

Settlement Agreement Second Semi-Annual Report
January 2006 – December 2006

**Semi-Annual Outcomes
for the Period July 2006 – December 2006**



Division of Children and Family Services
Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW)
Prepared by the BMCW Program Evaluation Managers

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Please note this information is embargoed from public release or publication until 1:30 p.m. on March 19, 2007.

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Preface

BMCW Demographic and Descriptive Data

Families with children in out-of-home care

Date	December 31, 2003 (N)	December 31, 2004 (N)	December 31, 2005 (N)	December 31, 2006 (N)
Families receiving Ongoing Case Management program services (end of month)	2,081	1,948	1,899	1,777
Children in out-of-home care placements (end of month)	3,489	3,151	2,825	2,621

Number of children who achieved permanency by type January–December 2006

Permanency	Number of Children
Reunification	712
Adoption	317
Age of Majority reached	180
Transfer of Guardianship	169
Subsidized Guardianship	51

NOTE: There are 161 children currently enrolled in the Subsidized Guardianship program including 51 children who entered between January and December 2006.

Ages of children at time of removal

Age at removal	CY 2003	CY 2004	CY 2005	2006
Birth – 4 years old	44%	40%	41%	53.1%
5 – 11 years old	32%	32%	29%	25.8%
12 – 15 years old	17%	20%	20%	10.4%
16+ years old	7%	8%	10%	10.6%
Total children	1,123	1,308	1,179	1180

Families whose children entered out-of-home care

This table provides the number of families who entered ongoing case management services during each year, and further identifies how many of those families had three or more children.

Children in family	Number of families CY 2003	Number of families CY 2004	Number of families CY 2005	Number of families CY 2006
< 3 children per family	411	435	422	420
3	55	76	80	63
4	21	32	37	36
5	8	16	19	15
6	9	15	4	3
7	2	4	1	4
8	0	1	2	5
9	2	5	1	1
11				1
Total families that entered Ongoing Services	508	584	566	548
Families with three or more children that entered ongoing services	97	149	144	128

Remaining enforceable provisions for this reporting period

§I.B.2 At least the following percentages of children in BMCW custody reaching 15 of the last 22 months in out-of-home care during the period shall have had a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petition filed on their behalf, or an available Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) exception documented in their case, by the end of their fifteenth month in care (Performance Standard: $\geq 90\%$).

§I.B.6 Of all reunifications with parents/caregivers, at least the following percentages of children shall be reunified within 12 months of entry into care (Performance Standard: $\geq 71\%$).

§I.B.7 At least the following percentage of children for whom an adoption is finalized within the period shall exit BMCW out-of-home care within 24 months of entry into care (Performance Standard: $\geq 30\%$).

§I.C.1. No more than the following percentages of children in BMCW custody shall be the victims of substantiated abuse or neglect allegations within the period by a foster parent or staff of a facility required to be licensed (Performance Standard: $\geq 0.60\%$).

§I.D.5 The use of shelter placements shall be phased out entirely.

§I.D.6 By December 31, 2003, and thereafter, no child shall be placed in a shelter.

§I.D.7 Diagnostic/Assessment Centers. This provision states "By December 31, 2003, BMCW shall develop special diagnostic/assessment centers for children over

12 years of age who need further assessment in order to determine the appropriate placement. Placement in such centers shall not exceed 30 days, or 60 days if the placement is extended in accordance with applicable state law.”

§I.D.9 At least the following percentages of children in BMCW custody within the period shall have had three or fewer placements after January 1, 1999, during their current episode in BMCW custody. The number of placements will exclude time-limited respite care placements and returns to the same caretaker after an intervening placement during the same out-of-care episode. Those children in BMCW custody through the Wraparound Milwaukee program shall be excluded from this calculation (Performance Standard: $\geq 90\%$).

Redesign of Out of Home Care and Adoptions

Early in 2006, BMCW evaluated the current system for adoption and out-of-home care services. To better serve children in out-of-home care, BMCW re-designed the service delivery system for adoption and out-of-home care to ensure timely and appropriate permanency for children. Input and feedback from community partners, child welfare advocates, concerned community members, and experienced BMCW staff was included in the re-design.

The system re-design combines the efforts to:

- Recruit foster and adoptive parents;
- License, re-license and support foster and adoptive parents using combined licensing assessment that will identify barriers to adoption early in the placement process;
- Provide enhanced permanency consultation to children and families; and
- Provide foster and adoptive parent training within the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership for Professional Development.

The new design emphasizes overall permanency options for children. It promotes a shared philosophy and approach regarding foster and adoptive families. This approach will help expedite permanency and improve consistency of placement for children. The new design is more functional, promotes greater efficiency in service provision and, we believe, will allow greater flexibility and improve performance.

The redesign resulted in four contracts to perform the following functions:

- 1) Recruitment of foster and adoptive families;
- 2) Foster care and adoption licensing and re-licensing, adoption case management, quality assurance, selection, matching, and placement authorization;
- 3) Permanency consultation to explore all permanency options, engage birth parents in permanency planning, and expedite permanency for children. Using permanency consultants in this way is consistent with how this function is performed statewide;

Through the procurement process, Children's Service Society of Wisconsin (CSSW) was awarded the above three contracts in CY 2007.

4) Training of foster and adoptive parents has been contracted to the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership for Professional Development within the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, which is consistent with the partnership of universities and child welfare training in other parts of the state.

Addressing Permanency

Under the enhanced Permanency Consultation program, beginning in CY 2007 the BMCW will fund up to nine permanency consultation positions. These positions will provide support services to the three ongoing case management regions. Each region has approximately 60 case managers serving about 16 to 20 children on average as part of their caseload. The children will need varying degrees of permanency consultation services depending on the circumstances and complexity of the child's need for permanency. The permanency consultants must keep abreast of all children assigned to them for consultation and prioritize the degree of involvement needed at various stages of the child's permanency goal.

The following outlines the principles and role of the permanency consultant:

- Permanency planning begins at the time of first contact with a family;
- Permanency should remain a priority concern throughout BMCW involvement;
- A child's cultural heritage and spiritual beliefs are valued and considered in all permanency planning decisions;
- The private partner agency will promote a collaborative, community involved, multi-disciplinary approach to our practice;
- The private partner agency is responsible for assuring adherence to relevant federal laws and regulations; state statutes, including chapter 48; administrative rules and standards; and state and agency policies.
- Pursuit of permanence must be timely and adhere to all applicable federal and the Wisconsin Children's Code (Chapter 48);
- Concurrent planning is practiced;
- Family members should be involved in all phases of permanency planning and decision making to the extent possible;
- Older youth should be directly involved, to the extent possible in every stage of creating his or her permanency goal and plan; and
- The scope of permanency planning encompasses the long-term view of caring for the child, beyond the child's exit from the child welfare system.

Through the procurement process Children's Service Society of Wisconsin (CSSW) was awarded the contracts for the out of home care and adoption services, as well as the recruitment and permanency consultation contracts. Effective March 12, 2007, CSSW assumed responsibility for the functions previously provided by Lutheran Social Services – First Choice for Children (FCFC).

BMCW Performance January through December 2006 on Remaining Enforceable Items – At a Glance

§ I.B.2 At least the following percentages of children in BMCW custody reaching 15 of the last 22 months in out-of-home care during the period shall have had a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petition filed on their behalf, or an available Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) exception documented in their case, by the end of their fifteenth month in care									
CURRENT PERFORMANCE CY 2006 – The BMCW did not meet this requirement (first or second six months periods)				Past Performance					
Performance Standard	Jan–Jun Result	Jul–Dec Result	Annual Result	Period 1 Standard	Period 1 Result	Period 1 Result (CY 2003)	Period 2 Standard	Period 2 Result (CY 2004)	Period 3 Standard
>= 90%	77%	80%	79%	>= 65%	78%	76.8%	>= 75%	88.2%	>= 90%

* The method for calculating the Period 3 performance standard (going forward) for this measure was adjusted to meet the recommendations by the Legislative Audit Bureau in the Feb. 2006 audit report

§I.B.6 Of all reunifications with parents/caregivers, at least the following percentages of children shall be reunified within 12 months of entry into care.									
CY 2006 - The BMCW met this requirement (second six months period and annual)				Past Performance					
Performance Standard	Jan–Jun Result	Jul–Dec Result	Annual Result	Period 1 Standard	Period 1 Result (CY 2003)	Period 2 Standard	Period 2 Result (CY 2004)	Period 3 Standard	Period 3 Result (CY 2005)
>= 71%	70%	72%	71%	Monitor Only	45.0%	>= 65%	63.0%	>= 71%	72%

§I.B.7 At least the following percentage of children for whom an adoption is finalized within the period shall exit BMCW out-of-home care within 24 months of entry into care.

CY 2006 - The BMCW met this requirement (second six months period and annual)				Past Performance					
Performance Standard	Jan–Jun Result	Jul–Dec Result	Annual Result	Period 1 Standard	Period 1 Result (CY 2003)	Period 2 Standard	Period 2 Result (CY 2004)	Period 3 Standard	Period 3 Result (CY 2005)
>= 30%	28.5%	36.4%	32.5%	>= 20%	14.2%	>= 25%	15.5%	>= 30%	21.7%

§I.C.1. No more than the following percentages of children in BMCW custody shall be the victims of substantiated abuse or neglect allegations within the period by a foster parent or staff of a facility required to be licensed.

