

Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services Independent Monitoring Report

2023 Annual Report January-December 2023

Published March 2024

Executive Summary and Highlights

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) and its Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) are focused on achieving long-lasting results that improve the safety, permanency and wellbeing of children and families in Milwaukee County. During the period from January through December 2023, DMCPS performed the following:

Access and Initial Assessment / Independent Investigations

- A total of **14,967** child protective service reports were received, of which **6,321** (**42.2%**) were screenedin for further initial assessment/independent investigation.
- A total of 6,076 initial assessments and 102 independent investigations were completed.
- At the start of 2023, there were **73** initial assessment specialists (IAS) employed with DMCPS. From January through December 2023, **27** IAS were hired, and **23** IAS separated employment.

Safety

- The case management agencies made face-to-face contact on **18,647** of the expected **19,451(95.9%)** monthly face-to-face contacts.
- A total of **54** children re-entered out-of-home care (OHC) within 12 months of their prior OHC episode.
- While in OHC, **12** children were victims of maltreatment by their provider.

Permanency

- On average per month, **58** children entered OHC, and **62** children exited OHC, during 2023.
- On average per month, **1,484** of **1,746 (85.0%)** children in OHC were placed in a family-like setting.
- On average per month, 682 of 1,746 (39.1%) children in OHC were placed with a relative.
- On average per month, **628** of **1,746 (36.0%)** children were in OHC for more than 24 months.
- Over the course of 2023, **744** children exited from an OHC episode.
- Of the **324** children who reunified during 2023, **135** (**41.7**%) reunified within 12 months of entering OHC.

Well-being

- On average per month, **1,547** of **1,757** (**88.0**%) children were current with their annual medical exams.
- On average per month, **1,031** of **1,437** (**71.7**%) children were current with their annual dental exams.

Child Welfare Case Manager Workforce

- At the start of 2023, there were 143 child welfare case managers (CWCMs). From January through December 2023, 80 CWCMs were hired, and 59 CWCMs separated employment. This resulted in 164 CWCMs at the end of 2023 and an annual turnover rate of 26.5%.
- On average per month, **67.8** of **155.3** (**43.7**%) CWCMs had more than 15 children on their caseload.

This report is a cumulative performance summary for DMCPS. Changes in the data between this report and prior reports reflect updates due to validation procedures as well as changes in reporting structure.

1. Introduction

2. Access and Initial Assessment / Independent Investigations

- 2.1 Child Protective Service Reports Volume and Response Time
- 2.2 Initial Assessments / Independent Investigations Completed and Pending
- 2.3 Initial Assessments Specialists Staffing

3. Safety

- 3.1 Face-to-Face Contact
- 3.2 Re-entry
- 3.3 Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care

4. Permanency

- 4.1 Entries into Out-of-Home Care
- 4.2 Placement Groups
- 4.3 Foster Homes
- 4.4 Length of Stay
- 4.5 Permanency Outcomes

5. Well-being

5.1 Annual Medical and Dental Exams

6. Child Welfare Case Manager Workforce

- 6.1 Child Welfare Case Manager Turnover
- 6.2 Child Welfare Case Manager with a Caseload of More than 15 Children

1. Introduction

The DMCPS Independent Monitoring Report (IMR) provides pertinent information on key areas of the child welfare system in Milwaukee County. The report includes information about Access, Initial Assessment, independent investigations, outcomes related to safety, permanency, and well-being, and the workforce. The IMR is intended to serve as a mechanism for maintaining transparency to both internal and external stakeholders while providing information about the overall functioning of Milwaukee County's child welfare system.

2. Access and Initial Assessment / Independent Investigations

2.1 Child Protective Service Reports - Volume and Response Time

From January through December 2023, DMCPS received a total of **14,967** unique child protective services (CPS) reports. This is a **6.8%** increase in volume when compared to the 14,014 unique CPS reports from 2022. Figure 1 shows the total number of CPS reports received from January through December over the last five years (2019 – 2023). The majority (72.4%) of reports were received from mandated reporters.

