



2015-17 Biennial Budget Priorities

WAFCA is a member association that works to improve the lives of families and children in Wisconsin. Our member agencies provide a wide array of prevention and supportive services such as foster care, in-home support, counseling, and mental health treatment. WAFCA represents over 50 child and family serving agencies and leaders in the field and advocates for the more than 225,000 individuals and families that our members serve each year.

Continue to Improve Access to Mental Health and Health Services

-  Build on the new mental health initiatives advanced last session by investing in school-linked and school-based mental health services through capacity-building grants and Medicaid-funded mental health consultation in schools.
- Protect access to health and mental health services by sustaining support for current BadgerCare eligible populations and increase financial stability of the Medicaid program by accepting federal expansion revenue to derive an estimated \$345 million in savings.
-  Increase access to mental health services and reduce administrative costs for the Medicaid program and providers through targeted prior authorization reforms.
- Support Governor's proposal for expanded treatment alternatives and diversion programs and increased BadgerCare coverage for the treatment component of inpatient substance abuse services.
- Additional budget items WAFCA is tracking:
 - FamilyCare/IRIS Changes: *How will access to services and payment rates be impacted by the significant redesign of the long-term care system? How will the new FamilyCare model respond to local and regional variance in needs and services? (LFB DHS, pg 216, Item #1)*
 - Children's Community Option Program: *Will this new program increase access, maintain the scope of services and reduce waiting lists for children's long-term services? (LFB DHS, pg 216, Item #2)*

Support Stable Families & Strong Community Supports

- Support Governor's proposal to provide \$2 million to care for children who are victims of sex-trafficking.
- Adopt the recommendation of the Department to fund a \$5 million annual increase in Child and Family Aids, the core funding source for critical, mandated child and family services.
-  Increase state funding for Post Adoption Resource Centers and post-adoption therapy services to promote stability in adoptive families and prevent disruptions.

- Support sufficient funding to cover the full cost of extending foster care to age 21 for youth with IEPs, including case management services and support further expansion of the eligibility criteria to enable more youth to benefit from extended care.
- Support proposed statutory change to exempt residential care centers and group homes from requirements to obtain dual licensure as a community-based residential facility in order to care for foster youth to age 21.
- Support continued statewide investment in and expansion of home visitation services.
- Adopt the recommendation of the Department to provide a 2.5% annual increase in foster parent reimbursement.
- Restore targeted grants for child advocacy centers.
- Support Governor’s proposal to provide \$5 million for grants to shelters that help victims of domestic abuse and their families.
- Additional budget items WAFCA is tracking:
 - Child Welfare Safety Services: *How will the \$6.4 million cut impact services intended to keep children safe at home with their family? (LFB DCF, pg 110, Item #19)*

Promote Sound Public Contracting Policies for Child and Family Serving Agencies

-  Clarify state law to permit child and family serving agencies to retain reasonable earnings from government contracts. Retention of earnings is a basic business necessity that incentivizes efficient operations, protects against future losses, and fosters innovation.

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