CY 2006 - The BMCW met this requirement (both six months periods and annual)				Past Performance					
Performance Standard	Jan–Jun Result	Jan–Dec Result	Annual Result	Period 1 Standard	Period 1 Result (CY 2003)	Period 2 Standard	Period 2 Result (CY 2004)	Period 3 Standard	Period 3 Result (CY 2005)
<= 0.60%	0.029%	0.15%	0.15%	<= 0.70%	0.57%	<= 0.65%	0.79%	<= 0.60%	0.81%

(Table continued on next page.)

§I.D.5 The use of shelter placements shall be phased out entirely. The BMCW phased out all shelter placements by December 31, 2003.

§I.D.6 By December 31, 2003, and thereafter, no child shall be placed in a shelter. The BMCW no longer uses shelters as a placement for children.

§I.D.7 Diagnostic/Assessment Centers. This provision states, "By December 31, 2003, BMCW shall develop special diagnostic/assessment centers for children over 12 years of age who need further assessment in order to determine the appropriate placement. Placement in such centers shall not exceed 30 days, or 60 days if the placement is extended in accordance with applicable state law."

§I.D.9 At least the following percentages of children in BMCW custody within the period shall have had three or fewer placements after January 1, 1999, during their current episode in BMCW custody. The number of placements will exclude time-limited respite care placements and returns to the same caretaker after an intervening placement during the same out-of-care episode. Those children in BMCW custody through the Wraparound Milwaukee program shall be excluded from this calculation.

CY 2006 - The BMCW did not meet this requirement (first or second six months periods)				Past Performance					
Performance Standard	Jan–Jun Result	Jul–Dec Result	Annual Result	Period 1 Standard	Period 1 Result (CY 2003)	Period 2 Standard	Period 2 Result	Period 3 Standard	Period 3 Result (CY 2005)
>= 90%	73%	73%	73%	>= 80%	75.9%	>= 82%	72.1%	>= 90%	72%

Introduction

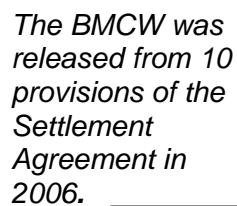
In accordance with the Settlement Agreement for the federal lawsuit against the State of Wisconsin, this is the second semi-annual report for 2006, including annual outcomes of the BMCW's performance from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, **to report on the remaining enforceable provisions.**

The Settlement Agreement requires the BMCW to attain specific outcomes regarding the permanency, safety, and well-being of children in out-of-home care in Milwaukee County.

As of December 31, 2005, the BMCW reached the conclusion of the third year of the Settlement Agreement between Children's Rights, Inc., on behalf of the plaintiffs, and the other State defendants.

Plaintiffs and defendants agreed that the Article I provisions, as listed below, are no longer subject to enforcement because defendants were in compliance with the provisions at the conclusion of Period 3 and for the most recent two consecutive six-month intervals, as evidenced by the semi-annual reports prepared by the program evaluation managers. These provisions are:

The BMCW was released from 10 provisions of the Settlement Agreement in 2006.



§I.B.1. Negotiation with Milwaukee District Attorney to ensure adequate legal representation for the prosecution of termination of parental rights (TPRs) petitions, consistent with ASFA requirements

§I.B.3. Belated compliance with Adoption and Safe Families Act requirements

§I.B.4 Length-of-stay in care

§I.C.2. Timeliness of processing referrals to independent investigator

§I.C.3. Timeliness of making case assignments and completing investigations

§I.C.4. Timeliness in making determination of independent investigations

§I.D.1- 2 BMCW shall ensure that Ongoing Case Managers have caseloads not to exceed an average of 11 families per case-carrying manager per Site.

§I.D.3 Contract hold-back for monthly face-to-face contacts.

§I.D.4. Monthly face-to-face contacts

§I.D.8 The Division of Children and Family Services shall make its best efforts to seek legislative approval of foster parent reimbursement rates consistent with USAD standards

Remaining Enforceable Provisions

This is the second semi-annual report for 2006, which includes annual outcomes of the BMCW's performance from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006 on the remaining enforceable provisions where full compliance and release was not previously achieved.

The BMCW was successful in meeting the following performance standards for both six-month periods in 2006:

§I.C.1 Substantiated maltreatment of children in out-of-home care: The BMCW achieved an annual performance rate of 0.15% compared to the standard that no more than 0.60% of children in BMCW custody shall be the victims of substantiated abuse or neglect allegations by a foster parent or staff of a facility required to be licensed.

§I.D.5 The use of shelter placements shall be phased out entirely. The BMCW phased out all shelter placements by December 31, 2003

§I.D.6 By December 31, 2003, and thereafter, no child shall be placed in a shelter. The BMCW no longer uses shelters as a placement for children

The BMCW was successful in meeting the following performance standards for the second six-month period.

§I.B.6 Reunification within 12 months of entry into out-of-home care: During the second six months of CY 2006, 72% of all children reunified were reunified within 12 months of entry into out-of-home care. The BMCW achieved an annual performance rate of 71% compared to the standard of 71%.

§I.B.7 Adoption within 24 months of entering out-of-home care: During the second six months of CY 2006, 36% of all children with a finalized adoption were adopted within 24 months of entering care. The BMCW achieved an annual performance rate of 32.5% compared to the standard of 30% of children for whom an adoption is finalized within the period shall exit BMCW care within 24 months of entry into care.

The BMCW was not successful in meeting the following performance standards for the second six-month period.

§I.B.2 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) timeliness requirement, timely filing of TPRs: During the second six months of CY 2006, the BMCW achieved a performance level of 80% compared to the standard that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care for 15 of 22 months must have a termination of parental rights (TPR) petition filed on their behalf, or an ASFA exception documented in their case by the end of the 15th month in care. The annual performance for this measure was 79%.

§I.D.9 Placement stability: During the second six months of CY 2006, 73% of the children in an out-of-home care placement were in three or fewer placements, compared to the standard that at least 90% of children in out-of-home care within the

period shall have three or fewer placements. The annual performance percentage rate for this measure was 73%.

The Plaintiffs and the Department are not in agreement as to what the performance standard should be for the following measure. However, there is continued discussion surrounding this measure. Future reports will provide the information of performance standards based on the results of negotiations.

§I.D.7 Diagnostic/Assessment Centers. This provision states “By December 31, 2003, BMCW shall develop special diagnostic/assessment centers for children over 12 years of age who need further assessment in order to determine the appropriate placement. Placement in such centers shall not exceed 30 days, or 60 days if the placement is extended in accordance with applicable state law.”

By December 31, 2003, the BMCW developed special Diagnostic/Assessment Centers for children over 12 years of age who need further assessment in order to determine the appropriate placement.

The BMCW met the 30-day limit (and two additional approved 15-day extension requests) for 87% (194) of the 223 pre-dispositional children, and exceeded the 30-day limit (and two additional approved 15-day extension requests) for 13% (29) of the children.

Data Source

The performance data represent the results on the remaining enforceable provisions and the efforts of the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006. The data is presented in four categories:

- Performance standards met or exceeded
- Performance standards previously met
- Performance standards met during the second six-month period
- Performance standards not met

Most of the data presented in this report has been generated from the electronic Wisconsin Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (eWiSACWIS). To consistently and systematically assess the Agreement outcomes, the data elements that could be generated using the eWiSACWIS system and identify required system enhancements were identified. This included changes designed to measure many of the Agreement elements. Work continues on managing artifact data and data validation issues within the data system. The quality of the data is dependent upon complete and accurate data entry by staff, system conversions, and system builds/updates. When identified, improvements to the data system are made as soon as possible to improve the accuracy and consistency of reporting.

Performance Standards Met or Exceeded in CY 2006

Maltreatment while in out-of-home care

I.C.1. No more than the following percentages of children in BMCW custody shall be the victims of substantiated abuse or neglect allegations within the period by a foster parent or staff of a facility required to be licensed.

Period goal: 0.60% (at or below)

Actual Performance January – December 2006: 0.15%

Maltreatment while in out-of-home care

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Jan to Jun 2006	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan - Dec 2006
Completed investigations – determinations (N)	24	28	25	23	17	29	146	14	28	21	17	24	14	264
Children maltreated by foster parent or agency staff (Substantiated allegations) (N)	0	0	1	0	0	0	*1	0	2	0	3	0	0	6
Children entering care (N)	71	83	126	112	77	75	544	123	102	107	102	108	94	1,180
Cumulative children in OHC (2,871 as of 1-1-'06)	2,942	3,025	3,151	3,263	3,340	3,415		3,538	3,640	3,747	3,849	3,957	4,051	
BMCW YTD performance							0.029%							0.15%

* NOTE: The data provided for the first six months of 2006 was adjusted to reflect the removal of four children from the first six-month total. The substantiation of the maltreatment by two providers was reversed by an administrative review. If the four children remained in the total for CY 2006, the performance percentage would be 0.25%.

Semi-annual and annual performance CY 2003 to CY 2006

	Period Goal (at or below)	End of Period
BMCW Period 1 (2003)	0.70%	0.57%
BMCW Period 2 (2004)	0.65%	0.79%
BMCW Period 3 (2005)	0.60%	0.81%
BMCW CY 2006	0.60%	0.15%

The measure was calculated by identifying the number of children in an out-of-home care placement on January 1, 2006, (2,871) and adding all children entering out-of-home care during 2006 (1,180). This total (4,051) represents all children in out-of-home care during the year. To calculate the performance standard, divide the number

of children with a substantiated allegation of maltreatment (6) by the total of all children who were in an out-of-home care placement during the year (4,051).