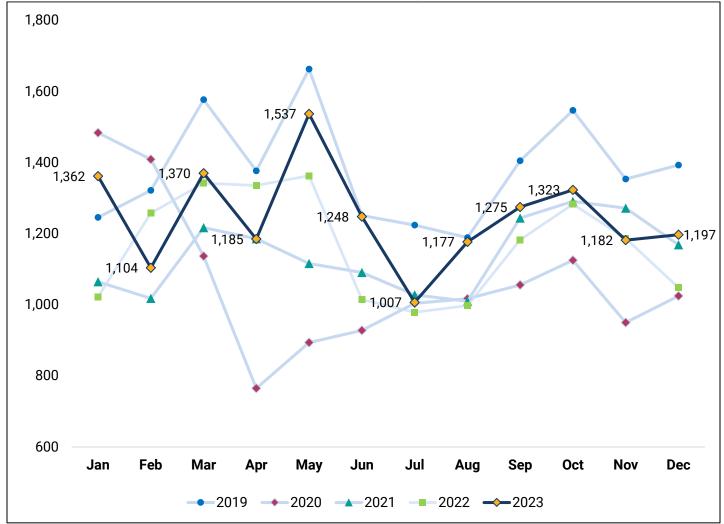


Figure 1: Total Child Protective Services Reports Received (January-December 2019–2023)

On average per month, DMCPS received **1,247** CPS reports from January through December 2023. DMCPS screened-in an average of **527** CPS reports for further assessment/independent investigation per month, resulting in an average screen-in rate of **42.2%**. The screen-in rate is 5.4 percentage points less than 2022 (and the lowest screen-in rate reported dating back to 2007).¹ As a result, DMCPS received 953 more CPS reports in 2023 than 2022, but, screened in 371 less CPS reports than 2022 (5.5% decrease). Figure 2 shows the number of screened-in and screened-out CPS reports by month during 2023.

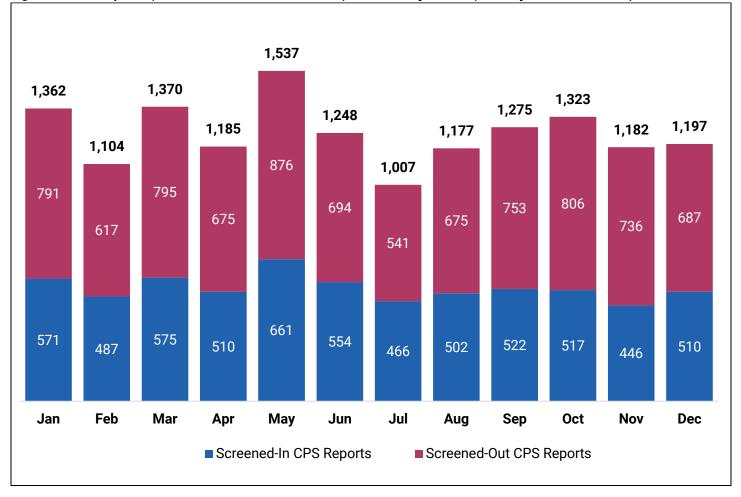




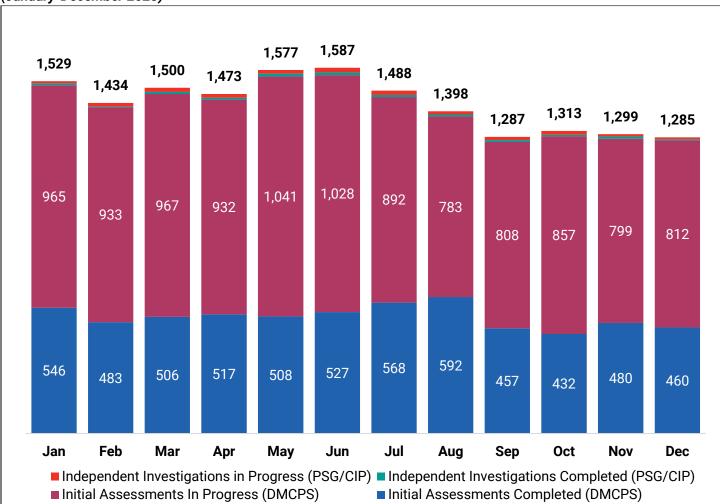
Table 1 shows the response time (by percentage) of CPS reports that were screened-in by month during 2023. On average per month, **22.0**% of CPS reports were screened-in with a same day response time, and an average of **58.5**% were screened-in with a response time of within five business days.

