



201 East Washington Avenue, Room G200
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53708-8916
Telephone: 608-266-8684
Fax: 608-261-6972

Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson
Secretary's Office

January 31, 2014

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' 2013 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, 2013, 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: 104

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 104 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to 90 children residing in out-of-home care during 2013.

Maltreatment Determinations: 104 Incidents

For reported incidents, 72 (69%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., sexual abuse likely did not occur) while 11 (11%) maltreatment determinations are pending because the investigation is not yet complete. Twenty-one (20%) 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 20 cases was a non-caregiver (17 minors and 3 adults). In one case, the maltreater was the biological parent of the child.

Dates of Occurrence:

The incidents reported are estimated to have occurred between September 2007 and December 2013. Children disclose abuse in different stages, therefore it is common for abuse to be reported months or even years after the incident occurred. In cases of alleged abuse 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).

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Counties of Occurrence:

Thirteen counties had incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to children residing in out-of-home care. Walworth County had the largest number (4) of incidents, followed by Milwaukee County (3).

Ages or Age Group of Children:

Alleged sexual abuse was reported and investigated for children ages 2 to 17 years. Sexual abuse was substantiated 4 times for children age 7 years and younger, with the majority of substantiations (17) 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.

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

Sincerely,


Eloise Anderson
Secretary

cc: Governor Scott Walker