



APRIL 2023

The Bureau of Youth Services is a unit within Wisconsin's DCF that is dedicated to being more responsive to the needs of older youth in and at risk of being involved in the child welfare or youth justice system. If you have questions or ideas, please contact us!

Leadership

Shelby McCulley
Director

Becky Yang
Strategic Initiatives
Coordinator

Youth Justice Team

Youth Justice Policy
Coordinators

Alana Peck
Carlton Frost
Jenna Dunlap

Youth Services Team

Asia Jackson
Anti-Human Trafficking
Coordinator

Faith Price
Youth Services
Policy Coordinator

Greta Munns
Youth Services
Policy Coordinator

Kelsey Hill
Independent Living
Coordinator

Happy Spring! I am writing this message on a beautiful spring day that carries the promise of summer around the corner – although I recognize that this being Wisconsin, we may be back in second (or third?) winter by the time you read this. Regardless of the weather, we do know that it is budget season – a critically important window in the development of Wisconsin's policy and funding priorities that only comes around once every other year. This newsletter includes a high-level summary of some of the many important proposals in the Governor's budget proposal, which is being considered by the Legislature right now and over the next couple of months. Every one of us, and the young people we serve, are affected by the state budget, and we encourage you to review the information and engage in the process. Your voices, and your ability to amplify the voices of young people, are incredibly powerful. Thank you.

2023-2025 Executive Budget

On **February 15, 2023**, Governor Evers presented his **Biennial Budget** recommendations to the Wisconsin public and the state legislature. **His budget proposals include many provisions to support DCF's efforts to better support the state's vulnerable children, youth, and families.** The full text of the Governor's budget is available at <https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/2023-25-Executive-Budget%20ASE.aspx>, with the DCF-specific sections available at <https://doa.wi.gov/budget/SBO/2023-25%20437%20DCF%20ExASEecutive%20Budget.pdf>.

DCF staff summarized key aspects of the DCF budget provisions here: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/budget> and we invite you to check it out! There, **you can learn more about the Governor's proposed investments in many of DCF's services and programs.** These include **several proposals to better support older youth, including:**

- Returning 17-year-olds to the youth justice system
- Investing \$35 million over the biennium to support intensive evidence-based programs designed to safely prevent children from entering out-of-home care or to reunify them with family as quickly as possible. This program will serve children and families in both the child protection and youth justice systems.
- Funding to enhance critical youth justice system infrastructure, including training for youth justice professionals and enhanced data systems
- Increased funding for both independent living and runaway and homeless services programs
- Streamlining statutes and funding for youth-serving programs to allow for more flexible and effective delivery of services

You can **find out more about opportunities to provide feedback on any of the budget proposals to the legislature's Joint Committee (JCF) on Finance by visiting <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/>.** The JCF is offering some in-person opportunities as well as the option to submit comments via an online portal and/or dedicated email address to the Committee.

Save the Dates – Fostering Success Summer Visits

The network of University of Wisconsin (UW) Fostering Success programs is excited to share about **opportunities for prospective students to visit participating campuses this summer and learn about their Fostering Success programs.**

Previously, UW-Stout offered a Fostering Success Summer Overnight for prospective students. This year, **seven of the nine campuses that now offer Fostering Success are collaborating to offer multiple day-long programs** that each include visits to multiple campuses. **This opportunity is provided at no cost and is open to high school students (grades 9-12) in out-of-home care (for example, foster care, residential care centers, court-ordered kinship, group homes), or unaccompanied homeless youth.**



Individuals or groups can register and participate in any (or all) of the programs. **The registration deadline for all days is June 7, 2023.** For more information, contact the campus coordinator for each campus – those contacts are available using the links provided below. Each campus contact will follow up directly with registrants to provide a complete itinerary, meal information, bussing schedule, and other details.

- **June 14, 2023: Visit UW Stout, UW Eau Claire, and UW River Falls.** Day begins at 8:30am at UW-Stout in Menomonie and ends at UW-Stout at 5pm.
- **June 21, 2023: Visit UW Milwaukee and UW Whitewater.** Contact the [campus point of contact](#) for details on when and where this visit will start.
- **June 27, 2023: Visit UW La Crosse and UW Platteville.** Day begins at 8:30 at UW-Platteville or 10:30am at UW La Crosse. A tour/visit to La Crosse will be followed by a tour and at Platteville.

To register a group, visit <https://forms.office.com/r/y9TmQvxfBF> or scan the QR code below.



