

Child Welfare Strategic Transformation

Putting Wisconsin's families first



Family First Newsletter | January 2022| Issue 6

Nominations Being Accepted for the Secretary's Caring for Kids Award

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 Wraps Up Phase 1

Last August, DCF launched the Safety Planning Revision Workgroup. Over the past several months, this self-professed group of 'safety nerds' has been working hard and thinking critically about the language used when talking about safety in the child welfare system.

The focus of Phase 1 for this workgroup has been to look at the present and impending danger threats through a race, equity, and inclusion lens. To guide the conversations, the workgroup used a practical guide developed by the Children's Bureau called: "[Buzzwords: Moving to Behavioral Descriptors](#)". This guide outlines some common 'buzzwords' often used in child welfare. Buzzwords are popular jargon or phrases that can be subjective, negative and have the potential to lead to unintended biases.

Based on their work, the Safety Planning Revisions Workgroup is recommending changes to the existing danger threat language to remove subjective buzzwords and phrases. The changes will be 'previewed' to key stakeholders early in 2022 for input and feedback. The revised danger threats will roll out in a Summer 2022 eWiSACWIS release.



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In the meantime, take a look at the [short guide](#) to learn more about how the use of language can impact assessments, and for some strategies to 'interrupt' the use of potentially harmful buzzwords in child welfare!

Parent Leader Group Information

Launched in early 2021 by DCF's new Lived Experience coordinator, 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). 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.

At the end of 2021, DCF's Lived Experience role was highlighted in State Bar of Wisconsin, [Children and the Law Section Blog](#).

"Attorneys who practice law in the child welfare system play a variety of roles - agency representation, guardian ad litem or youth attorney, parent attorney, judicial officer - but one thing is almost certain: they will have some level of interaction with parents of the children involved in their cases. How much value is given to a parent's perspective or input may vary greatly, but hearing that voice is a vital part to child welfare transformation. While Wisconsin works to implement The Family First Prevention Services Act, a national legislative effort to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care, it is an ideal time to ensure the parent voice is heard."

QRTP Provider Update

DCF is pleased to announce four opportunities to attend open office hours related to QRTP technical assistance in January and February. Each of the sessions will provide child welfare professionals an open-ended question/answer session for all things related to QRTP, including eWisACWIS technical assistance, clarification of the QRTP emergency rule, QRTP certification requirements, QRTP extended placements, and other questions.

Below is the information for each session. Please share this information with other child welfare professionals. If you're not able to attend the whole session, the 'virtual office door' will remain open for the entirety of the scheduled time for drop-ins.



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For questions related to the sessions or QRTP, please contact Dana Johnson via email at danal.johnson@wisconsin.gov or phone at 920-366-3747. Additional updates and information related to QRTP can be found on the [Family First](#) website.

QRTP Technical Assistance | January 25, 2022

Held via Zoom | [Zoom invitation](#) ID: 892 0430 7538 Code: 522597 | 10:00a.m. - 11:00a.m

QRTP Technical Assistance | January 31, 2022

Held via Zoom | [Zoom invitation](#) ID: 892 0430 7538 Code: 522597 | 9:00a.m. - 10:20a.m

QRTP Technical Assistance | February 8, 2022

Held via Zoom | [Zoom invitation](#) ID: 892 0430 7538 Code: 522597 | 12:00p.m. - 1:20p.m

QRTP Technical Assistance | February 18, 2022

Held via Zoom | [Zoom invitation](#) ID: 892 0430 7538 Code: 522597 | 10:00a.m. - 11:20a.m

DCF would like to extend congratulations to facilities who have recently been approved as a Qualified Residential Treatment Facility (QRTP). To view the list of pending and certified facilities visit the [QRTP web page](#). A new QRTP certification logo is now available for providers to add to their websites to show certification.

Spring Town Hall Meetings

Save the dates will be coming soon! The DCF Spring Town Hall is tentatively set for mid-April 2022 and will cover a variety of subjects related to the Strategic Transformation and Family First. Please send topic suggestions or 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.

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

