



State of Wisconsin  
2015-17 Biennial Report

October, 2017

Wisconsin Department of Children & Families

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Eloise Anderson, Secretary

This is the 2015-2017 biennial report of the Wisconsin Department of Children & Families (DCF). It provides an overview of the Department's organization and accomplishments in the two years ending June 30, 2017.

Section 15.04 of the Wisconsin Statutes directs all state agencies to submit biennial reports to the Governor and Legislature in October of odd-numbered years, addressing “the performance and operations of the department or independent agency during the preceding biennium” and “projecting the goals and objectives of the department or independent agency as developed for the program budget....” This requirement is over 50 years old: In the late 1960s it replaced a requirement for an annual report. Detailed supplemental information is now available at any time on our website. We encourage readers to consult [dcf.wisconsin.gov](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov) for more information about our programs.

# DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES

## BIENNIAL REPORT 2015-17

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## **INTRODUCTION—Agency Description**

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) works in partnership with local governments, tribes, health-and-social-services agencies, private and non-profit providers, and concerned individuals to protect and promote the wellbeing of children, families, and communities through:

- Supervising the statewide child-welfare system to protect children at risk of neglect or abuse, and to make permanency plans for the care and placement of children who have suffered it.
- Directly managing child-protective services in Milwaukee County.
- Regulating the health and safety of child care by licensing child-care providers statewide, certifying qualifying Milwaukee providers, and supervising the certification of non-Milwaukee providers through counties and tribes.
- Encouraging improvements in the quality of child care statewide through the YoungStar quality-rating program and financial assistance to child-care workers to attend professional-development training.
- Administering the Wisconsin Shares child-care subsidy program for low-income parents, including maintaining computer systems, establishing payment rates and statewide policies for My Wisconsin Child Care, and providing funding under contracts with counties, consortia, and tribes for local eligibility and authorization workers outside Milwaukee County.
- Supporting county services to establish paternity and child-support orders, including maintaining statewide computer and financial systems to maintain accurate case records and disburse support payments promptly.
- Administering Wisconsin Works (W-2) and other employment programs to promote self-sufficiency among parents and young adults.
- Overseeing community-based juvenile-justice services and associated Youth Aids to counties (transferred from the Department of Corrections effective January 1, 2016).

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Department of Children and Families is to improve the economic and social wellbeing of Wisconsin's children, youth, and families. It has established five overarching goals:

1. Make certain children and youth are nurtured, safe, and engaged.
2. Enhance statewide prevention and early-intervention efforts.
3. Provide families access to quality early care and education.
4. Promote economic security and stability for parents.
5. Engage fathers in the lives of their children.

## STRUCTURE

The Department is headed by Secretary Eloise Anderson, who was appointed by Governor Walker and confirmed by the Senate.

The Secretary administers the Department with the assistance of an appointed Deputy Secretary, Assistant Deputy Secretary, and Administrators for the Department's divisions:

- Division of Early Care and Education
- Division of Family and Economic Security
- Division of Management Services
- Division of Safety and Permanence
- Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services

The Secretary also appoints the Chief Legal Counsel, Legislative Director, Communications Director, Inspector General, and Office of Urban Development Director. The Secretary's Office also includes the Tribal Relations Director.

Succeeding portions of this report provide additional detail about the internal structure of the five divisions and their programmatic accomplishments during the 2015-17 biennium.

### POSITION UTILIZATION

As of June 30, 2017, the Department had eight hundred and three (803) authorized full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions, including permanent and project positions in both the classified and unclassified service. Seventeen (17) of the 803 FTE were deployed in twenty-eight (28) part-time, permanent positions (making them each, on average, about 60% time).<sup>1</sup>

### ATTACHED STATUTORY COUNCILS AND BOARDS

There are two statutory councils attached to the Department: The Governor's Council on Domestic Abuse (which advises the Secretary and the Legislature on matters of domestic-abuse policy and funding); and the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council (which advises the Department on Milwaukee County child welfare issues). In addition, the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board is attached to the Department for limited administrative purposes. It has typically published its own, separate biennial report.

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<sup>1</sup> §230.215 (4) Wis. Statutes Requires agencies to include information in their biennial reports on their success in establishing permanent, part-time positions.

## DIVISION OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

The mission of the Division of Early Care and Education (DECE) is to promote safe, affordable, high-quality, child-care and early-education experiences that enhance children's development, and to assist low-income families in paying for their child care.

