) protect and promote the welfare of all children; (b) prevent the neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children; (c) support at-risk families through services that allow children, where appropriate, to remain safely with their families or return to their families in a timely manner; (d) promote the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care and adoptive families; and (e) provide training, professional development, and support to ensure a well-qualified child welfare workforce. States are required to provide a 25% funding match to the federal grant. Federal law limits the amount of the grant and matching funds that can be used for foster care maintenance payments and adoption assis-

tance payments. The June, 2011, state plan notes that Wisconsin does not use Title IV-B, Subpart I funding for foster care maintenance payments.

In FFY 2009-10, Wisconsin received approximately \$4.9 million FED under Title IV-B, Subpart I. Of this amount, DCF distributed approximately \$3.1 million to counties as part of the children and family aids basic county allocation and \$0.2 million to tribes in calendar year 2010. The Department of Corrections distributed approximately \$0.9 million to counties under the youth aids program, and DCF retained approximately \$0.7 million to support other child welfare programs and state administrative costs.

TANF. Counties, other than Milwaukee County, and most tribes are reimbursed for the costs of kinship care payments separately from children and family aids. In Milwaukee County, DCF makes kinship care payments to eligible relatives. Kinship care payments are funded with federal temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) block grant funds.

To the extent TANF funds are not sufficient to fund kinship care costs, counties and tribes can either support these costs from other state aids, the local property tax, or other funds or place cases on waiting lists. However, it is DCF policy that cases in any county or tribe under a court order for placement with a relative cannot be placed on waiting lists. Therefore, counties and tribes may only place cases without a court order for placement with the relative on waiting lists.

The kinship care program was created under provisions of 1995 Wisconsin Act 289, which created the Wisconsin Works program to replace the former AFDC program. Under AFDC, non-legally responsible relatives who provided care for children were eligible for an AFDC payment based on the income of the child.

With the transition to the graduated foster care licensing system, court-ordered kinship care placements are becoming foster care placements.

As this occurs, children and family aids will fund these newly licensed providers, rather than TANF. TANF continues to fund these placements until the placement converts to a licensed foster care placement and to fund those that do not convert to a licensed foster care placement.

Title IV-B, Subpart II - Promoting Safe and Stable Families. Funding available under Title IV-B, Subpart II is intended to promote safe and stable families through family preservation, family support services, family reunification, and adoption promotion and support services. The federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) allocates funding to states based on each state's relative share of children whose families receive supplemental nutrition assistance. Each state must meet a 25% match requirement.

In FFY 2009-10, Wisconsin received \$5,075,800 in Title IV-B, Subpart II funding. States are required to allocate at least 20% of their Title IV-B, Subpart II funding to each of the four categories of activities: family preservation, family support, family reunification, and adoption promotion and support. These categories are defined in Appendix A under the "Family Preservation and Support Services Program." In addition, Wisconsin received \$301,400 in Title IV-B, Subpart II monthly caseworker funds, which were used to provide training activities for county workers.

DCF allocates Title IV-B, Subpart II funds to counties for family preservation, family support, and family reunification activities. Attachment 4 to this paper identifies the Title IV-B, Subpart II allocations to counties in 2011. In addition, a portion of the federal allocation is budgeted for the state special needs adoption program, state administrative costs, BMCW network services, and training and technical assistance.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Funds. Federal funding is also provided to states to prepare youth to live independently after leaving out-of-home care and to provide transitional services to youth aging out of out-of-home care. The inde-

pendent living program is described above.

The federal funding is a capped entitlement. Each state receives funding based on its share of the nation's out-of-home care population, as reported in the most recent year for which information is available. Each state is required to provide matching funds equal to 20% of the federal allocation. In FFY 2009-10, Wisconsin received \$2,127,400 in independent living funds.

In addition to Independent Living funds, federal funding is also provided to help youths transition to self-sufficiency through the education and training voucher program. Wisconsin received \$713,200 FED in 2009-10 in ETV funds for distribution to counties, tribes, and BMCW and for the DCF scholarship program.

Adoption Incentive Funds. States may receive adoption incentive payments if the number of children adopted from the child welfare system increases from FFY 2007. For each additional adoption, the state receives a payment of \$4,000. If the child meets the criteria for special needs and is under age nine, the state receives an additional \$4,000 payment; if the child is age nine or older, the state receives an additional \$8,000 payment. In addition, if a state has its highest ever foster child adoption rate, the state receives \$1,000 for each child above the number of children calculated using the former highest child adoption rate.

Wisconsin received \$276,300 in FFY 2010 in adoption incentive payments based on the increase in the number of adoptions in FFY 2009 that exceeded those in FFY 2007.

Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). The federal social services block grant is distributed to states on the basis of population to provide services directed toward at least one of five goals: (a) to prevent, reduce, or eliminate economic dependency; (b) to achieve or maintain self-sufficiency; (c) to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults or to preserve, rehabilitate or reunite families; (d) to prevent or reduce inap-

appropriate institutional care; and (e) to secure admission or referral for institutional care when other forms of care are not appropriate or to provide services to individuals in institutions. States may transfer up to 10% of their allotment for any fiscal year to the preventive health and health services, the alcohol, drug abuse, and mental health services, the maternal and child health services, and the low-income home energy assistance block grants. States can also use funds for staff training, administration, planning, evaluation, and purchasing technical assistance in developing, implementing, or administering the state's social service plan.

States may not use SSBG funds for: (a) medical care except family planning, rehabilitation, and certain detoxification services; (b) land purchases, construction, or major capital improvement; (c) most room and board expenses, except emergency short-term services; (d) educational services generally provided by public schools; (e) most social services provided in and by employees of hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons; (f) cash payments for subsistence; (g) child day care services that do not meet state and local standards; and (h) wages to individuals as a social service, except wages of welfare recipients employed in child day care.

In 2009-10, \$31,290,000 in federal SSBG funds are budgeted in DHS, of which \$6,588,400 is transferred to DCF to support the children and family aids CFA and \$2,060,200 is budgeted for state operations in DCF.

Other Funding Sources. In addition to the funding sources already identified in this section, children in the child welfare system may receive services funded through other programs or sources. For example, children in out-of-home care are eligible for medical assistance, which pays for the child's health services. In addition, some case management activities conducted by child welfare caseworkers are not eligible for reimbursement under Title IV-E, but are eligible under MA. Medical assistance payments for these services are referred to as "targeted case management" (TCM) funds. Under the federal Deficit Reduction Act of

2005 (DRA), TCM funds are no longer available for child welfare activities, beginning in 2009. However, Congress imposed a moratorium on implementation of this regulation regarding TCM funds. DHS will continue to claim TCM funds until the moratorium is lifted. Due to the DRA, no TCM funds were budgeted under 2009 Wisconsin Act 28. However, \$25.7 million in TCM funds were claimed and received by DCF in 2009-10.

Of this amount, \$8.7 million was used for the child welfare program to: (a) address a foster care deficit in calendar year 2009 (\$4.1 million); (b) support the state's child welfare data system (\$3.8 million); and (c) implement a program improvement plan (\$0.8 million). The Joint Committee on Finance allocated the remainder of these funds (\$16.9 million) for the costs to administer the TCM claiming process and to support expenditures for child support enforcement activities, medical assistance benefits, and pupil assessment costs.

Many children in the child welfare system have developmental, physical, emotional, or mental disabilities. Some of the costs of care for these children are supported by programs that serve people with these disabilities, including the community integration program and SSI. Additional information on these programs can be found in two other information papers prepared by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau -- "Medical Assistance, BadgerCare Plus, SeniorCare, and Related Programs," and "Supplemental Security Income."

Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare

Beginning January 1, 1998, DHFS became responsible for administering child welfare services in Milwaukee County. Previously, the Milwaukee County Human Services Department (MCHSD) had this responsibility. DHFS took over this role as required by legislation enacted in the 1995 and 1997 legislative sessions in response to a lawsuit filed against the state and Milwaukee County. The

suit alleged that the state and the county were in violation of federal law and that the administration of child welfare services in Milwaukee County failed to keep children safe.

This section of the paper provides information on the lawsuit and subsequent settlement, a description of the child welfare system in Milwaukee County as administered by DCF, and how these services are funded.

ACLU Lawsuit. On June 1, 1993, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Children's Rights Project (now Children's Rights, Inc.) filed an action in Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin on behalf of approximately 5,000 children who were receiving, or should have been receiving, child welfare services in Milwaukee County. The Milwaukee County Executive, the Director of MCHSD, the Governor, and the Secretary of the former Department of Health and Social Services were named as defendants.

The complaint was a broad-based challenge to the administration of the Milwaukee County child welfare system, alleging that the county, among other things, failed to investigate complaints of abuse and neglect, failed to provide services to avoid unnecessary out-of-home placements, failed to provide appropriate out-of-home placements, and failed to terminate parental rights and secure permanent placements for children who could not be returned to their birth families. The complaint alleged that the state failed to adequately supervise and fund the Milwaukee County system.

In response to the lawsuit, during the 1995 legislative session, Wisconsin Acts 27 and 303 initiated the state's assumption of responsibility for providing child welfare services in Milwaukee County. 1995 Wisconsin Act 27 directed DHFS (as the Department of Health and Social Services was renamed the Department of Health and Family Services) to submit a proposal to the Legislature by April 1, 1996, that would outline a plan for the Department to assume responsibility for operation of the Milwaukee County child welfare system. Sub-

sequently, 1995 Wisconsin Act 303 provided initial funding, positions, and statutory authority for DHFS to plan for providing child welfare services in five sites in Milwaukee County, beginning January 1, 1998. These sites were combined to three regions in 2006.

After the enactment of 1995 Wisconsin Act 27, the parties to the lawsuit entered into settlement negotiations based on the possibility that the state would be assuming responsibility for child welfare services in Milwaukee County. Negotiations broke down in February, 1996, and the parties were prepared to go to trial.

However, the Court dismissed much of the lawsuit in January of 1998. This dismissal was partially based on grounds that the state's assumption of child welfare services in Milwaukee County made much of the case moot and also that, for many of the plaintiffs' allegations, the federal law under which the lawsuit was filed does not create privately enforceable rights. Privately enforceable rights are rights that give an individual the right to sue in order to have the government comply with provisions in law. Therefore, the Court found that the plaintiffs had no standing.

The portion of the case that remained outstanding related to alleged violations of the federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act, (AACWA), which requires states to provide a written permanency plan for every child in out-of-home care and for a periodic review of those permanency plans. The Court found that this federal requirement does create a privately enforceable right for the creation and periodic review of a permanency plan, but not for actual implementation of the plan. The Court said that on this basis, the plaintiffs were entitled to further hearings and a possible trial to enforce this right.

Settlement Agreement. The federal court approved a three-year settlement agreement in December of 2002, effectively closing the case, although the state is subject to arbitration or court intervention if non-compliance issues arise. The

settlement required DHFS to attain specified outcomes on or before January 1, 2006, for permanence, safety, and child well-being for children in out-of-home care in Milwaukee County. These areas are described in more detail below:

Permanence. The settlement required BMCW to negotiate in good faith as soon as practicable with the Milwaukee County District Attorney to ensure adequate legal representation for the prosecution of TPR petitions, consistent with federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requirements. By January 1, 2004, 65% of children in out-of-home care in Milwaukee County who had been in care for 15 of the last 22 months must have had a TPR petition filed on their behalf, or an exception documented in their case, by the end of the 15th month in care. The percentages increased to 75% by January 1, 2005, and to 90% by January 1, 2006.

For children who have been in out-of-home care for more than 15 of the last 22 months, and for whom a TPR petition has not been filed or an exception has not been documented in their case, a TPR petition must have been filed on their behalf or an exception documented in their case according to the following percentages: (a) 75% by January 1, 2004; (b) 85% by January 1, 2005; and (c) 90% by January 1, 2006.

Under the settlement agreement, if the state obtained a federal Title IV-E waiver allowing subsidized guardianship before January 1, 2003, no more than the following percentages of children in BMCW out-of-home care were allowed to be in care for more than 24 months: (a) 40% by January 1, 2004; (b) 30% by January 1, 2005; and (c) 20% by January 1, 2006. Since the state obtained a Title IV-E waiver after January 1, 2003, the percentages were 40%, 35%, and 25% respectively.

The settlement agreement also required that, in 2004, 65% of children who were reunified with their parents be reunified within 12 months of entering out-of-home care. This percentage increased to 71% in 2005.

In addition, the settlement agreement required that by January 1, 2004, at least 20% of children for whom an adoption is finalized must have exited BMCW out-of-home care within 24 months after their removal from their homes. This percentage increased to 25% by January 1, 2005, and 30% by January 1, 2006.

Safety. The settlement agreement required that by January 1, 2004, no more than 0.70% of children in out-of-home care would be victims of substantiated abuse or neglect allegations by a foster parent or staff of a licensed facility. The percentages fell to 0.65% by January 1, 2005, and 0.60% by January 1, 2006.

Independent Investigations. By January 1, 2004, at least 80% of the allegations of abuse or neglect by foster parents or staff of a licensed facility must have been: (a) referred for an independent investigation within three business days; and (b) assigned to an independent investigator within three business days of the receipt of the referral. In addition, a substantiation determination had to have been made within 60 days of the receipt of the referral to the independent investigation agency for 80% of these cases. The percentages increased to 85% by January 1, 2005, and 90% by January 1, 2006.

Child Well-Being. The settlement also placed requirements on the contract provisions, caseworker-to-case ratios, and the use of shelters as placements.

Under the settlement, the caseloads of ongoing caseworkers may not exceed an average of 11 family cases per case-carrying caseworker per site. This was phased in incrementally and became fully effective on January 1, 2004, and enforceable on April 1, 2004. BMCW is required to include a holdback provision in the caseworker contracts if the caseworkers do not meet 90% compliance with monthly face-to-face visits with the children in BMCW's custody.

Under the settlement, no children may be placed in a shelter care facility after December 31, 2003. By December 31, 2003, the settlement re-

quired BMCW to develop diagnostic/assessment centers for children over 12 years of age who need additional assessment to determine the appropriate placement. A placement in these centers may not exceed 30 days, but may be extended for another 30 days as long as the total duration of the placement does not exceed 60 days. BMCW reports that shelter care placements were not used after December 31, 2003, and diagnostic/assessment centers were implemented.

By January 1, 2004, at least 80% of children were required to have three or fewer placements after January 1, 1999, during their current episode in BMCW custody. By January 1, 2005, the required percentage increased to 82% and by January 1, 2006, 90%.

Reports. The settlement requires BMCW to provide a number of reports on the items mentioned previously and a variety of additional statistics, as well as a comprehensive case review at least once annually.

Performance of BMCW. Attachment 5 provides a complete overview of the performance of BMCW on each of the settlement agreement factors during each of the three one-year periods.

Areas Not in Compliance. In Period 1 (2003), BMCW met all of the requirements of the settlement agreement except: (a) the settlement required that no more than 40% of children be in out-of-home care for more than 24 months, and 44.2% of children were; (b) the settlement required that at least 20% of children who had adoptions finalized be adopted within 24 months, and 14.2% were, and (c) the settlement required that at least 80% of children in OHC have three or fewer placements, and 75.9% did.