The BMCW and its private partner agencies **met the performance standard** (0.60% or below) for this measure in CY 2006.

Discussion

During CY 2006, six children were the victims of a substantiated allegation of maltreatment while in an out-of-home care placement, compared to 35 during CY 2005. All six children were removed from the placement where the substantiated allegation occurred.

Substantiated maltreatment type by maltreater in 2006:

Foster home – two children with a substantiated allegation of Neglect/General Lack of Care. The foster home is currently on “hold;” no children are being placed in the home, and we are in the process of revoking the license.

Treatment Foster Homes – two children were the victim of a substantiated allegation of Physical Abuse. Both of the treatment foster homes have had their license revoked.

Group Homes – one child was a victim of a substantiated allegation of Neglect/General Lack of Care.

Residential Care Center - one child was the victim of a substantiated allegation involving a lack of supervision.

The number of substantiated allegations for “physical abuse” continued to decline between CY 2003 and CY 2006:

- CY 2003 - 17 children
- CY 2004 - 15 children
- CY 2005 - 8 children
- CY 2006 - 2 children

As the number of substantiated allegations for “physical abuse” continued to decline, the number of substantiated allegations for “neglect – general lack of care” remained the most significant. Although it did not increase in CY 2006 by percentage, it remained the highest category of maltreatment.

The number of children under age 5 who were the victims of a substantiated allegation also continued to decline. In CY 2006, there were *no substantiated* allegations regarding children under the age of 5. In CY 2005 two children were under the age of 5; and in CY 2004, 10 children were under the age of 5.

Maltreatment by type in Periods 1, 2, 3 and in CY 2006

Type of substantiated maltreatment	Period 1 (N)	Period 1 %	Period 2 (N)	Period 2 %	Period 3 (N)	Period 3 %	Jan. – Dec '06 (N)	Jan. – Dec '06 %
Neglect - general lack of care	9	29%	10	24.4%	26	65.0%	3	50%
Physical abuse	17	53%	15	36.5%	8	20.0%	2	33%
Lack of supervision	0	NA	12	29.3%	4	10.0%	1	17%
Other medical neglect	0	NA	2	5%	1	2.5%	0	NA
Emotional maltreatment	0	NA	1	2.4%	0	NA	0	NA
Sexual abuse	6	18%	1	2.4%	1	2.5%	0	NA
Totals	32	100%	41	100%	40	100%	6	100%

During CY 2006, the following are descriptions of which actions fell under substantiated determinations of maltreatment:

Neglect – General Lack of Care (3 children)

- Staff at a facility (group home) failed to provide a safe environment for the child. The child was prevented from leaving the facility by peers, and staff remained in the office without intervening in the ensuing altercation. The child was removed from the group home placement.
- Foster parent failed to provide the child with services including speech and language therapy. The child is 5 years of age and lacks the ability to speak. A second child in this same home (7 yrs. old) missed 72 days of school last year and 42 days the year before while in the foster home placement. Both children were removed from the foster home.

Physical Abuse (2 children)

- The foster parent punished the child by pinching and grabbing the child for “being bad.” The child had several small bruises on each inner bicep. The medical professional consulted ruled out any type of blood disorder that could have caused the bruising. The child was removed from the placement.
- The foster parent became upset and put his/her hands to the child’s neck. A medical professional indicated that the child presented with marks/injuries that were consistent with the injury described. The child was removed from the placement.

Lack of Supervision (1 child)

- A staff person at a residential care center failed to provide an appropriate level of supervision for a child in care.

Maltreatment types by gender and age (at the time of the incident):

- Birth to 4 years old: There were no children with a substantiated allegation within this age group.
- 5 to 11 years old: Three children were in this age group, all males. One child was the victim of physical abuse; the other two children were victims of general neglect.
- 12 to 15 years old: Two children were in this age group, both males. One was the victim of physical abuse, while the other child was a victim of lack of supervision.
- 16 and above: One female child was in this age group. This child was the victim of general neglect.

Strategies to address maltreatment of children in out-of-home care

The BMCW and its partner agencies consider the safety and well-being of children to be its primary responsibility. Efforts to reduce the number of children who experience maltreatment while in out-of-home care are continuous. In 2005 and 2006, several new or expanded strategies were implemented, including:

- **Mobile Urgent Treatment Team for Foster Families (MUTT-FF).**

In October 2005, (the program began in December 2005) DHFS worked with the Milwaukee County Human Services Behavioral Health Division and expanded its crisis intervention services for foster families provided by their Mobile Urgent Treatment Team (MUTT). There is now a mobile crisis team dedicated to providing immediate mental health services 24 hours-a-day to foster children and their families. In addition, the team develops a 21-day response plan, which includes any follow-up visits to the foster home to evaluate how the child and foster family are doing and identify other mental health service needs. The team also prepares a long-term crisis plan for children who are at risk for a recurring mental health, emotional, or behavioral crisis. The use of the service from January to December 2006 was as follows:

- 129 children were enrolled in MUTT-FF program;
- 102 completed services in 2006. Of the 102 children who completed services:
 - 52 were successfully managed in their existing foster home.
 - 48 transitioned to an appropriate level of care, such as relative placement, pre-adoptive home, residential treatment center, group home, treatment foster care, or reunification.
 - 2 children were placed in a new foster home.
- 27 children remained in the program as of December 31, 2006.

- 60 children were provided with one-on-one crisis stabilization services in addition to crisis intervention.

Implementation of Stabilization Meetings: Within the first week of a new placement, ongoing case managers and licensing specialists conducted a joint home visit (initial stabilization meeting) with the foster family to identify potential behaviors or issues that may stress the family's capacity to nurture the child and maintain the placement. Together, with the foster family, a plan was developed to enable a smooth transition of the child to his or her new home. From January to December 2006, approximately 415 initial stabilization meetings were held.

In addition, First Choice for Children implemented quarterly stabilization meetings focusing on the strength and stability of the placement and assessed any services or supports that may have been necessary. These meetings were held in the foster family's home with Ongoing Case Management, licensing, and adoption staff (if assigned). First Choice for Children incorporated these meetings into practice and conducted approximately 1,595 meetings during 2006.

- **Improved Support Plans:** By the end of Period 3, First Choice for Children implemented actions to strengthen and better customize support plans. The initiative included a range of staff training opportunities, including a two-day in-service aimed at strengthening family assessment skills and supervisory reinforcement of the skills necessary to provide meaningful support to foster families. Beginning in July 2006, First Choice for Children began auditing case files to ensure support plans are completed and individualized for the family. From July to December 2006, the average compliance rate based on case file audits was 93%.
- **Focus on Disciplinary Practice:** First Choice for Children used a standard home visit checklist to guide monitoring activities at each home visit. Included on the checklist was a discussion of discipline. The *Acknowledgement and Understanding of Corporal Punishment* policy had become a stand-alone document separate from the general *Foster Parent Agreement* to better emphasize this policy. First Choice for Children also required the licensing specialist to observe the foster parent/child interaction at least once a quarter, which could help improve parenting skills and disciplinary practices used in response to behavioral challenges.
- **Expanded Training Options:** First Choice for Children has continued to expand the breadth of training available to both staff and foster parents. Extensive additions to the foster parent training included:
 - Managing hard-to-manage teenagers
 - Dealing with sexually active youth
 - Substance abuse and foster youth
 - Children who steal
 - Behavior management
 - Fostering lesbian, gay, transsexual, or gender questioning youth

- Lying child that cries wolf
- Teen depression
- Love & Logic – positive parenting
- Addicted Parents
- Stress Solutions
- Building Self-Esteem in Children
- Cross-Cultural Parenting
- Preserving Family Connections

In addition, First Choice for Children opened a second training location for foster families at Ascension Church on the south side of Milwaukee.

First Choice for Children continually reassessed training needs through feedback from staff and foster parents, then scheduled training appropriate to meet those identified needs. It has refined guidelines for foster parents to receive outside training credit to ensure the training attended is appropriate to the specific needs of the foster family.

Unlicensed kinship providers were surveyed and given information about available training and the opportunity to attend without cost.

Training of foster and adoptive parents has been contracted to the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership for Professional Development within the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, which is consistent with the partnership of universities and child welfare training in other parts of the state.

- **Post-Substantiation Debriefing:** All substantiated allegations were staffed by two First Choice for Children managers to identify learning opportunities (i.e. early warning signs missed). Staff from the Ongoing Case Management and Adoption programs also participated in these debriefings to enhance cross-program collaboration in identifying the warning signs of maltreatment and how the programs can work together to prevent the maltreatment from occurring.

First Choice for Children expanded their debriefings to include allegations that were unsubstantiated but where the independent investigator identified concerns about the foster home. When these findings occurred, the licensing specialist and ongoing case manager (and adoption worker if assigned) conducted a stabilization meeting in the foster home within 21 days of the finding. During this meeting, the concerns from the investigation were discussed and a plan to mitigate these concerns was developed and implemented.

- **More Frequent Background Checks:** In early 2006, First Choice for Children revised their background check policy to include more frequent and diligent checks on caregivers, household members, and those adults who frequent the home. Background checks were conducted annually instead of bi-annually and included a request for information from all states and countries a person has lived in since the age of 18. First Choice for Children also obtained judicial permission to access juvenile court records to ensure any juveniles living in the home did not have criminal records that would pose a safety threat for other children in the

home. These enhancements exceeded the standards required for foster home licensing that are contained in the Wisconsin Administrative Code Ch. HFS 56.