### **Bureau of Early Learning and Policy (BELP)**

The Bureau of Early Learning and Policy administers, and provides detailed policy guidance for Wisconsin Shares, Wisconsin's child-care subsidy program for low-income working parents and participants in work programs preparing to enter the workforce. The BELP also administers MyWICChildCare (the new Electronic Benefit Card /account-payment-approval program for parents to pay their Wisconsin Shares providers), the YoungStar child-care quality rating system and technical assistance contract, other contracts to provide information, technical, and financial assistance to providers and potential providers to increase their qualifications, a contract with Resource-and-Referral agencies (whose mission is to assist parents in finding child care), and during 2015-17 the BELP also administered Wisconsin's Race-to-The-Top (RTTT) Early Learning Challenge federal grant to improve early childhood education in Wisconsin.

### Accomplishments

- Measured in dollars, DCF's largest program (other than child-support distributed) is Wisconsin Shares. Expenditures of \$243,476,300 in SFY 2015-16 and \$258,683,200 in SFY 2016-17 supported as many as 45,722 children from 26,210 families per month (July 2016). DECE estimates that more than 76,500 total children benefited in 2015 and nearly 74,000 in 2016.
- The MyWICChildCare program was rolled out in three phases. This new structure empowers parents in Wisconsin Shares to control their child-care benefit account and personally make payments to their provider through an electronic-benefit card (EBT), phone call, or Internet transaction (depending on whether their provider elects to rent the unique point-of-sale devices that accept the cards):
  - Phase One (October, 2016) covered the Western Wisconsin counties of Buffalo, Clark, Pepin, Jackson, Monroe, Trempealeau, Vernon, and La Crosse;
  - Phase Two (February, 2017) covered all other counties except Milwaukee; and
  - Phase Three (April, 2017) covered Milwaukee county.
- The YoungStar contract supported approximately 19,000 technical-consultation visits with child-care providers and \$4 million in micro-grants; 3,800 child-care programs benefited from one or both in the biennium. (Providers can receive up to 10 hours of technical consultation annually, meaning many received more than one visit; similarly, they could receive a micro-grant in each year).
- Of the 3,823 child-care programs participating in YoungStar, 52.5% earned 3, 4, or 5 stars—exceeding basic health and safety standards and meeting higher quality standards. This is a significant increase from 44% at the beginning of the biennium.

- Seventy-four percent (74%) of Wisconsin Shares children are attending high-quality child-care programs that have achieved YoungStar ratings of 3, 4, or 5 Stars (on a 5-star scale).
- BELP administers funding for the scholarship and bonus programs designed to improve child-care teacher qualifications and retention. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Wisconsin® (“Teacher Education and Compensation Helps”) program provides scholarships to staff working in regulated child-care programs in Wisconsin, making credit-based education more affordable to them. REWARD Wisconsin (originally “Rewarding Education with Wages and Respect for Dedication”) pays a salary supplement to reward and retain child-care professionals who have attained specific credit-based instruction levels and remained in the child-care field. More than 3,300 T.E.A.C.H. scholarships were awarded over the biennium, and almost 6,500 child-care professionals received a REWARD stipend during the same time period.

### **Race-To-The-Top, Early Learning Challenge (RTTT, ELC)**

The Division and BELP manage the Race-To-The-Top, Early Learning Challenge (RTTT, ELC) federal grant awarded to Wisconsin in 2013 to make lasting improvements in early childhood education. In addition to DCF, the departments of Public Instruction and Health Services have collaborated to increase the supply of high-quality early-learning programs and improve data systems to inform future policy and practice decisions. More information about these projects can be found at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/rttt>. The grant ends in December 2017 but supported several accomplishments in 2015-17:

#### Accomplishments

- A YoungStar validation study was completed by UW-Madison and released in 2016. It validated that programs with higher star ratings had higher levels of observed quality than lower-rated programs.
- RTTT supported the continued development of YoungStar Early Childhood Inclusion Resource Web Pages <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/eci>.
- RTTT funds were used to provide access to free credit-based instruction for YoungStar-participating child-care providers. Over 1,200 students have been supported by the Educational Opportunities Grant, and over 500 credentials have been earned.
- The CETE (Children’s Empowerment Through Education) Network was created in order to generate new private investments for improving the early childhood system. The purpose of the Network is to support both existing and emerging local early-childhood partnerships in a collective effort to increase both public and private support for early childhood education.
- RTTT allowed Wisconsin to build the technical and policy foundation for the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS), which will promote analysis of de-identified and cross-departmental data about the performance of children who have participated in state programs.
- RTTT supported a total of 159 Parent Café sessions, held in 14 counties across Wisconsin, reaching 875 parents. An additional 15 Café sessions were held that focused on families with children with special needs and tribal communities.
- RTTT grants provided 518 Challenge Awards to child care programs that increased their YoungStar rating in Calendar Years 2015 and 2016.