To register an individual, visit <https://forms.office.com/r/dALfjr5s6s> or scan the QR code below.



Youth Voice Updates

Youth Advisory Council – Legislative Day

In honor of National Foster Care Awareness Month, the Wisconsin Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is convening a Legislative Day for current YAC members on Wednesday, May 17, 2023. The intent is for YAC members to meet with Legislators one-on-one to talk about issues that are important to them. For example, extending Independent Living supports and services to the age of 23 for aged-out youth. To prepare for the Legislative Day, YAC members will meet the evening of Tuesday, May 16, 2023 to prepare elevator speeches, go over the materials they'd like to present to the Legislators, and discuss the main event's agenda. The YAC members are excited to have the opportunity to meet with Legislators and strategically share their stories to impact policy change at the state level.



Youth Leadership Team

The next Youth Leadership Team (YLT) meeting will be hybrid (in-person and Zoom options) on Thursday, May 18, 2023, from 4:30pm-6:30pm. This is a great paid opportunity for any young people ages 14-21 who have personal experience in the youth justice system and are interested in making positive changes in their community or the youth justice system. Past leadership experience is not required – youth should just come with an open mind and a willingness to participate.



New and existing YLT members and adult supporters who plan to attend the March YLT meeting should RSVP by 5pm on Thursday, May 11, 2023 using this link: <https://form.jotform.com/DCFBYS/ylt-meeting-rsvp--may-18-2023>. If needed, adult supporters may and should help youth complete their RSVP or complete it on the youth's behalf with the youth's permission.

Meeting Details

Thursday, May 18, 2023 from 4:30-6:30pm

- **In-Person Option:** *Please RSVP by May 11, 2023 for this option!*
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire – Ho Chunk Room (320E)
Davies Student Center
77 Roosevelt Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701
- **Virtual Option**
[Zoom link](#)

Frequently Asked Questions about the YLT:

- **Who is eligible to attend?** Young people ages 14 – 21 with personal experience in the youth justice system. This includes (but is not limited to) youth on delinquency supervision, youth in detention or in placement, youth with a JIPS referral, etc.
- **Are youth compensated for their time?** Yes, youth will receive a \$25 stipend for their active participation in the meeting. Youth who RSVP and attend in-person at UW-Eau Claire will receive a physical gift card. Youth who RSVP and attend virtually will receive an electronic gift card that will be emailed 7-10 business days after the meeting.
- **Do youth and adult supporters need to let us know they plan to attend?** RSVP is encouraged, especially if attending in-person. DCF will only hold the in-person portion of the meeting if DCF staff know there are at least three eligible young people that RSVP to attend in-person at UW-Eau Claire in Eau Claire, WI. If that minimum is not met, the meeting will only be offered virtually.
- **I'm an interested adult, can I come by myself?** To help keep this a youth-centric space, we would like to limit adult supporters attending without accompanying a participating young person. Please consider if there are young people you work with who may be interested in this opportunity and who you can accompany.

Visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youthservices/leadership> for more information regarding the Youth Leadership Team. If you have any questions or are unable to make the meeting but would like to receive additional information regarding future YLT meetings, e-mail us at dcfyj@wisconsin.gov.

Youth Justice Updates

Youth Justice Data

Web-based training for YJ in eWiSACWIS

A new web-based training (WBT) for core YJ eWiSACWIS page is now live on the WCWPDS website! Last year DCF staff and the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (PDS) collaborated to produce the **first-ever WBTs for eWiSACWIS, offering modules on core features and CPS workflows tailored both for onboarding new staff and for refreshing experienced professionals.** February 2023 marked the **debut of the first YJ-focused trainings**, which cover the YJ Referral and Case Information pages.

The public-facing modules for experienced professionals, as well as instructions on how to access the new-staff versions on PDS online, are available here: <https://wcpds.wisc.edu/web-based-courses/ewisacwis-web-based-modules/>.

A new mini-module on “Restorative Justice” features, including victim engagement, restitution/community service, and deferred prosecution agreements, is coming in late spring/early summer. More YJ-focused WBTs are in development, so stay tuned!

eWiSACWIS updates

The February eWiSACWIS update (“release”) included two major YJ packages: the Youth Justice Court Report, and updates to old YJ templates that may support county workflows (particularly for non-YASI cases).

Youth Justice Court Report

The Court Report was designed in spring and summer 2022 in consultation with judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and county staff from around the state. It was created to meet two needs: **less focus on CPS, placements, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and other factors when they don’t apply to a particular case; and greater focus on tailoring a dispositional order to the YASI-identified strengths and needs of the youth.** While DCF staff believe this template can help improve practice, the agency currently has no timeline for requiring its use.