In Period 2 (2004), BMCW did not meet the following requirements of the settlement agreement: (a) the settlement required that at least 65% of children who enter into out-of-home care be reunified with their families within 12 months, and 63% were; (b) the settlement required that at least 25%

of children who had adoptions finalized be adopted within 24 months, and 15.5% were; (c) the settlement required that no more than 0.65% of children were to have substantiated abuse or neglect allegations by a foster parent or staff member in a facility requiring licensing, and 0.85% did; and, finally, (d) the settlement required that at least 82% of children in out-of-home care have three or fewer placements, and 72.1% did.

In Period 3 (2005), BMCW did not meet the following requirements of the settlement agreement: (a) the settlement agreement required that at least 90% of children who were in out-of-home care for 15 of the past 22 months have a termination of parental rights petition filed on their behalf, and 29.0% did; (b) the settlement required that at least 30% of children who had adoptions finalized be adopted within 24 months, and 21.7% were; (c) the settlement required that no more than 0.60% of children were to have substantiated abuse or neglect allegations by a foster parent or staff member in a facility requiring licensing, and 0.81% did; and (d) the settlement required that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care have three or fewer placements, and 72.0% did.

The measurement methodology for the first permanency standard (that children in out-of-home care for 15 of the past 22 months have a termination of parental rights filed on their behalf) was changed in 2005 in response to a report by the Legislative Audit Bureau. Although it appears as though the BMCW performed dramatically worse on this measure in comparing Period 3 to Period 2 (29% of children in Period 3 versus 88.2% of children in Period 2), the way in which this performance standard was measured changed, thus explaining the difference. Although the reports document that BMCW was in compliance with this standard through Period 2, under the new methodology, it is likely that BMCW would not have been in compliance during any of the periods.

Based on the settlement agreement, BMCW was no longer subject to enforcement for the standards that were met at the end of the three-year period

and were in compliance for the most recent two consecutive six-month intervals. BMCW continues to report on the progress of the standards that have not yet been met for two consecutive six-month intervals. These standards include all of the four standards that were not met in 2005 plus the requirement of reunification with the family within 12 months.

In 2006, BMCW did not meet the following standards: (a) the settlement agreement required that at least 90% of children who were in out-of-home care for 15 of the past 22 months have a termination of parental rights petition filed on their behalf, and 79% did; and (b) the settlement required that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care have three or fewer placements, and 73% did.

BMCW did not meet the following standards in 2007: (a) the settlement agreement required that at least 90% of children who were in out-of-home care for 15 of the past 22 months have a termination of parental rights petition filed on their behalf, and 85% did; (b) the settlement required that at least 71% of children who enter into out-of-home care be reunified with their families within 12 months, and 69% were; (c) the settlement required that no more than 0.60% of children were to have substantiated abuse or neglect allegations by a foster parent or staff member in a facility requiring licensing, and 0.93% did; and (d) the settlement required that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care have three or fewer placements, and 75% did.

A progress report for 2008 shows improvement. BMCW did not meet the following standards in the 2008: (a) the settlement required that at least 71% of children who enter into out-of-home care be reunified with their families within 12 months, and 64% were; and (b) the settlement required that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care have three or fewer placements, and 77% did.

A progress report for 2009 shows continued difficulty in meeting these last two standards. BMCW did not meet the following standards in 2009: (a) the settlement required that at least 71%

of children who enter into out-of-home care be reunified with their families within 12 months, and 57% were; and (b) the settlement required that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care have three or fewer placements, and 78% did. These standards will continue to be monitored.

Oversight and Administration of BMCW.

Child welfare services are provided by BMCW in the DCF Division of Safety and Permanence. Services are provided from a central administrative site located in the City of Milwaukee and from three service-delivery areas located throughout the county: region 1 covers the northeastern part of the county; region 2 covers the northwestern part of the county; and region 3 covers the southern part of the county.

Management and Administration. BMCW is authorized 175.7 positions to administer child welfare services in Milwaukee County. In addition, DCF has 4.0 positions in the Office of Performance and Quality Assurance's Bureau of Performance Management, Performance Review and Evaluation Section that maintain and report program data regarding the settlement agreement and corrective action plan, as well as conduct a secondary level review of any critical incidents due to maltreatment and neglect. DCF also contracts with private vendors for over 325 staff who provide services to families in the child welfare system.

Management staff in BMCW consists of a director, a deputy director, three section chiefs (administrative section chief; prevention, access, and initial assessment section chief; and training and quality improvement section chief), and a manager at each of the three neighborhood service delivery sites. The Bureau Director is responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing major child welfare reform activities in Milwaukee County and building community support for the system, as well as developing and maintaining strong working relationships with the juvenile court, health, corrections, juvenile justice, and school systems, private providers, and community organizations. This position has overall responsibility for the Bu-

reau and serves as the primary contact for contract negotiations with vendors.

Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council. 1995 Wisconsin Act 303 established the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council as a body to make recommendations to DHFS (now DCF) and the Legislature regarding child welfare services in Milwaukee County. The Council consists of: (a) three members of the Milwaukee County Board nominated by the Milwaukee County Executive; (b) two state representatives, one appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and one appointed by the Assembly Minority Leader; (c) two state senators, one appointed by the Senate President and one appointed by the Senate Minority Leader; (d) 10 state residents, no fewer than six of whom are residents of Milwaukee County; and (e) two members nominated by a children's services network established in Milwaukee County as required under the W-2 program. The Governor appoints the chairperson of the Council from the 10 public members. Members from the Milwaukee County Board, public members, and members appointed by the W-2 children's services network are appointed for three-year terms.

With regard to child welfare services in Milwaukee County, the Council is required to make and submit recommendations to DCF annually on the following:

- Policies and plans for the improvement of the child welfare system;
- Measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the child welfare system, including outcomes measures;
- Funding priorities for the child welfare system; and
- Innovative public and private funding opportunities for the child welfare system.

The Council must hold at least one public hearing each year at which the Council must encourage

public participation and solicit public input regarding the child welfare system in Milwaukee County. The Council must also advise DCF in planning, and provide technical assistance and capacity-building to support, a neighborhood-based system for the delivery of child welfare services in Milwaukee County.

DCF must prepare a response to the recommendations submitted by the Council within 60 days of receiving the Council's report. DCF must transmit the Council's report and DCF's response to the Governor and to the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature.

In addition to the executive committee, the Council has the following five subcommittees: (a) intake, initial assessment, and safety services; (b) adoption and foster care; (c) cross-systems; (d) health care; and (e) public policy. These subcommittees meet monthly to discuss systemic issues in their areas in a community forum. The full Council meets quarterly.

Organization of Child Welfare Services in Milwaukee County. The child welfare system in Milwaukee County runs parallel with the systems in the other counties in the state. Table 7 compares the two systems.

Attachment 6 to this paper illustrates the decision-making process for child welfare cases in Milwaukee County. The system and processes in BMCW are described in the next sections of this paper.

Access Unit. The access unit receives all incoming reports of possible child abuse or neglect. The unit of 16 state-employed social workers, three state-employed supervisors, and one state-employed manager located at the central administrative site, receives intake referrals and gathers information from the referral source to determine the urgency of the referral. Referrals screened into the system by the access unit are either referred to the initial assessment unit for further investigation, or are referred to Community Impact Programs,

Table 7: Comparison of the Child Welfare System in Wisconsin Between Milwaukee County and Non-Milwaukee Counties

	Counties other than Milwaukee County	Milwaukee County
Child Welfare	County Human or Social Services Department	DCF, Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare
Funding Sources	Community Aids, Independent Living funds, Title IV-B (2) funds, county funds	GPR and federal funds (including Title IV-E, Independent Living, Title IV-B (2) funds), Milwaukee County's contribution, TANF, targeted case management funds
Adoption Unit	Special Needs Adoption Program (state)	Adoption unit in BMCW

the agency that performs independent investigations under contract with the state. Independent investigations are conducted if there is a possibility of a conflict of interest in cases where BMCW conducts the assessment. For example, a report alleging abuse or neglect in a foster home would be referred for independent investigation.

Between January and June of 2010, the access unit received an average of 1,267 calls per month. Of these referrals, on average, the access unit screened 710 into the system for further investigation. The remaining referrals were screened out for various reasons, such as the referral was not an appropriate referral or the referral was for a family or child for which a referral had already been received.

Staff is employed at the access unit from 7:00 am until 1:00 am, with the first shift available to receive calls from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm and the crisis response team available to receive calls from 4:30 pm until 12:30 am. If all of the access lines are in use during these times, the calls are forwarded to an outside vendor (All City Communications) that, after taking down basic information, sends the information to the intake office. The intake supervisor then assigns the call to an intake worker who returns the call and collects the information.

Between 12:30 am and 8:00 am Monday through Friday and on Saturday, Sunday, holidays, and furlough days, BMCW contracts with All City Communications to receive calls. The vendor

shares the information gathered from the referral source with an on-call state-employed social worker, who then consults with the on-call state-employed manager or supervisor. Together, they determine whether the referral is an emergency and requires an immediate response or can be addressed the following business day. During Monday through Thursday, there is one supervisor and two access/initial assessment social workers, to respond to urgent calls. On the weekends and holidays a rotation is used so that one supervisor and four access/initial assessment social workers are on-call for each weekend/holiday shift. Shifts run in a 12-hour block. The supervisors and intake/initial assessment social workers are on call on a rotating basis.

Family Intervention Support and Services (FISS). BMCW provides services when a parent, rather than the state or county, seeks a petition for the court to assume authority for an adolescent under CHIPS criteria. These are referred to as *pro se* petitions. These situations involve adolescents who are considered uncontrollable by their parents, including adolescents who are habitual truants, are habitual runaways, or engage in similar noncompliant behavior. The legislation enacting the transfer of child welfare services to DHFS did not specify that BMCW would provide access services for these cases. However, the Milwaukee County Children's Court found the statutory language unclear regarding responsibility for these adolescents and ordered BMCW to provide intake services.

BMCW contracts with Perez Pena, Ltd. to administer the FISS access unit, which conducts the assessments of *pro se* cases. The FISS program is intended to strengthen the parents' ability to carry out their responsibilities to care for, supervise, and support their children at home, school, and in the community. Before a *pro se* case goes to court, the FISS access unit must assess the family's functioning. The FISS access unit assessment includes the adolescent's school attendance and participation, mental health, alcohol and drug concerns, and social relationships and activities. The FISS access unit completes an assessment and does not provide a direct service.

Based on the assessment, and the family's identified level of need, the family and adolescent may: (a) receive services from general community resources; (b) return to Milwaukee County Children's Court for additional pre-CHIPS or pre-delinquent services; (c) be referred to BMCW for additional services; or (d) be referred to the on-going FISS services unit administered by the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division. Between January and July of 2010, the FISS services unit, on average, received 16 referrals per month, had 14 families complete services each month, and had 17 cases open at the end of each month.

Initial Assessment Unit. Each of the three service-delivery regions has a unit of state-employed staff who conduct initial assessments on families that are the subject of a child abuse or neglect referral. Each region has from 25 to 36 state-employed social workers and up to eight state-employed supervisors to make these determinations. Up to five support staff provide clerical support to each region. In addition, there are two training supervisors in region 3.

These units, which receive referrals from the access unit, are responsible for determining: (a) if child abuse or neglect has already occurred, who did it, and the extent and the severity of the abuse or neglect if it has occurred; (b) the level of impending danger to a child in the family of future abuse or neglect; and (c) the types of services to be

included in a safety plan for a child in order to prevent abuse or neglect from occurring in the future. These determinations are based on interviews with family members, home visits, and other contacts in order to determine the level and nature of child, caregiver, and family functioning, and identification of any factors within the family that place a child at risk.

If staff determines that a child is not safe and is at risk of further abuse or neglect, the case is opened and staff determines whether the child can remain at home if the family receives safety services, or if the child needs to be removed and placed in out-of-home care. Otherwise, if staff determines the child is safe, the case is closed. If staff determines that a child can remain safely at home, they can refer the family case to the alternative response program or for safety services. Cases with children removed and placed in out-of-home care are referred to the lead agency for ongoing case management. Between January and June of 2010, the initial assessment unit closed 4,211 cases and referred 305 cases for ongoing services.

Safety Services. Safety services are available to families where threats to child safety have been identified, but the initial assessment unit has determined that the child can remain at home safely if appropriate services are provided to the family. Families receive safety services until parents can demonstrate sufficient protective behaviors and threats to child safety are significantly reduced or eliminated.

DCF contracts for safety services coordinators at each of the three service-delivery sites. These vendors are responsible for developing a network of providers that provide the services identified in each family's safety plan. The vendor assigns each referral from the initial assessment unit to a safety services case manager, who is then responsible for coordinating the provision of services among the vendor's network of providers, according to the family's safety plan. The safety services case manager is also responsible for conducting weekly safety assessments and reassessments of threats to

child safety of the families using a specific safety evaluation tool. As of January 1, 2010, the two safety services vendors are: (a) Children's Service Society of Wisconsin (formerly Children's Family and Community Partnership) for regions 1 and 2; and (b) Integrated Family Services for region 3. These vendors will continue to provide safety services in 2011.

Safety services may include: (a) supervision, observation, basic parenting assistance, social and emotional support, and basic home management; (b) child care; (c) routine and emergency drug and alcohol screening and treatment services; (d) family crisis counseling; (e) routine and emergency mental health services; (f) respite care; (g) housing assistance; and (h) transportation. Families receive services that are appropriate to their specific situations based on the safety plan.

Between January and June of 2010, the three safety services units received 269 referrals from the initial assessment unit, and, on average, 45 new cases were opened each month. In 2009, 764 families received safety services. In 2009, the average cost for safety services purchased by a vendor was \$878 per family, not including any services billed to MA. The average period during which the family received safety services in 2009 was 131 days. From January through June of 2010, 348 families received safety services.

Ongoing Services. DCF contracts with vendors to serve as lead agencies in each of three regions to provide services to ongoing cases. The contract includes funds for case management, ongoing services, and administration. The ongoing case management vendors, as of November 10, 2010, are Children's Service Society of Wisconsin for regions 1 and 2, and Integrated Family Services for region 3. Ongoing case management is defined as family-centered assessment, case planning, service procurement, coordination and monitoring, court appearances, and other necessary services for children in out-of-home care, children at home under court supervision, and their families. Successful ongoing case management ensures the identifica-

tion and implementation of services and evaluation of family outcomes that bring a child to a safe and supportive permanent home through timely reunification, adoption, or guardianship.

The lead agency is responsible for ongoing services cases until the case is closed or is transferred to special needs adoption. A case closes when the child is successfully reunified with the family or a transfer of guardianship is made and the CHIPS case is dismissed by the court. A case is transferred to special needs adoption when there has been a termination of parental rights and subsequent adoption is expected to occur. Lead agencies are responsible for providing case management services, including the provision of ongoing services necessary to achieve the objectives of the permanency plan. In addition, lead agencies are responsible for ensuring a child's safety while in out-of-home care.

Case Management Services. Case management services are provided for ongoing cases of children in out-of-home care and their families. The lead agency is required to provide enough case managers such that there is one staff member for every 11 family cases. In addition, the lead agency must ensure that there is one supervisor for every six staff members. Ongoing case management services include the following:

- Continually re-assessing threats to child safety and when a child is found unsafe, determining the level of intervention required to control and manage those threats, including the need for an in-home safety plan, out-of-home safety plan, or a safety plan that combines in-home and out-of-home options;
- Conducting a family assessment and developing a case plan to reduce the threats to child safety and enhance the protective capacities of the parents and caregivers so that the family can assure child safety without CPS intervention;
- Assisting the family by engaging parents and caregivers in a process to reduce safety and

risk concerns with the family, including, at a minimum, monthly face-to-face contact with all children in out-of-home care;

- Developing and implementing a plan to work toward reunification with the family or placement in another home environment; and
- Preparing all necessary documentation for safety assessment, permanency plan reviews, extensions of out-of-home care placement, court reports for transfer of guardianship, or termination of parental rights cases.

