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Division of Safety and Permanence

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September 11, 2019

Stacia Burrows, Coordinator  
Marathon County Citizen Review Panel  
Marathon County Department of Social Services  
400 East Thomas Street  
Wausau, WI 54403

Dear Ms. Burrows:

Thank you for your timely submission of Marathon County Citizen Review Panel's annual report. This letter responds to the citizen review panel annual report response requirements set forth in the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

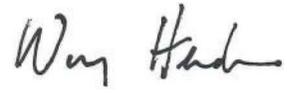
The Citizen Review Panel submitted one recommendation to improve child protection services at the state level. As submitted, the recommendation to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) is below, and followed by response:

1. *Accessible access via DCF website, currently there is no link on the state website that allows individuals interested in becoming a foster parent to provide their contact information. Other states have a link to submit an individual's contact information in order to have follow up about becoming a foster parent. Barriers need to be removed that currently hinder potential foster parents from exploring and engaging in the licensing process for foster care.*  
*Examples of barriers include, DCF website is difficult to navigate to find information on foster care and is challenging to secure contact information on who local contacts are to inquire about foster care and how to get started.*

The DCF appreciates the panel's careful attention to barriers that may be faced by individuals interested in becoming licensed foster parents. We deeply value our foster parents and acknowledge their vital role in partnering with parents statewide to engage in the shared parenting process. We have forwarded this recommendation to the Division's Bureau of Permanence & Out-of-Home Care (BPOHC) for further consideration. BPOHC will be evaluating the entire out-of-home care continuum, in light of Family First Prevention and Services Act. This process will include robust stakeholder feedback and will identify areas in which the system can improve for children in out-of-home care. Foster parents are a key part of the out-of-home care continuum and removing barriers to become foster parents is an important issue to address. This recommendation will be included in the out-of-home care continuum conversation for consideration and prioritization.

Thank you for your panel's continued dedication and efforts on behalf of Wisconsin children and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Henderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Henderson  
Division Administrator