

Child Welfare Strategic Transformation

Putting Wisconsin's families first



Family First Newsletter | February 2022| Issue 7

Nominations for the Secretary's Caring for Kids Award Due Feb. 20!

Since the start of the pandemic, child welfare workers have continued to navigate new challenges with grace and compassion. Without hesitation, they have stepped up and worked tirelessly to ensure families dealing with new and unique stressors find the necessary supports and services to safely remain together and thrive. Many have also found innovative ways to serve families, strengthened relationships between community partners, and much more.

As we head into Social Work Month in March, we encourage you to recognize and honor those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty by submitting them for a 2022 Secretary's Caring for Kids Award. Nominations are open through Sunday, February 20, and recipients will be invited to attend a virtual recognition ceremony on Tuesday, March 22.

To submit a nomination, please visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/form/caring-for-kids-award-nomination>.

Safety Planning Revisions Workgroup

Some readers may recall that in August, DCF launched the Safety Planning Revision Workgroup. This workgroup, made up of a variety of stakeholders, has been thinking critically about supporting safety decision-making in the child welfare system.

The focus of Phase 1 has been to look at the present and impending danger threats through a race, equity, and inclusion lens. Based on their work, the Safety Planning Revisions Workgroup recommended some initial changes to the existing danger threat language to remove subjective buzzwords and phrases. The initial revised danger threats will roll out in a Summer 2022 eWiSACWIS release.

The Safety Planning Revisions Workgroup is now firing on all cylinders for phase 2! Phase 2 is all about hearing directly from child welfare professionals, youth, parents, tribal partners, and the Professional Development System (PDS) to understand current safety processes, inefficiencies, and providing suggestions for improvement. The Division of Safety and Permanence along with long-time partner CGI, are providing facilitation and workshop delivery.



Child Welfare Strategic Transformation

Putting Wisconsin's families first



Interviews and workshops have been a great opportunity for gain better insight into the safety realm of child welfare.

As Phase 2 is reaching its half-way point over 18 interviews and four workshops have been completed.

Over 100 hours of safety related conversations have taken place!

Moving forward, an additional 12 workshops are scheduled to occur. The Safety Planning Revisions Workgroup will ultimately suggest revisions to the Safety Analysis and Planning process based on the voices and information heard throughout the process. Phase 2 will also include additional, more substantive changes to the existing danger threats that were not able to be completed during Phase 1 of the process. Stay tuned for more information about these exciting changes!

National Partnership on Child Safety

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is excited to share information about our involvement in the National Partnership on Child Safety (NPCS). Wisconsin is an original member of this partnership as a result of being a pioneer in our systems change work, specifically with our systems change review process. Our involvement in this partnership allows us to lead the way towards systemic change locally and nationally. It also allows us to strengthen our strategic planning and transformation efforts as the mission and goals of NPCS are in direct alignment with our vision and mission.

The National Partnership for Child Safety (NPCS), formed in 2018, is a quality improvement collaborative whose aim is to improve child safety and reduce child maltreatment fatalities through the application of safety science and shared data. The [NPCS](#) currently includes 26 state, county and tribal child and family serving agencies that oversee child welfare for an estimated 807,000 children. The NPCS is supported by Casey Family Programs and a technical assistance team that includes the University of Kentucky and Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI).

NPCS will work to identify, test, and evaluate strategies to provide upstream, preventative, and earlier intervention supports and services that can strengthen the building blocks of healthy families. It represents a system that is focused less on a child protection response to abuse and neglect and more on building the wellbeing of all children.

The planned activities of the NPCS will focus on using data across all participating jurisdictions to identify national improvement opportunities. These activities will focus on the themes some of which resonate with DCF's strategic planning and transformation:



Child Welfare Strategic Transformation

Putting Wisconsin's families first



- **Keeping families strong.** As families face increased economic, physical, and psychological stress during the global pandemic, we must change the way we think about how we support parents and children, with a focus on more front end, upstream resources.
- **More Upstream Resources.** By shifting to a child welfare system that offers upstream resources for families, the goal is to provide families with more services rather than more surveillance, including connecting families to economic supports and housing assistance that have been shown to strengthen families and reduce child welfare interactions.
- **Prevention programs.** There are several examples of proven or promising solutions that are helping to build a knowledge base of evidence-based practices that reduce or prevent child abuse and neglect maltreatment and fatalities.
- **Racial disparities in child welfare.** The systemic racism in our child welfare system requires child welfare professionals to question our assumptions, biases, and policies.

