



wisconsin department of
children + families

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Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Secretary's Office

January 30, 2012

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' 2011 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, 2011 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: 148

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 148 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to 144 children residing in out-of-home care placement during 2011.

Maltreatment Determinations (144 Children)

For reported incidents, 100 (70%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., sexual abuse likely did not occur). Twenty (14%) maltreatment determinations are pending because the investigation is not yet completed. Twenty four (17%) of the reported incidents were substantiated, which means these children were sexually abused after they were removed from their homes and placed into 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 was most commonly the child's biological parent (5 or 21%) followed by another child in the foster home (4 or 17%) and a relative of the placed child (4 or 17%). In 2011, there were no foster parents substantiated for sexual abuse of a child in his or her care.

Dates of the Incidents:

The incidents reported are estimated to have occurred between 2005 and 2011. 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 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:

Milwaukee County had the largest number (8) of incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to a child residing in out-of-home care placement, followed by Brown County (5).

Ages or Age Group of children:

Alleged sexual abuse was reported and investigated for 144 children ages 0 through 17 years. Sexual abuse was substantiated 7 times for children age 6 years and younger, with the majority of substantiations (17) occurring for children age 10 years and older.

Types of Placement: 8

Cases of confirmed (substantiated) sexual abuse were disclosed by children residing in 8 different types of out-of-home placements, with the most common setting being non-relative foster homes (9), followed by non-relative treatment foster homes (5) and Kinship Care placements (4).

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

