



Putting

Families First



Welcome!



Wendy Henderson
Administrator



John Elliott
Deputy Administrator



A background image showing several hands of different skin tones placing small, light-colored square cards onto a dark wooden floor. The hands are arranged in a circular pattern, suggesting a collaborative activity or a shared vision.

Vision

All Wisconsin children and youth are safe and loved members of thriving families and communities.

**We strive for justice in the
child welfare system
through addressing
systemic oppression,
inequity and racism.**

Caring for Kids Awardees



LaTasha Perry
Wellpoint Care
Network



Kathleen Peters
Winnebago County
Department of Human
Services



Elizabeth Sinclair
Waukesha County
Department of
Health and Human
Services



Jenica Slavek
Dane County
Human
Services



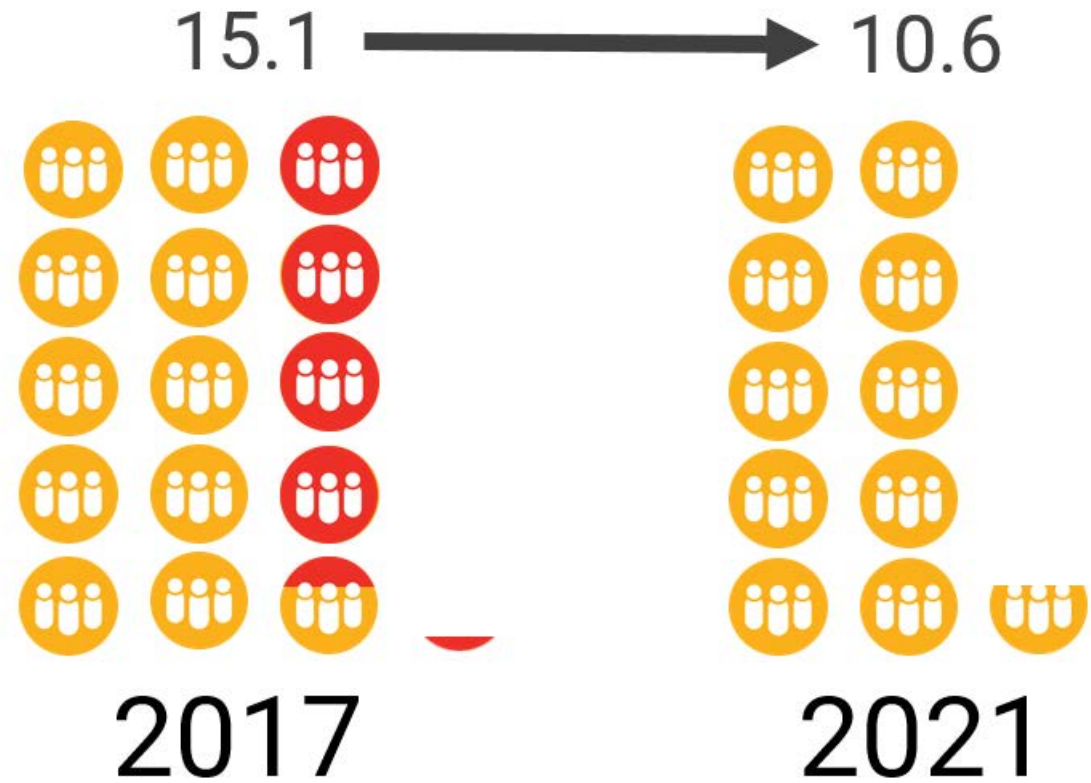
**Stephanie
Wanserski**
Wood County
Human Services
Department



A group of diverse children, including a girl with blonde hair, a boy with dark hair, and a boy with light brown hair, are smiling and looking up at the camera. They are wearing casual clothing like denim jackets and sweaters. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

What the Data Tells Us

4.5
fewer children
removed per day
since the peak in 2017.