- **Caring Connections Support Groups:** In late October 2006, First Choice for Children implemented a foster parent support group pilot entitled “Caring Connections.” The topics of these groups were based on feedback from foster parents and included managing difficult behavior in children and managing the stress of being a foster parent. The groups were facilitated by a master’s level therapist to provide guidance, education, and support to the group. A First Choice for Children staff person was also present to address any questions related to licensing or BMCW practices. Over a two-month period, 15 support groups were held and a total of 105 foster parents attended these groups. Generally, the foster parents gave positive feedback about these groups and provided suggestions for additional topics.

Performance standards previously met

BMCW met the following standards, but has not yet been released from reporting and enforcement under the Settlement Agreement:

§I.D.5 The use of shelter placements shall be phased out entirely.

The BMCW phased out all shelter placements by December 31, 2003

§I.D.6 By December 31, 2003, and thereafter, no child shall be placed in a shelter.

The BMCW no longer uses shelters as a placement for children

Performance Standards Met or Exceeded For the Second Six Months of CY 2006

Reunification within 12 months of placement in out-of-home care

I.B.6. Of all reunifications with parents/caregivers, at least the following percentages of children shall be reunified within 12 months of entry into care.

Period goal: 71% (or above)

Actual Performance January 1– December 31, 2006: 71%

Reunification within 12 months of placement in out-of-home care

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec	Annual
CFCP													
Region 1 Reunifications (N)	17	8	22	30	14	7	30	14	18	10	15	12	197
Reunified in 12 or fewer months	10	7	17	17	9	5	25	10	13	9	10	9	141
Percentage reunified in 12 or fewer months	59%	88%	77%	57%	64%	71%	83%	71%	72%	90%	67%	75%	72%
CFCP													
Region 2 Reunifications (N)	16	28	29	24	17	32	17	16	20	23	15	23	260
Reunified in 12 or fewer months	13	19	22	13	11	26	13	9	15	19	13	16	189
Percentage reunified in 12 or fewer months	81%	68%	76%	54%	65%	81%	77%	56%	75%	83%	87%	70%	73%
La Causa													
Region 3 Reunifications (N)	25	16	28	25	25	24	20	22	19	16	12	23	255
Reunified in 12 or fewer months	19	11	20	20	15	18	11	14	14	10	8	15	175
Percentage reunified in 12 or fewer months	76%	69%	71%	80%	60%	75%	55%	64%	74%	63%	67%	65%	69%
BMCW													
BMCW Reunifications (N)	58	52	79	79	56	63	67	52	57	49	42	58	712
Reunified in 12 or fewer months	42	37	59	50	35	49	49	33	42	38	31	40	505
Percentage reunified in 12 or fewer months	72%	71%	75%	63%	63%	78%	73%	64%	74%	78%	74%	69%	71%

Semi-annual and annual performance CY 2003 to CY2006

	January - June	July - December	YTD
BMCW Period 1 (2003)	44%	47%	45%
BMCW Period 2 (2004)	59%	68%	63%
BMCW Period 3 (2005)	69%	75%	72%
BMCW CY 2006	70%	72%	71%

NOTE: During Period 1, there was no established performance standard. Period 2 was the first year where there was an enforceable performance standard (65%).

The BMCW and its private partner agencies met the performance standard (71%) for this measure in the second six months of 2006.

The BMCW and its private partner agencies met the annual performance standard of 71%.

Discussion

The following information focuses on the children who have exited out-of-home care and achieved permanency through reunification between CY 2003 and CY 2006.

Permanency through reunification

	Period 1 January - December	Period 2 January - December	Period 3 January - December	CY 2006 January - December
Percentage of children reunified in 12 or fewer months	45%	63%	72%	71%
Percentage of children reunified in 24 or fewer months	61%	77%	83%	88%
Percentage of children reunified in 24 or more months	39%	23%	17%	12%
Children with three or fewer placements at time of reunification	72%	83%	89%	85%
Children with four or more placements at time of reunification	28%	17%	11%	15%
Reunified in 12 or fewer months, age when entered out-of-home care:				
0 to 4 years old	40%	44%	44%	41%
5 to 11 years old	33%	33%	30%	29%
12 to 15 years old	21%	16%	20%	21%
16 plus years old	6%	7%	6%	9%
Reunified in 12 or more months, age when entered out-of-home Care:				
0 to 4 years old	40%	43%	16%	39%
5 to 11 years old	48%	48%	37%	43%
12 to 15 years old	12%	8%	27%	15%
16 plus years old	0%	1%	20%	3%
	(2 children)			

The table above shows the distribution of all children reunified between CY 2003 and CY 2006:

- The data show the continued progress for children achieving permanence through reunification within 12 or fewer months of entering out-of-home care.
- 85% (429) of the children reunified in 12 or fewer months of entry into out-of-home care had three or fewer placements at the time of their reunification. Although this is lower than the 89% in CY 2005, the data continue to suggest that a large percentage of the reunified children who do not experience multiple placement disruptions tend to be reunified within 12 or fewer months.
- Approximately 70% of the children were 11 years or younger when entering out-of-home care and were reunified in 12 or fewer months of entering out-of-home care. During the past four years, this age group has consistently included the largest percentage of children reunified within 12 months of entering care. For comparative purposes, in December 2006, 57% of the children in an out-of-home care placement were 11 years of age or younger.
- Regarding children reunified with siblings, during CY 2006, the table below shows the number of children who were members of sibling groups with two or more children reunified. Sibling groups with two to three children show a slight increase in reunification compared to 2005. Conversely, there was a slight drop of sibling groups with four and five children. However, during CY 2006 there were siblings groups of seven, eight, and nine children reunified. There were no sibling groups reunified during CY 2005 that were this large.

Reunification of children and sibling groups

Number in sibling Group reunified	Number of sibling groups for each size - CY 2005	Number of sibling groups for each size - CY 2006	Percentage of all reunifications - CY 2006
2	94	100	28%
3	40	42	18%
4	21	15	8%
5	5	3	2%
6	3	2	2%
7	0	1	Less than 1%
8	0	1	Less than 1%
9	0	1	Less than 1%

NOTE: The data in the above table do not infer that the siblings were reunified at the same time; rather, it indicates, for example, that during the past 12 months, 100 sibling groups with two children were reunified. The children may have been reunified with their family at different times during the 12-month period.

Strategies to address timely reunification

- Coordinated Service Team Meetings:** Permanency planning is a continuous process that involves many different people and systems. Coordinated Service Team meetings (CSTs) are conducted to support families to achieve and maintain safety, well-being, and permanency for their children through a process of communication and collaboration that includes all BMCW partners, service providers, family members, and community and natural supports. Coordinated Service Team (CST) meetings help develop case plans, case evaluations and assess progress on a case plan. The BMCW policy is to facilitate CST meetings on all Ongoing Case Management cases on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.

The following table provides the number of CSTs conducted during CY 2006.

Coordinated Service Team meetings conducted by month in CY 2006

Jan.	455
Feb.	364
Mar.	402
Apr.	416
May	386
June	342
July	406
Aug.	385
Sept.	361
Oct.	367
Nov.	360
Dec.	334
Total	4,578

- Permanency Staffings**—Beginning in August 2006, the BMCW convened permanency staffings as a part of the case planning process. The purpose of the staffing is to expedite permanency by examining all permanency options, including adoption, and moving forward with a realistic plan to achieve the goal best suited to the needs of the child. Between August and December of CY 2006, 1,196 permanency staffings were held.

The table below provides a breakout of the children’s time in care at the time of the staffing.

Permanency staffings convened August - December 2006

Child	9 months	13 months	15+ months	Total staffed
Total	176	310	710	1,196

Permanency consultants assist in case planning by giving a focus to the variety of permanency options that need to be considered as a child's case moves forward. This includes concurrent planning—considering the option of locating an adoptive home at the same time the parent works toward meeting the court orders for reunification. The Permanency Consultant program will be enhanced in 2007 to provide more staff and to ensure parents are knowledgeable of the options for permanency and related federal timelines.

Adoption within 24 months of removal

I.B.7. At least the following percentage of children for whom an adoption is finalized within the period shall exit BMCW out-of-home care within 24 months of entry into care.

Period Goal: 30% (or above)

Actual Performance January – December, 2006: 32.5%

Adoptions in CY 2006

Time to Adoption	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	CY 2006
24 months or less	3	4	4	1	13	18	9	10	6	15	11	9	103
Monthly percentage	15.8%	13.8%	28.6%	5.0%	38.2%	50.0%	31.0%	30.3%	28.6%	53.6%	34.4%	40.9%	32.5%
25 months or more	16	25	10	19	21	18	20	23	15	13	21	13	214
Monthly percentage	84.2%	86.2%	71.4%	95.0%	61.8%	50.0%	69.0%	69.7%	71.4%	46.4%	65.6%	59.1%	67.5%
Total number of finalized adoptions	19	29	14	20	34	36	29	33	21	28	32	22	317

NOTE: After completing the CY 2006 reconciliation for finalized adoptions, 13 additional (not previously reported) adoptions were added to the BMCW's total for the first six months of CY 2006. The first semi-annual six-month report for CY 2006 indicated there were 139 finalized adoptions, of which 40 were completed within 24 months of the child entering care. The initial performance percentage reported for the first six months was 28.8%. The addition of the adoptions increased the first six-month total to 152 adoptions, of which 43 were completed within 24 months of the child entering care. The adjusted performance calculation for the first six months of CY 2006 changes to 28.3%.