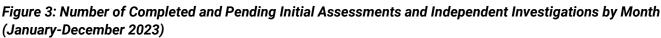
Response	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aua	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Time	Jali	reb	Iviai	Арі	iviay	Juli	Jui	Aug	Seh	001	NUV	Dec
Same Day	22.9%	26.1%	23.0%	23.7%	19.2%	20.9%	20.4%	21.5%	19.5%	23.4%	22.2%	21.0%
Within 24- 48 Hours	18.0%	16.8%	20.3%	21.8%	23.4%	20.0%	21.7%	17.5%	18.8%	18.0%	17.9%	19.8%
Within Five Business Days	59.0%	57.1%	56.7%	54.5%	57.3%	59.0%	57.9%	61.0%	61.7%	58.6%	59.9%	59.2%

¹ Data is available back to 2007. Screen-in rates ranged from 67.5% (2007) to 42.2% (2023). The rate decrease is consistent with statewide trends. WI Department of Children and Families

2.2 Initial Assessments and Independent Investigations - Completed and Pending

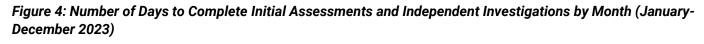
From January through December 2023, there were **6,076** initial assessments completed by initial assessment specialists (IAS) and **102** independent investigations completed by Professional Services Group/Community Impact Programs (PSG/CIP).² On average per month, **506** initial assessments were completed by **65** IAS and **nine** independent investigations were completed by **three** PSG/CIP staff. Figure 3 shows the number of completed and pending initial assessments and independent investigations by month during 2023.

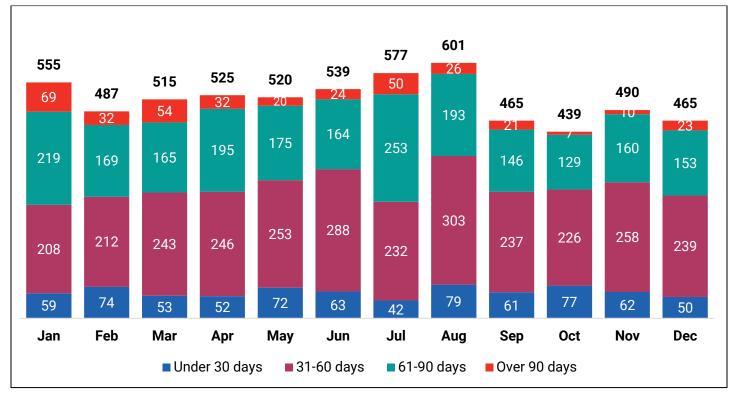




 ² Professional Services Group (PSG)/Community Impact Programs (CIP) staff conduct independent investigations on behalf of DMCPS.
 WI Department of Children and Families
 Bureau of Performance Management
 Page 6 of 18
 Data Sources: eWiSACWIS; Agency Information

Initial assessments and independent investigations are required to be completed within 60 days of the referral. Figure 4 shows the number of days to complete initial assessments and independent investigations between January and December 2023. In 2023, **3,689 (59.7%)** of the **6,178** initial assessments and independent investigations were completed in 60 days or less.





2.3 Initial Assessment Specialists Staffing

At the beginning of 2023, DMCPS employed **73** initial assessment specialists (IAS). Over the course of 2023, **27** IAS were hired, and **23** IAS separated employment resulting in a **23%** annual turnover rate.³ Table 2 provides the monthly number of IAS at the beginning of the month, the number hired during the month, the number separating employment during the month, and the annual turnover rate for 2023.

Table 2: Number of IAS at the Start of the Month, the Hires and Separations by Month, and the Annual Turnover Rate
(January – December 2023)

Turnover	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
IAS Start of Month	73	72	69	65	73	72	71	72	69	77	80	78
IAS Hires	3	0	0	9	0	0	3	0	9	3	0	0
IAS Separations ⁴	4	3	4	1	1	1	2	3	1	0	2	1
Annual Turnover %												23%

WI Department of Children and Families Bureau of Performance Management

³ Turnover rate is the number of IAS who exited employment divided by the number of IAS at the beginning of the year plus the number of IAS hired during the reporting period.