## **Bureau of Early Care Regulation (BECR)**

The Bureau of Early Care Regulation protects and promotes the health, safety, and welfare of children in regulated family and group child-care centers, day camps and license-exempt child-care programs offered through the public schools. Combined, these child-care settings serve over 230,000 children in Wisconsin. The Bureau is responsible for monitoring over 4,000 licensed child-care programs in the state to ensure compliance with state licensing standards. The Bureau also provides training and consultation to child-care certifiers employed by counties, tribes, and subcontractors of those agencies. In the Spring of 2017, the Bureau began working with nearly 200 license-exempt child-care programs operated by public school districts in Wisconsin.

### Accomplishments

- The Division has been implementing new requirements resulting from the 2014 reauthorization of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). The reauthorization requires states that accept this funding to conduct annual monitoring of child-care providers' compliance with health-and-safety rules, conduct caregiver background-checks in a specified manner, and requires that DCF begin to monitor license-exempt child-care programs operated by school districts.
- In early 2017, BECR staff began carrying out the newly required monitoring of child-care programs operated by public school districts (which must comply with the applicable licensing standards of group child care programs), making introductory visits to about 200 public-school child-care programs during 2017.
- Each year, licensing specialists and certifiers made nearly 11,000 visits to licensed and certified child-care centers to monitor, provide technical assistance, verify compliance with administrative rules, and investigate complaints.
- Each year, staff investigated over 1,000 complaints regarding licensed facilities and approximately 250 complaints regarding allegations of illegal unlicensed child care.
- Licensing specialists review the requirements of administrative rules with child-care centers. In 2016 BECR found that ninety-seven percent (97%) of the rules were met by licensed centers, with only three percent (3%) in violation, which are then required to be corrected.
- There were nearly 1.4 million webpage views on the Regulated Child Care and YoungStar Public-Search website <http://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov/Search/Search.aspx> during 2016. The public accessed information such as location maps, YoungStar ratings, center hours of operation, capacity, compliance and noncompliance statements, correction plans, and enforcement actions.

## **Bureau of Program Integrity (BPI)**

The BPI maintains integrity of the Wisconsin Shares and YoungStar programs by monitoring, investigating potential fraud or misuse, and positioning DCF to recover misapplied funds. The Bureau detects fraud and abuse through the use of multiple tools, such as "red-flag reports." During 2015-17 BPI monitored provider billing practices and parents' use of their authorizations. The Bureau also conducts improper-payment reviews and targeted case reviews to detect errors in subsidy issuances and provide training and technical assistance to local-agency staff.

### Accomplishments

- The Bureau investigated over 11,000 fraud referrals and red flags in the last two years, which resulted in the completion of over 1,800 preliminary and formal child-care provider investigations.
- The Bureau's investigation results brought about the termination of 68 child-care providers for intentional program violations over the last two years, primarily for improper billing of DCF.
- In the 2015-17 biennium, the Bureau's investigation results also supported the establishment of over \$1,470,000 in overpayments to child-care providers. (Overpayment "establishment" is the formal process of creating a claim for which DCF seeks recovery).

### **Milwaukee Early Care Administration (MECA)**

The mission of the Bureau of Milwaukee Early Care Administration is to promote excellence in early childhood care and education in Milwaukee County and to ensure that county residents have access to affordable, high-quality child care that enhances children's development and supports low-income workers. The Department contracts with the Department of Health Services for eligibility determinations for county residents applying for Wisconsin Shares child-care assistance. The Bureau issues child-care authorizations, conducts quality-assurance reviews of the program, provides training for Milwaukee County child-care providers, and conducts program-integrity activities for clients receiving WI Shares in Milwaukee County.

