

Transforming Wisconsin's Child Welfare System

The last several years have shown us that every family needs help sometimes. We all play a key role in helping build a system supportive of healthy families.

Since 2018, Wisconsin has been working toward transforming the child welfare system to become more in-home, family-focused, and collaborative. This effort aims to dramatically reduce the proportion of CPS and YJ children and youth who are served outside of their family home.

Research Supports the Transformation

- Increased investment in prevention services has been linked to:
 - decreased maltreatment,
 - improved outcomes
 - and decreased downstream costs.
- Removals, regardless of length, have a profound impact on the child and family and have been long associated with negative outcomes for both children and families.
- Findings also suggest that removal from home leads to increased likelihood of long-term negative consequences.
 - This was true even when comparing children who were removed, to children who experienced similar maltreatment but were not removed from their parent's care.
 - For justice-involved youth, even short stays in detention increase the risk of recidivism.

For more information:

Capacity Building Center for States. (2021). *The evidence for strengthening families*. Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Service. <https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/resources/evidence-strengthening-families>. PDF download.

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2020, July 1). Study: Pretrial Juvenile Detention Increases Odds of Felony Recidivism by 33%. *Annie E. Casey Foundation*. Study: [Pretrial Juvenile Detention Increases Odds of Felony Recidivism by 33% - The Annie E. Casey Foundation \(aecf.org\)](https://www.aecf.org/study/pretrial-juvenile-detention-increases-odds-of-felony-recidivism-by-33%/).

Putting Families First: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family-first>.

How is Putting Families First changing child welfare practice in Wisconsin?

4.5

Fewer children removed per day in 2021 compared to 2017

3,000+

children and 1,600 families served with flexible funding (Targeted Safety Support Funds – TSSF)

77%

of families who were supported w/ flexible funds as part of an in-home plan never experienced a removal

Administrative data reflects 2021 information and comes from the eWiSACWIS case management system.

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