

Department of Children and Families Fiscal Update

(Sarah) Kate Johnson, Director
DCF Bureau of Regional Operations
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Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

Introduction



Agenda

- Overview of Governor Evers' budget for Department of Children and Families (DCF) programs
- Fiscal updates
- Resources
- Questions



DCF Vision

All Wisconsin children and youth are safe and loved members of thriving families and communities.



Governor Evers' 2023-35 budget: DCF

Five primary themes:

- Providing all families with access to quality early care and education opportunities.
- Putting families first in the redesign of Wisconsin's child welfare system.
- Helping families improve their economic mobility
- Supporting youth who are vulnerable and historically underserved.
- Safe children and healthy families in Milwaukee County.



Providing all families with access to quality early care and education opportunities.



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Access to Quality Early Care and Education

Supporting families in accessing affordable, quality care

- Includes several changes to support both **Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy** recipients and private pay families in accessing quality care.
- Expands **the Child and Dependent Care Credit**, providing nearly \$30 million in relief to an estimated 107,000 Wisconsinites.



Access to Quality Early Care and Education

Investing in the early childhood workforce and system infrastructure

- Foundational investment of \$340 million for [Child Care Counts](#) to continue and sustain the early care and education system.
- **Enhance** early childhood **system supports and decrease child care deserts** around the state.
 - Online child care licensing application to reduce application timelines
 - Grant program to attract new providers
 - Increased funding for child care providers in tribal areas.



Access to Quality Early Care and Education

Building thriving communities and supporting the economy

- Invests \$22 million over the biennium to **continue the [Partner Up! grant program](#)** which connects the business and early care and education communities.
 - Employers are able to offer attractive benefits to remain competitive in a tight labor market.
 - Parents are able to access quality care.
 - Child care providers are able to steady their enrollment numbers and increase their revenue to be closer to the actual cost of providing care.



Helping families improve their economic mobility



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Helping Families Improve Their Economic Mobility

Supporting the self-sufficiency of individuals and families

- Providing \$27 million over the biennium will support the **Child Support Information Technology Modernization** to meet the ongoing needs while providing flexibility for future system enhancements.



Helping Families Improve Their Economic Mobility

Providing job training and skills for our future success

- Providing additional dollars for **Skills Enhancement Grants**
- Investing \$2 million over the biennium to fund **Jobs for America's Graduates-Wisconsin**



Helping Families Improve Their Economic Mobility

Growing and sustaining local solutions

- Includes an annual increase of \$14 million in funding for **Child Support Agencies** to improve services to participants.
- Provides a foundational investment for the **Housing, Opportunity, Planning and Empowerment (HOPE) program** to provide financial literacy and empowerment services to families receiving Wisconsin Works (W-2) benefits.
- Provides \$14 million a year to restart the **Living Independently through Financial Empowerment (LIFE) program**, to provide temporary assistance to domestic abuse survivors to help achieve financial independence.



Putting families first in the redesign of Wisconsin's child welfare system



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Supporting youth who are vulnerable and historically underserved



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Keeping Families Together

\$35 million

in evidence-based intensive services

\$6 million

for domestic abuse grants

\$5 million

to expand HV services



Putting Families First

- Continues support for the **Targeted Safety Support Funds (TSSF)** program.
- Recommends increasing the funding for domestic abuse services by \$20M GPR annually.
 - \$6.2M GPR to increase funding for DCF's **domestic abuse grants**
- Increases funding by \$5 million across the biennium to expand to **Home Visiting** services



Strengthening Support for Kinship Caregivers

\$34M

**for
kinship
caregiver
supports**

\$16M

**for additional,
flexible financial
support to
kinship
caregivers**



Increased Support for Relative Caregivers and Foster Care Providers

Strengthening support for kinship caregivers

- Invest \$34 million across the biennium to **increase age-based rates** by 5 percent and expand eligibility for the **clothing** exceptional rate and **sibling** exceptional rate.
- Recommends \$16 million in **flexible financial support to kinship caregivers** and for family search services to locate caregivers.
- **Expanded definition of relation** to allow for family friends to qualify for kinship care supports
- **Recruiting and retaining** relative and foster **caregivers**



Safe children and healthy families in Milwaukee County



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Safe Children and Healthy Families in Milwaukee County

Focus on prevention

- Support families who are involved with the child welfare system to reduce trauma, maintain safety, and ensure kids **stay connected with families**.
- \$9 million to provide **flexible funds for services** targeted to prevent children from entering foster care when families are unable to receive needed supports elsewhere.
- \$35 million to support a statewide, intensive evidence-based **parenting skills program** designed to safely prevent children from entering out-of-home care or to reunify them with family as quickly as possible.



Safe Children and Healthy Families in Milwaukee County

Supporting children and families in crisis

- \$15 million to **strengthen the continuum of care** in the Milwaukee child welfare system to ensure that children who have the highest level of need are able to
 - Be stabilized and served effectively in their home state
 - In qualified treatment programs
 - With the tools and supports to transition successfully into family living arrangements



Fiscal Updates



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Child Welfare

- WiLearn new worker training
 - Effective January 1, 2023
 - New cost reporting structure overview: Wed., May 24 at 8:20 am
- Financial Data Documentation Risk Assessment Workgroup
 - Goals are to:
 - Identify areas of concern/risk in the collection and processing of financial information/data in eWiSACWIS
 - increase data accuracy and DCF support system-wide.
 - Targeted technical assistance is available via the helpdesk.



Child Support

- IRS notice about federal tax information (FTI) communicated in February 2023
 - Prohibits contractors from having access to FTI beyond the three (3) data elements identified in IRC 6103 (I)(6)(B): address, social security number and amount of offset
 - Included as a new appendix in 2024 contracts.
- Bureau of Child Support (BCS) is in ongoing communication with federal contacts and CSAs with any updates and next steps.



Child Support System Logo and Tagline

Strong Families, Bright Futures



DWD Data Access

- DCF is working with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to update its data sharing agreement (DSA) for unemployment insurance data.
 - To comply with DWD 149.06 “Confidentiality safeguard requirements and disclosure of records to third parties”
 - Will be included as a new appendix in 2024 contracts.



2024 Contracts – in development

- Early May: distribution to counties via WCHSA and WCSEA
- May and June: discussion and engagement with counties
- June 30: agreement of final contract language
- July: complete final edits
- Nov. 1: distribute final contract documents to counties for review and signatures
- Jan. 1, 2024: CY 2024 begins



Resources

- DCF Biennial Budget web site: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/budget>
- My contact info: SarahKate.Johnson@wisconsin.gov
- DCF Area Administrator

Northern	Kimberly Edwards	KimberlyA.Edwards@wisconsin.gov
Northeastern	Kelly Williams	kelly.williams1@wisconsin.gov
Southern	Justine Girard	Justine.Girard@wisconsin.gov
Southeastern	Tonja Thompson	Tonja.Thompson@wisconsin.gov
Western	Jamie Fawcett	Jamie2.Fawcett@wisconsin.gov



May Recognition



Questions