⁴Separations include Promotions, Resignations, Retirements, Terminations, and Transfers.

3. Safety

3.1 Face-to-Face Contact by the Case Management Agencies

During 2023, **18,647** (**95.9%**) of the expected **19,451** face-to-face contacts (FFC) were completed by the case management agencies. Table 3 shows the number of expected and completed face-to-face contacts and the percent of completed face-to-face contact by month.⁵

Table 3: Number of Expected and Completed Face-to-Face Contact by Month (January-December 2023)

FFC	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of Children Receiving FFC	1,568	1,509	1,565	1,566	1,558	1,553	1,551	1,545	1,543	1,571	1,561	1,557
Number of Children Requiring FFC	1,649	1,614	1,630	1,629	1,630	1,637	1,603	1,608	1,598	1,624	1,618	1,611
Percent of Children Receiving a FFC	95.1%	93.5%	96.0%	96.1%	95.6%	94.9%	96.8%	96.1%	96.6%	96.7%	96.5%	96.6%

3.2 Re-Entry

A total of **54** children re-entered OHC within 12 months of a prior episode in OHC over the course of 2023. This is an increase of 19 (54.3%) children when compared to 2022.⁶ Table 4 shows the number of re-entries by re-entry month in 2023 and time between exit and re-entry.

Table 4: Number of Children who Re-Entered OHC by Month (January-December 2023)

Time Before Re-Entry Group	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2023 Total
0 - 2 Months	2	0	3	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	12
3 - 6 Months	0	2	3	1	2	2	2	0	3	2	1	2	20
7 - 9 Months	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	9
10 - 12 Months	1	0	3	2	3	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	13
Total	6	3	10	5	5	4	6	2	6	4	1	2	54

⁵ This measures one face-to-face contact per month; additional face-to-face contacts are required based on case circumstances.

⁶ 35 children re-entered OHC within 12 months from January-December 2022. WI Department of Children and Families

Bureau of Performance Management

3.3. Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care

During 2023, **12** children were victims of maltreatment by their provider while in OHC. Table 5 shows the month of maltreatment, the child's age, the maltreatment type, and the maltreater's relationship to the victim.

Child Victim	/ictim Month 7		Maltreatment Type	Maltreater Relationship to Victim
1	March	13	Physical Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
2	April	2	Physical Abuse	Court-Ordered Kinship (COK)
3	May	11	Sexual Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
4	May	13	Sexual Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
5	May	13	Sexual Abuse	Treatment Foster Home (Non-Relative)
6	August	3	Physical Abuse	Foster Home (Non-Relative)
7	August	5	Physical Abuse	Foster Home (Non-Relative)
8	November	4	Neglect and Physical Abuse	Foster Home (Non-Relative)
9	December	1	Neglect	Court-Ordered Kinship (COK)
10	December	6	Neglect	Unlicensed (Non-Relative)
11	December	7	Neglect	General Foster Home (Relative)
12	December	11	Neglect	Unlicensed (Non-Relative)

 Table 5: Child Victim by Month (January-December 2023), Child's Age, Maltreatment Type, and Maltreaters'

 Relationship to Victim

4. Permanency

4.1 Entries into Out-of-Home Care

At the beginning of 2023, there were **1,802** children in OHC. On average per month, **58** children entered OHC, and **62** children exited OHC during 2023. As a result, there were **1,721** children in OHC at the end of 2023, a reduction of **81 (4.5%)** from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. Figure 5 shows the number of children entering and exiting OHC by month.