We appreciate efforts by county staff to bring court partners into the loop – more than 100 people attended each of two lunchtime presentations on the new Court Report!

(Supplementary) Youth Justice Templates

The second update was for several YJ templates created prior to the rollout of new YJ pages in 2018 and which a handful of counties still regularly use. Previously available under the Administration Dropdown of the Create Case Work page, they are **now part of the Youth Justice dropdown.** Additionally, **DCF updated the templates to current application standards** to avoid disrupting those county workflows and made some tweaks to improve their utility and avoid confusion with other processes – such as YASI casework. **These templates are NOT intended as core documents, but are available as optional supplements,** particularly with youth for whom YASI may not be appropriate, such as those on a Juvenile in Need of Protection or Services (JIPS) order or those with specific capacity/competence needs.

The YJ templates include the following:

- **Youth Justice Face Sheet:** This template may be helpful for sharing a brief snapshot of a YJ case, particularly for youth for whom a YJ Court Report was not created.
- **Youth and Family Assessment:** This template has been simplified from its previous version, which was closer to a (rudimentary) scoring tool. This version focuses on narrative and may be helpful for documenting general information collected at intake, particularly with youth for whom the YASI may not be appropriate. It also has the option of supervisor approval, which may make it helpful for those interested in reviewing intake decisions.

- **Youth Justice Case Plan AND Youth Justice Case Review/Closing Narrative:** These templates are NOT intended as DSP's official solutions for documenting YJ case plans and outcomes in eWisACWIS. DSP plans to tackle those questions this year as part of a larger conversation about quality case planning, including integration with CaseWorks. However these documents, which are largely unchanged from older templates, may still be helpful as an interim solution, particularly with youth for whom the YASI may not be appropriate. They also offer the option of supervisor approval.

BYS Staff Update

Liz Landerman and Joy Breese-Holz retired in early March, Ragen Shapiro joins DCF Leadership Team

Both had long careers as dedicated public servants, and DCF appreciates all they gave to the children and families of Wisconsin.



Joy has been a licensed Social Worker for the State of Wisconsin for 43 years and enjoyed 17 wonderful years of State Service! Not only did she work in State service, but she enjoyed service with county and nonprofit organizations and volunteer work as well. Joy believes that every organization "can make a difference" in the lives of children, youth, and families. She had that belief into practice every day as she worked with youth, families, and dedicated community partners, most recently enjoying the opportunity to end her state service journey with BYS.

Joy's retirement will include traveling the US with their RV and seeing as many National Parks as she can!! Joy and her husband have six awesome grandchildren (with the 7th due in April!), and they plan on spending more time with them.



Liz was with the state for many years and enjoyed working with many wonderful programs and people in DCF, county, and Tribes. In the adoption program, she had the fantastic opportunity to find families for hundreds and hundreds of youth of all ages and abilities, and as a Consultant she was able to make a difference in helping so many kids to move into a permanent family. Liz appreciated ending her state service career with the dedicated BYS YJ staff and supervisors.

Liz will remain active in retirement as she pursues skiing, hiking, biking, kayaking, and travel!



Ragen Shapiro joined the DCF Leadership Team in March. Ragen has been with DCF since 2016, and most recently served as BYS's section manager. In that role, she supervised staff in their provision of services for youth who are involved in or at risk of involvement in the child welfare and youth justice systems. This included oversight of the community-based youth justice system, as well as independent living programs for youth aging out of out-of-home care, runaway and homeless youth programs, prevention programs targeted at adolescents, and services for survivors of child sex trafficking.

Please join us in thanking Joy and Liz for their service and wishing them all the best in retirement and in wishing Ragen all the best as DCF's new Legislative Advisor!



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

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***May every youth in, at risk of, or aged out
of the child welfare/youth justice system
transition to a successful adulthood.***

The goal of the Bureau of Youth Services is to improve outcomes for youth in the child welfare and youth justice systems and other vulnerable youth. Specifically, the Bureau supports service delivery systems that move youth towards academic success, safe and stable housing, employment, permanent connections with supportive adults, and healthy lifestyle behaviors. Youth aged 12-21 in or at risk of entering the child welfare and a youth justice system present unique and complex challenges. The Bureau brings a more coordinated program and policy focus to youth in the child welfare system and other vulnerable youth.

Sign up for our newsletter [here!](#)