### Accomplishments

- MyWICChildCare was successfully rolled out to Milwaukee County in April 2017 as the third and final phase of statewide implementation. All staff were trained on the new system and updated on information and policy changes.
- The Bureau's Authorization Section served over 12,000 families and 22,000 children.
- The work of the Client-Investigation Section resulted in 1,736 substantiated claims since 2015, for over \$3,394,900 in established overpayments.

### **Bureau of Operations and Planning (BOP)**

The Bureau of Operations and Planning provides day-to-day operational support and planning for child-care programs, including training development and delivery, IT support and coordination of program requirements, contract administration, research and data analysis, library services and policy development.

### Accomplishments

- The Bureau compiled the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan, reflecting requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization Act of 2014.

- BOP coordinated the conversion of the Wisconsin Shares policy manual and Child Care Regulation Policy manual into a searchable format that facilitates easier on-line use and reference by agency workers. DECE has also started tracking the use of these manuals, finding that since May 2017 the Wisconsin Shares policy manual averages 14,563 page views per month, and the Certification policy manual averages 1,218 page views per month.
- Examples of training the Bureau arranged or delivered included project-management, and Systems and Training support for the successful implementation of MyWICChildCare.
- Policy support included development of grant-guidance compliance, including federal sub-recipient performance monitoring.

## DIVISION OF FAMILY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

The Division of Family and Economic Security (DFES) has two bureaus: The Bureau of Working Families and the Bureau of Child Support. The mission of the division is to ensure parents with children can support their families.

### **Bureau of Working Families (BWF)**

The Bureau of Working Families is responsible for administering the Wisconsin Works (W-2) and Job-Access Loan Programs, Emergency Assistance, The Transform-Milwaukee Jobs program, the Transitional Jobs program, federal assistance for refugees, the Community Services Block Grant, and the Wisconsin Skills Enhancement program, and grants supporting civil legal services, adult literacy and General High School Equivalency Degree (GED) services.

#### *Program: Wisconsin Works (W-2)*

Wisconsin Works is Wisconsin's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program for low-income custodial parents. W-2 is a work-based program designed to assist parents to prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment. In addition, the W-2 program assists parents with disabilities to apply for either Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits as a means of providing economic stability for their families.

#### Accomplishments

- From January 2015 to December 2016, the total caseload (paid and unpaid) decreased from 18,822 to 11,039 participants, a reduction of forty-one percent (41%).
- In calendar-year 2015, W-2 participants obtained 10,729 jobs. In calendar-year 2016, they obtained 8,574 jobs (paralleling the smaller caseload). And from January 2017 through June 2017, W-2 participants obtained 3,596 jobs.

#### *Program: Transform Milwaukee Jobs Program (TMJ)*

The Transform Milwaukee Jobs Program was established to replace forerunner subsidized-employment programs for adults not eligible for W-2 because they are not custodial parents. As with W-2, a goal is to transition individuals into stable unsubsidized employment. Additional goals of the Milwaukee program include increasing child-support payments, transitioning former foster youth into independent living, and supporting family reunification by enhancing parents' capabilities.

#### Accomplishments

- Over 306 businesses and organizations (for-profit, non-profit, and governmental entities) participated as worksites.
- In calendar-years 2015 and 2016, respectively, 368 and 505 people entered *subsidized* employment through the TMJ program. From January 2017 through June 2017, another 159 TMJ participants entered subsidized employment.

- In calendar-year 2015, 249 TMJ participants (67.7% of the number entering subsidized employment) successfully obtained *unsubsidized* jobs. In calendar-year 2016, 241 more TMJ participants entered unsubsidized employment.
- Ninety-nine percent (99%) of the TMJ participants were ex-offenders, ninety-six percent (96%) were African American, seventy-six percent (76%) were male, sixty-six percent (66%) were non-custodial parents, sixty percent (60%) had a child-support order, and one percent (1%) had a reunification plan requiring the parent to obtain employment.

*Program: Transitional Jobs (TJ) Program*

The Transitional Jobs program is similar to the Transform Milwaukee Jobs program, providing subsidized employment opportunities outside Milwaukee County for low-income adults who traditionally weren't eligible for W-2 because they are not parents, or not custodial parents.

Accomplishments

- Over twenty businesses and organizations participated as worksites.
- In calendar-year 2016, twenty-eight (28) TJ participants entered subsidized employment. From January 2017 through June 2017, another fifty-seven (57) entered subsidized employment.
- From January 2017 through June 2017, seventeen (17) of the 2016-17 TJ participants transitioned to unsubsidized employment.