40%

of children were placed with
relatives

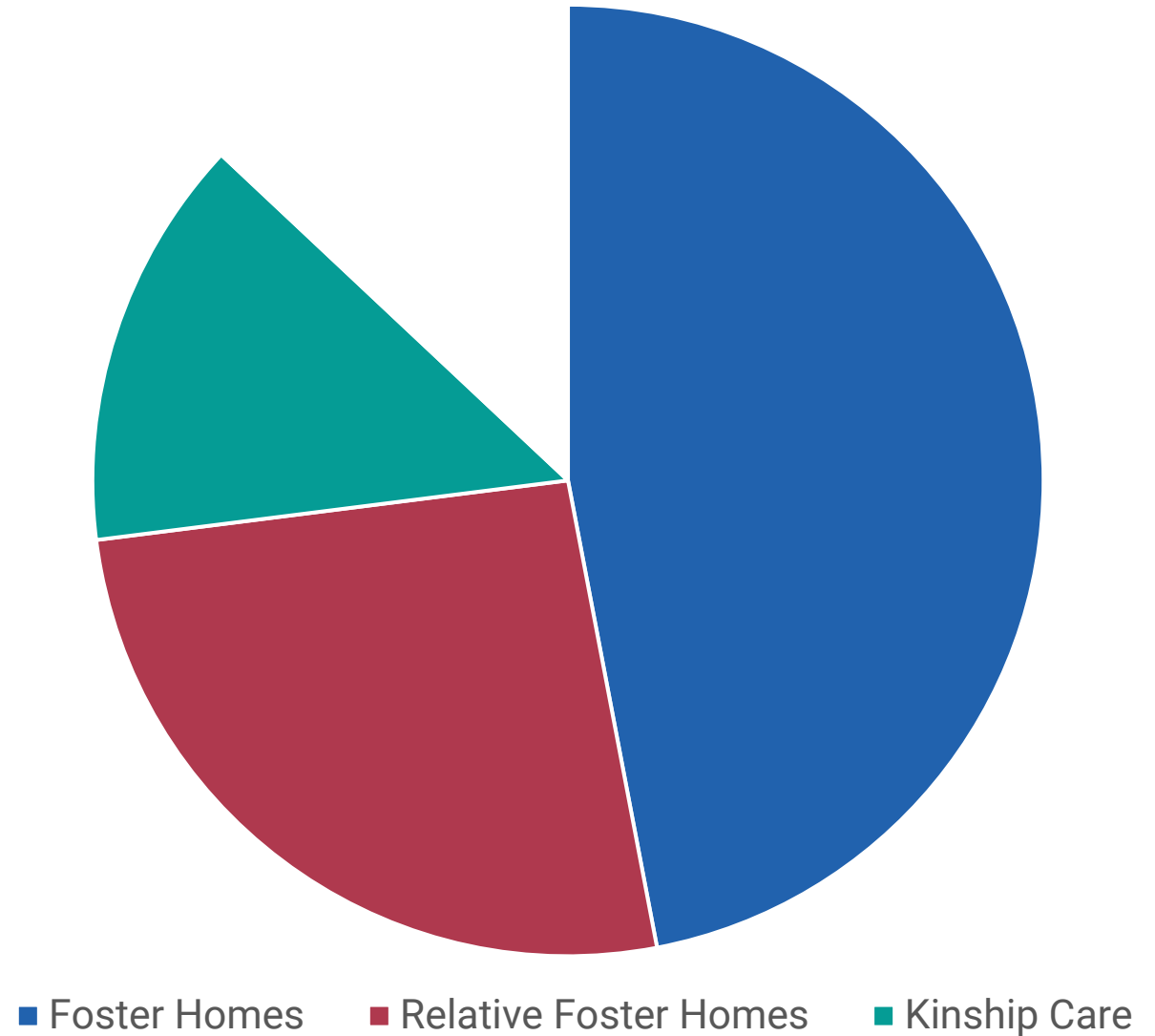


■ Relative Foster Homes ■ Kinship Care



87%

of children placed in
out of home care
were placed in
family settings



A group of diverse children, including a girl with blonde hair, a boy with dark hair, and a girl with brown hair, are smiling and looking up. They are wearing casual clothing like denim jackets and sweaters. The image has a soft, slightly desaturated tone. A white rectangular border is overlaid on the image, containing the text.