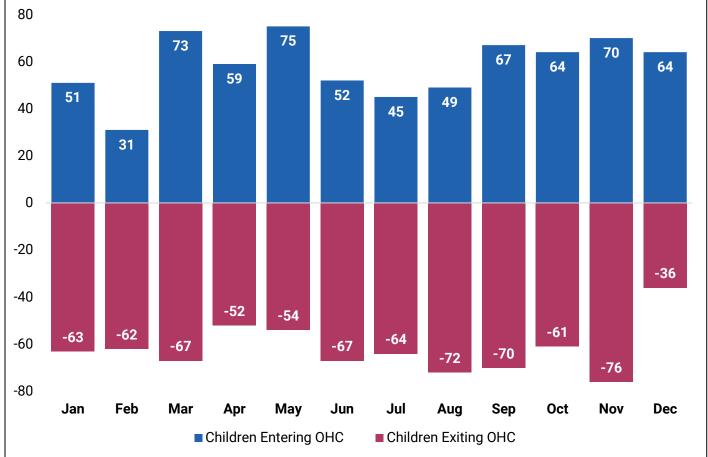


Figure 5: Number of Children Entering and Exiting Out-of-Home Care by Month (January-December 2023)

4.2 Placement Groups

On average per month, there were **1,746** children in OHC between January and December 2023. The placement types are divided into three groups: family like (foster home, kinship care, treatment foster home, unlicensed non-relatives, trial reunification), congregate care (group home, residential care center, shelter), and other (detention, institutions, missing from OHC, supervised independent living). Figure 6 shows the number of children in OHC by placement group and month during 2023. On average, **85.0%** of children in OHC were placed in a family like setting, **9.6%** were placed in a congregate care setting, and **5.4%** were placed in other settings.



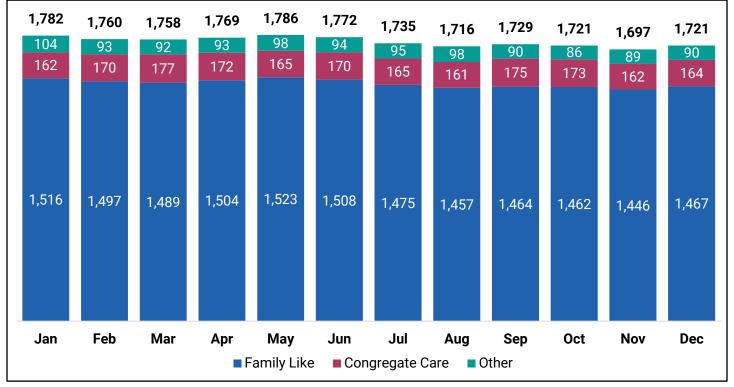


Table 6 shows the number of children in OHC by placement group, age group, and month during 2023. On average per month, there were **533** children aged 12 years or older in OHC. Of these older children, **284** (**53.3**%) were placed in a family like setting, **157** (**29.5**%) were placed in congregate care, and **92** (**17.3**%) were in other care. Of all the children in OHC, on average per month, **682** (**39.1**%) of placements were with relatives.⁷

Placement Group & Age Group of Children	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Мау	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	AVG
Family Like	1,516	1,497	1,489	1,504	1,523	1,508	1,475	1,457	1,464	1,462	1,446	1,467	1,484
0 to 2	437	437	438	427	433	426	417	405	407	400	406	415	421
3 to 4	233	227	231	234	235	239	238	231	234	223	210	219	230
5 to 11	562	553	552	554	552	551	532	530	542	554	552	559	549
12 to 15	193	189	183	204	210	197	199	197	191	186	183	178	193
16+	91	91	85	85	93	95	89	94	90	99	95	96	92
Congregate Care	162	170	177	172	165	170	165	161	175	173	162	164	168
5 to 11	6	6	8	10	13	11	12	13	16	14	15	14	12
12 to 15	80	87	87	84	78	79	73	74	81	83	77	78	80
16+	76	77	82	78	74	80	80	74	78	76	70	72	76
Other	104	93	92	93	98	94	95	98	90	86	89	90	94
0 to 2	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	1
5 to 11	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
12 to 15	33	27	28	28	29	27	22	27	26	26	23	26	27
16+	67	63	61	64	68	65	72	71	62	59	65	63	65
Total	1,782	1,760	1,758	1,769	1,786	1,772	1,735	1,716	1,729	1,721	1,697	1,721	1,746

Table 6: Number of Children in OHC b	v Placement Group Age Grour	and Month (Ianuar	v-December 2023)
	у пасетет втоир, муе втоир	, anu monui (Januai	y-Deceniner 2023)

⁷ Relative as defined in §48.02(15)

WI Department of Children and Families Bureau of Performance Management

4.3 Foster Homes

During 2023, the average number of open foster homes was **519**, a total of **167** providers were newly licensed, and **211** providers were closed. Table 7 shows the number of providers licensed as new foster homes, the number of providers closed, and the resulting monthly number of foster homes.