Adoption within 24 months

Semi-annual and annual performance CY 2003 to CY 2006

	January - June	July – December	CY 2006
BMCW Period 1 (2003)	8.9%	18.8%	14.2%
BMCW Period 2 (2004)	13.8%	17.8%	15.5%
BMCW Period 3 (2005)	20.6%	23.5%	21.7%
BMCW CY 2006	28.3%	36.4%	32.5%

The BMCW and its private partner agencies **met the performance standard** of 30% or above for this measure during the second six months of CY 2006.

The annual percentage of children with a finalized adoption (32.5%) within 24 months of entering care also exceeded the annual performance standard.

Discussion

During the second six months of CY 2006, the BMCW and its private partner agency (Children Services Society of Wisconsin) have continued to show progress with the percentage of children achieving timely adoptions.

The next two tables show general descriptive data about the children adopted in CY 2005 and CY 2006.

Length-of-stay in out-of-home care for children adopted in CY 2006

LOS in out-of-home-care		< 24 Months	24- 36 Months	36-48 Months	48-60 Months	60 + Months
CY 2006 N=317		103	75	37	23	79
Gender	M (162)	47	41	18	12	44
	F (155)	56	34	19	11	35
Age	0-5	81	41	22	7	1
	6 to 11	14	21	12	9	39
	12 to 15	5	9	3	6	28
	16 plus	3	4	0	1	11

Length-of-stay in out-of-home care for children adopted in CY 2005

LOS in out-of-home-care		< 24 Months	24- 36 Months	36-48 Months	48-60 Months	60 + Months
Period 3 N=368		80	76	39	20	153
Gender	M (184)	38	33	21	12	80
	F (184)	42	43	18	8	73
Age	0-5	65	52	18	10	4
	6 to 11	7	22	15	8	79
	12 to 15	5	1	6	2	58
	16 plus	3	1	0	0	12

- In CY 2006, 7 more males were adopted than females. In CY 2005, an equal number of males and females were adopted.
- Children adopted after 60 or more months in care accounted for 25% of the adoptions in CY 2006.
- During CY 2006, 48% of the children adopted were 5 years of age or under and 6% of the children were 16 or older when they were adopted. Children 12 or older accounted for 22% of the adoptions.
- Children under the age of two again represent the largest percentage of children adopted within 24 months of removal, although by a slightly smaller margin than in CY 2005, accounting for 42.7% of the adoptions in 24 or fewer months. The next largest age group by percentage is

children two to three years of age, who account for 17% (17 children) of the children adopted within 24 months of entering care.

Percentage of children under age 2 adopted within 24 months of removal

Year	Number of children adopted within 24 months of removal	Number of children under the age of 2 years at the time of finalization	Percentage
2006	103	44	42.7%
2005	80	43	53.7%
2004	87	59	67.8%
2003	80	54	67.5%

The following table provides data that show the number of out-of-home care placements a child resided in prior to his/her finalized adoption compared to the child’s time to adoption.

Number of placements at time of adoption (CY 2006)

Months to Adoption	Number of Placements														Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
0 – 12	13	10	1	2											26
13 – 24	31	30	10	2	3		1								77
25 – 36	15	21	24	10	1	2	1	1							75
37 – 48	14	6	5	9	2	1									37
49 to 60	4	7	6	2	2				1			1			23
60+	13	10	7	9	11	5	7	7	3	1	1	1	1	1	79
Total	90	84	53	34	19	8	9	8	4	1	1	2	1	1	317

Children with three or fewer placements at the time of their finalized adoption:

- 92.3% of the children adopted in 12 or fewer months had three or fewer placements while in care.
- 92.2% of the children adopted between 12 and 24 months had three or fewer placements while in care.
- 92.2% of the children adopted within 24 or fewer months had three or fewer placements while in care.
- 76.7% of all children adopted had three or fewer placements, and 85.9% had four or fewer placements at the time of their adoption.

Early identification of adoption as a permanence goal may lead to fewer overall placements while the child is in out-of-home care. In the above sample, 148 of 165 (or 90%) children who were adopted in 36 or fewer months have three or fewer placements at the time of their finalized adoption. This percentage decreases for children adopted after 37 month in out-of-home care where 59 of 105 children (56%) experienced three or fewer placements.

Permanency Counseling at Children's Court

BMCW funds a staff person at Children's Court who counsels parents on issues of permanency and helps them make decisions around the voluntary termination of parental rights.

The following figures are provided for informational purposes only. The data in the table below show the involvement of the Permanency Counselor (located at the Children's Court Center) in the permanency process.

Activity of permanency counselor at Children's Court

Summary January - December 2006	
Scheduled Meetings	492
Actual Meetings	266
New Meetings	114
Court Only	95
No Shows/meetings cancelled	17
New Referrals (Family Cases)	
Judges	25
Court Commissioner	1
Ongoing Case Managers	61
Region 1 (16)	
Region 2 (21)	
Region 3 (24)	
Assistant District Attorney	4
Public Defender	22
Guardian at Litem	1
Meeting Participants	
Fathers	87
Mothers	327
Grandmother	1
Other	3
Voluntary TPR's	
Mothers	40
Fathers	18

Voluntary TPRs January – December 2006

Total number of children = 89

Jury trials = 56

No attorney = 10

Strategies to address length of time to adoption

Out-of-Home Care and Adoption Redesign:

To better serve children in out-of-home care, the BMCW re-designed the service delivery system for adoption and out-of-home care, to ensure timely and appropriate permanency and placements for children.

Permanency Staffings: The BMCW began permanency staffings in August 2006. Permanency staffings are convened on behalf of each child on a Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS) court order to ensure the achievement of the child's plan for permanency and to expedite the plan in a safe manner. Please refer to section §I.B.6 *Reunification within 12 months of placement in out-of-home care*, page 26 for details on the number of children staffed between August and December 2006.

Other successful strategies that continue are the Children's Court Permanency Counselor, efforts to involve permanency consultants in the CST process, dual licensure of foster and adoptive parents, and increased efforts to involve fathers and relatives in planning for a child's permanency.

Performance Standards Not Met

Timeliness of ASFA compliance

I.B.2 Timeliness of ASFA compliance - At least the following percentages of children in BMCW custody reaching 15 of the last 22 months in out-of-home care during the period shall have had a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) petition filed on their behalf, or an available Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) exception documented in their case, by the end of their fifteenth month in care

The BMCW and its private partner agencies did not meet the performance standard of 90%, during the second six months of CY 2006.

Period goal: 90% (or above)

Actual Performance January – December 2006: 79%

Timeliness of ASFA compliance

	Number of children with available exception or TPR (N = 556)	Number of children reaching 15 of 22 months in OHC (N = 708)	Compliance % for month	Compliance % YTD	
January	32	37	86.5%	86.5%	
February	34	48	70.8%	77.6%	
March	33	54	61.1%	71.2%	
April	72	93	77.4%	73.7%	
May	49	62	79.0%	74.8%	
June	62	71	87.3%	77.3%	
					Second Six Months Performance
July	36	49	73.5%	76.8%	73.5%
August	50	67	74.6%	76.5%	74.1%
September	45	59	76.3%	76.5%	74.9%
October	54	62	87.1%	77.6%	78.1%
November	42	50	84.0%	78.1%	79.1%
December	47	56	83.9%	78.5%	79.9%

Semi-annual and annual performance CY 2003 to CY 2006

	January – June	July – December	Annual Performance
BMCW Period 1 (2003)	70%	84%	77%
BMCW Period 2 (2004)	87%	90%	88%
BMCW Period 3 (2005)	29%	29%	29%
BMCW CY 2006	77%	80%	79%

Compliance with ASFA by type						
TIMELY ASFA compliance				BELATED ASFA compliance for cohort group children		
	TPR Filed	Relative Placement	Not in Best Interest	TPR Filed	Relative Placement	Not in Best Interest
Jan (N=37)	9	15	8	1	0	4
Feb (N=48)	7	12	15	1	7	5
Mar (N=54)	5	25	3	2	7	4
Apr (N=93)	19	32	21	0	4	6
May (N=62)	18	15	16	1	1	5
Jun (N=71)	15	31	16	2	2	2
Jul (N=49)	1	19	16	3	2	7
Aug (N=67)	5	32	13	1	0	2
Sep (N=59)	7	23	15	1	2	4
Oct (N=62)	12	24	17	1	1	2
Nov (N=50)	9	15	18	0	1	0
Dec (N=56)	17	9	22	0	1	0
Grand Total	124	252	180	13	28	41

N= Number of children each month who reach 15 of 22 months in out-of-home care.

The data in the above table show how 556 of the 708 children met timely ASFA compliance during CY 2006. There were 152 children who did not meet timely ASFA compliance. There were 82 of the 152 children who did not meet timely compliance but met belated compliance at some point during the year.

The data show, by month, how each cohort group of children achieved timely ASFA compliance. The left side in the above table shows, the number of children who were at the 15th of 22 months threshold in out-of-home-care achieved timely permanence:

- 45% (252 of 556 children) met timely compliance though the “relative” exception (this accounted for 45% of the children in CY 2005);
- 32% (180 of 556 children) met timely compliance though the “not in the best interest” exception (this accounted for 44% of the children in CY 2005); and
- 22% (124 of 556) met timely compliance through the filing of a TPR petition.

The right side of the table, “Belated ASFA compliance for cohort group children” shows, by month, the children from each cohort group who did not meet timely compliance, but “belatedly” moved into compliance during CY 2006.

