



OCTOBER 2024

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

Evelyn Joy Coker
Director

Carlton Frost
Youth Justice Section Manager

VACANT
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Youth Justice Team

Youth Justice Policy Coordinators

Alana Peck
Jenna Dunlap
Sarina Wiesner
Tess Brodsky

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 Fall! I love this time of year and find myself embracing the joys of the season: changing leaves, fuzzy socks, and white chocolate hot mochas. This season not only brings a sense of comfort but also a renewed energy for our work as we close out the calendar year. The BYS team is going through a period of growth, welcoming a new YJ Section Manager, BYS Research and Policy Associate, and two MSW interns. We are thrilled to have our three new team members who are already making a positive impact. Here's to a wonderful fall filled with collaboration and hope!

- Evelyn Joy Coker

Bureau Updates

Effective September 2024, **Carlton Frost is BYS's new Youth Justice Section Manager!** Carlton has been an invaluable member of our YJ team, serving as one of the Bureau's YJ Policy Coordinators since 2019 and previously as a Program and Policy Analyst at the state Department of Corrections. He brings a wealth of experience and expertise. Carlton has a Bachelor's in Neuroscience, a Master's in Public Affairs, and a PhD in Neuroscience. **Congratulations, Carlton!**

There have been some recent shifts in BYS responsibilities, noted below.

Youth Services team:

- **Greta Munns** has transitioned to the DCF Adult Supporter Lead of the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Greta also continues to oversee tribal and county independent living, and the PATHS contracts.
- **Faith Price** now serves as the contract administrator for the Runaway and Homeless Youth programs. Faith also continues to oversee the Brighter Future Initiatives (BFI) contracts.

Youth Justice team:

- **Alana Peck** is the BYS Web Coordinator and contact for data systems, overseeing overall reporting (e.g., eW-Reports, data requests, data warehouse).
- **Asia Jackson** transitioned to the DCF Adult Supporter Lead of the Youth Leadership Team (YLT). She now works in both the Youth Services and Youth Justice sections.
- **Jenna Dunlap** is now the DCF Adult Supporter Co-Lead of the YLT.
- **Sarina Wiesner and Jenna Dunlap** are co-lead county liaisons, providing technical assistance to their respective counties. Sarina supports the Southern, Southeastern, and Northeastern regions, while Jenna supports the Northern and Western regions. Jenna also facilitates YJ Tailored Dispositional Orders training for the northern counties, and Sarina handles this training for the southern counties.

Youth Services Updates

Independent Living Updates

In **September 2024**, DCF independent living staff **provided an Independent Living 101 overview to nearly 90 Milwaukee ongoing agency staff**. Together, BYS and DMCPs staff went over IL background, funding, and requirements; best practices; eligibility; resources; Supervised Independent Living; documentation; and more. This opportunity **built upon a similar overview BYS staff provided to child welfare professionals in the balance of the state in February 2024**. At that time, BYS staff provided the overview **to nearly 200 individuals**. In all sessions, participants asked good questions and provided helpful feedback. Thanks to all who attended; conversations are already underway about how and when DCF can offer these overviews again.



Don't forget! In May, DCF IL staff started Independent Living Office Hours. This takes place via Teams from 12-1pm on the third Tuesday of the month and is **an opportunity for child welfare professionals doing independent living work to connect with each other and with DCF staff**. Sometimes there is a specific topic for discussion (past topics have included secondary education, the Guide for Youth in OHC Placements in Wisconsin). If you are interested, you can request the calendar invite for Office Hours by emailing DCFILCoordinator@wi.gov.

Youth Justice Updates

2025 Innovation Grants

In August 2024, **DCF announced the 2025 Youth Justice Innovation grantees**. DCF continued the following areas of focus: **Reducing YJ Referrals, Pre-Court Diversion, and Post-Dispositional Services**. BYS was also able to offer an additional year of continuation funding to current 2024 innovation grantees.

Initial 2025 grantees include:

- Chippewa
- Clark
- Sawyer
- Kewaunee
- Taylor
- Forest
- Ozaukee
- Racine
- Winnebago
- Wood

Counties receiving additional continuation funds include:

- Barron
- Douglas
- Dunn
- Green
- Jefferson
- Juneau
- Kenosha
- La Crosse
- Marathon
- Monroe
- Oconto
- Oneida
- Price
- Sheboygan
- Walworth
- Waushara



2025 YJ Innovation Grant Recipients



Reducing YJ Referrals

- Chippewa
- Clark
- Sawyer



Pre-Court Diversion

- Kewaunee
- Taylor



Post-Dispositional Services

- Forest
- Ozaukee
- Racine
- Winnebago
- Wood



Continuation

- Barron
- Douglas
- Dunn
- Green
- Jefferson
- Juneau
- Kenosha
- La Crosse
- Marathon
- Monroe
- Oconto
- Oneida
- Price
- Sheboygan
- Walworth
- Waushara



DCF is also excited to announce a unique opportunity provided specifically to second- and third-year innovation grantees. **All sixteen continuation grantees** were offered an **additional \$14,000 in funding** to **recruit or facilitate youth** attending **DCF Youth Leadership Team** hybrid meetings. We have recommended counties to include other counties in their region to maximize the number of youth who can attend. DCF hopes this alleviates barriers for youth to attend including transportation, food, and gift card incentives.