Ongoing Services. Ongoing services are provided to children and their families when a child is found to be unsafe and the threats to child safety cannot be fully managed by family members or informal supports. The primary role of ongoing services is to support families in achieving safety and permanence for their children, which includes: (a) evaluating the existing safety plan developed during the initial assessment and investigation; (b) managing and assuring child safety through continuous assessment, oversight, and adjustment of safety plans that are effective in assuring child safety and are the least intrusive to the family; (c) engaging families in a case planning process that will identify services to address threats to child safety by enhancing parent and caregiver protective capacities; and (d) measuring progress related to enhancing parent and caregiver protective capacities and eliminating safety-related issues.

Services that may be used to support families during ongoing services include: (a) parenting education, non-professional support and counseling, basic home management, and life skills education; (b) mental health, substance abuse, family, individual, group, and marital counseling; (c) substance abuse treatment; (d) child care; (e) respite care; and (f) transportation.

Between January and June of 2010, an average of 1,577 families received ongoing services each month. In 2009, 2,084 families received ongoing services and, for the period beginning January 1

through June 30, 2010, 1,641 families had received these services.

Contract Provisions. The lead agency contracts contain performance requirements, including specific performance targets, that may change from year to year. Under the terms of the 2010 contract, DCF reimburses the lead agencies for 100% of their expenses on a per case rate, which is reconciled with actual expenses at the end of the contract year. DCF may recoup funds where a contractor fails to meet certain performance expectations that results in a cost to the state.

Out-of-Home Care Placement Costs. Between January and June of 2010, an average of 2,276 children were in out-of-home care each month. Children removed from their homes can be placed in foster homes, group homes, RCCs, or with relatives. The out-of-home care budget for 2010-11 is approximately \$56.3 million for the wraparound program (Wraparound Milwaukee, which provides services for families and children with serious mental health needs), temporary care, foster care, group homes, and RCCs. In 2010-11, kinship care benefits in Milwaukee County are budgeted at approximately \$12.0 million. Some of this funding, however, will fund payments for children who are eligible for kinship care but are not placed with the relative under a court-order (referred to as non-court-ordered kinship care).

Out-of-Home Care Placement Unit. BMCW contracts with Children's Service Society of Wisconsin to provide foster care and adoption licensing, placement, support services, and permanency consultation services. These services include: (a) recruitment and licensing of foster families; (b) identification, selection, and authorization of appropriate foster homes; (c) provision of ongoing educational services and support to foster families; (d) placement referrals to foster homes, group homes, and RCCs; and (e) consultation to support each child's right to safe, timely, and appropriate permanence.

Staff includes three managers, two administra-

tors, 16 supervisors, 92 specialists, three coordinators, and 11 consultants to provide the licensing, placement, support, and consultation services. Four specialists and one supervisor are dedicated solely to the recruitment of foster families.

Between January and June of 2010, there were an average of 644 active foster homes in Milwaukee County. During the same period, 106 homes were newly licensed and 40 foster homes were closed.

Adoption Placement Unit. BMCW contracts with Children's Service Society to provide special needs adoption placement services. Special needs adoption placement services include concurrent planning with caseworkers, recruitment of potential adoptive families, home study assessments of potential adoptive families, case management services for children available for adoption, identification and selection of appropriate adoptive homes for children waiting for adoption, and supervision and support to an adoptive family during the adoption finalization period. In addition, this unit arranges for the payment of adoption assistance for eligible children. This contract is combined with the contract under the out-of-home care placement unit described above, and the employees for adoption placement are included in the totals above.

From January through June of 2010, there were 158 TPR petitions filed, 140 TPR's granted, and 142 adoptions finalized in Milwaukee County. In 2009, there were 356 TPR petitions filed, 317 TPR's granted, and 304 adoptions finalized.

Contract Monitoring and Performance Measurement. Quality assurance is provided by seven program evaluation managers (PEMs) and two fiscal PEMs who report to their section chiefs, who, in turn, report to the Director and Deputy Director of BMCW. In addition, three former PEM positions were transferred to DCF's Office of Performance and Quality Assurance. Also, BMCW's contract specialist works with the PEMs on performance and compliance issues, provides support and technical assistance, and monitors the administrative services, as well as some program-related, con-

tracts.

The PEMs are responsible for: (a) monitoring the implementation of management policies; (b) reviewing work of child welfare staff; (c) evaluating staff performance and recommending corrective action when required; (d) monitoring child welfare services with local agencies and courts; (e) monitoring compliance with state and federal laws, administrative rules, and policies; (f) evaluating program effectiveness; (g) recommending improvements, as necessary; (h) planning and monitoring consultation services; and (i) maintaining and reporting program data. The PEMs are located at the central administrative site. One program and one fiscal PEM are assigned to each contract and program area. PEMs work as a team with BMCW management to address issues and develop work products.

The contract specialist has the primary responsibility for contract development and monitoring. The three transferred positions assist in the responsibilities of the PEMs and also maintain and report data related to the settlement agreement and the corrective action plan. In addition, they conduct secondary reviews of any critical incidents due to maltreatment or neglect.

Funding for BMCW. Table 8 identifies funding budgeted in 2009 Wisconsin Act 28 to DCF to administer child welfare services in Milwaukee County in the 2009-11 biennium. State revenues, federal revenues (FED), and TANF are identified in the table. State revenues consist of GPR, and estimates of the amount of third-party revenue received for children in out-of-home care. Federal revenues reflect funding received under Title IV-E. In 2010-11, DCF is allocated approximately \$3.5 million PR from third-party collections. Third-party collections represent revenue received for the support of children in out-of-home care, such as child support and SSI payments.

Operations funding supports the costs of state staff, BMCW's portion of eWISACWIS, rent, training, supplies and services, and other expenditures.

Table 8: Milwaukee Child Welfare Funding Summary, 2009-11 Biennium

	2009-10				2010-11			
	State Revenue*	FED	TANF	Total	State Revenue*	FED	TANF	Total
Placement Costs								
Foster Care	\$4,879,800	\$1,728,900	\$0	\$6,608,700	\$5,118,500	\$1,813,500	\$0	\$6,932,000
Treatment Foster Care**	12,883,400	4,564,600	0	17,448,000	13,041,900	4,620,800	0	17,662,700
RCCs	6,010,700	92,400	0	6,103,100	6,323,800	97,200	0	6,421,000
Group Homes	9,134,200	2,030,800	0	11,165,000	9,610,000	2,136,600	0	11,746,600
Receiving and Assessment Homes	<u>2,759,500</u>	<u>926,700</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,686,200</u>	<u>2,759,500</u>	<u>926,700</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,686,200</u>
Subtotal	\$35,667,600	\$9,343,400	\$0	\$45,011,000	\$36,853,700	\$9,594,800	\$0	\$46,448,500
Service Costs								
Wraparound Services	\$9,407,400	\$937,200	\$0	\$10,344,600	\$9,407,400	\$937,200	\$0	\$10,344,600
Safety Services	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,924,000</u>	<u>5,924,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,924,000</u>	<u>5,924,000</u>
Subtotal	\$9,407,400	\$937,200	\$5,924,000	\$16,268,600	\$9,407,400	\$937,200	\$5,924,000	\$16,268,600
Vendor Costs								
Case Management Contract	\$26,962,400	\$1,471,400	\$426,300	\$28,860,100	\$26,962,400	\$1,471,400	\$426,300	\$28,860,100
Out-of-Home Placement Unit	4,187,000	1,113,000	0	5,300,000	4,187,000	1,113,000	0	5,300,000
Foster Care Training and Recruitment	197,500	52,500	0	250,000	197,500	52,500	0	250,000
Adoption Contracts	2,012,400	1,341,600	0	3,354,000	2,012,400	1,341,600	0	3,354,000
Court Contracts	978,600	153,600	0	1,132,200	978,600	153,600	0	1,132,200
UW-Milwaukee Social Work	222,400	0	0	222,400	222,400	0	0	222,400
Milwaukee DA Supplement	233,600	0	0	233,600	233,600	0	0	233,600
Training Partnership Supplement	369,200	0	0	369,200	369,200	0	0	369,200
FISS Unit	220,400	0	0	220,400	220,400	0	0	220,400
Independent Investigations	300,000	0	0	300,000	300,000	0	0	300,000
Prevention Services Contract	0	0	1,489,600	1,489,600	0	0	1,489,600	1,489,600
Domestic Violence Education	365,000	0	0	365,000	365,000	0	0	365,000
Foster Care Training	378,800	174,200	0	553,000	378,800	174,200	0	553,000
Kinship Care Payment Unit	315,400	0	0	315,400	315,400	0	0	315,400
Trust Fund Accounting Unit	116,400	10,100	0	126,500	116,400	10,100	0	126,500
EDS Child Hospital	30,000	0	0	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000
Ombudsman	287,600	0	0	287,600	287,600	0	0	287,600
Permanency Counselor	65,000	0	0	65,000	65,000	0	0	65,000
Foster Parent Crisis Intervention	442,000	116,400	0	558,400	442,000	116,400	0	558,400
CART Facilitator	45,000	0	0	45,000	45,000	0	0	45,000
Subsidized Guardianship Eval	<u>135,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>135,000</u>	<u>135,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>135,000</u>
Subtotal	\$37,863,700	\$4,432,800	\$1,915,900	\$44,212,400	\$37,863,700	\$4,432,800	\$1,915,900	\$44,212,400
Total Aids Funding	\$82,938,700	\$14,713,400	\$7,839,900	\$105,492,000	\$84,124,800	\$14,964,800	\$7,839,900	\$106,929,500
BMCW Improvements	\$2,014,300	\$164,200	\$0	\$2,178,500	\$2,400,300	\$256,400	\$0	\$2,656,700
Total Operations Funding	\$16,978,100	\$3,116,800	\$899,400	\$20,994,300	\$17,106,900	\$3,164,500	\$899,400	\$21,170,800
Grand Total	\$101,931,100	\$17,994,400	\$8,739,300	\$128,664,800	\$103,632,000	\$18,385,700	\$8,739,300	\$130,757,000

*Includes GPR funding, third-party collections, MA targeted case management and other match revenues, and Milwaukee County's contribution.

**Treatment foster care will be phased-out after implementation of the graduated foster care licensing system.

Aids funding supports placement costs and vendor contracts for case management and ongoing services, safety services, adoption and out-of-home care placement services, independent investigations, safety evaluations, and prevention services.

BMCW Improvements. Act 28 also provided funding for new initiatives to improve the performance of BMCW. Funding of \$2,178,500 in 2009-10 and \$2,656,700 supported: (a) additional crisis intervention, stabilization, and support services for

youth placed by BMCW in treatment foster homes and youth in court-ordered kinship care placements; (b) an increase in the salary of contracted ongoing case managers, mentors, and ongoing case management supervisory staff; (c) additional reimbursement for salaried, state-employed service managers and region managers for after hours on-call rotation for consultation in the event of urgent or emergency situations; (d) the development of professional competency among region managers and initial assessment service managers to effec-

tively supervise the implementation of the initial assessment function; (e) home visits by nurses to provide consultation services for all BMCW child welfare program areas; and (f) additional staff of 15 social workers and three site supervisors.

County Contribution. Milwaukee County's annual contribution equals the amount of funding budgeted by the county in 1995 for child welfare services (\$69.3 million) less any revenues no longer available to Milwaukee County, such as funding provided under programs that have since been repealed (approximately \$10.4 million).

Milwaukee County is required to provide \$58,893,500 annually to DCF for the costs of providing child welfare services in Milwaukee County. Before 2001-02, the county could decide how it would provide these funds through a variety of state aid payments, including shared revenue and community aids. 2001 Wisconsin Act 16 required Milwaukee County to make its \$58,893,500 annual contribution as follows: (a) through a reduction of \$37,209,200 from the amount DHFS distributed as the BCA under community aids (now distributed by both DCF and DHS as the CFA for children and family aids and the BCA for community aids); (b) through a reduction of \$1,583,000 from the substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant that DHFS (now DHS) distributes as a categorical allocation under community aids; and (c) through a deduction of \$20,101,300 from shared revenue payments. As a result of this change, the funding that was budgeted in community aids and then transferred to BMCW is now directly budgeted in BMCW and not in community aids or children and family aids.

eWISACWIS

The electronic Wisconsin Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (eWISACWIS) is the state automated child welfare system that assists case workers and administrators in managing

child welfare services. The system maintains information on intake, assessment, eligibility determination, case management, court processing, financial reporting, and administration.

States are required to collect reliable and consistent information on children served by child welfare systems. Using enhanced federal matching funds available from the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), eWISACWIS was designed and developed initially to manage services in Milwaukee County. As a condition of receiving federal matching funds, states must ensure that their systems: (a) collect and electronically report data required under DHHS regulations; (b) interface with state child abuse and neglect data collection systems and TANF eligibility collection systems, to the extent practicable; and (c) provide efficient, economical, and effective administration of state child welfare programs, as determined by DHHS. In addition, the system must be a statewide system. The eWISACWIS system was fully implemented statewide in July, 2004.

Federal regulations require states that received enhanced federal funds to develop a comprehensive child welfare data collection system that includes information on child welfare services, out-of-home care and adoption assistance, family preservation and support services, and independent living. In addition, state systems must:

- Meet data collection and reporting requirements of the adoption and foster care analysis and reporting system (AFCARS);
- Provide for intrastate electronic data exchange with data collection systems operated under TANF, MA, child support enforcement, and the national child abuse and neglect data system (NCANDS);
- Provide for automated data collection on all children in out-of-home care under the responsibility of the state or funded by the state (or counties);

- Collect and manage information necessary to facilitate delivery of child welfare services, family preservation and family support services, family reunification services, and permanent placement;

- Collect and manage information necessary to determine eligibility for the out-of-home care, adoption assistance, and independent living programs and to meet case management requirements for these programs;

- Monitor case plan development, payment authorization and issuance, and review and management including eligibility determinations and redeterminations; and

- Ensure confidentiality and security of information.

In addition to the enhanced federal funds provided for development of the system, DHHS reimburses states for the ongoing data collection activities, regardless of whether the systems are used for children in out-of-home care and adopted children who are not eligible for Title IV-E. The reimbursement for ongoing operating costs is determined based on cost allocation procedures. In 2010-11, the net Title IV-E share of eWISACWIS operating costs amounted to 26.2%.

DCF contracted with American Management System in February of 1999 to design eWISACWIS and implement it first in Milwaukee County and later statewide. eWISACWIS was completely implemented in Milwaukee County by January of 2001, and in all other counties by July, of 2004.

The ongoing operations costs are supported with federal, state, and county funds. Counties are charged for one-third of the non-federal share of ongoing operations costs. The remaining two-thirds of the non-federal share of these costs are supported with state funds. The county share of the master lease costs from initial implementation has been paid with MA TCM funds.

In 2010-11, \$4.2 million is budgeted for ongoing eWISACWIS costs. Of this total funding, 17% is supported with federal TANF funds, 27% is from federal Title IV-E funds, 14% is supported with payments from counties, and the remaining funding (42%) is state funds.

