

Wisconsin Wraparound

State agencies have heard from partners that kids aren't getting the behavioral health services they need. **Wisconsin Wraparound** is a collaboration between Wisconsin's Department of Children & Families (DCF), Department of Health Services (DHS), and Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to address the complex behavioral needs of children and youth, identifying the following problems:

- Services are fragmented (service systems only see a part of the puzzle) and kids are falling through the cracks.
- Children and youth are entering the child welfare system because of behavioral health needs, **not** because of abuse or neglect.



Parent of children with complex behavioral needs, in their own words...

"I didn't know where to reach out... I knew of the two counseling offices that were available in town. I had called the hospital. They were booked. So, it was like, 'Okay, what do we do?' So, you know, we very much felt like we were drowning in nothing. There was nothing we could do."

"You have Madison, you have Milwaukee, you have Green Bay, and you have Eau-Claire and the Twin Cities, and the rest of the state is just this huge empty void when it comes to mental health and behavioral health care."

- Julie, mother of 7, Taylor County

What are the goals of the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative?

- To serve children and youth with complex behavioral health needs.
- To serve these kids and their families in communities across the state through high fidelity and targeted wraparound services.
- To intervene earlier to reduce child welfare involvement.
- To fill gaps in existing local programs like Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) and Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS).



In 2023, according to DCF data, there were 757 instances of a child removed from home with a removal reason of child behavior problem and/or child diagnosed condition. Of these 757 removal instances, 232 children were enrolled in CCS and 189 children were enrolled in the CLTS program.



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

Proposal at a Glance: New Medicaid Program Components

Wraparound Model/ Care Coordination

- Individualized, team-based, collaborative process to provide coordinated services and supports.
- Implemented by a statewide organization.

Eligibility and Enrollment

- No wrong referral approach (schools, child welfare, health care, justice).
- Assessment via functional screen.

Benefit Package – Examples of Services

- Health related social needs (potential to braid funding with DCF).
- Parental capacity building, support, and respite care.
- Behavioral health treatments.

Next Steps for Wisconsin Wraparound

Legislative Approval

- The first step is for the Legislature to direct DHS to request a waiver. This can be done through the budget proposal for Wisconsin Wraparound, or through passage of standalone legislative bill, LRB-947.
- [2017 Wisconsin Act 370](#) requires legislative authorization and oversight of certain agency requests to the federal government.
- DHS cannot request a Medicaid waiver without a legislative directive.

Medicaid Waiver

- The program would be implemented through a federal Medicaid waiver.
- Waivers allow states flexibility in designing programs for sub-groups.

Waiver Design

- DHS would write the waiver request with input from partners (once DHS has legislative approval).
- Details would be decided during the waiver request process (such as eligibility criteria, allowable services, and program delivery).
- The waiver request process typically takes several years, allowing extensive input from families, providers, and partners.

This initiative represents a significant step toward ensuring all Wisconsin children have access to the behavioral health services they need.



Well children need well caregivers