Continuing the Momentum



**Centering the Voices of
Lived Experience**

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Lived Experience

Child Welfare Parent Leader Group began in 2021.

- Meets monthly to give input on various DCF efforts.
- Actively engaged in Initial Assessment and Safety Revisions projects.
- Ability to give input on the legislation.
- Initiated Parent Information Project.



Lived Experience

Parent Information Project

- Designed by the CW Parent Leader Group
- Develop **key information** that parents need to know when engaged with Child Welfare.
- **Parent Leaders** spearhead effort.
- **Collaboration** with stakeholders to include county stakeholders, tribal partners and child welfare professionals.
- **Research** efforts across states around information provided to parents involved with CPS.

Parents can [submit an interest form](#)





Change in Action

“I feel that the Parent Leader Group is an innovation...it’s a great way for people to be heard and not feel silenced because of stigma.”



Supporting Children & Families In-Home

Safety Revisions

Key Objectives include:

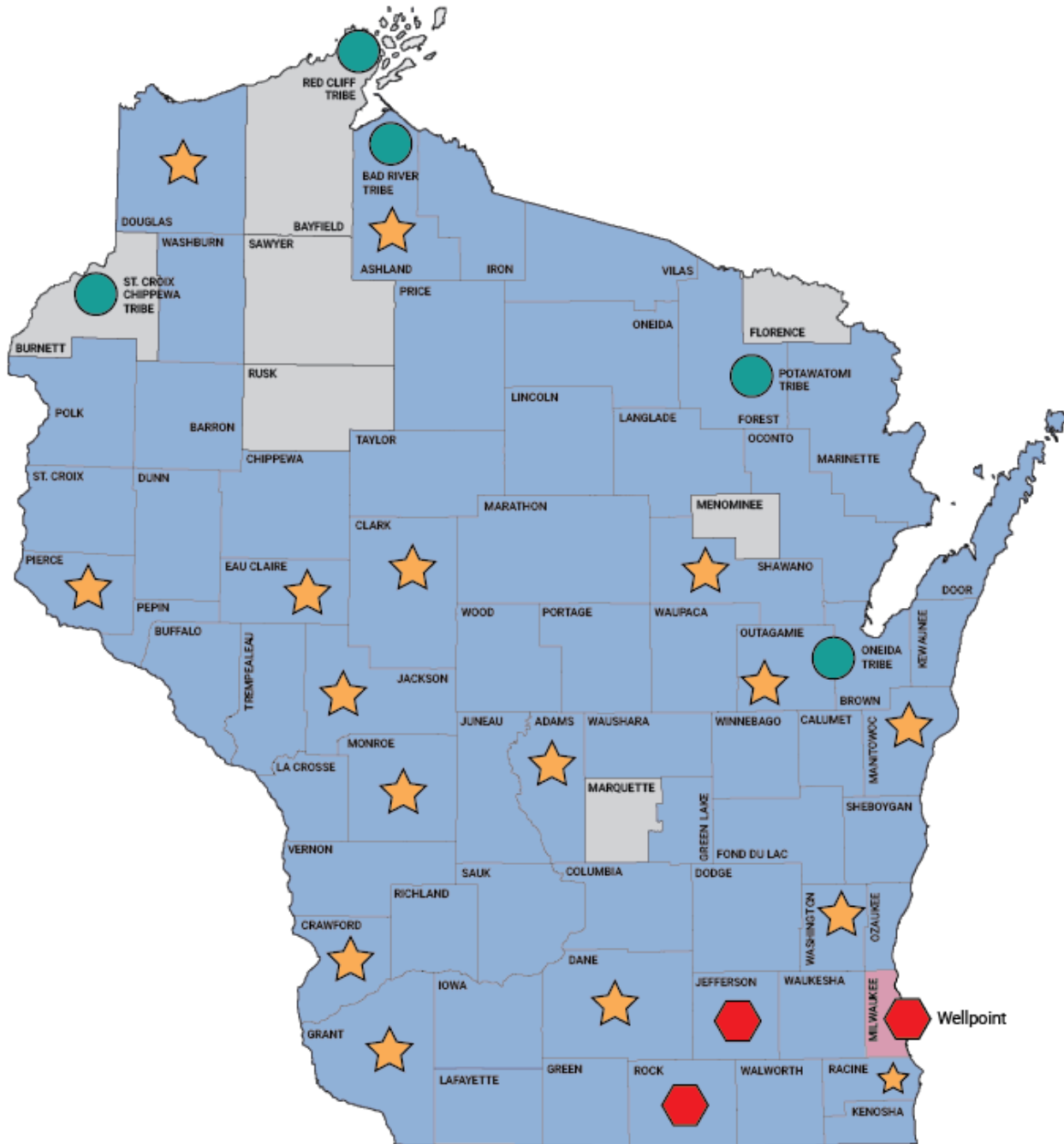
- Refine the safety assessment process and danger threat language to be **culturally responsive, equitable** and **just**.
- Refine and improve the safety assessment and planning framework that facilitates upfront safety decisions that are informed by **engagement with families** to guide the case process and keep more children and youth safely in their homes.
- Minor language changes to 12 danger threats in **June '22**.
- Watch DCF Website for upcoming training opportunities, FAQ's & other updates.
- Future recommendations in development **for 2023-2024**.