Federal Reviews

DHHS has reviewed each state's Title IV-E claiming practices and child welfare system. States are required to pass both reviews, and there are financial penalties if a state does not pass a review.

Title IV-E Review. In March of 2002, DHHS conducted a state Title IV-E program review in Wisconsin to determine if the state was properly claiming federal funding under Title IV-E. The review examined the accuracy of IV-E eligibility and reimbursement for children in out-of-home care statewide, and included a review of the initial IV-E eligibility determination for children, the reimbursability of those children for specific periods of out-of-home care, and the eligibility of care providers for IV-E reimbursement.

Of the 80 cases reviewed, DHHS determined that 23 cases had a total of 29 errors relating to Title IV-E eligibility and reimbursability requirements. Since the error rate exceeded the maximum allowable rate of 10%, or eight cases, the state was required to implement a program improvement plan to correct the problems identified in the review. The plan included: (a) statutory changes, enacted in 2001 Wisconsin Act 109, that incorporate federal requirements into state law; (b) expanding the state eligibility unit (SEU) to include all counties (except Milwaukee County); (c) improving Wisconsin's handbook on Title IV-E eligibility and reimbursability requirements and emphasizing the format and timing of events that are required under state and federal laws; and (d) upgrading eWISACWIS to more easily identify requirements and deadlines for Title IV-E eligibility and reim-

bursement.

DHHS performed a second review in May, 2005. After reviewing 150 cases, DHHS found one case to be in error for part of the review period, resulting in a case error rate of 0.67%. Wisconsin was found to be in substantial compliance with Title IV-E, as neither the case error rate nor the dollar error rate exceeded 10%.

DHHS performed a third review in August, 2008. After reviewing 80 cases, DHHS found no error cases. Wisconsin was found to be in substantial compliance with Title IV-E.

The next review is scheduled for August of 2011.

Child and Family Services Review. In August of 2003, DHHS conducted a comprehensive review of Wisconsin's child welfare program. This federal child and family services review (CFSR) was conducted in all 50 states over a three-year period. All 50 states were found to be in nonconformance with some portion of the review.

The CFSR examines each state's conformance with federal requirements under Titles IV-B and IV-E of the federal Social Security Act. The review examined 14 aspects of the state program, including seven outcome measures relating to safety, permanency, and well-being, and seven systemic factors relating to the overall capacity of the state program to serve children and families. These areas are shown in Table 9.

The CFSR consisted of: (a) an on-site review of 50 cases in three counties, which were intended to represent performance across the state; (b) focus groups with key stakeholders; (c) analysis of program outcome data; and (d) a state self-assessment.

The on-site portion of the review occurred in August, 2003, and included an examination of individual cases and discussions with stakeholders in Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Outagamie Counties. This on-site review was conducted by a team of

Table 9: CFSR Measures and Factors

Outcome Measures:	
Safety Outcome 1	Protecting children from abuse and neglect
Safety Outcome 2	Maintaining children safely in their homes whenever appropriate
Permanency Outcome 1	Providing permanency and stability of living situations
Permanency Outcome 2	Preserving continuity of family relationships
Well-Being Outcome 1	Enhancing capacity of families to provide for children
Well-Being Outcome 2	Supporting educational services for children
Well-Being Outcome 3	Supporting physical and mental health services
Systemic Factors:	
Information System Capacity	Ability to meet federal reporting requirements and use of data
Case Review System	Written case plans and regular permanency reviews, notification, and hearings
Quality Assurance	State program standards and quality assurance activities
Staff and Provider Training	Training for county agency staff and foster parents
Service Array	Needs assessment and services for children and families statewide
Responsiveness to Community	Sharing information and involving stakeholders
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Standards for licensing (including criminal background checks) and recruitment and retention activities

federal and state reviewers at each of the three locations. The federal members of the review team included federal staff and peer reviewers from other states. A random sample of 50 cases was chosen among the three counties, including both in-home services and out-of-home care placement cases. The individual case reviews involved analyzing case files and interviewing family, social

workers and caseworkers, service providers, out-of-home care providers, and legal advocates.

Overall, DHHS determined that Wisconsin was not in substantial conformance with six of the seven outcome factors and with four of the seven systemic factors. The results of the review are described in more detail in Attachment 7 to this paper. The state received its CFSR findings from DHHS in January of 2004, and was given 90 days to produce a statewide program enhancement plan (PEP) in response.

The PEP established measurable goals for improving child welfare program outcomes and systemic aspects of program capacity to deliver services statewide. The state was required to implement the action steps in the PEP over a two-year period and show progress toward meeting the improvement goals during the period. Wisconsin's PEP was submitted to DHHS on April 14, 2004. After some modifications, DHHS approved Wisconsin's PEP on November 1, 2004. Wisconsin's PEP was found to be successful.

However, DHHS conducted a second CFSR in April, 2010, which included 65 cases in Milwaukee, La Crosse, Columbia, and Sauk Counties to assess the extent of the system improvements, as agreed upon in the PEP. The process was similar to the first CFSR.

Overall, DHHS determined that Wisconsin was not in substantial conformance with all seven outcome factors and with three of the seven systemic factors. The results of the review are also detailed in Attachment 7. The state received its CFSR findings from DHHS in June of 2010, and was given 90 days to produce a statewide program improvement plan (PIP). DCF submitted its draft plan on September 14, 2010. On December 21, 2010, the PIP was approved by the Administration for Children and Families. Appendix B summarizes the current draft of the PIP.

If a state is found to be in nonconformance, DHHS can assess financial penalties against the

funds received by the state under Titles IV-B and IV-E. Under the CFSR process, penalties are withheld pending successful completion of the PIP including achievement of federally-approved performance improvement targets. Following the end of the PIP period, DCF will then go through a close-out process with DHHS at which time it will be determined if DCF has met its obligations. The closeout period can take up to one year after the PIP period.

Penalties may be assessed against a pool of federal funds that includes a state's Title IV-B award and 10% of a state's Title IV-E claims for administrative costs in the years subject to penalties. For each item for which a state is found to be in non-compliance, a 1% penalty, or approximately \$130,000, could be assessed against the pool of federal funds and continue until the state comes into conformance. The penalty increases to 2% and then 3% per item if nonconformance continues following subsequent federal reviews.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programs

Most state-funded activities to prevent child abuse and neglect in Wisconsin are administered through the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention (CANP) Board. In addition, DCF administers two child abuse and neglect prevention programs -- a statewide grant program and a program that provides services to families in Milwaukee County. This section describes these programs.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board. The mission of the CANP Board is to promote the development of a sustainable, comprehensive prevention infrastructure that reflects research and promising practices in child abuse and neglect prevention. Through strategic partnerships and investments, the Board supports Wisconsin communities in the provision of services to prevent child abuse and neglect.

The Board consists of 20 members, including 10 members from state government (the Governor, the Attorney General, the DHS Secretary, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Corrections Secretary, the DCF Secretary, and one member of the majority and minority party from each house of the Legislature, or their designees) and 10 public members, who are appointed on the basis of expertise, experience, leadership, or advocacy in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The Governor appoints the 10 public members for staggered, three-year terms.

The Board administers the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) and is required to solicit and accept contributions, grants, gifts, and bequests for CTF. These funds are available for expenditure by the Board.

The Board meets quarterly and is required biennially to develop a plan for awarding grants to and providing technical assistance to organizations for child abuse and neglect prevention programs and to submit this plan to the Governor and both houses of the Legislature. These programs must be distributed throughout all geographic areas of the state and in both urban and rural communities. In addition, the Board, in collaboration with all state agencies, must: (a) recommend to the Governor, the Legislature, and the state agencies changes needed in state programs, statutes, policies, budgets, and rules to reduce the problems of child abuse and neglect, improve coordination among state agencies that provide prevention services, promote individual, family, and community strengths, build parenting skills, and provide community support for children and families; (b) promote statewide educational and public awareness campaigns and materials related to child abuse and neglect; (c) encourage professionals to recognize and deal with problems of child abuse and neglect; (d) disseminate information about the problems of and methods of preventing child abuse and neglect to the public and to organizations concerned with those problems; and (e) encourage the development of community child abuse and neglect prevention programs.

2010-2015 Strategic Plan. In the summer of 2009, CTF initiated the 2010-2015 strategic planning process, surveyed policy makers, providers, researchers, parents, and other leaders in the child maltreatment prevention field, and held in-depth interviews with some of these leaders. The CANP Board made initial recommendations based on the information gathered by CTF regarding the needs of Wisconsin families, the future of prevention, and the most effective role for CTF. These initial recommendations were presented at the fall strategic planning retreat in 2009. CTF also held five regional listening sessions with family resource centers across the state in order to get a more complete understanding of direct services being provided to the state's children and families. CTF used information from these listening sessions to finalize the 2010-2015 strategic plan, which was approved by the CANP Board on April 12, 2010. The strategic plan includes five goals: (a) convene and unite key partners around a shared prevention agenda; (b) identify, develop, and promote best practices in child abuse prevention; (c) promote adult and community responsibility to protect children from abuse and neglect; (d) advocate for public policy that reflects the CTF vision and mission; and (e) ensure CTF is a high quality and high performing agency.

Funding for CANP Board. Under 2009 Wisconsin Act 28, the Board is budgeted \$3,784,800 (\$1,107,600 GPR, \$620,100 FED, \$2,034,000 PR, and \$23,100 SEG from CTF) annually to support three grant programs and the Board's operations costs. The federal funding is available under Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which supports networks of community-based, prevention-focused family resource and support programs. The program revenue funding is available from the sale of duplicate birth certificates (under state law, the Board receives \$7 of the \$20 fee for a duplicate birth certificate). The revenue from duplicate birth certificates has been declining. As a result, the actual amount expended in 2009-10 and allocated in 2010-11 is less than the amount budgeted under Act 28.

In 2010-11, \$824,400 (\$85,500 GPR, \$568,800 PR, and \$170,100 FED) is budgeted to support the Board's operations costs. This includes providing technical assistance to programs throughout the state, increasing public awareness on child abuse and neglect prevention, and supporting seven full-time staff. Staff includes an executive director, an associate director, a senior program officer, a strategy and fund development coordinator, a program coordinator, a financial specialist, and an office manager. The Board contracts for additional services as needed.

Public Education and Awareness. In 2009-10, CTF provided \$200,000 to support Awareness to Action, a child sexual abuse prevention campaign, which provides group-based education to parents and other adults using a curriculum called "Stewards of Children." The Children's Hospital and Health Systems' Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Fund provided an additional \$200,000 in matching funds for this campaign. The Board also: (a) provides materials and training to hospitals, child care providers, and schools on shaken baby syndrome prevention; (b) provides technical assistance and training for family support workers; (c) disseminates professional development portfolios that allow family support professionals to keep track of their training and continuing education to achieve core competencies in the field of family support; (d) offers materials that provide advice for parents on a variety of subjects, such as discipline and prevention of sexual abuse; and (e) maintains the CTF website. In addition, CTF, in partnership with the CAP Fund, recently awarded a contract through a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process to coordinate a social marketing campaign designed to engage Wisconsin communities in the prevention of child maltreatment. This work will begin in January of 2011.

Grant Programs. The Board's three grant programs are: (a) family resource center grants; (b) community-based family resource and support program grants; and (c) statewide projects. Each of these grant programs is described in greater detail below.

Family Resource Centers. Family resource

centers focus on enhancing parent-child interaction, reducing family stress, improving family functioning, and providing community support in order to prevent child abuse and neglect. Family resource centers provide comprehensive services to families, including education and support. The centers primarily provide services for parents with children through age three and offer opportunities for parents and caregivers to learn new skills, interact with other parents, and learn to access community resources. Although each center provides different programs and activities, each is charged with being responsive to the needs of the community and universally accessible by all in the community. The centers provide an array of programming from the following four service areas: (a) outreach and family visiting services; (b) group-based parent education and support services; (c) individual center-based parent education and support services; and (d) community resource referral and follow-up services. Currently, there are approximately 60 family resource centers in Wisconsin, of which 20 are supported by the CANP Board.

In 2009-10, the Board awarded a total of \$1,740,000 (\$783,000 GPR, \$87,000 FED, and \$870,000 PR) to the 20 family resource centers listed in Table 10. In 2010-11, the Board is budgeted

Table 10: Family Resource Centers

Agency	Location
ABC Healthy Families, Inc. Family Support Center	Ashland/Bayfield Chippewa Falls
Florence County Public Health Department	Florence
Family and Childcare Resources of NEW	Green Bay
Northwest Connection Family Resources	Hayward
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Janesville
Family Resource Inc.	La Crosse
Family Connections of Southwest Wisconsin	Lancaster/Platteville
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Madison
Lakeshore Community Action Program	Manitowoc
Child Care Resource & Referral, Inc.	Menasha
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Milwaukee
La Causa, Inc.	Milwaukee
St. Vincent de Paul Society	Milwaukee
Renewal Unlimited	Portage
Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital	Prairie du Chien
Superior School District	Superior
Family Resources Inc.	Tomah
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Wausau
Family Center of Washington County	West Bend

\$1,640,000 (\$820,000 GPR, \$82,000 FED, and \$738,000 PR) to support grants to family resource centers.

In 2009-10, each family resource center received a grant of \$87,000. The initial grants were awarded under a competitive request for proposals (RFP) process. Grantees are required to provide a 20% match to their grant, which may be in cash, in-kind services, or both. If a program has received funding from the Board for three or more years, the program must have at least a 5% match in cash.

In 2009-10, the 20 family resource centers served 9,579 adults and 12,635 children, including 7,931 children who were younger than four years old. Based on the total number of adults these centers served, the average expenditure was \$365 per adult. These family resource centers also provided \$1,753,500 in matching funds.

In December of 2010, CTF issued a competitive RFP to fund up to 10 family resource center networks at \$150,000 each. The RFP requests proposals to develop, coordinate, and implement family resource center networks to support and strengthen families across the state. The new grantees will be required to: (a) provide a community response program; (b) coordinate access to economic supports; (c) implement evidence-based home visiting; (d) hold family team meetings; and (e) provide cross-systems integration. This new process of distributing family resource center grants is scheduled to begin in 2011-12.

Family resource centers submit quarterly and annual reports to the Board summarizing services provided, participant demographics, and participant outcome evaluation data. Families are asked to provide demographic information when they first contact the family resource center and again each state fiscal year that they continue to participate. Families are also asked to complete a survey about changes in their parenting knowledge, skills, and attitudes after they have participated in a parenting course or playgroup.

Table 11 shows the number of hours of service

Table 11: Number of Hours of Service Provided by Family Resource Centers in 2009-10

	2009-10 (hours)
Parent education courses	23,020
Family education workshops	16,722
Support groups	10,319
Family visits or home visits	22,146
Community education	5,636
Parent/child activities (such as playgroups)	112,607

provided by family resource centers in 2009-10.

Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program Grants. The Board distributes grants to support community-based family resource and support programs aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect, namely community response programs and access and visitation programs.

In 2009-10, the Board awarded \$685,000 (\$85,000 GPR, \$240,000 FED, and \$360,000 PR) in grants to 11 community response programs sites. The Board is budgeted \$729,800 (\$60,000 GPR, \$284,800 FED, and \$385,000 PR) for community response programs in 2010-11. These programs provide voluntary services to families who are either screened out of child protective services at intake or have their cases closed after the initial assessment. Community response programs work with families to identify the services they need and address the issues that brought them into contact with child protective services.