*Program: Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)*

The purpose of the Community Services Block Grant is to empower people and communities to overcome the effects of poverty and to support their progress toward self-sufficiency. Federal and State statutes mandate that ninety percent (90%) of CSBG funds be distributed to the sixteen (16) Community Action Agencies (CAAs) and two statewide organizations that serve special populations. Each of the recipient agencies is a non-profit corporation that provides direct services to low-income individuals, families, and communities. Direct services provided by these agencies (through both CSBG and other funds) include: employment and training, adult literacy, financial literacy, housing assistance, small business development, transportation assistance, affordable housing development, parenting and family support, emergency food and clothing, energy assistance, weatherization, and special projects for child and youth development. Each organization conducts a comprehensive needs assessment within its service area and tailors programming to these needs.

Accomplishments

- CSBG-funded agencies served over 200,000 individuals in need from over 119,000 families in each year of the biennium. For example, in 2016, based on improved tracking, they served 212,785 individuals in need from 119,081 families. These included 57,291 children, 30,899 senior citizens, 22,172 people with disabilities, and 12,901 people who lacked health insurance.
- Specifically, from 2015 through 2016, CSBG agencies helped 469 low-income households buy

homes; helped 150 low-income people start businesses; provided emergency shelter to 4,052 homeless people; helped 1,988 people get jobs; constructed, rehabbed, and/or weatherized 5,983 units of affordable housing; helped 559 adults to earn GEDs, and 610 individuals to earn post-secondary certificates or diplomas. And these CAAs provided emergency food, clothing, and financial assistance to thousands who were experiencing financial distress.

- During the two calendar years 2015 and 2016 together, CSBG-funded CAAs mobilized over 23,500 volunteers, who gave about 1.9 million hours of their time to assist people in need in their communities.

#### *Program: Skills Enhancement Program*

The Skills Enhancement Program also assists CAAs, providing grants of about \$17,800 per year to each, intended to assist low-income individuals to obtain the skills needed to compete for living-wage jobs. The program assists them with tuition, books, and training-related transportation and child-care costs. To be eligible, individuals must work at least 20 hours per week and have incomes at or below 150% of the federal poverty level. They must pursue training for occupations that pay a living wage and typically offer employer-sponsored health-care coverage.

#### Accomplishments

- In state fiscal year (SFY) 2016, eighty-five (85) Skills Enhancement Program participants completed their training programs. Of these, fifty-three (53, or 62%) obtained new jobs and increased their wages by an average of \$9,936 per year. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of those obtaining new jobs now have access to employer-sponsored health insurance.

#### *Program: Refugee Services*

BWF administers programs to assist refugees to achieve economic self-sufficiency and social self-reliance through funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in the U.S. Department of Health Service's Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF provides funding to serve individuals to whom the U.S. State Department has granted official refugee status. Under contracts with DCF, local contracted agencies provide employment and supportive services (such as health screenings, English as a Second Language instruction, employment preparation, and mental-health services).

#### Accomplishments

- From October 2015 through July 2017, 2,690 refugees from 32 countries arrived in Wisconsin.
- In addition, 3,243 prior arrivals in federal fiscal years (FFY) 2013-15 continued to be eligible for refugee programs and were served with similar supportive services as needed, as well as citizenship-preparation services.
- Sixty percent (60%) of the 1,031 refugees participating in refugee employment programs in FFY 2016 became employed. Of those receiving W-2 or refugee cash assistance, 53% became

employed at least part time.

- Other refugees that did not receive cash assistance but participated in other employment or social services achieved an eight-eight percent (88%) employment rate.
- Among all refugees starting employment, eighty-eight percent (88%) were still employed at ninety (90) days (the “job-retention rate”).
- Also during FFY 2016, the Refugee Program Section began overseeing the administration of the Refugee School Impact Grant in partnership with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). This grant funds programs assisting refugee students and their parents with integration into the education system, which increases their likelihood of school success.