YASI Technical Assistance

Two BYS YJ Policy coordinators provide technical assistance to counties on YJ-YASI practice.

- ⇒ Northern and Western counties can connect directly with [Jenna Dunlap](#).
- ⇒ Southern, Southeastern, and Northeastern counties can connect directly with [Sarina Wiesner](#).

All counties can also send questions and inquiries to the general DCF YJ inbox:

DCFYJ@wisconsin.gov.

YASI Coach Networking Event – Stevens Point

BYS is excited to share photos from the 1st annual YASI Coach Celebration and Networking Event held in Stevens Point in August. Cohort 1 and 2 county coaches met in-person for skill-building, networking, and fun. YASI Coach Cohort 3 began training in September.



Figure 1 Lincoln and Outagamie Coaches



Figure 2 Marathon, La Crosse, Racine, and Dunn Coaches



Figure 3 Racine, La Crosse, Marathon, and Dunn Coaches



Figure 4 Coach Trivia Winners - Kenosha, Dunn, and Dane Coaches



Figure 5 Cohort 1 and 2, PDS and BYS



Figure 6 PDS, BYS Family Photo



Figure 7 PDS, BYS Awkward Throwback Family Photo

Education Reminders

Chronic Absence & Truancy

This summer, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released a revised edition of the [Non-Attending Minor Students and Attendance Process FAQ](#). This document provides school districts with answers to frequently asked questions regarding the attendance process for situations where students under age 18 stop attending school for long periods of time. Updates made the document easier to navigate and also clarify guidance to schools about district withdrawal procedures and additional considerations for students with IEPs. Specifics about the changes can be viewed here: [What is Different? 2024 Non-Attending Minor Students and Attendance Process FAQ](#).

Child Welfare Professionals can also find materials from the spring 2024 Truancy Prevention Learning Series (including recordings, presentation materials, and notes sheets) on DPI's [School Attendance Improvement and Truancy Prevention](#) Page.

Educational Stability for Youth in Out of Home Care

Students placed in Out-of-Home Care often experience educational disruptions that can impact their academic experiences and outcomes. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Child Welfare Agencies (CWAs) collaborate to implement policies and practices that minimize those disruptions and preserve students' opportunities for improved well-being and success in school.

On September 17, DCF and DPI co-hosted a webinar to provide a refresher to school district and [county human service Points of Contact](#) on the basic educational stability provisions for youth in OHC included in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Over 140 participants joined us for discussion of best practice and resources to support collaboration! The presentation was recorded and is available upon request. Please contact DCFeduPOC@wisconsin.gov for more information.

Using Data to Improve Attendance
Truancy Prevention Learning Communities | Spring 2024

Data is a powerful tool in attendance interventions. At a systemic level, analysis can help schools and community partners anticipate community needs, identify the scope of attendance issues to effectively target interventions, and investigate the strengths, needs, and solutions for sub-populations of students. Regularly collecting and reviewing data can interrupt and change poor attendance patterns before academic performance is negatively affected.

Questions and Patterns to Consider

While this is not an exhaustive list of considerations for your data, it may help you get a sense of what might be helpful to collect and review and the stakeholders you may want or need to consult with.

- What impact do schedules, start times, half days, and holidays have on daily attendance?
- Do we see any trends that appear to be connected to seasons, sibling absences, certain classrooms or courses, transitions, grade levels, or common barriers (like access to transportation)?
- Are any groups or subpopulations of students chronically absent at a disproportionate rate? Are there specific interventions or services that are effective for those students?
- Are students and families engaged with school? What perceptions do students and families have about school? Any negative school experiences?
- What types of interventions do we offer? What are the impacts of those interventions on daily attendance?
- Are there common root causes for students who are chronically absent? Are any of our interventions effective at addressing those root causes?
- When students are referred to Youth Justice, Child Protective Services, or receive a citation/ticket:
 - Does their daily attendance improve?
 - Does their sense of school belonging and engagement improve?
 - Do they ultimately graduate at a rate similar to or higher than their peers who were not referred?
- Are there certain types or groups of students for whom YJ, CPS, or citations/tickets are effective?

This resource was developed with information provided during the Spring 2024 Truancy Prevention Learning Communities. A recording of the full webinar is available on YouTube.

For more information or to share a strategy your community is using to address chronic absence, contact Julie.Incm@dps.wi.gov or DCFY@wisconsin.gov.

