



wisconsin department of  
**children & families**

201 East Washington Avenue, Room G200

P.O. Box 8916

Madison, WI 53708-8916

Governor Scott Walker  
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Secretary's Office

January 30, 2013

Honorable Leah Vukmir  
State Senator  
131 South, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702

Honorable Scott Krug  
State Representative  
208 North, State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Senator Vukmir and Representative Krug:

In compliance with 2009 Wisconsin Act 78, the Child Welfare Public Disclosure Act, attached is the Department of Children and Families' 2012 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, 2012 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 Incidents Reported: 148*

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 148 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to 134 children residing in out-of-home care during 2012.

*Maltreatment Determinations: 148 Incidents*

For reported incidents, 114 (77%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., sexual abuse likely did not occur) while six (4%) maltreatment determinations are pending because the investigation is not yet complete. Twenty-eight (19%) of the reported incidents were substantiated, which means these children were sexually abused following removal from home.

*Nature of Maltreater Relationship:*

For substantiated incidents, the relationship of the maltreater to the child in 23 cases was a non-caregiver (14 minors and nine adults). In three cases, the maltreater was unknown to the child and in one case the maltreater was a partner/friend of the relative caregiver living in the home. During 2012, one foster parent was substantiated for sexual abuse to a child in their care.

*Dates of Occurrence:*

The incidents reported are estimated to have occurred between August 2004 and November 2012. Children disclose abuse in different stages, therefore it is common for abuse to be reported months or

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even years after the incident occurred. In cases of alleged abuse to younger children, dates of alleged maltreatment may be difficult or impossible to determine because of the child's inability to effectively communicate details of the incident(s).

*Counties of Occurrence:*

Twelve counties had incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to children residing in out-of-home care. Milwaukee County had the largest number (14) of incidents, followed by Sawyer County (3).

*Ages or Age Group of Children:*

Alleged sexual abuse was reported and investigated for children ages 1 to 17 years. Sexual abuse was substantiated eight times for children age 7 years and younger, with the majority of substantiations (16) occurring for children age 8 years and older.

*Types of Placement:*

Whereas the majority of victims of substantiated sexual abuse cases resided in non-relative treatment foster homes and congregate care settings (e.g. Residential Care Center, Group Home, Shelter), the alleged sexual abuse did not necessarily occur within the placement setting or by a maltreater in the setting.

If you have any questions about this summarized information or the attached report, please contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Eloise Anderson  
Secretary

cc: Governor Scott Walker