Foster Homes	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Foster Homes at the End of the Month	542	536	536	529	526	529	519	507	503	505	497	497
New Foster Homes	21	21	12	10	18	11	13	13	7	17	11	13
Closed Foster Homes	19	23	16	17	18	9	21	24	15	18	15	16

Table 7: Number of Foster Homes by Month (January–December 2023)

Note: Differences between the number of foster homes at the end of the month and the number of foster homes at the beginning of the following month could be the results of belated data entry and/or pending work.

The number of foster homes at the end of the year decreased during each of the last five years: 708 (2018), 651 (2019), 640 (2020), 594 (2021), 548 (2022), and **497 (**2023). This reversed a trend from the prior three years (2014 through 2017) when the average number of new foster homes exceeded the number of closed foster homes. Figure 7 shows the net gain/loss of foster homes over the last ten years (2014 through 2023).⁸

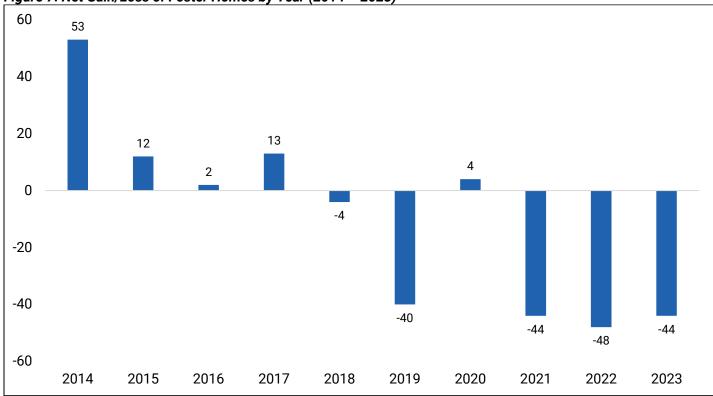


Figure 7: Net Gain/Loss of Foster Homes by Year (2014 – 2023)

⁸ Net Gain/Loss was calculated by subtracting closed foster homes from new foster homes by year.
 WI Department of Children and Families
 Bureau of Performance Management
 Page 12 of 18
 Data Sc

4.4 Length of Stay

On average per month, **628** of **1,746** (**36.0**%) children were in OHC for more than 24 months in 2023. This is an improvement from 2022.⁹ Figure 8 shows the total number of children who were in OHC broken out by the number of children in OHC for 24 or fewer months and more than 24 months. The percentage of children in OHC for more than 24 months remained stable throughout 2023.

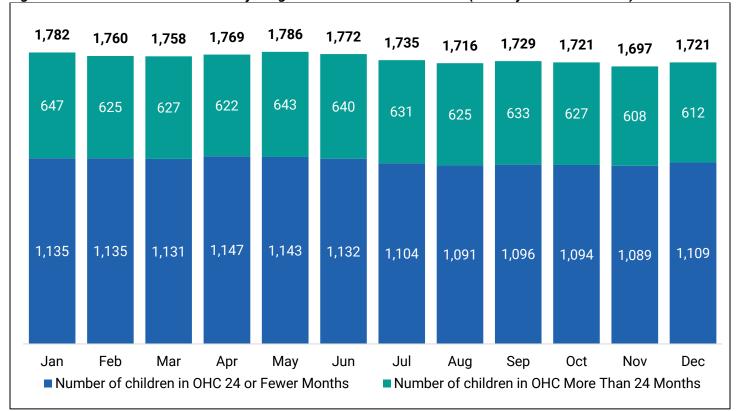


Figure 8: Number of Children in OHC by Length of Time in OHC and Month (January–December 2023)

 ⁹ From January through December 2022, an average of 697 of the 1,854 (37.6%) children were in OHC for more than 24 months.
 WI Department of Children and Families
 Bureau of Performance Management
 Page 13 of 18
 Data Sources: eWiSACWIS; Agency Information

4.5 Permanency Outcomes

A total of **744** children exited OHC during 2023. Figure 9 shows that **324** (**43.5**%) of children were reunified, **150** (**20.2**%) of children had a transfer of guardianship (TOG), and **180** (**24.2**%) children were adopted.

