

Division of Safety and Permanence

DSP Numbered Memo Series 2026-25

June 22, 2026

To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator
DCF Area Administrators
Child Placing Agency Directors
Child Welfare Agency Directors
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Group Home Providers
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: John Elliott
Administrator



Re: Revisions to the Youth Justice (YJ) Standards related to in-home case planning

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to establish and communicate updates made to the following areas of the Youth Justice Standards:

1. Youth Justice Standards
 - a. Introduction and Purpose
 - b. Case Process and Documentation
 - b. Juvenile in Need of Protection and Services (JIPS)
 - c. Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI)

BACKGROUND

In the 2018 [Wisconsin Children and Family Service Review \(CFSR\)](#), Wisconsin received an overall rating of “area needing improvement” for item 20: Written Case Plan. The report noted that a significant number of parents were not fully engaged in jointly developing case plans and case plans were not tailored to families’ specific needs.

In response to this finding, the Division of Safety and Permanence identified the need to enhance quality case planning (Wis. Stat. s. [938.485\(6\)\(b\)](#)). This effort sought extensive feedback from lived experts, youth justice professionals, Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Directors, and Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA). The need for

family-centered decision making was identified as a central theme in the feedback received. Youth justice professionals identified the need for clearer guidance and tools as to how to engage families in case planning.

The [Youth Justice Standards](#) have been updated to include additional requirements for a Family Case Plan for children/youth receiving services under JIPS jurisdiction in Wisconsin. Further, the Youth Justice Standards have been revised to align with best practices for in-home case planning which “will provide accountability and services to youth and families in the system that prepares them to thrive” ([Wisconsin Youth Justice Vision and Strategic Plan](#)).

POLICY AND PROCEDURE REQUIREMENTS

Areas of notable practice and procedural changes include:

1. Added requirement for in-home Family Case Plans to be used for in-home JIPS cases that identifies services arranged and agreed upon by the youth, parent/guardian, and youth justice professional.
2. Defined expectation that the in-home Family Case Plan document be created in collaboration with the family, their identified natural supports, tribes (if applicable), and the assigned child welfare and youth justice professionals.
3. Defined number of goals to be developed on the in-home Family Case Plan.
4. Defined requirements for obtaining signatures on the in-home Family Case Plan to include parents and youth once they have reached the age of 12.
5. Updated best practice on reaching consensus on the in-home Family Case Plan.
6. Defined and required the use of the Family Teaming process as a style of engagement to collaborate with the family and identify natural supports in youth justice cases, including both JIPS and delinquency cases.
7. Provided guidance to use the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI) on delinquency cases only. The YASI is only validated for delinquency referrals; therefore, it should not be used to assess risk for youth who have been referred for JIPS cases.

Areas of language changes:

1. Updated language throughout to center family voice and collaboration.

A full summary of the updates made to the Youth Justice Standards is attached (See Attachment 1: [Summary of Youth Justice Standards June 2026 Revisions](#)).

eWISACWIS DOCUMENTATION

Changes to eWiSACWIS documentation related to revisions made to the [Youth Justice Standards](#) will be effective as of June 22, 2026. The changes in functionality will do the following:

- Promote the Family Teaming process as an engagement strategy throughout the in-home Family Case Plan, including elevating family voice and demonstrated input in the documentation.
- Added signature lines on the in-home Family Case Plan to include parents and youth once they have reached the age of 12.
- Demonstrate collaboration with tribal child welfare professionals, when applicable.
- Connect individual strengths to planning and services section. As of June 22, 2026, the eWiSACWIS functionality will reflect the above in-home Family Case Plan practice changes and improvements to the documentation functionality.

ACTION SUMMARY

Youth justice professionals will need to adhere to all requirements within the Youth Justice Standards. Family Teaming and Family Case Plan supportive materials are available on [DCF's Putting Families First Family Teaming](#) and [DCF's Youth Justice in WI](#) webpages.

Post implementation support opportunities will be available to youth justice professionals. DCF will offer monthly support sessions in July and August 2026. The details regarding the dates and times will be provided to all youth justice professional staff and their supervisors. Updates and DCF technical assistance will also be available at Youth Justice regional meetings and Out-of-Home Care (OHC) office hours.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: DCF Area Administrator

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Youth Justice Policy Coordinator
Bureau of Youth Services

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MEMO WEB SITE: [Wisconsin Child Welfare Policies and Standards](#)

ATTACHMENTS: [Summary of Youth Justice Standards](#)
[Youth Justice Standards 2026](#)