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Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Secretary's Office

January 31, 2017

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

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

Dear Chief Clerk Renk and Chief Clerk Fuller:

In compliance with 2009 Wisconsin Act 78, the Child Welfare Public Disclosure Act, attached is the Department of Children and Families' 2016 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, 2016 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: 147 Incidents

Wisconsin child protective services agencies screened in and investigated 147 reported incidents of suspected sexual abuse to 138 children residing in out-of-home care during 2016.

Dates of Occurrence:

The incidents reported are estimated to have occurred between March 2012 and December 2016. 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).

Maltreatment Determinations:

For reported incidents, maltreatment determinations were made for 126 (86%) of the reported incidents; for one incident services were determined not to be needed, for four incidents (3%) maltreatment determinations could not be made because the agencies were not able to locate the family and/or information; and for 16 incidents (11%) maltreatment determinations are pending because the investigations are not complete. Of the 126 reported incidents where the maltreatment determination was made, 107 (85%) were unsubstantiated (i.e., sexual abuse likely did not occur) while 19 (15%) of the

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reported incidents were substantiated, which means these children were sexually abused following removal from home.

Nature of Maltreater Relationship:

Of the 19 substantiated incidents, the relationship of the maltreater to the child in four cases was a foster parent or other adult in the child's placement. In seven cases the maltreater was either another child living in the home or a peer maltreater. In six cases, the maltreater was a non-caregiver to the child. In two cases, the maltreater relationship to the child was unknown.

Types of Placement:

Of the 19 incidents of substantiated sexual abuse to children in out-of-home care, eight occurred while the children were placed in non-relative family foster homes or treatment foster homes, three occurred while the children were placed in group homes, two while the children were placed in residential care centers, two while the children were placed in unlicensed relative homes, two while the child was placed in a court ordered Kinship Care placement, and two while the child was placed in non-relative/unlicensed placement. The alleged sexual abuse did not necessarily occur within the placement setting or by a maltreater who resided in the setting.

Location of Substantiated Incidents:

Thirty-seven counties investigated incidents of sexual abuse to children residing in out-of-home care. Fourteen counties had substantiated incidents of sexual abuse, with five of the substantiated incidents occurring in Milwaukee County, two in Winnebago County and one each in the respective counties of Barron, Burnett, Dane, Eau Claire, Marinette, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Racine, Rock, Walworth and Wood.

Ages or Age Group of Children:

Alleged sexual abuse was reported and investigated for children ages 0 to 17 years. Sexual abuse was substantiated three times for children age 7 years and younger and 16 times for children age 8 years and older.

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

Sincerely,


Eloise Anderson
Secretary

cc: Governor Scott Walker