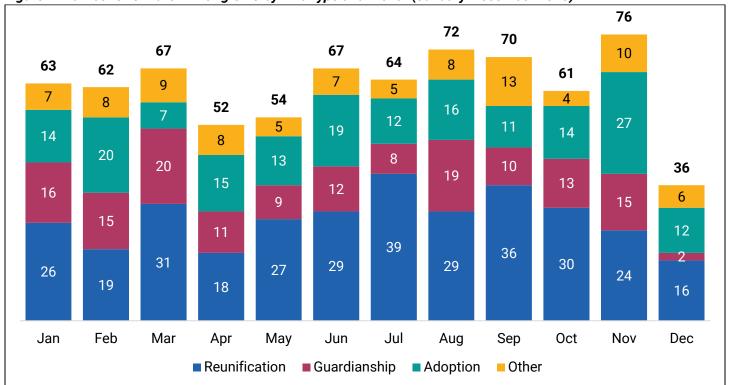


Figure 9: Number of Children Exiting OHC by Exit Type and Month (January-December 2023)

Table 8 shows the length of time that children were in OHC prior to exiting during 2023, grouped by monthly intervals. Of the **324** children who reunified, **135** (**41.7**%) reunified within 12 months of entering OHC. Of the **150** children who had a TOG, **64** (**42.7**%) achieved permanency within 24 months or less. Of the **180** children who were adopted, **49** (**27.2**%) were adopted within 24 months or less.

	<= 1	2 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 24	25 - 36	37 - 48	>= 49
Exit Reason	Month	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months
Reunification	18	12	38	30	37	116	36	19	18
Guardianship	0	0	3	1	4	56	47	27	12
Adoption	0	0	0	9	7	33	43	32	56
Other	1	1	5	2	5	20	13	17	26
Total	19	13	46	42	53	225	139	95	112

 Table 8: Number of Children Exiting OHC during 2023, by Exit Type and Length of Time in OHC (January-December 2023)

*Other includes age of majority, custody transfer, missing from OHC

5. Well-being

5.1 Annual Medical and Dental Exams

During 2023, a monthly average of **1,757** children were expected to have an annual medical exam and **1,547** (**88.0**%) were completed and documented. In 2023, **1,437** children were expected to have an annual dental exam and **1,031** (**71.7**%) were completed and documented. Figure 10 provides the percent of expected annual medical and dental exams that were completed during 2023.

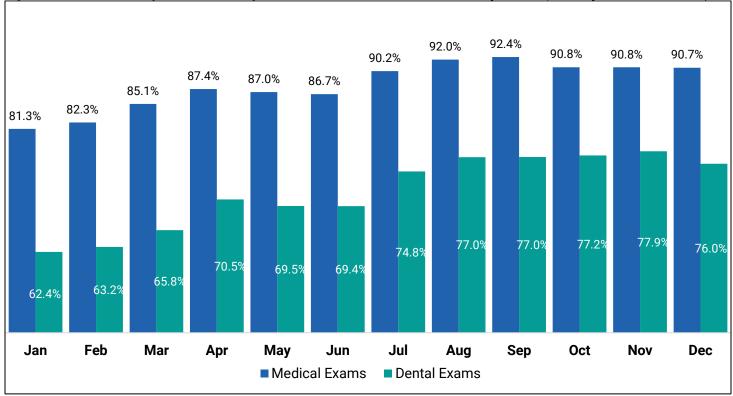


Figure 10: Percent of Expected and Completed Annual Medical/Dental Exams by Month (January–December 2023)

6. Child Welfare Case Manager Workforce

6.1 Child Welfare Case Manager Turnover

On January 1, 2023, there were **143** child welfare case managers (CWCMs). Over the course of 2023, **80** CWCMs were hired and **59** CWCMs separated employment, resulting in a **26.5**% CWCM turnover rate.¹⁰ The turnover rate improved during the last two years and appears to have stabilized from its all-time high in 2021.¹¹ At the end of 2023, there were **164** CWCMs, a net gain of 21 during 2023. Table 9 provides the monthly number of CWCMs at the beginning of the month, the number of CWCMs hired, the number of CWCMs separating employment, and the annual CWCM turnover rate for 2023.