Another \$25,000 grant is awarded to the School of Social Work and Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to evaluate this approach to reaching families at risk of maltreatment.

In addition, CTF recently issued an RFP for Milwaukee County for \$300,000 to implement an economic intervention focused community response program. The Milwaukee Community Response Program (MCRP) will work with families on a voluntary basis whose cases have been closed after an initial assessment. MCRP will ensure that families are receiving all eligible public benefits,

financial literacy, and emergency funds for basic needs. Families will also be referred to other community resources for additional services as appropriate. This project is being implemented in collaboration with DCF and is scheduled to begin in 2011-12. The UW-Madison School of Social Work and Institute for Research on Poverty will evaluate this project.

The grants are awarded on a state fiscal year basis. The current grantees for community response programs are shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program Community Response Grantees (2010-11)

Program	Location
ABC Healthy Families Inc.	Bayfield
Pierce County Department of Health Services	Ellsworth
Green Lake County Department of Health and Human Services	Green Lake
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Janesville
Family Resources, Inc.	La Crosse
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Madison
Lakeshore Community Action Program	Manitowoc
Renewal Unlimited, Inc.	Portage
United Way of Racine	Racine
Lakeland Family Resource Center	Spooner
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Wausau

Typically, the Board awards grants for a three-year period, with annual renewals, contingent upon satisfactory performance. The grant funds cannot be used to supplant existing funds and grantees are typically required to provide a 25% match annually during the first year of the grant and 50% during the second and subsequent grant years (if applicable). The match can be made through cash, in-kind services, or both, and must be used only to enhance the services provided with the grant from the Board.

The Board allocates \$125,000 annually, on a state fiscal year basis, in federal access and visitation grant funds to safe exchange programs throughout the state. The grants support programs that establish, expand, or enhance support of and

facilitate non-custodial parents' access to and visitation with their children. The program goals are to: (a) improve access of non-custodial parents to their children; (b) encourage non-custodial parents to take advantage of opportunities to spend time with their children, and connect them to such opportunities; (c) provide safe, non-threatening sites for access and visitation when necessary; and (d) enhance the ability of the non-custodial and custodial parents to co-parent, and to provide a supportive, non-confrontational environment for their children.

The Board awards these grants under a statewide, competitive process. The grantees must demonstrate collaboration and connection with other community agencies and either be an existing access and visitation program or receive another grant from the Board. Grantees are required to provide a 10% match of cash, in-kind services, or both.

Grantees may use these funds to support voluntary and mandatory mediation, counseling, education, the development of parenting plans, and visitation enforcement, including monitoring, supervision, and neutral drop-off and pickup. The 2010-11 access and visitation grantees are listed in Table 13.

Table 13: 2010-11 Access and Visitation Grantees

Agency	Location
Family Support Center	Chippewa Falls
Family Services of Northeast WI	Oshkosh
HELP of Door County	Sturgeon Bay
Prevention and Protection of Abused Children	Waukesha
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin	Wausau

Statewide Projects. The Board awarded promising practice grants totaling \$479,500 (\$150,000 GPR, \$100,000 FED, and \$229,500 PR) in 2009-10 and is budgeted \$296,300 (\$224,100 GPR, \$70,000 FED, and \$2,200 PR) to support a number of special project grants, including respite care and training for parents and other care-givers in the

areas of children's and parents' mental health. These grants target identified triggers of child abuse and neglect and attempt to improve programs across the state through capacity-building efforts, professional development opportunities, and direct service provision.

These grants are designed to: (a) improve outreach and effectiveness of services to parents with mental health and substance abuse issues; (b) increase availability and consistency of respite care for families with children with mental health or behavioral issues; and (c) improve understanding among early childhood and family support professionals of children's social and emotional development. Table 14 lists the statewide promising practice grantees for 2010-11.

Table 14: 2010-11 Statewide Promising Practices Grantees

Agency	Location
Respite Care Association	Madison
Supporting Families Together Association	Madison
Wisconsin Alliance for Infant Mental Health	Madison
Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies	Madison
Child Abuse Prevention Fund	Milwaukee

"Celebrate Children" License Plates. Provisions in 1997 Wisconsin Act 27 created a special license plate to provide a new revenue source for the Board's programs. On January 1, 1999, the Department of Transportation (DOT) began issuing a special license plate with the words "Celebrate Children" on it, which could be purchased by individuals who wished to support the Board's child abuse and neglect prevention programs. Of the total cost of each license plate, \$20 was deposited into the Children's Trust Fund.

2005 Wisconsin Act 319 created a non-profit corporation, the Celebrate Children Foundation, to increase fundraising efforts for child abuse and neglect prevention. The Celebrate Children Foundation is directed by a nine-member board, including the chair, four members of the CANP Board, and

four additional members recommended by the Foundation Board and approved by the CANP Board. The Foundation staff includes the president, executive vice president, and a resource development coordinator/public relations consultant.

The Celebrate Children Foundation helps communities obtain and invest resources in quality childhood and family development experiences in an effort to create an environment in which Wisconsin children may become healthy and productive citizens.

Act 319 also deposited the revenue raised from the "Celebrate Children" license plate to the Celebrate Children Foundation, rather than the Children's Trust Fund. The revenue stream from the "Celebrate Children" license plate forms the basis of the foundation's endowment fund.

Currently, a "Celebrate Children" license plate costs the buyer \$115 in the first year and \$100 each year thereafter (\$25 more than a standard license plate), of which \$90 in the first year and \$75 in each year following is retained by DOT and the balance (\$25) is deposited in the Celebrate Children Foundation endowment fund.

The foundation cannot spend the revenue from the sale of these license plates that is deposited into its endowment fund. The foundation may only expend the interest that accrues to the endowment fund. In calendar year 2009, \$86,000 was deposited into the endowment fund from issuing "Celebrate Children" license plates.

Family Foundations. DCF is budgeted \$985,700 GPR in 2010-11 to distribute as grants for the prevention of child abuse and neglect, under s. 48.983 of the statutes, which was formerly known as PO-CAN (prevention of child abuse and neglect) and now called Family Foundations. DCF is required by statute to award the grants on a competitive basis to counties, private agencies, or tribes. The minimum amount of a grant is \$10,000, and the recipient must provide a 25% match in funds or in-kind contributions.

Table 15: Family Foundations Grant Recipients

	CY 2010 Funding
Brown County Human Services Department	\$261,200
Marathon County Health Department	155,600
Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services	137,900
Door County Department of Social Services	35,700
Fond du Lac County Department of Social Services	110,300
Manitowoc County Health Department	80,100
Portage County Department of Health and Human Services	77,000
Vernon County Health Department	37,200
Waupaca County Department of Health and Human Services	61,600
LacCourte Oreilles Tribal Government	<u>25,200</u>
Total	\$981,800

Table 15 lists current grant recipients and the grant amounts they are budgeted to receive in calendar year 2010. Seven of the 10 recipients have integrated the grant funding into existing programs operating in those counties. The other three created new programs with the grant funding. A number of programs have used the state grant funding to secure additional local and private funding to expand the level of service provided and the number of families served.

The amount of funding that each county, private agency, or tribe receives from DCF in excess of the minimum \$10,000 is based on the following weighted criteria applied to the population in that county, area, or tribe: (a) the number of births funded by MA (40%); (b) the infant mortality rate (10%); (c) the premature birth rate (10%); (d) the low birth weights rate (10%); and (e) the level of racial or ethnic disproportionality in each of these poor birth outcome rates under (b) through (d) above (30%--10% for each rate).

Program Components. There are two distinct components to the program: (a) home visitation; and (b) intervention for families determined to be at risk of child abuse and neglect. These components are designed to serve potentially different populations, as indicated below.

Home Visitation. This component is a primary intervention, home visitation program offered to all pregnant women who are eligible for MA. A family

may receive services, beginning during the prenatal period, under the program until a child is three years of age. If risk factors for abuse or neglect continue to be present when the child reaches three years of age, the family may continue to receive services until the child reaches five years of age. Participation in the program is voluntary.

Grant funding can be used to support the cost of case management services and flexible funds provided to participating families. Flexible funds are payments totaling not less than \$250 per family per year for appropriate expenses for participating families. Of the amount paid on behalf of a family, 50% may be paid from the state grant; the grant recipients must pay the remaining 50%. Because state law does not define the allowable uses of these flexible funds, the granting agency determines the appropriate uses of these funds. For example, grantees have used these funds to purchase equipment and supplies for infants, such as cribs, car seats, and diapers.

To be eligible for a grant, applicants must indicate in their application that they will claim reimbursement under MA for case management services provided to program participants.

Each county, private agency, and tribe that provides a home visitation program must collect and report data to DCF. DCF must evaluate the availability of home visitation programs in the state, determine whether there are gaps in home visitation services, and cooperate with counties, private agencies, and tribes in providing home visitation programs to address any identified gaps in services.

Intervention. This program component serves families with children who are at risk of abuse or neglect. Services may begin with a request by a family member or a filed child abuse or neglect report, either of which indicates a substantial risk of future abuse or neglect of a child in the family if

assistance is not provided, and a determination that no petition will be filed. This component is a secondary intervention program and participation is voluntary and is not restricted to MA-eligible families. Under the program, grant recipients may use the grant funding as flexible funds, which are intended to be used to pay appropriate expenses, as determined by the agency, for the families in the program to reduce the risk of child abuse or neglect. Payments to a family may not be less than \$250 per year, and the program must encourage the participant to contribute towards the cost of the service funded. Examples of flexible fund expenditures for this program include car repairs, security deposits, and one-month rental payments. Additionally, the grant recipient must indicate that it is willing to fund case management services to MA-eligible families participating in the intervention program. The county may use a portion of its Title IV-E incentive funds that it receives from the state to support the case management costs for the participants in the intervention service component of the program.

Technical Assistance. DCF budgets \$160,000 FED (Title IV-B, Subpart II) in 2010-11 to fund technical assistance and training to counties and tribes that are selected to participate in the Family Foundations program. DCF has contracted with the University of Wisconsin-Extension to provide these services.

Prevention Services in Milwaukee County. DCF provides funding to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in Milwaukee County for two different services: (a) home visiting for parents in Milwaukee County; and (b) community-based grants for prevention services. Both of these initiatives are supported with a \$1,489,600 TANF grant which DCF awards to programs for the provision of these services. In addition, the Administration for Children and Families in the federal Department of Health and Human Services has awarded a three-year grant in the amount of \$464,000 per year for an alternative response pilot that serves women with substance use disorders and their children.

Home Visitation Services. In FY 2010-11, DCF awarded a total of \$812,100 of the TANF grant to the Milwaukee County Health Department to provide home visitation services in Milwaukee County. In addition, UW-Extension was provided with \$90,000 in BMCW GPR funding and \$90,000 in MA matching funds.

Prevention Services. In FY 2010-11 DCF provided \$577,500 of the TANF grant to the Milwaukee Brighter Futures program as a prevention component. The Brighter Futures program seeks to: (a) prevent and reduce the incidence of youth violence and other delinquent behavior; (b) prevent and reduce the incidence of youth alcohol and other drug use and abuse; (c) prevent and reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect; (d) prevent and reduce the incidence of non-marital pregnancy and increase the use of abstinence to prevent non-marital pregnancy; and (e) increase adolescent self-sufficiency by encouraging high school graduation, vocational preparedness, improved social and other interpersonal skills, and responsible decision-making.

In addition, in order to receive the MA matching funds for home visitation services, GPR in BMCW was used to fund UW-Extension activities, rather than TANF. As a result, the remaining \$100,000 from the TANF grant is used by BMCW for other prevention services in Milwaukee County.

Families Come First. BMCW, the Planning Council of Milwaukee, and Meta House will use grant funds of \$464,000 per year to implement a pilot to provide an alternative response for children who are at risk of entering foster care. Meta House is a family treatment program for women with substance use disorders and their children. The Planning Council is a grant partner that will conduct the evaluation of the project.

The pilot, Families Come First, will target infants who are positive for toxic substances at birth and their mothers, as well as pregnant women who are abusing alcohol and/or drugs. BMCW and

Meta House will jointly respond to allegations of child maltreatment due to substance use to identify the impact on child safety, provide a faster and family-centered response, and actively involve mothers in the safety decisions for their children while keeping the family together.

Summary

In Wisconsin, counties, tribes, and the state administer a wide range of programs that are intended to keep children safe, prevent child abuse and neglect, support families, and serve children who are in need of protection and services. Child welfare services are provided by state, local, tribal, or contracted employees. Federal law, state law, and the courts all have a significant impact on the child welfare system.

Funding for child welfare services is provided from a combination of state, federal, tribal, and local funds through numerous state and federal programs, many of which are targeted to provide specific services to targeted populations. This

funding mix reflects the shared responsibility of federal, state, tribal, and local governments to keep children safe and protect them from harm.

Attachment 1 to this paper presents an overview of the child welfare system in Wisconsin. Attachment 2 lists 2010 and 2011 allocation amounts to counties and tribes under the independent living program, and Attachment 3 shows the number of individuals receiving independent living services by counties in 2009. Attachment 4 lists the 2011 county allocations of Title IV-B, Subpart II funding.

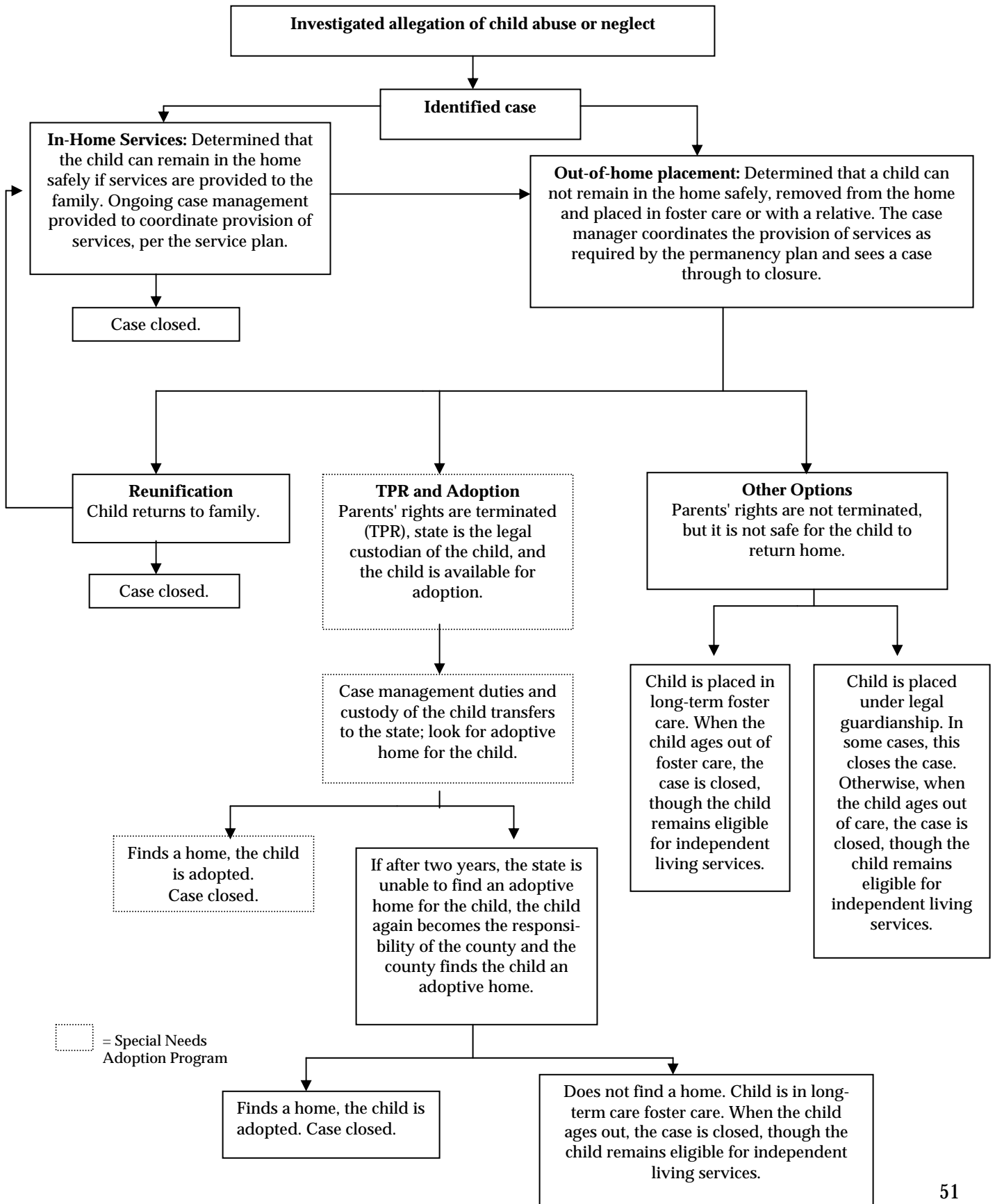
Attachments 5 and 6 provide information on the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, including the Bureau's performance on permanence, safety, and well-being measures and the case decision making process in the Bureau.