Family Legal Advocacy and Supports


- Provide quality legal support and advocacy to prevent unnecessary separation of children from their homes.
- Before a CHIPS/JIPS is filed.
- 3-year pilot with targeted start date of **September 2022**.
- Establishing partnerships with CCIP, UW Law Clinic, School of Social Work, and counties to create a multidisciplinary team.
- Identifying the scope of services and legal supports available.








Innovations Across Wisconsin 2022 Agencies


Key

 TSSF Participating County
Child Welfare Agency

 TSSF Participating Tribal
Child Welfare Agency

 Intensive In-Home Services

 Parents Supporting Parents

 Youth Justice





Change in Action

“Due to the local housing crisis, we knew we had to begin to do something different. We were able to add a local house...which we made available to...prevent removal. **The unique examples are endless, and we have not seen a child enter care after utilizing our “little house”.**



Supporting Children & Families **Out-of-Home**

Fueling Innovations with Casey Family Programs

- Innovative **kinship** and **foster** care options for adolescents.
- Child by child approach to **bring kids back in state**, closer to their homes and communities.





CERTIFIED



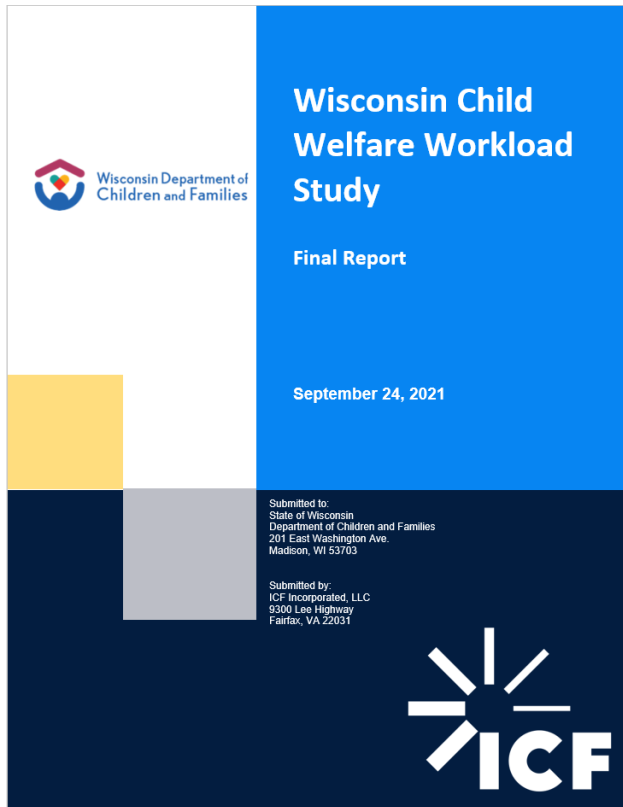
Change in Action

“This youth made tremendous progress during her placement and really began taking pride in her ability to cope...She is happy to be with her mother once again.”