Parent Leader Group Celebrates First Anniversary

In February 2021, the Parent Leader Group was launched by DCF's lived experience coordinator. One year later, the Parent Leader Group is now meeting monthly to talk about lived experience and ways to support the child welfare's transformation efforts.

This group is made up of parents with lived child welfare experience. The parent leader meetings are being held virtually and facilitated by DCF and the Office for Children's Mental Health (OCMH). The group has covered a variety of topics from safety and permanency planning to communications and legal representation.

For parents that may be interested in joining this group, [this form](#) should be completed and submitted. DCF is always looking for more families to work within this group to assist in the transformation efforts.

QRTP Implementation a Success!

QRTP Extended Placements

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) requires that all children placed in a QRTP long-term (extended) have approval from the agency responsible for their care. Any child who is placed in a QRTP for more than 12 consecutive months or eighteen 18 non-consecutive months (or, in the case of a child under age 13), for more than six consecutive or non-consecutive months), the local child welfare agency responsible for their care must seek approval and



Child Welfare Strategic Transformation

Putting Wisconsin's families first



document the approval in the eWiSACWIS database. A numbered memo was released on February 4, 2022, with practical information related to this requirement. For more information, please view the [memo](#).

First Group Home in Milwaukee Certified as a QRTP

DCF is excited to announce the certification of our first group home in Milwaukee to become certified as a QRTP. The group home provides unique services to serve youth who identify as LGBTQIA2S+. This is the first, of many group homes seeking certification as a QRTP. For an up-to-date list of providers approved for certification as a QRTP, please visit the [Family First QRTP website](#).

QRTP Branding Logo

All facilities certified as a QRTP earn the distinctive QRTP certification logo to brandish on their website and social media informing others of their unique status. Look for the logo to easily identify the facilities in Wisconsin that have applied and been approved for certification as a QRTP. If you're a certified facility and would like logo permissions, please reach out to FamilyFirst@wisconsin.gov.

QRTP Training for All Professionals on March 3rd

An online training will be held on March 3rd, 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. for ALL professionals who may place children in a facility certified as a QRTP. If you have not attended a previous QRTP training session (held in Fall 2021) or would like a refresher of the new process and eWiSACWIS technical overview, please attend. For a link to the training session being conducted via Zoom, visit the [Family First QRTP website](#) for information. Registration for the training is not required.

E-Learning Activity

The QRTP [e-learning activity](#) is now live on the CCIP training website. Explain the major provisions of FFPSA, how to place in QRTP, and understand the role and responsibilities of the court in placing with a QRTP.

Spring Town Hall Meetings

Please mark your calendars. The Town Hall Meeting dates are as follows.

- Child Welfare Professionals – April 26, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.
- ICWA Town Hall - Date in progress
- Directors and Legal Partners – April 26, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.



Child Welfare Strategic Transformation

Putting Wisconsin's families first



The Town Halls will cover a variety of subjects related to the Strategic Transformation and Family First. Please send questions to FamilyFirst@wisconsin.gov.

For those who were not able to attend the most recent Fall Town Halls, you can view the recordings on the [Family First website](#).

Communications Update

As transformation efforts continue, check the [transformation web page](#) for updates and additional resources. Articles within this newsletter are hyperlinked to the newest information available on the DCF Family First website.

Highlights from the Family First Stakeholder meeting included:

- 4,300 family-first website page visits last quarter
- 2,000 qrtp website page visits last quarter
- QRTP training sessions have concluded, email familyfirst@wisconsin.gov with questions
- Streamlined communications goal for 2022
- New Year, New Mindset campaign ending in February for Family First. New campaign to begin in March.

Over the next few months, we will highlight some of the successes across the state around Family First efforts. The goal is to help with idea sharing since there are many counties implementing Family First and Transformation initiatives in a variety of ways. Creativity is key!

For more information or questions, please reach out to FamilyFirst@wisconsin.gov.

