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**Department of Children and Families Suspends Wisconsin Shares Payments of
Thirty-Four Suspected Fraudulent Child Care Providers**

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) suspended thirty-four child care providers from receiving Wisconsin Shares payments on Saturday, September 19. These providers were suspended because DCF discovered evidence that providers had violated Wisconsin Shares regulations and will be referred to law enforcement.

"We found and stopped fraudulent payments to these providers suspected of cheating Wisconsin taxpayers and taking dollars from hardworking parents," stated DCF Secretary Reggie Bicha. "This is only one step among many to end child care fraud and speaks to the high priority that our staff is giving to find and stop criminals who are scamming the system and giving child care providers a bad name."

To increase and accelerate DCF's ability to investigate and shut down child care fraud, O'Brien and Associates were hired to help identify additional child care providers suspected of fraud, assist with recovering funds and help in legal actions regarding suspensions or revocations of licenses. O'Brien and Associates has successfully led other fraud investigations including assisting the Illinois Department of Public Aid in saving over \$10 million in program benefits from being paid out improperly. The firm also has a 100% conviction rate on fraud cases sent for prosecution.

Parents whose child care provider has been suspended from receiving Wisconsin Shares payments should contact 4C in Milwaukee at 414-562-2676 or outside of Milwaukee at 800-750-5431 to assist in finding a new child care facility. For more information about 4C, visit their Web site at www.4c-milwaukee.org or www.4-c.org.

To report suspicions of fraud, call the DCF child care fraud hotline at 877-302-FRAUD or 877-302-37283 or visit the DCF website at www.dcf.wisconsin.gov to submit tips directly to fraud detection and prevention unit.

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