Strategies to address timely ASFA compliance

The BMCW has implemented the following to address timely ASFA compliance:

- **Revise curriculum:** The ASFA staff training curriculum will be revised and updated by the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership for Professional Development at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. An Assistant District Attorney will assist with the revisions.

- **Updated training** for staff will be provided to clarify ASFA requirements, and to review the differences in concepts between the permanency goal and the permanency plan, particularly at the 12-month point in time in care and the need for ASFA documentation at 15 of 22 months in care.

Permanency Staffings: Beginning in August 2006, the BMCW convened permanency staffings as a part of the case planning process. The purpose of the conference is to expedite permanency by examining all permanency options, including adoption, and moving forward with a realistic plan to achieve the goal best suited to the needs of the child. The BMCW will convene staffings for children in care at least nine months to review barriers to permanency and to discuss resolution. Please refer to the table *Permanency Staffings Convened August – December 2006*, page 26 for details on the number of children staffed between August and December 2006.

Children beyond 9 months in care are also included in the permanency staffings. This includes children in care between 9 and 15 months who have not yet reached the ASFA timeline and who may or may not have an allowable exception indicated, and also children who have passed the ASFA timeline and have not yet reached permanence.

Placement Stability

I.D.9. At least the following percentages of children in BMCW custody within the period shall have had three or fewer placements after January 1, 1999, during their current episode in BMCW custody. The number of placements will exclude time-limited respite care placements and returns to the same caretaker after an intervening placement during the same out-of-care episode. Those children in BMCW custody through the Wraparound Milwaukee program shall be excluded from this calculation.

Period goal 90% (or above)

Actual Performance January – December 2006: 73%

Children with three or fewer placements while in out-of-home care

Placements	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Three or Fewer (N)	1,758	1,734	1,773	1,742	1,725	1,697	1,659	1,643	1,662	1,685	1,712	1,694
Percentage	71.7%	72.8%	72.8%	72.5%	72.6%	72.8%	72.5%	72.8%	73.4%	73.5%	73.9%	73.8%
Four or More (N)	692	647	660	658	648	633	629	613	601	607	605	600
Percentage	28.3%	27.2%	27.2%	27.5%	27.4%	27.2%	27.5%	27.2%	26.6%	26.5%	26.1%	26.2%
Semi-Annual Percentage	71.7%	72.2%	72.4%	72.5%	72.5%	72.5%	72.5%	72.7%	72.9%	73.1%	73.2%	73.3%
YTD	71.7%	72.2%	72.4%	72.5%	72.5%	72.5%	72.5%	72.6%	72.7%	72.7%	72.9%	72.9%

The table above provides, on a month-by-month basis, the number of children who have three or fewer placements. The 2006 average for children with three or fewer placements was 73%. The BMCW did not meet the expected performance standard of 90% or above during the second six months of 2006.

The table below summarizes the semi-annual and annual performance showing the first six months performance, the second six months, and the annual performance for CY 2003, CY 2004, CY 2005, and CY 2006.

Semi-annual and annual performance CY 2003 to CY 2006

	January - June	July - December	YTD
BMCW Period 1 (2003) Performance expectations 80% or above	75%	77%	76%
BMCW Period 2 (2004) Performance expectations 82% or above	71%	73%	72%
BMCW Period 3 (2005) Performance expectations 90% or above	71%	72%	72%
BMCW CY 2006	73%	73%	73%

The BMCW and its private partner agencies did not meet the performance standard of 90% during the second six months of CY 2006.

Discussion

General information about the mean and median:

The median relates to or constitutes the middle value in a distribution. For example, the median number in the following set of numbers (2, 2, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 15, 18, 21, 21, 22) is 7, the middle number. There are an equal number of values above and below the median.

The mean (or average) for the above set of numbers would be 10.1.

Why do we report the mean and the median? Both numbers give us an idea of where the middle of the group is. The “mean” takes into consideration all values in the group equally, as to where the middle may be. As a consequence, the value can be easily influenced by extreme values in the group (outliers). The median does not consider the extreme values; rather it identifies the value in the middle of the group of numbers. We often use both numbers to provide a more informed analysis of the data.

Children with four or more placements December 2006

N=600 Age range	Current Age		Length-of-stay (months)		Length of Placement (months)		Number of Placements	
	mean	median	mean	median	mean	median	mean	median
0 to 4 n=52	2.5	3	21	19.5	7.4	6.9	4	4
5 to 11 n=147	8.5	9	41.8	32.4	13.9	8.6	5	5
12 to 15 n=196	13.8	14	63.4	52.8	15.9	8.3	7	6
16 to 18 n=205	16.7	17	76.2	62.6	14.5	7	8	7

Children with four or more placements December 2005

N= 750 Age range	Current Age		Length-of-stay (months)		Length of Placement (months)		Number of Placements	
	mean	median	mean	median	mean	median	mean	median
0 to 4 n=35	2.5	3	19.9	19	6	3	5	4
5 to 11 n=177	8.7	9	49.2	38	11.6	7.4	6	5
12 to 15 n=274	13.8	14	70.1	65	11.5	6	8	7
16 to 18 n=264	16.8	17	83	76.5	11.4	5.4	9	7

A

One method to observe change within a system is to compare similar data at two different points in time. The following two tables provide descriptive data from December 31, 2006 and December 31, 2005 for children with four or more placements.

A comparison of the data in the two tables yields several differences:

- The median and mean length-of-stay for children with four or more placements decreased in three of the four age groups in December 2006 compared to December 2005.
- The data suggest that children with four or more placements (across all four age groups) have been more stable in their current placement. There are noticeable increases in the mean and median length of time in current placement across all four age groups.
- The average number of placements per age range decreased (by one placement) in all four of the age groupings. The median number of placements also decreased by one placement for children 12 to 15 years old.

The information in the table below suggests that by December 2006, the percentage of all children 11 years or younger with four or more placements increased by 4.9% when compared to the same data from December 2005. In previous reports, it was observed that children between the ages of 0 and 4 were not immune to multiple placement changes. Although the percentage and number of children with four or more placements remains heavily weighted with children 12 years or older, the apparent increase in the percentage and number of children less than 11 years of age who moved into their fourth placement may need to be monitored further. This would include determining the underlining causes which contribute to placement instability for younger children, and what interventions could be implemented to stabilize placements.

The increase of children under 11 years old appears to follow a similar increase in the percentage of children entering out-of-home-care during CY 2006, where 78.9% of the children who entered an out-of-home-care placement were under the age of 12 at the time of entry. This represents an 8.9% increase from 2005.

Percentage of children by age with four or more placements

Age	Dec. 2005 (N=750)	Dec. 2006 (N=600)	Difference
0 to 4	4.7%	8.7%	4.0%
5 to 11	23.6%	24.5%	0.9%
12 to 15	36.5%	32.7%	-3.9%
16 to 18	35.2%	34.2%	-1.0%

The data in the following table presents information relative to the time a child was in care compared to the child moving into his/her fourth placement. During CY 2006,

there were 1,140 children who experienced at least their fourth placement at some point during the year.

This table identifies when children reached their fourth placement relative to their time in care at the time of their fourth placement.

- It does not show how long these children have been in care
- It does not show how many children entered out of home care in 2006 and reached their fourth placement
- The time in care categories are strictly related to when the children reached their fourth placement and are not related to total time in care

Identifying when children reached their fourth placement provides information that may be beneficial when monitoring children who experience multiple moves while in out-of-home care over-time.

Child's age compared to time to reach fourth placement

Time in OHC at fourth Placement (months)	Age at fourth placement (yrs)																	Grand Total
	< 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16 +	
0-12	18	19	18	13	12	24	14	19	27	25	19	32	40	43	66	59	58	506
12-24		12	9	14	15	13	12	19	15	21	9	14	21	15	22	10	26	247
24-36			5	6	11	8	4	9	13	14	8	7	9	10	6	7	8	125
36-48				2	5	3	1	4	6	4	3	7	7	3	4	7	1	57
48-60					1	4	1	2	4	10	4	2	3	3	6	4	4	48
60-72						4	6	5	3	3	1	3	4	5	4	2	2	42
72-84							7	3	2	1	1	3	2	4	4	2	1	30
>84								3	3	6	7	6	11	8	8	17	16	85
Grand Total	18	31	32	35	44	56	45	64	73	84	52	74	97	91	120	108	116	1140

The following information is specifically based on the percentage of children who reached their fourth placement, not the percentage of all children in placement.

The data show how long each child was in care relative to his/her age at the time he/she reached his/her fourth placement.

- 506 of the children (or 44%) reached a fourth placement within 12 months of entering out-of-home care.
- 53% (266) of the above mentioned 506 children were 12 or older when they reached their fourth placement in 12 or fewer months.
- Within 24 months of entering out-of-home-care, 66% of the children reached their fourth placement.
- Within 36 months of entering out-of-home-care, 77% (or 878) of the children reached their fourth placement.
- 23% (or 262) children reached their fourth placement after 36 months in care.

The table above identified when children, who were in an out-of-home care placement during CY 2006, reached their fourth placement during their episode of care. The following two tables specifically breakout the 506 children (in the above table) who entered their fourth placement within 12 months of entering care. One important difference between the table above and the next two tables is the time in care category. The previous table focused specifically on the time to reach the fourth placement whereas the following tables refer to the current length-of-stay in care.