Attachment 7 summarizes the outcome measures and results under the children and family services reviews in 2003 and in 2010.

Appendix A describes the history of federal child welfare law, and Appendix B summarizes the draft of the new program improvement plan.

ATTACHMENT 1

Overview of the Child Welfare System in Wisconsin



ATTACHMENT 2

**Independent Living and Education and Training Vouchers County and Tribal Allocations
2010 and 2011**

	2010				2011			
	<u>Independent Living</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>	<u>Ed/Training Vouchers</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>	<u>Independent Living</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>	<u>Ed/Training Vouchers</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>
Adams	\$ 15,482	\$3,871	\$1,052	\$263	\$18,083	\$4,521	\$1,638	\$410
Ashland	12,000	3,000	557	139	16,506	4,127	1,213	303
Barron	17,838	4,460	1,764	441	20,562	5,140	2,305	576
Bayfield	12,000	3,000	371	93	14,366	3,591	637	159
Brown	42,011	10,503	9,070	2,267	38,474	9,618	7,128	1,782
Buffalo	14,253	3,563	681	170	12,000	3,000	607	152
Burnett	15,278	3,820	991	248	15,605	3,901	971	243
Calumet	14,356	3,589	712	178	14,591	3,648	698	174
Chippewa	20,501	5,125	2,569	642	19,323	4,831	1,972	493
Clark	14,868	3,717	867	217	16,731	4,183	1,274	319
Columbia	18,658	4,664	2,012	503	18,985	4,746	1,881	470
Crawford	1,200	300	495	124	12,000	3,000	607	152
Dane	59,935	14,984	14,487	3,622	89,281	22,320	20,809	5,202
Dodge	21,833	5,458	2,972	743	24,730	6,182	3,428	857
Door	16,302	4,076	1,300	325	16,394	4,098	1,183	296
Douglas	12,000	3,000	248	62	14,478	3,620	667	167
Dunn	12,000	3,000	557	139	17,295	4,324	1,426	356
Eau Claire	25,315	6,329	4,024	1,006	31,039	7,760	5,126	1,282
Florence	12,000	3,000	340	85	14,591	3,648	698	174
Fond du Lac	30,641	7,660	5,634	1,408	32,616	8,154	5,551	1,388
Forest	12,000	3,000	124	31	12,000	3,000	576	144
Grant	12,000	3,000	402	101	17,633	4,408	1,517	379
Green	16,507	4,127	1,362	340	17,295	4,324	1,426	356
Green Lake	15,278	3,820	991	248	15,492	3,873	940	235
Iowa	14,765	3,691	836	209	14,929	3,732	789	197
Iron	12,000	3,000	124	31	12,000	3,000	182	46
Jackson	15,892	3,973	1,176	294	17,069	4,267	1,365	341
Jefferson	17,736	4,434	1,733	433	24,054	6,013	3,245	811
Juneau	14,663	3,666	805	201	14,591	3,648	698	174
Kenosha	62,291	15,573	15,199	3,800	52,218	13,054	10,829	2,707
Kewaunee	15,073	3,768	929	232	14,929	3,732	789	197
La Crosse	24,701	6,175	3,838	959	31,264	7,816	5,187	1,297
LaFayette	16,404	4,101	1,331	333	15,718	3,929	1,001	250
Langlade	14,458	3,615	743	186	15,830	3,958	1,031	258
Lincoln	12,000	3,000	124	31	12,000	3,000	546	137
Manitowoc	27,261	6,815	4,612	1,153	20,787	5,197	2,366	592
Marathon	32,280	8,070	6,129	1,532	49,739	12,435	10,162	2,541
Marinette	15,073	3,768	929	232	15,492	3,873	940	235
Marquette	12,000	3,000	62	16	12,000	3,000	516	129
Menominee	14,049	3,512	619	155	14,366	3,591	637	159

ATTACHMENT 2 (continued)

**Independent Living and Education and Training Vouchers County and Tribal Allocations
2010 and 2011**

	2010				2011			
	<u>Independent Living</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>	<u>Ed/Training Vouchers</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>	<u>Independent Living</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>	<u>Ed/Training Vouchers</u> Allocation	<u>Match</u>
Monroe	\$17,326	\$4,332	\$1,610	\$402	\$18,534	\$4,633	\$1,759	\$440
Oconto	15,892	3,973	1,176	294	17,971	4,493	1,608	402
Oneida	14,868	3,717	867	217	18,985	4,746	1,880	470
Outagamie	25,930	6,482	4,210	1,052	24,843	6,211	3,458	865
Ozaukee	12,000	3,000	310	78	16,506	4,127	1,213	303
Pepin	12,000	3,000	248	62	12,000	3,000	485	121
Pierce	15,482	3,871	1,052	263	17,295	4,324	1,426	356
Polk	12,000	3,000	310	78	18,196	4,549	1,668	417
Portage	15,585	3,896	1,083	271	19,886	4,971	2,123	531
Price	15,278	3,820	991	248	18,083	4,521	1,638	410
Racine	35,148	8,787	6,996	1,749	46,923	11,731	9,403	2,351
Richland	12,000	3,000	402	101	16,056	4,014	1,092	273
Rock	24,496	6,124	3,776	944	30,250	7,562	4,914	1,229
Rusk	12,000	3,000	433	108	12,000	3,000	607	152
St Croix	15,892	3,973	1,176	294	18,647	4,662	1,790	447
Sauk	18,350	4,587	1,919	480	22,477	5,619	2,821	705
Sawyer	14,458	3,615	743	186	15,830	3,958	1,031	258
Shawano	12,000	3,000	248	62	12,000	3,000	364	91
Sheboygan	28,081	7,020	4,860	1,215	26,983	6,746	4,034	1,009
Taylor	12,000	3,000	464	116	14,591	3,648	698	174
Trempealeau	12,000	3,000	310	78	14,704	3,676	728	182
Vernon	14,253	3,563	681	170	15,718	3,929	1,001	250
Vilas	16,404	4,101	1,331	333	16,056	4,014	1,092	273
Walworth	19,989	4,997	2,414	603	23,491	5,873	3,094	774
Washburn	14,868	3,717	867	217	14,929	3,732	789	197
Washington	18,043	4,511	1,826	456	24,617	6,154	3,397	849
Waukesha	44,264	11,066	9,751	2,438	39,262	9,816	7,341	1,835
Waupaca	18,862	4,715	2,074	518	20,111	5,028	2,184	546
Waushara	14,765	3,691	836	209	14,591	3,648	698	174
Winnebago	33,509	8,377	6,500	1,625	40,614	10,154	7,705	1,926
Wood	18,965	4,741	2,105	526	29,799	7,450	4,792	1,198
BMCW	305,960	76,490	88,839	22,210	253,420	63,355	65,004	16,251
Subtotal	\$1,637,570	\$409,393	\$243,179	\$60,795	\$1,762,424	\$440,606	\$246,398	\$61,599
Ho Chunk	\$21,423	\$5,355	\$2,848	\$712	\$19,435	\$4,859	\$1,698	\$425
Lac Courte Oreilles	14,253	3,563	681	170	12,000	3,000	607	152
Lac du Flambeau	12,000	3,000	526	132	14,929	3,732	516	129
Division of Juvenile Corrections	\$23,955	\$5,989	\$0	\$0	\$25,500	\$6,375	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,709,201	\$427,300	\$247,234	\$61,809	\$1,834,288	\$458,572	\$249,219	\$62,305

ATTACHMENT 3

2009 Independent Living Annual Report Summary

County/ Tribe	Number of Youth Eligible in 2009	Youth in OHC	Number of Youth Discharged 18-21 Years	IL Assessments Completed	IL Plans Completed	Total Number of Youth Receiving Services	2009 Room & Board Funds Expended
Adams	34	8	26	21	21	21	\$400
Ashland	33	6	27	5	6	7	1,309
Barron	62	7	55	23	23	14	1,780
Bayfield	13	6	7	10	9	8	1,310
Brown	218	46	172	54	44	17	3,048
Buffalo	12	1	11	9	9	8	0
Burnett	27	5	22	7	5	5	0
Calumet	17	1	16	7	7	6	0
Chippewa	63	4	59	9	4	2	875
Clark	37	6	31	7	4	5	0
Columbia	54	9	45	11	9	8	0
Crawford	16	7	9	5	5	4	0
Dane	569	82	487	112	109	117	793
Dodge	89	23	66	44	43	24	1,150
Door	26	3	23	15	11	13	840
Douglas	19	6	13	3	3	3	550
Dunn	44	4	40	6	6	3	7,052
Eau Claire	156	28	128	26	20	13	0
Florence	15	4	11	8	7	8	0
Fond du Lac	120	28	92	67	60	63	2,500
Forest	17	2	15	2	2	2	0
Grant	38	9	29	15	14	12	776
Green	39	3	36	9	7	8	0
Green Lake	24	4	20	9	7	7	0
Iowa	20	3	17	7	7	6	1,763
Iron	5	2	3	2	0	1	0
Jackson	35	10	25	12	12	10	700
Jefferson	81	20	61	30	27	26	0
Juneau	16	5	11	7	6	7	2,000
Kenosha	300	62	238	94	94	57	153,000
Kewaunee	17	5	12	8	9	9	0
La Crosse	126	23	103	46	29	45	2,300
LaFayette	20	3	17	13	6	13	0
Langlade	27	10	17	9	7	7	0
Lincoln	16	5	11	4	4	2	0
Manitowoc	61	14	47	19	14	17	0
Marathon	246	45	201	49	45	89	795
Marinette	25	4	21	7	7	6	0
Marquette	13	3	10	4	4	4	0
Menominee	18	4	14	4	4	3	0

ATTACHMENT 3 (continued)

2009 Independent Living Annual Report Summary

County/ Tribe	Number of Youth Eligible in 2009	Youth in OHC	Number of Youth Discharged 18-21 Years	IL Assessments Completed	IL Plans Completed	Total Number of Youth Receiving Services	2009 Room & Board Funds Expended
Monroe	42	8	34	14	14	16	\$1,480
Oconto	47	6	41	13	13	6	0
Oneida	46	11	35	19	17	16	0
Outagamie	94	16	78	24	23	20	1,120
Ozaukee	35	9	26	9	9	5	385
Pepin	9	2	7	7	7	7	0
Pierce	29	4	25	7	6	18	0
Polk	48	5	43	16	14	7	200
Portage	64	14	50	9	6	6	1,020
Price	39	13	26	20	21	15	400
Racine	253	37	216	51	89	57	0
Richland	25	3	22	9	6	11	152
Rock	142	28	114	39	40	20	0
Rusk	17	1	16	6	7	3	0
St. Croix	47	6	41	12	12	12	0
Sauk	65	15	50	32	30	28	1,325
Sawyer	29	6	23	6	4	5	100
Shawano	10	2	8	2	1	2	0
Sheboygan	96	14	82	38	41	37	750
Taylor	20	4	16	2	2	3	0
Trempealeau	20	3	17	8	8	4	0
Vernon	29	3	26	4	4	4	0
Vilas	35	4	31	11	11	1	0
Walworth	75	10	65	27	27	27	3,187
Washburn	22	3	19	5	5	4	0
Washington	83	15	68	33	32	29	950
Waukesha	140	27	113	117	114	102	6,775
Waupaca	60	12	48	18	18	12	3,200
Waushara	13	4	9	11	11	10	350
Winnebago	164	30	134	85	91	90	790
Wood	<u>145</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	4,711	866	3,845	1,496	1,430	1,270	\$205,125
Milwaukee	1,676	434	1,242	724	668	467	\$40,350
DOC	19	0	19	19	19	19	0
Ho Chunk	28	7	21	17	17	28	0
La du Flambeau	13	0	0	0	0	3	0
Lac Courte Oreilles	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	6,457	1,308	5,136	2,261	2,139	1,797	\$245,475

ATTACHMENT 4

**Title IV-B, Subpart II County Allocations (Promoting Safe and Stable Families)
Calendar Year 2011**

County	Amount	County	Amount
Adams	\$36,050	Manitowoc	\$56,650
Ashland	36,050	Marathon	91,800
Barron	46,350	Marinette	46,350
Bayfield	36,050	Marquette	36,050
Brown	72,100	Menominee	0
Buffalo	36,050	Milwaukee	0
Burnett	36,050	Monroe	46,350
Calumet	46,350	Oconto	46,350
Chippewa	46,350	Oneida	46,350
Clark	46,350	Outagamie	72,100
Columbia	46,350	Ozaukee	56,650
Crawford	36,050	Pepin	36,050
Dane	103,000	Pierce	46,350
Dodge	56,650	Polk	46,350
Door	41,200	Portage	56,650
Douglas	46,350	Price	36,050
Dunn	46,350	Racine	72,100
Eau Claire	56,650	Richland	36,050
Florence	36,050	Rock	61,800
Fond du Lac	56,650	Rusk	36,050
Forest	36,050	St. Croix	51,500
Grant	46,350	Sauk	46,350
Green	46,350	Sawyer	36,050
Green Lake	36,050	Shawano	46,350
Iowa	41,200	Sheboygan	101,300
Iron	36,050	Taylor	41,200
Jackson	36,050	Trempealeau	41,200
Jefferson	51,500	Vernon	46,350
Juneau	41,200	Vilas	36,050
Kenosha	61,800	Walworth	56,650
Kewaunee	41,200	Washburn	36,050
La Crosse	61,800	Washington	61,800
Lafayette	36,050	Waukesha	103,000
Langlade	41,200	Waupaca	46,350
Lincoln	46,350	Waushara	41,200
		Winnebago	61,800
		Wood	<u>51,500</u>
		Total	\$3,453,050

