



wisconsin department of
children + families

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Madison, WI 53708-8916

Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Secretary's Office

January 28, 2011

Honorable Pam Galloway
State Senator
409 South, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Honorable Don Pridemore
State Representative
318 North, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Senator Galloway and Representative Pridemore:

In compliance with 2009 Wisconsin Act 78, the Child Welfare Public Disclosure Act, this is the Department of Children and Families' 2010 annual report on alleged sexual abuse of children residing in out-of-home care placement. The attached data report addresses reports of alleged sexual abuse for the period January 1 through December 31, 2010 and fulfills the Department of Children and Families' reporting requirements under Section 48.981 (9)(b), Wis. Stats. The following information summarizes some of the findings in the attached report:

Number of Incidents Reported: 132

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 132 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to children residing in out-of-home care placement during 2010.

Maltreatment Determinations

For reported incidents, 88 (67%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., determined that sexual abuse did not occur). Thirty one (23%) maltreatment determinations are pending because the investigation is not yet completed. Thirteen (10%) of the reported incidents were substantiated, which means these children were sexually abused after they were removed from their homes and placed into an out-of-home care placement. This does not mean that the child was maltreated in the placement or by a member of that household. Please see the following section on maltreater relationship.

Nature of Maltreater Relationship:

For substantiated incidents, the relationship of the maltreater to the child is most commonly a peer maltreater (3 or 23%) followed by a step parent (2 or 15%). One foster parent was substantiated for sexual of abuse of a child in his care.

Dates of the Incidents:

The incidents reported are estimated to have occurred between 2002 and 2010. Children disclose abuse when they feel ready, so it is common for abuse to be reported months or even years after the incident occurred. In cases of alleged abuse to younger children, dates of the alleged maltreatment may be

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difficult or impossible to determine due to the child's inability to effectively communicate about the incident(s).

Counties in which the substantiated incidents occurred: 8

Milwaukee County had the largest number (4) of incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to a child residing in out-of-home care placement, followed by Winnebago County (3). Jackson, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Outagamie, Vilas and Walworth Counties had 1 substantiated incident per county.

Ages or Age Group of children: 9-17 years

Alleged sexual abuse was reported and investigated for children ages 1 through 17 years, with sexual abuse being substantiated in 13 cases for ages 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17 years. The largest age group of children sexually abused was fifteen and sixteen-year-old youth (3 per age group), followed by ten year olds (2).

Types of Placement: 6

Cases of confirmed (substantiated) sexual abuse were disclosed by children residing in six different types of out-of-home placements, including non-relative treatment foster homes (6), non-relative foster homes (2), group homes (2), relative foster home (1), shelter care (1) and residential care center (1). Treatment foster homes are a typical placement for teenagers, which coincides with that being the most common setting where the substantiated abuse was reported.

As stated earlier, the alleged sexual abuse did not necessarily occur within the placement setting or by a maltreater in that setting, but rather that is the child's current or most recent type of placement.

If you have any questions about this summarized information or the attached report, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Eloise Anderson
Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Governor Walker