 Table 9: Number of Child Welfare Case Managers at the Start of the Month, the Hires and Separations by Month, and

 the Annual Turnover Rate (January-December 2023)

Turnover	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Start of Month	143	159	163	159	161	163	168	173	171	166	166	163
Hires	21	9	5	7	3	9	9	4	1	3	5	4
Separations	5	5	9	5	1	4	4	6	6	3	8	3
Annual Turnover %												26.5%

¹⁰ Turnover rate is the number of CWCMs who exited employment divided by the number of CWCMs at the beginning of the year plus the number of CWCMs hired during the reporting period.

 $^{^{11}}$ The turnover rates the last two years were 36.7% (2022) and 45.8% (2021).

WI Department of Children and Families

Bureau of Performance Management

6.2 Child Welfare Case Managers with a Caseload of More than 15 Children

One measure of workload intensity is the proportion of CWCMs with more than 15 children on their caseload. On average, from January through December 2023, 67.8 of 155.3 (43.7%) CWCMs had more than 15 children on their caseload. This is an improvement from 2022.¹² Table 10 shows the number of CWCMs with cases, the number of CWCMs with more than 15 children on their caseload, and the percent of CWCMs with more than 15 children on their caseload.

Caseloads with 16+ Children	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
CWCMs with Caseload of >15 Children	73	71	72	68	68	65	69	68	60	65	67	68
CWCMs Carrying Cases	135	142	149	159	156	153	165	163	162	167	158	155
% CWCMs with Caseload >15 Children	54.1%	50.0%	48.3%	42.8%	43.6%	42.5%	41.8%	41.7%	37.0%	38.9%	42.4%	43.9%

Table 10: Number and Percent of CWCMs with a Caseload of More than 15 Children by Month (January-December 2023)

¹² The average from January-December 2022 was 81 of 129 (62.8%) of CWCMs had more than 15 children on their caseload. WI Department of Children and Families Bureau of Performance Management Page 16 of 18

7. Appendix-Data Sources

Measure	Report Name	Report Type
2.1 Child Protective Service Reports - Volume and Response Time	SM02X100 - Access Report (Enhanced)	eWReports - Monthly Batch
2.2 Initial Assessments / Independent Investigations - Completed and Pending	SM06A109 - Initial Assessment Report	eWReports - Monthly Batch Agency Verification
2.3 Initial Assessments Specialists Staffing	IAS Hires Exits and Turnover DMCPS Organizational Chart	Manual Agency Verification
3.1 Face-to-Face Contact	CM06X103 - BMCW Face to Face Contacts	eWReports - Monthly Batch
3.2 Re-Entry	SM10A112 - Placement Activity and Detail (Exits Tab)	eWReports - Monthly Batch Agency Verification
3.3 Maltreatment in Out-of-Home Care	SM06A109 - Initial Assessment Report Independent Investigation Database	eWReports - Monthly Batch
4.1 Entries into Out-of-Home Care	SM10A114 - Permanency Outcomes	eWReports - Monthly Batch
4.2 Placement Groups	SM10A113 - Placement Count	eWReports - Monthly Batch
4.3 Foster Homes	PM02A100 - BMCW New Foster Homes	eWReports - Monthly Batch
4.4 Length of Stay	SM10A113 - Placement Count	eWReports - Monthly Batch
4.5 Permanency Outcomes	SM10A114 – Permanency Outcomes	eWReports - Monthly Batch Agency Verification
5.1 Annual Medical and Dental Exams	CM01X107 - BMCW Medical- Dental Initial/Annual Examinations	eWReports - Monthly Batch
6.1 Child Welfare Case Manager Turnover	Agency – Turnover-Caseloads	Manual Agency Verification
6.2 Child Welfare Case Manager with a Caseload of More than 15 Children	Agency – Turnover-Caseloads	Manual Agency Verification

For more information and links to historical reports, visit <u>DMCPS Data | Wisconsin Department of Children and Families</u> dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/data