March 2024

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

1

Youth Voice Updates

Youth Leadership Team Updates

We are excited to announce information about the first Youth Leadership Team (YLT) hybrid meeting of the 2024 – 2025 academic year. **The first YLT meeting will take place on, Tuesday, October 22, 2024 from 5:00pm-6:30pm and will be in a hybrid format (in-person and virtual option).** New and existing YLT members and adult supporters who plan to attend the October YLT meeting should **RSVP by 5pm on Sunday, October 20th, 2024 via [JotForm](#).** Adult supporters, please assist youth in completing their RSVP or complete it on their behalf, if needed.


October 22, 2024 Meeting Information

- In-person option: Running Rebels EAST – 225 W Capitol Dr, Milwaukee, WI 53212
- Virtual option: [Zoom](#)

Below are answers to a few frequently asked questions.

- **Who is eligible to attend?** Young people ages 14 – 21 with personal experience in the youth justice system. This includes youth on delinquency supervision and/or Juveniles in Need of Protection or Services (JIPS).
 - ◊ Direct service providers, please help us in keeping this a youth-centric space by coordinating the attendance of at least one eligible young person to attend with you.
- **Are youth compensated for their time?** Yes, youth are compensated for their active participation in the meeting.
- **Do youth and adult supporters need to RSVP?** RSVP is encouraged, especially if you plan to attend in-person, but not required. To hold the in-person portion of the meeting, at least three youth need to RSVP. If there are less than three in-person RSVPs, the meeting will be held virtually.

You can 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 be added to the contact list to receive additional information regarding future YLT meetings, e-mail us at dcfyj@wisconsin.gov.



Do you have personal experience with Wisconsin's Youth Justice system? We want to hear from you!

The Youth Leadership Team (YLT) is a group for youth ages 14-21 with Youth Justice system experience who are interested in partnering with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) staff to impact state policy and practice.

Next YLT Meeting is on October 22 in Milwaukee (or on Zoom)!

Do you have questions about the Youth Justice (YJ) system? Maybe you've wondered how many youth are involved in YJ each year? Or if there are patterns in YJ involvement across the state? Bring your questions to our YLT kick-off for this year! We'll be looking at some YJ data and you'll have a chance to help us analyze information that will be included in a [state report!](#)

Please use this JotForm to RSVP for the October meeting by Sunday, October 20

- No previous leadership or data analysis experience is needed
- Food will be provided at the in-person meetings
- YLT members are paid for attending meetings

Need more information?
Contact the YLT Lead, Asia Jackson:
(414) 587-7641 or asia.jackson@wisconsin.gov

Fall Meeting Details
October 22, 2024
5:00-6:30pm
[Running Rebels EAST, Milwaukee](#)
[Zoom link](#)

**Note that DCF requires at least 3 youth RSVPs to host in-person.*

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Youth Advisory Council

On Saturday, September 14, 2024, Wisconsin's Youth Advisory Council (YAC), comprised of youth with lived experience in out-of-home care, met in Stevens Point to discuss their priorities for the coming year, as well as plans for continued growth and recruitment. In addition, BYS Director Evelyn Coker led the group in the healthy mind platter activity, encouraging the young adults to reflect and intentionally build a life and schedule that prioritizes wellness. The next YAC meeting will take place November 8-9, 2024, with location to be determined. During this two-day meeting, YAC members will look ahead to 2025 and elect the group's officers.

Have you ever wanted to run a policy, plan or idea by youth with lived experience in out-of-home care in your area? Consider reaching out to [your local Transition Resource Agency](#), which have regional Youth Advisory Councils across the state. Each [agency's YAC Advisor\(s\)](#) would be happy to connect, share valuable insights, and work with you to increase youth engagement in the policies and procedures that impact their lives.

The Healthy Mind Platter



The Healthy Mind Platter for Optimal Brain Matter

What We're Reading

New and interesting research, tools, and learning opportunities recommended by BYS staff:

- Research Brief: [Addressing Chronic Absenteeism by Aligning School Settings with the Developmental Needs of Adolescents](#), STEPS for Youth
- Policy Framework: [Continuum of Care for Communities](#), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Webinar: [The Youth Protective Factors Study: Risk, Strengths, and Reoffending](#), The Council of State Governments Justice Center, UMass Chan Medical School, and UC Berkeley's Risk-Resilience Lab
- Training & Toolkit: [What Youth Want from Supportive Adults](#), Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health

OCTOBER 2024

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

Evelyn Joy Coker
Director

Carlton Frost
Youth Justice Section
Manager

VACANT
Strategic Initiatives
Coordinator

Youth Justice Team

Youth Justice Policy
Coordinators

Alana Peck
Jenna Dunlap
Sarina Wiesner
Tess Brodsky

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



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

201 W. Washington Ave.
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53708-8916

Fax: 608-422-7157
E-mail: dcfoys@wisconsin.gov

***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!](#)