Children in four or more placements according to current time in care

Number of Placements	Time in out of home care							Grand Total
	12-24	24-36	36-48	48-60	60-72	72-84	>84	
4 th	108	21	4	2	4	0	0	139
5 th	59	16	3	1	1	0	4	84
6 th	31	15	4	2	1	4	5	62
7 th	22	11	6	2	1	2	8	52
8 +	33	40	15	29	17	12	23	169
Grand Total	253	103	32	36	24	18	40	506

The data in the above table show the movement of the 506 children after their 12th month in care:

- 27% (139) of the children, who reached their fourth placement, remain in their fourth placement.
- 73% (367) of the children moved into at least one additional placement.

62% (227) of the 367 children who moved beyond their fourth placement did so within 36 months in care.

The data show that children, who reached their fourth placement within 12 months of entering care, may be more susceptible to placement instability (multiple placement moves) up through their 36 month in care.

The next table provides descriptive statistics specific to the 506 children who reached their fourth placement within 12 months of entering out-of-home-care. All of the children in this group are not currently in care; many of these children have achieved permanence and are no longer in care. To calculate the data for the last column “Current LOS . . .” one of two length-of-stay numbers was assigned each child. If the child remains in care, his/her current length-of-stay was used; if the child exited care, his/her time in care at the time of discharge was used.

Children who reached their 4th placement prior to 12 months in out-of-home-care

N=506	Age at fourth placement (yrs)	Time in OHC at fourth Placement (months)	Age at Removal (yrs)	Current LOS (months) – or at time of discharge
Mean	10.9	5.9	10.4	33.2
Median	12.3	5.7	11.8	23.8
Mode	14.9	6.3	11.8	26.3
Minimum	0.5	1.5	Birth	1.9
Maximum	18.0	12.0	17.5	150.5

- Children ages 11–15 appear more likely to reach their fourth placement within their first 12 months in out-of-home-care.
- By the sixth month in care, these children already appear to be at a greater risk of placement instability (multiple placement movements).
- The data continue to imply that the longer a child stays in care, the more likely the child is to experience, on average, more placements.

Children's experiences in out-of-home care are different. Multiple and frequent placement changes may have a disruptive influence on a child's development. The information suggests that children with behavioral and/or mental health issues may already be more likely to move from placement to placement or experience placement instability. Early identification of children who demonstrate placement instability within their first year in care may be helpful in directing services for the child and foster family that may minimize placement disruptions. It is also important to examine other areas besides the number of placements for a child, i.e. length of time in current placement – or time between placement movement, as well as the placement setting where the child resides (a foster home, or a higher level of care placement, such as a treatment foster home, group home or a residential care center. Nearly 61% (approximately 700) of the 1,140 children identified as having been in four or more placements in CY 2006 also had a placement in a higher level of care (HLOC) setting sometime during their current placement episode.

When we look further at the children who had four or more placements during CY 2006, and specifically those who have had at least one placement in a HLOC type setting, we see that the number of placements for these children fall within a range of 4 and 28, with an average of 9 placements. This group of children has a corresponding average length-of-stay in care of 62 months. Conversely, if we compare children who have had four or more placements, but have not had a HLOC placement in their current episode of care, we see that the number of placements range between 4 and 17, with an average of 5 placements. Although it appears that there are differences in the frequency/number of placement changes between the two sub groups (a HLOC placement or not), the average Length-of-stay in care is the same, 62 months, for both groups.

The 506 children who reached their fourth placement within 12 months of entering care included 254 girls and 252 boys. For children less than 13 years of age boys accounted for 50 more placements than girls. However, girls experienced 52 more placements than boys for children between the ages of 13 to 16 years old. It was an

equal split for children 17 and older with six boys and six girls who moved into their fourth placement

The table below provides an approximate look at the movement between a child's third and fourth placements. Shelter placements are identified within this table because some the children within this group reached their fourth placement before the use of shelters was phased out.

Third and fourth placements of children with four or more placements while in care

Third Placement	Fourth Placement												Grand Total
	YCF	RCC	GH	TFC	ASC	Shelter	PAH	FHNR	FHR	COK	NRU	RU	
Youth Correctional Facility (YCF)		1											1
Residential Care Center (RCC)		1	4	5		3		4					17
Group Home (GH)		8	33	21	2	4		26		5	3	1	103
Treatment Foster Care (TFC)		5	9	21	0	4	1	7		1			48
Assessment-Stabilization Center (ASC)	0	5	15	9	13	1	0	33	1	5	1	0	83
Shelter	1	2	7	1	2	16		56	1	8	1	1	96
Pre-Adoptive Home (PAH)				1	0			2					3
Foster Home (Non-Relative) (FHNR)		10	42	35	23	53	14	300	27	74	5	4	587
Foster Home (Relative) (FHR)			2		3	1		17	3	7	1	2	36
Court Ordered Kinship (COK)			10	2	1	14		69	16	30	2	1	145
Non-Relative - Unlicensed (NRU)					1	4		7		1	1		14
Relative - Unlicensed (RU)					1	2		2		2			7
Grand Total	1	32	122	95	46	102	15	523	48	133	14	9	1140

There are limitations to the data in the above table. These include issues related to data, such as conversion issues with early WiSACWIS, and the ability to validate historic data relating to the third and fourth placement for children who entered out-of-home-care prior to WiSACWIS. This data set is not singularly representative of children who reached their fourth placement during CY 2006. Instead, it includes all children who were in their fourth (or more) placement during CY 2006. The number of children with four or more placements is not a static group of children; rather it is a dynamic group. Children enter the four plus group as their placements change and exit the group (discharged from care) as they achieve permanence.

The placement categories listed in the table are in a specific hierarchal order. From left to right across the rows, and from top down in the left column, the placements are arranged from the most restrictive setting to the least restrictive setting. When following the placement history of children in out-of-home-care, it is important to follow their movement through the different levels of care; that is, from least restrictive to most restrictive and back to the least restrictive as behaviors stabilize. Unfortunately, this table only looks at each child's unique third and fourth placement, thereby not providing the full spectrum of movement through the system. It also does not provide explanations as to why the third placement ended necessitating a fourth placement. Understanding the "why" is a vital part in exploring the overall root cause for the movement. However, it provides the opportunity to identify placement settings when children are moving from third placement to fourth placement.

- The largest group of children (26% or 300 of 1,140) moved from their third placement of a non-relative foster home to their fourth placement of a non-relative foster home.
- A total of 523 children moved into a non-relative foster home for their fourth placement. The second largest group moving into a non-relative foster home for their fourth placement (6% or 69 of 1,140) moved from a court-ordered kinship placement.
- Overall, 587 children moved from a non-relative foster home to another placement, which account for 51% of all moves from the child's third to fourth placement.
- Of the 587 children who moved from a third placement with a non-relative foster home, we see that at least 104 of the 587 children (or 18%) moved into a relative placement; and another 110 of the 587 children (or 19%) moved into what is considered a higher level of care, to address what may be more severe emotional and behavioral challenges.
- Of the 17 children who moved from what was their third placement in a residential care center, 13 of the 17 (76%) moved down the continuum of care to a less restrictive setting for the child's fourth placement.

Additionally, for informational purposes only, the federal government also monitors the stability of foster care placements in each state. A state meets the national standard for this performance measure if, of all children in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal, 86.7% or more had no more than two placement settings. This performance measure is included in the CY 2007 Ongoing Case Management program contract for each region.

For the federal performance measure, the BMCW achieved a performance rate of 82.9% during CY 2005. Preliminary information for CY 2006 indicates that of all children who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal, between 84% and 87% of the children had no more than two placement settings.

This measure is distinctively different from the performance standard of three or fewer placements in the settlement agreement. The preliminary data from the federal measure appears to show that for most children who entered out-of-home-care, the pace of placement changes in the first year a child is in care show stronger stability in placements within the first year of out-of-home-care in CY 2006 compared to children during CY 2005.

Strategies to address placement stability

Some efforts to support foster families have been discussed previously in this report (pages 16-20.) In addition to strategies already mentioned, are:

- To provide at-risk youth additional services to meet their needs and increase stability, the BMCW requested the community to come forward with proposals for specialized group homes that provide targeted interventions aimed at working with youth to prevent subsequent and multiple placement disruptions. These homes will be contracted for services in 2007.
- **Expanded recruitment efforts.** The BMCW, working with First Choice for Children, intensified recruitment efforts to increase the pool of quality foster families to meet the diverse needs of children who required out-of-home placements. Efforts included:
 - Targeting efforts in areas adjacent to neighborhoods with high incidences of child removals in order to place children in their own neighborhood.
 - Use of Foster Parent Ambassadors to assist with community recruitment forums targeting health care providers and stay-at-home parents capable of caring for the higher need youth and sibling groups.
 - Increased the frequency of foster parent orientation sessions from four to five per month to accommodate increased demand for weekend sessions.
 - In conjunction with the counties that make up the Southeastern Region of Wisconsin, a major radio campaign focused on the need for homes that will care for teens and sibling groups.
 - Time Warner Cable ads focused on the need for homes that will care for teens and sibling groups.
 - The development of the Latino Community Recruitment Advisory Council to increase the pool of Latino and Spanish-speaking foster homes.

