



WAFCA at Work for You in 2016

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Bringing our expertise to critical conversations. In collaboration with members, WAFCA crafted an issue paper recommending changes in policy and practice to address systemic gaps in services for children with complex needs. This research effort positioned WAFCA to serve as co-facilitator of a broad stakeholder workgroup (including counties, DHS, DCF, OCMH) seeking to build a better continuum of services for children with complex needs.

Amplifying your voice in state level discussions on rule and policy reforms. WAFCA communicated member interests and directly connected members with state administration officials on a range of policies and rules including: serious incident reporting; new rules to implement prudent parenting in out-of-home care; changes to foster parent payment processes; comprehensive day treatment rule revisions; mental health provider Medicaid billing for substance use disorder treatment; and changes to the Allowable Cost Policy Manual.

Securing better payment rates. Our collective advocacy on the Rate Regulation Advisory Committee drew attention to the need for increased funding for out-of-home care to support a quality workforce and improve our state's capacity to serve all of our children, reducing the need for placement of children in other states.

Raising our profile in the state legislature. From mental health reform to adoption supports, WAFCA members were active and visible in the state legislature in 2016. Members testified at hearings on retained surplus, MA reform and adoption, ultimately resulting in successful passage of bills, such as WI Act 294, which removed regulatory barriers to enable expanded access to school-based mental health services.

Leading on new initiatives to expand mental health access in schools. After aligning with the School Mental Health Coalition last legislative session, WAFCA quickly moved into a leadership role, now serving as the administrator of a DPI grant supporting Coalition action in the coming year. Interest in school-based mental health services continued to grow as evidenced by the overcapacity crowd for the June Coalition training featuring best practices and policy advocacy guidance.

Measuring our impact - the Outcomes & Benchmarking

Workgroup. Quality improvement leaders from more than a dozen WAFCA member agencies designed and prepared to launch the “Impact Data – WAFCA Benchmarking Project” that will allow participating agencies to compare their agency’s success with clients to that of other WAFCA agencies.



Forming new partnerships for new member benefits. WAFCA welcomed new affiliations with Relias Learning and MRA -The Management Association, creating new opportunities for members to access needed expertise, and providing new member benefits through discounted services.

Developing leaders and connecting members. WAFCA’s core member events once again presented new perspectives to inform agency leaders and prepare them for the future.

- **Leadership Summit.** National experts trained WAFCA members on the Frame Works Institute model for changing the way we talk about the work of human services to generate greater public support for investments in our services.
- **WAFCA Institute.** Together we employed *Appreciative Inquiry* (AI) to identify the best of our agencies, imagine what could be and then create an environment to achieve that vision. The AI frame informed our Board and membership discussions on WAFCA strategic directions for 2017-2020.
- **Membership Meeting.** Former DHS Assistant Deputy Secretary Bill Hanna along with county and WAFCA leaders provided insight on the *Future of Human Services Financing*.



Advancing joint learning and professional development. WAFCA became an approved continuing education provider of the National Board for Certified Counselors and updated the name of our long-standing continuing education series from SWIP to the WAFCA Continuing Education & Professional Development Program (WAFCA-CE).