#### *Program: Civil Legal Services*

The 2015-17 biennial budget allocated \$1 million in federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to support grants made by the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation (WisTAF) to local agencies providing civil legal services for low-income people. Reflecting allowable uses of TANF funds and the provisions of the budget act, DCF approved a WisTAF plan to especially focus on victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. In SFY 2016 and 2017, thirteen (13) legal-service providers and domestic-violence shelters received grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

#### Accomplishments

- In SFY 2016, the grantees provided civil legal service to over 700 low-income domestic-abuse and sexual-assault survivors in 45 Wisconsin Counties. Services ranged from limited advice and consultation to representation in civil litigation.
- Grantees opened and closed 508 cases, resulting in 802 identified outcomes. Eighty percent (80%) related to litigation about a family matter—such as obtaining child custody or visitation rights; or obtaining, adjusting, or paying child support.

#### *Program: Literacy and GED Services*

The 2015-17 biennial budget also allocated \$325,200 in TANF funds to support literacy and GED services for very-low-income adults. DCF contracted with Wisconsin Literacy, Inc., a statewide organization for literacy provider agencies, which distributed funds to eighteen (18) literacy-service providers and twenty-six (26) GED-preparation providers throughout the state. The program’s main impact has been to connect the GED and literacy providers with W-2 agencies to encourage referrals for W-2 participants and other TANF-eligible adults, increasing their employability.

#### Accomplishments

- 2,906 students received GED instruction and 2,677 received adult literacy services in two years.
- In SFY 2016 and 2017, 457 students served through this program successfully completed the GED/high-school-equivalency degree and 618 literacy students improved their reading skills.

### *Improved Automated Systems*

As a part of administering the programs and services above, BWF works independently and in partnership with other state agencies to develop and maintain complex automated systems. Two of these are the next generation of the Client Assistance for Reemployment Services (CARES) system historically used by caseworkers for Wisconsin's public-assistance programs for eligibility determination and case-management: The CARES Worker Web (CWW) eligibility portal, and the CARES Work Programs case-management system. These systems provide enhanced data access for decision-making within BWF, DFES, and DCF, and support federal and other reporting needs.

BWF is committed to modernizing the existing applications so that users can most efficiently help program participants obtain unsubsidized employment and support their families. Additionally, having participant data easily available in usable formats supports DCF's data-driven decision-making culture. For example, the W-2 data warehouse can store more information than the previous iteration and is more readily linked to other information sources to support modern data analytics.

### Accomplishments

- As a part of a multi-year modernization project begun in 2015, BWF is moving CARES Work Programs automation to the existing CWW web-based system or a new web-based system called Wisconsin Work Programs. When complete, this new online system will improve the quality of data gathered from clients when they apply for public assistance, resulting in better-informed service delivery to them and their families.
- In the 2015-17 biennium, BWF launched Phase 1 of a project to move the CARES mainframe functionality for tracking W-2 time limits to a new web-based application that W-2 agencies are now using to manage time limits that apply to W-2 placements.
- The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) maintains a web site that Wisconsinites can use to apply for BadgerCare, FoodShare, and Wisconsin Shares child-care subsidy benefits on line; view information, such as copies of letters; and report changes in income, employment, and family size, which can affect their benefits. During 2015-17 BWF worked with DHS to add W-2 case information, making it more readily available to W-2 participants without having to contact their caseworkers. This also frees up caseworker time to focus on helping parents find employment.
- During 2016 BWF began the development of W-2 predictive models, with the goal of using W-2 participant characteristics to predict their success and use this information to inform case management.

### **Bureau of Child Support (BCS)**

The Bureau of Child Support's objectives are to ensure that children have the financial support of both their parents, to foster responsible behavior toward children, to emphasize that children need to have both parents involved in their lives, and to reduce welfare costs.

### *Wisconsin Child Support Program*

The Wisconsin Child Support Program provides policy guidance and financial assistance to county child-support agencies, which help custodial parents get court orders for financial and medical support for their children. The Department administers federal aid provided under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act for cases in which parents have requested enforcement services. States are federally required to provide:

- A State Disbursement Unit (SDU) to receive support (from non-custodial parents, or “NCPs”) and efficiently disburse it (to custodial parents),
- An automated system to track case actions and financial information—in Wisconsin known as the Kids Information Data System (KIDS); and
- A “central registry” to receive and route actions involving parties in different states or nations to the appropriate Wisconsin county or tribal child-support agency.