Supporting the Child Welfare **Workforce**

Child Welfare Workload Study



- Purpose: complete a representative, statewide child welfare staffing and workload evaluation.
- Start: August 2019, Finished: 2021.
- Informational memo + final report published 3/16/22.
- Study provided information on case time for child welfare practice areas, suggested caseload standards, and a tool that can be used to estimate local staffing needs.
- Webinars information will be available on DCF's webpage.



Permanency/Case Plan Project

- Improve efficiency and documentation.
- What can you expect from these changes?
 1. Content for plans remain the same
 2. New order to the plan and reduction in redundancy
 3. Character limits for certain areas on the document
 4. Inclusion of trauma-informed language
- eWiSACWIS roll out will be in June of '22.
- Comprehensive content guide will be available on the Knowledge Web.



Initial Assessment (IA) Project



- Improve the efficiency of the IA process and documentation.
- Identified enhancements to eWiSACWIS based on stakeholder feedback.
- Conducted a survey of child welfare professionals to gather feedback.
- Next steps will include:
 - Compiling the suggestions and feedback with the goal of creating a list of potential recommendations for improvement
 - Continuing to include stakeholders throughout the process





Supporting Child Welfare Agencies



CHILD WELFARE
TRANSFORMATION

WISCONSIN
NEWS

WISCONSIN
NEWS

WISCONSIN
NEWS

PAY ATTENTION TO
DANGER THREATS

CREATE SUPPORTIVE
SOLUTIONS

COLLABORATE WITH
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

LEAN ON
YOUR TEAM

PARTNER
WITH FAMILIES

COMMUNITY
SUPPORT

Increasing
Community-Based
Services

Building
Family-Based
Environments

Improving
Group Care

Supporting
Our
Workforce

County
Change
Management
Support

FAMILY!
I'M COMFORTABLE
REACHING OUT FOR
THE HELP I NEED.

Supervisor!
I HAVE THE TOOLS
I NEED TO SUPPORT
MY TEAM.

CHILD WELFARE
PROFESSIONALS!
I KNOW MY DECISIONS
ARE BACKED BY MY
LEADERS AND AGENCY.

WE'VE
UNDERSTOOD HOW
WE CAN MAKE
THINGS BETTER.

Supporting Communication w/ External Stakeholders



Engaging Community Stakeholders Project

- Partnering with Root, Casey Family Programs and WCHSA.
- Led by counties/DMCPS.
- 8 county directors appointed by WCHSA.

Project Purpose:

- Community stakeholder involvement will be a critical support in the success of our system transformation. To effectively communicate and collaborate with the groups, we must understand their motivators, mindsets, and communication preferences.





Change in Action

“Instead of sending children somewhere else to be ‘fixed’, we really needed our whole community to wrap around how **all of us** keep kids here. ”



Change in Action

“We held an Aadizookaan storytelling event and made a new collaborative partner with our radio station that helped us livestream the event.”

Where are we headed...

- Creative efforts to keep children in-home & prevent removals
- Increased partnership w/family's extended support network
- Renewed emphasis on partnering w/ community supports
- Continued prioritization of family settings for placement
- Congregate care stays that are intensive & short-term
- Funding key priorities to support local innovation



How Can We Support In-Home Planning in Court?

Ask key questions:

- What can we do to remove the danger /safety threat instead of the child?
- Can someone the child knows move into the home to support the family?
- Can the caregiver and the child move together to a relative's home?
- Can the child temporarily move in with a relative or like-kin?

Center Voices of Lived Experience

[Wisconsin Bar News](#)



A group of diverse children are playing outdoors in a park-like setting. They are all smiling and reaching out towards the camera. Several bubbles are floating in the air around them. The background is filled with green trees and foliage. The entire image has a semi-transparent dark overlay, and the text is centered within a white rectangular border.

Working Together to Put Families First



Change in Action

“It’s really looking at people through a lens of hope... It’s really believing that families are capable of change. We are all more likely to succeed if people believe in us.”

Q+A



Thank you

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www.dcf.wisconsin.gov



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families