- A partnership between Milwaukee Public Schools, First Choice for Children, and Children's Service Society of Wisconsin to recruit foster and adoptive homes.
- In addition, the BMCW is working with faith-based groups to develop new, culturally competent strategies for outreach, recruitment, and support of successful foster families.
- **Enhanced Placement Matching:** In the second quarter of 2006, First Choice for Children placement referral specialists started conducting face-to-face visits with children and foster parents as a way to gather as much information as possible to enhance the process of placement matching. The information gathered from the youth has become critical to understanding what they believe their needs are and what type of family would best engage them to stabilize and succeed in a placement. Meeting with foster parents at the time of initial licensing and at re-licensure gave the placement staff an opportunity to discuss parenting strengths and preferences.
- **Increased use of Corpcare:** Lutheran Social Services (LSS) continued to offer Corpcare, a free clothing bank, to assist licensed foster parents. This resource is particularly crucial for emergency placements and has been used increasingly by the First Choice for Children assessment homes. During the holiday clothing drive in December 2006, LSS expanded the use of Corpcare to Region 3 kinship care providers as a pilot program to assess whether these providers would utilize this resource. Approximately 50 kinship providers registered and attended this event.

Development of special diagnostic assessment centers

I.D.7 By December 31, 2003, the BMCW shall develop special diagnostic/assessment centers for children over 12 years of age who need further assessment in order to determine the appropriate placement. Placement in such centers shall not exceed 30 days or 60 days if the placement is extended in accordance with applicable state law.

BMCW **complied with the requirement** to develop special diagnostic/assessment centers for children over 12 years of age.

- Legal status of the Child in Need of Protective Service (CHIPS) petition/order has a direct impact on the length-of-stay in an Assessment Center or Placement Stabilization Center. Consistent with the Departments administrative rule, adolescents who are "pre-disposition" (under a Temporary Protective Custody order with a disposition of the CHIPS petition pending) may be placed in a center for 30 days per episode and two additional approved 15-day extension requests (60 total days). By statute adolescents who are "post-disposition" (under an active CHIPS order) may be placed in a center for no more than 20 days per episode.

Chapter HFS 59 SHELTER CARE FACILITIES

239 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES **HFS 59.05**

HFS 59.05 Child care. (3)(b)

"... **(3) TIME LIMITS**

(b) A shelter care facility may not keep a child in residence for more than 30 days per episode except:

1. An extension for an additional 15 days may be made upon written approval of the superintendent of shelter care for the county in which the facility is located; and
2. A second extension of 15 more days may be made upon written approval from the department..."

- The BMCW met the 60-day limit for 87% (194) of the 223 pre-dispositional children, and
- Exceeded the limit for 13% (29) of the children.

The following is more detailed information regarding children placed in assessment and placement stabilization centers January 1 — December 31, 2006:

- 487 children had at least one placement in a center;
- The 487 children accounted for 1,004 placements in a center;
- Many of the children experienced multiple placements. The table below provides a breakdown of the number of individual children and the number of placements they experienced January - December 2006.

Placements in centers

Number of individual children (N)	Number of placements in a center
299	1
88	2
33	3
20	4
15	5
8	6
9	7
4	8
2	9
3	10
1	11
1	12
4	13 +
487	1004

The data show that 299 (61.3%) of the 487 children experienced one placement in a center and 188 (38.7%) children experienced two or more placements in a center.

Adolescents who are "pre-disposition" (under a Temporary Protective Custody order with a disposition of the CHIPS petition pending) may be placed in a center for 30 days per episode and two additional approved 15-day extension requests (60 total days). Adolescents who are "post-disposition" (under an active CHIPS order) may be placed in a center for no more than 20 days per episode.

The next table provides a summary of the length-of-stay relative to the time limit (dependent on dispositional status) and number of placements in a center. The time limits are based on each placement episode for the child.

Children staying in centers

	Within Time Limit	Exceeded Time Limit
Single Episodes (N=299)	Children with one placement episode	
Pre-dispositional	118	31
Post-dispositional	75	75
Total Pre-Post	193	106
Multiple Episodes (N=705)	Time per Episode - Multiple	
Pre-dispositional	218	18
Post-dispositional	381	88
Total Pre-Post	599	106

The data indicate that 65% of the children (pre- and post- dispositional status) with a single placement episode were within the set time limit for length-of-stay in a center:

- 84% of the multiple placements were within the set time limit for length-of-stay in a center;
- For all 385 placements involving pre-dispositional children, 336 (87.2%) were within the time limit for length-of-stay in the placement;
- For all 619 post dispositional placements, 73.6% (or 456) were within the time limit for length-of-stay in the placement;
- Overall, 792 (78.8%) of the placements in a center were within the time limits for length-of-stay.
- 175 children experienced an AWOL episode from the adolescent assessment and placement stabilization centers. Of the 175 children, 113 were post-dispositional status and 62 were pre-dispositional status.

Children with an AWOL from a center

Age	Number of Children	Number of Children with an AWOL Episode	% Of Age group with an AWOL Episode
12	49	8	16.3%
13	74	21	28.4%
14	86	29	33.7%
15	83	33	39.8%
16	93	39	41.9%
17	88	45	51.1%

The data in the above table suggest that as children move through adolescence there appears to be a steady increase, by number and in percentage, of children who engage in runaway behavior.

The data show that the largest number of multiple placements in centers is due to the adolescents running away.

Adolescents who present with significant behavioral and/or emotional issues, such as chronic runaways, have challenged the BMCW with finding quality placements. As a result, the BMCW used the procurement process to request proposals for group setting placements to meet the needs of these youth.

Strategies to address the Special Diagnostic Centers

The Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) and its private partner agencies consider the safety, well-being and stability of children to be its primary responsibility.

The data indicate that teens tend to experience placement stability issues more frequently than other children. Possibly due to a variety of identified or unidentified needs, these children appear to struggle in the traditional placement settings, such as placement with a relative and general foster care. Some of these children also have

difficulties with short-term placements in assessment and placement stabilization centers. These youth frequently run away from the traditional out-of-home care settings. They are often identified as having a need for a higher level of care due to emotional and behavioral issues.

The Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare has taken steps to address this vulnerable population of youth. In the fall of 2006, the BMCW used the procurement process to request proposals to meet the needs of these youth. (Request for Proposals (RFP) # 1575 – Group Settings)

The request for proposals identified the group settings programs needed to be gender specific and to meet the following needs of youth:

- General Care
- High risk-runaways
- Alcohol and other drug addiction issues
- Pregnant and parenting teens
- Other groups with needs as identified by the provider

The request for proposal also allowed proposals to be presented for populations of youth the vendor identified with other needs; for example, youth age 17+ soon to reach “age of majority” in foster care, teen fathers, or teen with other specific identified service needs.

The request for proposals required all group setting to provide and engage youth in the following specific programming services:

- Educational programming regarding alcohol and other drug use / abuse (AODA)
- Healthy relationships (vs. Domestic Violence)
- Reproductive health
- Independent living skills
- Other high risk behaviors
- Positive recreational activities
- Academic achievement
- Supports and encourages youth as they begin the process of self exploration and awareness on the road to adulthood.

The specialized group settings must deliver and engage youth in the same programming as the general group setting, and in addition, address the identified behavior(s) the youth exhibit(s), such as, runaway behaviors, alcohol / drug use/ abuse, emotional / mental health, pregnant and parenting teens, caring for a baby, etc., and secondary behaviors such as a youth with an identified runaway behavior who may also have secondary behaviors such as alcohol use / abuse.

Named Plaintiffs

BMCW will supply Plaintiffs' counsel with quarterly updates of the named plaintiffs' case records until an adoption is finalized, a permanent guardianship order is entered, or the child is no longer in BMCW custody. The parties will engage in monthly good faith discussions concerning the appropriateness of the care and treatment of the named plaintiffs until an adoption is finalized, a permanent guardianship order is entered or the child is no longer in BMCW custody, except that defendants agree to the post-adoption services described below.

At the beginning of 2006, one of the five named plaintiff children was in an out-of-home care placement and remains in an out-of-home care placement. The other four named plaintiffs have been successfully adopted.

During calendar year 2006, the BMCW has continued to maintain open and regular communication with Children's Rights, Inc. Monthly good-faith discussions were scheduled and held between the BMCW director, chief legal counsel for the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Children's Rights lead attorney to discuss the remaining named plaintiff child, including the appropriateness of the care provided, treatment needs, barriers, and progress toward permanency. Additional discussions were held around specific situations that occurred with the child between the scheduled monthly conference calls to ensure plaintiffs' counsel had current information.

Corey H.

Information provided as of December 31, 2006.

Corey turned 14 in February 2006. Corey is legally free for adoption following a termination of parental rights in 2004. The BMCW continues to explore potential adoptive families for Corey H. who can meet his individual needs. At the permanency plan review in September 2006, the permanency goal for Corey was a dual plan of adoption and long-term foster care placement. The BMCW continues to pursue permanency for Corey H, and is seeking potential adoptive families nationwide.

Corey resided in a treatment foster home and received individual therapy every other week and academic tutoring as needed. Corey attended church with his mentor and was involved with the Boys and Girls Club after school and in their summer program. Corey's mentor also provided respite care, overnight visits, and a variety of community activities. Corey was employed during the summer months when school was not in session. Corey is in the eighth grade. Corey changed schools during 2006. His academic grades have been between Bs and Ds.

All necessary services identified by BMCW were provided to support Corey's placement stability in the treatment foster home. Although Corey resided in a family home setting, his needs exceeded the services provided through Treatment Foster Care. Based on a reassessment of his needs, Corey was referred for an alternative higher level of care placement and is expected to transition to the new placement in January 2007.

Once an adoptive family is identified for Corey, BMCW will ensure that he remains eligible for Title XIX medical coverage post-adoption through an adoption subsidy agreement.