ATTACHMENT 5

BMCW Performance Regarding Permanence, Safety, and Well-Being Standards

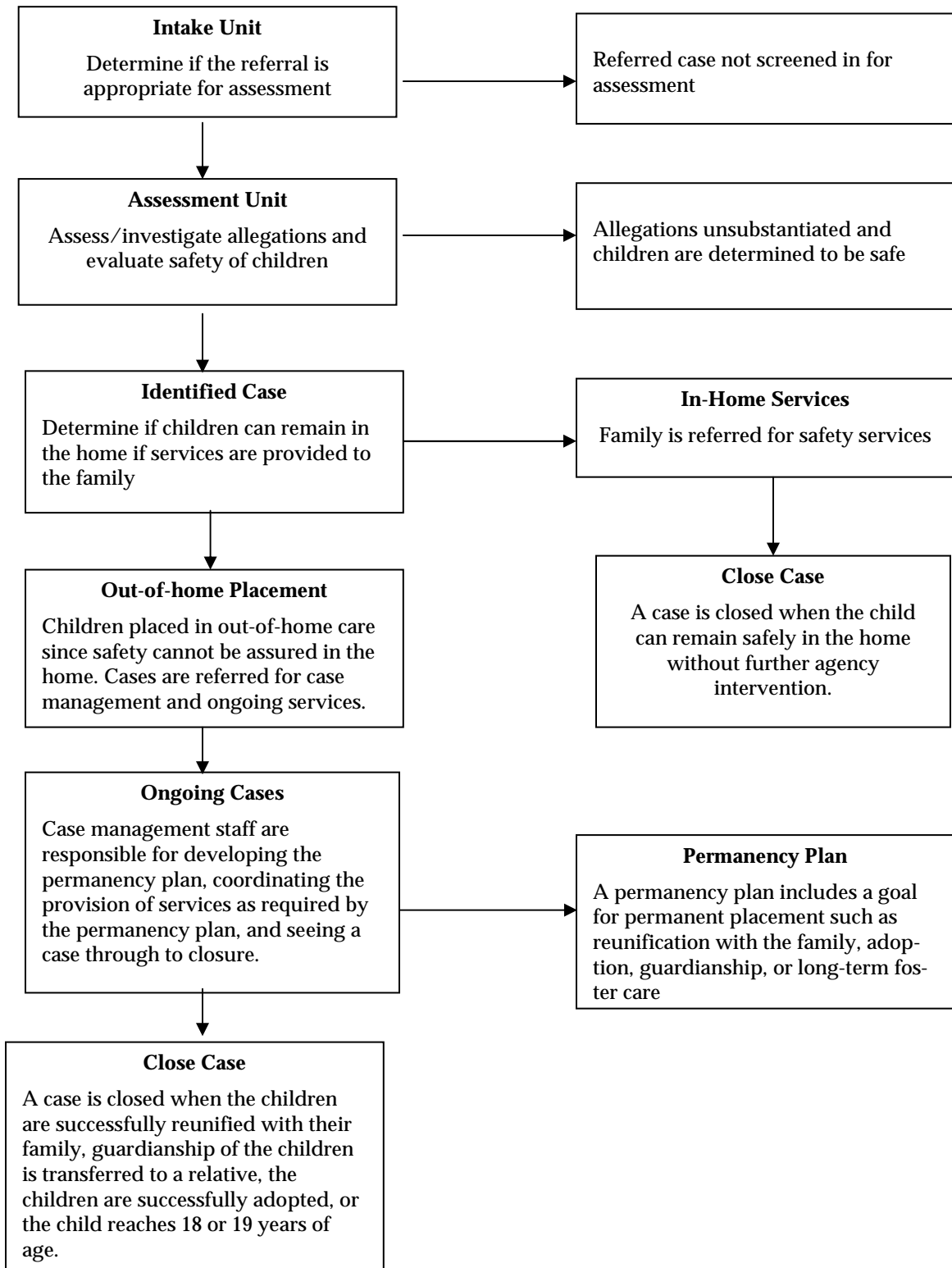
	Period 1 (2003)		Period 2 (2004)		Period 3 (2005)	
	Standard	Actual	Standard	Actual	Standard	Actual
Permanence						
TPR by 15th month for children in out-of-home care for 15 of last 22 months	≥ 65.0%	76.8%	≥ 75.0%	88.2%	≥ 90.0%	29.0%*
TPR by end of period, for children in out-of-home care 15 of last 22 months and didn't get TPR by 15th month	≥ 75.0%	88.5%	≥ 85.0%	92.9%	≥ 90.0%	92.0%
Children in out-of-home care for more than 24 months	≤ 40.0%	44.2%*	≤ 35.0%	30.2%	≤ 25.0%	23.0%
Reunification within 12 months of entry into out-of-home care	monitor	45.0%	≥ 65.0%	63.0%*	≥ 71.0%	72.0%
Exit out-of-home care within 24 months for children with finalized adoptions	≥ 20.0%	14.2%*	≥ 25.0%	15.5%*	≥ 30.0%	21.7%*
Safety						
% of children with substantiated abuse or neglect allegations by a foster parent or staff member	≤ 0.70%	0.57%	≤ 0.65%	0.85%*	≤ 0.60%	0.81%*
Alleged abuse and neglect reports referred to independent investigation agency within three days	≥ 80.0%	99.8%	≥ 85.0%	99.4%	≥ 90.0%	99.0%
Permanence						
Assign a staff person within three days of investigation agency's receipt of referral	≥ 80.0%	99.6%	≥ 85.0%	99.8%	≥ 90.0%	99.0%
Make determination within 60 days of investigation agency's receipt of referral	≥ 80.0%	97.6%	≥ 85.0%	98.1%	≥ 90.0%	99.0%
Well-Being						
Number of families per caseworker	≤ 13.0	9.8	≤ 11.0	10	≤ 11.0	10
Children in out-of-home care who have monthly face-to-face contact with their case manager	≥ 90.0%	90.0%	≥ 90.0%	97.0%	≥ 90.0%	97.0%
Children in out-of-home care shall have three or fewer placements	≥ 80.0%	75.9%*	≥ 82.0%	72.1%*	≥ 90.0%	72.0%*

*Indicates area in which BMCW did not meet the standard.

ATTACHMENT 6

Department of Children and Families

Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare
Case Decision-Making Process



ATTACHMENT 7

Summary of Outcome Measures, Systemic Factors, and Results Under the Child and Family Services Review

Outcome Measures:								Substantial Conformance	
2003		2010				Percent Achieved			
Strength	Needs Improvement	Strength	Needs Improvement			2003	2010*	2003	2010
				Safety Outcome 1					
				<i>Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect</i>		79.1%	65.5%	No	No
	X		X	Timeliness of CPS investigations					
	X	X		Repeat maltreatment					
				Safety Outcome 2					
				<i>Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible</i>		83.3	63.1	No	No
	X		X	Services to prevent removal					
X			X	Risk of harm					
				Permanency Outcome 1					
				<i>Children have permanency and stability in their living situations</i>		48.0	32.5	No	No
	X	X		Out-of-home care re-entry					
	X		X	Stability of out-of-home care placements					
	X		X	Permanency goal for child					
	X		X	Reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives					
	X		X	Adoption					
	X		X	Other planned living arrangement					
				Permanency Outcome 2					
				<i>Continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved</i>		44.0	55.0	No	No
X		X		Proximity of placement					
	X		X	Placement with siblings					
	X		X	Visiting with parents and siblings in out-of-home care					
	X		X	Preserving connections					
	X		X	Relative placement					
	X		X	Relationship of child in care with parents					
				Well-Being Outcome 1					
				<i>Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs</i>		54.0	32.3	No	No
	X		X	Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents					
	X		X	Child/family involvement in case planning					
X			X	Worker visits with child					
	X		X	Worker visits with parents					
				Well-Being Outcome 2					
				<i>Children receive services to meet their educational needs</i>		90.9	87.8	Yes	No
X			X	Educational needs of child					
				Well-Being Outcome 3					
				<i>Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs</i>		68.8	72.2	No	No
	X		X	Physical health of child					
	X		X	Mental health of child					

Systemic Factors:

2003		2010			Rating**		Substantial Conformance	
Strength	Needs Improvement	Strength	Needs Improvement		2003	2010	2003	2010
X		X			Statewide Information System <i>Ability to collect data</i> System can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals of children in out-of-home care	3	4	Yes
	X		X	Case Review System <i>Court processes</i> Process for developing a case plan and for joint case planning with parents	2	2	No	No
X		X		Process for 6-month case reviews				
X			X	Process for 12-month permanency hearings				
	X		X	Process for seeking TPR in accordance with ASFA				
	X		X	Process for notifying caregivers of reviews and hearings for opportunity for them to be heard				
				Quality Assurance System <i>Quality assurance program in DCF for counties; PEM in BMCW</i> Standards to ensure quality services, children safety, and health	2	4	No	Yes
X		X		Identifiable quality assurance system that evaluates the quality of services and improvements				
	X			Staff and Provider Training <i>Child welfare staff and foster and adoptive parents</i> Provision of initial staff training	2	1	No	No
	X		X	Provision of ongoing staff training that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge				
	X		X	Provision of training for caregivers and adoptive parents that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge				
				Service Array <i>Services available to serve families</i> Availability of array of critical services	2	2	No	No
	X	X		Accessibility of services across all jurisdictions				
X			X	Ability to individualize services to meet unique needs				
				Agency Responsiveness to Community <i>Community investment in state plans</i> Engages in ongoing consultation with critical stakeholders in developing the Child and Family Services State Plan	3	4	Yes	Yes
X		X		Develops annual progress reports in consultation with stakeholders				
X		X		Coordinated services with other federal programs				
				Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention <i>Standards and efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents</i> Standards for foster family and child care institutions	3	3	Yes	Yes
X			X	Standards are applied equally to all foster family and child care institutions				
X		X		Conducts necessary criminal background checks				
X		X		Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect children's racial and ethnic diversity				
	X	X		Uses cross-jurisdictional resources to find placements				

*Does not include percentage that partially achieved measure.

**On a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest rating. A rating of 1 or 2 means the factor is not in conformance; a rating of 3 or 4 means the factor is in conformance.

APPENDIX A

History of Federal Child Welfare Law

Introduction

The first documented case of child abuse in the United States occurred in 1874. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) had been notified that a girl named Mary Ellen had been regularly bound and beaten by her stepmother and brought the case to court to remove the child from her home and to prosecute her stepmother. Following ASPCA's successful conclusion of the case, the first child protection society, the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was formed and protective societies were established throughout the United States. Some of these societies emphasized "child rescue" and placed children in orphanages. Others emphasized family rehabilitation, which focused on keeping children in homes and reunifying families. When children were removed from their homes, they were placed in foster homes.

The family rehabilitation view gained more prominence and influenced state legislation and policy. State child welfare systems were established, but did not receive significant public interest. This changed with the 1962 publication of "The Battered-Child Syndrome," a research article by Dr. C. Henry Kempe and his colleagues, which examined the causes of, and the appropriate responses to, the physical abuse of children. The article indicated that little was known about the prevalence of child abuse in the United States. In response to Dr. Kempe's article, and the subsequent increase in the public's interest, the first federal legislation on child abuse was passed in 1974 -- the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Act (CAPTA), 100 years after Mary Ellen's court case.

Federal legislation has been enacted subsequently that builds upon CAPTA and reflects not only changes in the knowledge of child development, but also philosophical changes in the field of

child welfare. The most significant federal child welfare legislation is described below.

It should be noted that a significant portion of federal law regarding child welfare is found under Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the federal Social Security Act. As a result, much of the following legislation either created or modified federal law under Title IV-E or Title IV-B.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974

CAPTA (P.L. 93-247) provided funding to states to: (a) develop child abuse and neglect identification and prevention programs; (b) support innovative programs aimed at preventing and treating child maltreatment; and (c) authorize limited research into child abuse prevention and treatment.

CAPTA has been reauthorized six times since 1974. Each reauthorization added to, or changed, some aspect of the original legislation. Some of these changes include: (a) facilitating the placement of children with special needs in permanent adoptive homes; (b) creating a national adoption information exchange system; (c) promoting quality standards for adoptive placements and the rights of adopted children; (d) expanding the scope of child abuse to include neglect, specifically medical neglect, and requiring states to facilitate adoption opportunities for disabled infants with life-threatening conditions; (e) providing money to states for community-based child abuse and neglect prevention grants; and (f) requiring states to institute an expedited termination of parental rights (TPR) process for abandoned infants or children whose parents are responsible for the death or serious bodily injury of a child.

In addition, CAPTA established a national data collection system that requires states to report

standardized data, including: (a) the number of reported cases; (b) the number of cases substantiated, unsubstantiated, or determined to be false; (c) the number of children who received services; (d) the number of children removed from their homes; (e) agency response time to reports and to provide services; and (f) the number of children reunited with their families. CAPTA also changed the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of CPS staff, and the requirements of the CPS program, including requiring an assessment of the family's risk of abuse, neglect, and safety.

In the 1996 re-authorization of CAPTA, a base national definition of child abuse was established to include death, serious physical or emotional injury, sexual abuse, or imminent risk of harm.

The Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-36) reauthorized CAPTA through 2008, but it also made significant changes to CAPTA. The Act has four primary provisions that affect child protective services, including: (a) requiring states to develop a plan of safe care for the infants affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms; (b) requiring CPS caseworkers to advise the alleged maltreater of the allegations against him or her at the first contact that the CPS caseworker has with the alleged maltreater; (c) establishing procedures for referral of a child under three years of age who has been substantiated as abused or neglected to the Birth-to-3 program; and (d) establishing triage procedures for the appropriate referral of a child not at risk of imminent harm from abuse or neglect to community organizations or a voluntary preventive service. In addition, the Act implements programs to increase the number of older foster children placed in adoptive families, including a grant program to eliminate barriers to placing children for adoption across jurisdictional boundaries.

From 2008 through 2010, funding under CAPTA continued without CAPTA reauthorization.

The CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L.

111-320) reauthorized CAPTA through 2015 and revised requirements for: (a) the child abuse prevention and treatment advisory board; (b) the national clearinghouse for information relating to child abuse; (c) research and assistance activities; and (d) specific grants to states, tribes, and public or private organizations, including community-based grants. The Act intends to strengthen and support families with children; to protect children from abuse, neglect and maltreatment; to improve services for victims of domestic violence and children exposed to domestic violence; and to improve adoption assistance. The Act requires collection of additional data regarding training, education, and caseloads of CPS workers. The Act also enhances and improves flexibility, such as including the use of differential response systems in investigating abuse or neglect cases, training, and the collaboration, communication, and coordination among the various participants in the child welfare system.

Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978

The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-608) was enacted to protect the interests of Native American children and promote stability and security of Indian tribes and families. Under the Act, tribes have jurisdiction in child welfare services custody proceedings involving Native American children who reside on reservations (this does not include the authority to conduct child protective services investigations or initial assessments) and have a right to intervene in certain custody matters involving a Native American child. In addition, the Act establishes minimum federal standards for the removal of Native American children from their families, requires Native American children to be placed in foster or adoptive homes that reflect Native American culture, grants preference to Native American family environments in adoptive or foster care placement, requires child welfare agencies to provide "active efforts" to prevent the breakup of Native American families and prevent termination of parental rights (rather than "reasonable efforts" required for non-Native American children), provides assistance to tribes in the operation of child and family service programs, and sets a "beyond a

reasonable doubt" standard of proof for terminating Native American parents' parental rights.

Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980

The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA) of 1980 (P.L. 96-272) increased the involvement of the court in child welfare cases to counteract the authority of the child welfare system, with the intent to hold the child welfare system accountable and to reduce the number of children removed from their homes, the amount of time children spend in out-of-home care, and the number of placements experienced by children. AACWA established adoption assistance payments, which are made to parents who adopt a child with special needs.

AACWA also established the practice of developing and implementing permanency plans, with an emphasis on reuniting children with their families. In addition, the AACWA introduced the concepts of "best interests of the child" and "reasonable efforts," which are examined when trying to determine if a child should be removed from his or her home, when to reunify a child with the family, and to achieve the goals of the permanency plan. States are required to place each child in the least restrictive setting, consistent with the needs of the child.

Family Preservation and Support Services Program

Passed as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-66), the Family Preservation and Support Services Program provides funding to states to create a continuum of family-focused services for "at-risk" children and families and encourages states to use the funds to integrate preventive services into a treatment-oriented child welfare system, to improve service coordination within and across state agencies, and to engage broad segments of the community in program planning at state and local levels. It also defined the services states must provide to include: (a)

preservation, which are activities designed to assist families in crisis (including extended and adoptive families), often when the child is at risk of being placed in out-of-home care because of abuse or neglect; and (b) support, which are preventive activities, typically provided by community-based organizations, to improve nurturing of children and strengthen and enhance the stability of families.

This program is incorporated under Title IV-B of the Social Security Act. In 1997, the program was renamed Promoting Safe and Stable Families and included two additional services: (a) time-limited reunification services to facilitate the safe and appropriate reunification of children in out-of-home care with their families; and (b) adoption promotion and support services to encourage more adoptions of children from the out-of-home care system, including pre- and post-adoption services designed to expedite adoptions and support families.

In 2002, additional activities were permitted under this program, including: (a) infant safe haven programs; (b) mentoring children of incarcerated parents; (c) strengthening parental relationships; and (d) promoting healthy marriages.

In 2006, this program changed from a permanent authorization to a five-year authorization through 2011 and required minimum standards for caseworker visits.

Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994

The Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-382) was enacted to reduce the length of time that children wait to be adopted, facilitate the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive parents who can meet the needs of children waiting for placement, and eliminate discrimination on the basis of the race, color, or national origin of the child or the prospective foster or adoptive parent. The only categorical exception to this requirement is Native American children, who are covered under the Indian Child Welfare Act, which supersedes the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act.

The Act prohibits states and other entities that are involved in foster care or adoption placements, and that receive any federal funding, from delaying or denying the placement of a child solely on the basis of race, color, or national origin of the adoptive or foster parent, or the child, involved.

The Act also prohibits states and other entities from denying any individual the opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent on the basis of the prospective parent's or the child's race, color, or national origin. Finally, the Act requires child welfare services systems to diligently recruit a pool of potential foster and adoptive families that reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 (P.L. 105-89) established a variety of new standards for children and juveniles placed in, or at risk of being placed in, out-of-home care. ASFA is focused on the safety, permanence, and well-being of children who are removed from their homes, with safety being the primary consideration. The final federal rules became effective in March of 2000, and the federal requirements and regulations are incorporated into state statute.

ASFA establishes requirements for states to pursue the TPR and adoption of children who have been in out-of-home care for 15 of the last 22 months. In addition, ASFA specifies that a TPR petition must be filed if a court has determined that: (a) a child was abandoned when he or she was under one year of age; (b) a parent has committed, has aided or abetted the commission of, or has solicited, conspired, or attempted to commit first- or second-degree intentional homicide, first-degree reckless homicide, or felony murder and that the victim of the homicide is a child of the parent; or (c) the parent has committed substantial battery, first- or second-degree sexual assault, first- or second-degree sexual assault of a child, repeated acts of sexual assault of the same child, or intentionally or

recklessly caused great bodily harm to a child if the violation resulted in great or substantial bodily harm to the child or another child of the parent.

Exceptions to the TPR requirements are provided in cases where: (a) a child is being cared for by a fit and willing relative; (b) a child's permanency plan indicates and provides documentation that TPR is not in the best interests of the child; (c) the agency primarily responsible for providing services to a child and family under a court order has not, if so required, provided the family of the child, consistent with the time period in the permanency plan, the services necessary for the safe return of the child to his or her home; or (d) grounds for involuntary TPR do not exist. Once an exception is made, there is no defined time at which TPR must be considered again; however, the TPR decision or exception must be made each time a child has been in out-of-home care for 15 of the last 22 months. This applies primarily when a child entered and exited out-of-home care on multiple occasions. The Indian Child Welfare Act supersedes the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

ASFA introduced the concept of concurrent planning, which permits states to make reasonable or active efforts to place a child for adoption or with a legal guardian while, at the same time, states make reasonable or active efforts to reunify the child and family. This change supports the goal of permanency for children, based on the belief that out-of-home care is a temporary setting and not a place for children to grow up. ASFA also requires that a permanency plan hearing be held every 12 months, instead of every 18 months as was previously required, and that permanency planning begin immediately after the child is removed from the home. In addition, the permanency plan incorporates the idea that permanence can be expedited through the provision of services to families.

Finally, ASFA authorizes the Secretary of the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to make incentive payments to states to increase the number of adoptions of children in foster care as compared to the greatest number of

adoptions in any fiscal year, from 1997 through the current year.

Formerly, a state received \$4,000 per adoption plus \$2,000 for each special needs adoption and, since 2003, an additional \$4,000 for each adoption of a child nine years of age or older, with a maximum incentive payment per adoption of \$8,000. Under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351), the incentive amount for special needs adoptions is \$4,000, and for older child adoptions is \$8,000. Additional incentive payments are permitted if states exceed their highest recorded adoption rate since 2002.

States are required to reinvest these incentive funds into child welfare programs. This provision supports one of ASFA's ideals of results and accountability of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999

The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-169) established the John H. Chafee Independence Program, which revised the funding mechanism to states for independent living programs. The Act also expanded opportunities for independent living programs providing education, training, and employment services, and financial support for foster youth to prepare for living on their own. The Act allows states to provide medical assistance (MA) coverage to individuals between the ages of 18 and 21 who were in out-of-home care on their 18th birthday, requires states to ensure that foster parents are adequately prepared, both initially and on a continuing basis, to care for the children placed with them, and authorizes additional funding for adoption incentive payments to states to assist in finding permanent homes for children in out-of-home care.

In 2002, an educational voucher program was added to provide for education and training, including postsecondary training and education, to youth who have aged out of foster care.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351) focuses on: (a) ensuring permanent placements with relatives; (b) increasing adoptive families for children; (c) maintaining sibling ties and other family connections; (d) improving outcomes for older youth in foster care; (e) improving the quality of staff working with children in the child welfare system; (f) increasing access by tribes to federal funding to promote better outcomes for Indian children; and (g) addressing children's health and education needs.

States now have the option to use Title IV-E funds for kinship guardianship payments for children raised by relative caregivers who care for them in foster care and are committed to caring for them permanently when they leave foster care. State agencies must exercise due diligence to identify and provide notice to all adult grandparents and other adult relatives of a child within 30 days after the child is removed from his or her home. States may waive non-safety licensing standards on a case-by-case basis in order to eliminate barriers to placing children safely with relatives in licensed homes. Reasonable efforts must also be made to place siblings together or, if not placed together, to establish frequent visitation among siblings.

Federal foster care maintenance payments have been extended to youth up to the age of 21 and include supervised independent living settings as a Title IV-E reimbursable child caring facility. Youth must be involved in productive activity such as education, training, or work, or incapable of doing these activities due to a medical condition. A personalized transition plan is required within 90 days from the anticipated date of discharge from out-of-home care. Adoption assistance and guardianship payments have also been extended up to age 21 for children adopted or entering guardianship after age 16. In addition, all independent living services and education and training voucher benefits have been extended to children 16 and older who have

been adopted or entered a guardianship program from foster care.

The requirement that the home a child was removed from must meet the income eligibility requirements under the former aid to families with dependent children (AFDC) program has been eliminated for Title IV-E adoption assistance. In addition, children who are eligible for supplemental security income (SSI), based solely on the medical and disability requirements, are automatically considered children with special needs and eligible for adoption assistance without regard to the SSI income requirements. Title IV-E reimbursements to states based on these new Title IV-E eligibility rules must be invested in child welfare services, including post-adoption services. The expansion of special needs adoption assistance payments will be phased in over nine years, with older children and those who have spent at least 60 consecutive months in care, and their siblings, being eligible

first.

Other provisions: (a) allow Title IV-E reimbursement at an enhanced training rate for training costs associated with staff of private child welfare agencies, court-related staff such as judges and attorneys, and non-reimbursable placement providers such as court-ordered kinship care providers; (b) require state child welfare agencies to coordinate with local school districts to ensure educational stability of children in out-of home care related to school enrollment, school transition, and record sharing; (c) allow school-related transportation costs to be included in Title IV-E maintenance claims for out-of home care payments; and (d) require states to develop, in collaboration with the state Medicaid agency and other health professionals, a plan regarding the ongoing coordination and oversight of health services for children in out-of-home care.

APPENDIX B

Summary of Wisconsin's Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Draft

- DCF's draft of the PIP consists of five primary strategies: (a) improving pathways to permanence; (b) improving family engagement and well-being; (c) improving safety timeliness and response; (d) building service capacity; and (e) professional development enhancements. These strategies are described in further detail below, along with the measures with which the state is not in substantial conformance that these strategies intend to address.

Improving Pathways to Permanence. This strategy would improve case planning and review, enhance utilization of permanency goals, and implement the next phase of the new graduated foster care licensing system by:

- Integrating all requirements into child welfare ongoing service standards and clarifying how cases should be planned and reviewed to ensure appropriate planning is being completed for each child (permanency outcome 2 indicators of visiting with parents and siblings in out-of-home care, preserving connections, and relationship of child in care with parents; well-being outcome 1 indicators of child and family involvement in case planning, worker visits with child, and worker visits with parents; and the service array systemic factor);
- Setting clear standards around permanency planning, including the process to establish goals, define each goal, and provide parameters around the use of each goal (permanency outcome 2 indicators of stability of out-of-home care placements, permanency goal for child, reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives, adoption, and other planned living arrangement; and permanency outcome 2 of relative placement);
- Clarifying the role of case workers in the court process to better inform permanency planning decision-making, and assure consistent practice with notification (the case review systemic factor);
- Improving the legal framework for concurrent planning and the quality of the permanency planning review process (permanency outcome 1 indicators of out-of-home care re-entry, permanency goal for child, and adoption; permanency outcome 2 indicator of preserving connections; and the case review systemic factor);
- Clarifying and providing a legal basis to fully implement the provisions of ASFA and improve goals established for children and youth so that timely permanence can be achieved (permanency outcome 1 indicators of out-of-home care re-entry, permanency goal for child, and adoption; and the case review system factor);
- Developing eWISACWIS reports to monitor permanence goals chosen for children, concurrent planning, and pursuit of TPR in a timely fashion (all indicators of permanency outcome 1);
- Increasing use of subsidized guardianship statewide to increase permanency (permanency outcome 1 indicators of out-of-home care re-entry, permanency goal for child, and reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives; and permanency outcome 2 indicator of relative placement);
- Increasing use of permanency outcomes through permanency roundtables and consultations (permanency outcome 1 indicators of out-of-home care re-entry, permanency goal for child, reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives, and adoption; permanency outcome 2 indica-

tors of placement with siblings, preserving connections, and relative placement);

- Continuing implementation of levels of care initiative to facilitate increased placements with relatives (permanency outcome 2 indicators of placement with siblings, preserving connections, relative placement, and relationship of child in care with parents);

- Implementing use of an assessment tool to show service needs of the child and strengths and needs of permanent resources and providing clearer picture of what it will take to support the child and the permanent resource long term to inform planning (permanency outcome 1 indicators of out-of-home care re-entry, stability of out-of-home care placements, and reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives; and permanency outcome 2 indicator of relative placement);

- Removing systemic barriers to placing together siblings with differing levels of needs that exist in the foster care licensing code (permanency outcome 2 indicator of placement with siblings); and

- Implementing additional training, technical assistance, and monitoring efforts to standardize foster care licensing (foster care licensing systemic factor).

Improving Family Engagement and Well-Being. This strategy is intended to increase family engagement and implement the child and adolescent needs and strengths (CANS) standardized assessment tool by:

- Improving family engagement in case planning (well-being outcome 1 indicator of child and family involvement in case planning);

- Increasing caseworker contacts with children and families (well-being outcome 1 indicators of worker visits with child and worker visits with parents); and

- Providing more clear assessments of placement needs of children and improving matching of children with placements that address those needs (permanency outcome 1 indicator of stability of out-of-home care placements; well-being outcome 1 indicator of needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents; well-being outcome 2 indicator of educational needs of child; well-being outcome 3 indicators of physical health of child and mental health of child; and service array systemic factor).

Improving Safety Timeliness and Response. This strategy is intended to improve the quality of assessments and planning to address child safety and to improve performance on the timeliness of the initial assessments by:

- Better supporting children to remain in their own homes (safety outcome 1 indicator of repeat maltreatment; and safety outcome 2 indicators of services to prevent removal and risk of harm);

- Training CPS supervisors to become certified or qualified safety experts (safety outcome 1 indicator of repeat maltreatment; and safety outcome 2 indicators of services to prevent removal and risk of harm); and

- Improving timeliness of initial assessments (safety outcome 1 indicator of timeliness of CPS investigations).

Building Service Capacity. This strategy is intended to expand intensive in-home services, target implementation of the nursing initiative in Milwaukee, establish a practice model, and address the need for bilingual and culturally-competent services by:

- Providing short-term, concentrated, in-home services to families (well-being outcome 3 indicators of physical health of child and mental health of child; and service array systemic factor);

- Better supporting families so that they may

remain safely together and prevent removal (safety outcome 1 indicator of repeat maltreatment; and safety outcome 2 indicators of services to prevent removal and risk of harm);

- Supporting continuity of health care and the identification and monitoring of health needs for children three years or younger in out-of-home care placements in Milwaukee (well-being outcome 3 indicator of physical health of child; and service array systemic factor);

- Creating a model to provide prevention and after-care services consistently statewide (service array systemic factor);

- Developing implementation plans to advance policies and programs to improve access to bilingual and culturally-competent services (service array systemic factor); and

- Creating a resource tool to improve accessibility to services for bilingual, immigrant, and refugee families (service array systemic factor).

Professional Development Enhancements. This strategy is intended to mandate foster parent

training, implement a learning management system, improve performance-based management capacity, and expand professional development offerings on executive leadership in child welfare by:

- Assuring all licensed foster parents receive mandated training (permanency outcome 1 indicator of stability of out-of-home care placements; and staff and provider training systemic factor);

- Improving access to training and training monitoring through implementation of learning management system (staff and provider training systemic factor);

- Implementing KidStat at the county level to monitor and improve time to reunification, re-entry into foster care, timely TPR, and exits to permanent homes for children in foster care three years or more (all indicators of permanency outcome 1; and staff and provider training systemic factor); and

- Expanding delivery modalities of and opportunities for professional development on child welfare leadership (staff and provider training systemic factor).