



wisconsin department of
children + families

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Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Secretary's Office

April 26, 2012

The Honorable Mary Lazich
State Senator
8 South, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

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

Dear Senator Lazich and Representative Pridemore:

In compliance with 2009 Wisconsin Act 78, the Child Welfare Public Disclosure Act, this is the Department of Children and Families' 2012 first quarter 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 March 31, 2012 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: 38

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 38 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to 34 children residing in out-of-home care placement.

Maltreatment Determinations (38 Incidents)

For reported incidents, 9 (24%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., sexual abuse likely did not occur). Twenty-three (61%) maltreatment determinations are pending because the investigation is not yet completed. Six (15%) 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 a sibling or step sibling (3 or 50%). During the first quarter of 2012, 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 2001 and 2012. 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:

Sawyer County had the largest number (3) of incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to a child residing in out-of-home care placement. Douglas, Milwaukee and Outagamie Counties each substantiated 1 incident per county.

Ages or Age Group of children:

Alleged sexual abuse was reported and investigated for 34 children ages 2 through 17 years. Sexual abuse was substantiated for children of varying ages (i.e., 4, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 14 years).

Types of Placement: 2

Cases of confirmed (substantiated) sexual abuse were disclosed by children residing in 2 different types (i.e., non-relative foster homes (3) and non-relative treatment foster homes (3)) of out-of-home placements.

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