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Governor Tony Evers  
Secretary Emilie Amundson

Secretary's Office

January 31, 2019

Jeffrey Renk  
Senate Chief Clerk  
State Capitol, B20 SE  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707

Patrick E. Fuller  
Assembly Chief Clerk  
Risser Justice Center  
17 West Main Street, Suite 401  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Chief Clerk Renk and Chief Clerk Fuller:

In compliance with 2009 Wisconsin Act 78, the Child Welfare Public Disclosure Act, attached is the Department of Children and Families' 2018 annual report, which details alleged sexual abuse of children residing in out-of-home care. The attached data details reports of alleged sexual abuse for the period January 1 through December 31, 2018, and fulfills the Department of Children and Families' reporting requirements under Section 48.981(9)(b), Wis. Stats. The following information summarizes the key findings in the attached report:

*Number of Reported Incidents: 224*

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 224 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to 191 children residing in out-of-home care during 2018.

*Dates of the Incidents:*

The reported incidents are estimated to have occurred between August 2011 and December 2018. Children disclose abuse in different stages, therefore it is common for abuse to be reported months or even years after the incident occurred. In cases of alleged abuse involving non-verbal children, dates of alleged maltreatment are often difficult or impossible to determine.

*Maltreatment Determinations:*

For reported incidents, maltreatment determinations were made for 198 (88%) of the reported incidents. Of the incidents for which maltreatment determinations were made, 154 (77%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., preponderance of the evidence indicating that sexual abuse occurred was not found) while 39 (20%) of the reported incidents were substantiated. In addition, maltreatment determinations in five incidents (3%) could not be made because the agencies were not able to locate the family. Maltreatment determinations for the remaining 26 incidents (12%) are pending because the investigations are not complete.

*Nature of Maltreater Relationship:*

Of the 39 substantiated incidents, the relationship of the maltreater to the child was:

- A non-caregiver in 18 incidents
- Children in foster home in seven incidents
- Minors not named in four incidents
- A non-relative foster home provider or partner/friend in the home in two incidents
- A relative foster home or unlicensed relative in two incidents
- Unknown in two incidents
- A step parent or sibling/step sibling in two incidents
- A temporary caregiver in one incident
- A peer maltreater in one incident

Of the 39 substantiated incidents listed above, sex trafficking was identified as the type of sexual abuse in 22 incidents.

*Types of Placement:*

Of the 39 incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to children in out-of-home care, 12 occurred while the children were placed in a non-relative foster home or non-relative treatment foster home, 10 occurred while the children were placed in a group home, six occurred while the children were with unlicensed relatives or a relative foster home, four occurred while the children were placed in shelter care, three occurred while the children were placed in a kinship care court-ordered placement, two occurred while the children were placed in supervised independent living, one occurred while the child was placed in a residential care center, and one occurred while the child was placed with an unlicensed non-relative. The alleged sexual abuse did not necessarily occur within the placement setting or by a maltreater who resided in the setting.

*Location of Substantiated Incidents:*


Thirty-seven counties have investigated, or are investigating, incidents of sexual abuse to children residing in out-of-home care. Eleven counties substantiated an incident of sexual abuse. Twenty-one substantiated incidents of sexual abuse occurred in Milwaukee County, five substantiated incidents occurred in Marathon County, four substantiated incidents occurred in Kenosha County, two substantiated incidents occurred in Dane County, and one substantiated incident occurred in each of the following counties: Buffalo, Iowa, Kewaunee, Oneida, Saint Croix, Walworth, and Waukesha.

*Ages or Age Group of Children:*

Alleged sexual abuse was reported for children ages 0 to 17 years. Of the 39 substantiated incidents of sexual abuse, there were five substantiated incidents for children seven years and younger and 32 substantiated incidents for children eight years and older.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to provide the attached information, in compliance with the statute. Feel free to contact the Department with questions or clarification requests.

Sincerely,

  
Emilie Amundson  
Secretary

Senate Chief Clerk Jeffrey Renk  
Assembly Chief Clerk Patrick Fuller  
January 31, 2019  
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Attachment

cc: Governor Tony Evers