### Accomplishments

- Based on preliminary national data, Wisconsin is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in current child support collected for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2016, up from 4<sup>th</sup>, and collects 4.3% more in total payments on cases with arrears compared to the national average.
- During FFY 2016, Wisconsin’s child-support collections (both IV-D and non-IV-D) were \$938,564,300, up from \$932,466,100 in FFY 2015.
- Almost 100% of the \$3-4 million collected daily on child-support cases is disbursed to payees within two business days.
- In FFY 2016, the national average cost-effectiveness for child-support collections was about \$5.30 collected for every dollar spent. Wisconsin’s cost-effectiveness, an estimated \$7.68 per dollar spent, is significantly better than the national norm.
- Wisconsin was chosen in 2012 as one of eight states to implement the five-year Child-Support Non-Custodial Parent Demonstration (CSPED) project through a \$2.4 million federal grant. The purpose of the project was to demonstrate the value of enhanced or innovative employment services made available to NCPs through local child-support agencies, using an experimental design including a control group that did not receive the additional services. Traditionally federal child-support funding is for “enforcement” and distribution services, rather than employment.
- Wisconsin’s CSPED services were conducted in Brown and Kenosha counties, through a partnership with them known as “Supporting Parents Supporting Kids” (SPSK). Preliminary findings for Wisconsin included that parents receiving enhanced services found jobs at a greater rate, the jobs paid well, and parents were more likely to pay child support and add children to their health insurance. During 2015-17 BCS planned for the future of the program, including requesting a waiver to continue to receive federal matching funds in FFY 2017, which was granted. Wisconsin’s Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) at the UW-Madison was chosen to provide the national evaluation of lessons learned from the eight states. Final evaluation results

are expected in late 2018.

- DCF supported Milwaukee County's "Zone-Intensive Program Services" (ZIPS) project in the 53206 zip code during 2016. Focusing a team of county employees on this specific area increased by 24.4% the amount of current support collected from residents of the zip code.
- Wisconsin embarked on a project that will modernize the automated system counties use to produce the four million case-related notices, letters, and other documents sent to child-support case participants each year. Use of the new system for a subset of documents will be piloted in October 2017, with statewide rollout scheduled for November 2018.

## DIVISION OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The Division of Management Services (DMS) is responsible for providing administrative support services to the Department. These services include key Department-wide “infrastructure,” such as information technology, accounting and related services, biennial-budget and centralized operating-budget services, human resources and agency-wide training delivery, and such agency operations as planning and implementing staff moves and coordinating continuity-of-operations plans. Additional functional program-support services provided by DMS include DCF’s regional- operations staff-liaison services to local governments and program agencies, and managing its Department-wide program of regular reviews of program-performance statistics, known as KidStat.

### STAR

After extensive planning, testing, and training throughout 2014, Wisconsin began implementation phases of the “State Transforming Agency Resources,” (STAR) project to replace its various agency financial and human-resource systems with uniform, Oracle PeopleSoft-based, systems for all agencies. While affecting all agencies and employees, DMS bureaus were at the forefront of two significant phases in 2015-17:

- Phase I, implemented October 1, 2015, replaced the State’s longtime mainframe financial system, “Wismart,” (used for appropriation-level budget-to-actual monitoring and expenditure control) and individual agencies’ various accounting systems that interfaced with it for collecting revenue and expenditure detail; and
- Phase II, which began use of the PeopleSoft Human Capital Management (HCM) system for employee work-time and leave entry (and subsequent supervisor review and approval) beginning the week of December 14, 2015, for the first payroll in January 2016.

### Bureau of Budget and Policy (BBP)

The Bureau of Budget and Policy assures that DCF’s policy priorities for children and families are carried out by preparing the Department’s biennial budget proposal, supporting the development and monitoring of annual operating budgets, participating in the development of policy and program initiatives, analyzing management and financial issues, and preparing fiscal notes on proposed legislation. The bureau serves as the liaison to the State Budget Office in the Department of Administration (DOA) and the Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB).

### Accomplishments

- Worked with DCF staff and other agencies to identify maintenance-of-effort (MOE) expenditures to support the receipt of over \$64 million in federal TANF Contingency funds over the 2015-17 biennium.
- Integrated the new STAR system with DCF budget practices and policies.

## Bureau of Finance (BOF)

The Bureau of Finance is responsible for accounting and financial reporting for all funds administered by the Department (approximately \$1.2 billion annually). It provides procurement and contract services, collection services for public benefit programs, audit and review services, and financial consultation for the program divisions in order to promote fiscally informed decisions and consistent financial policy and procedures. The BOF also reviews and sets appropriate payment rates for child-placing agencies, group homes, and resident care centers.

### Accomplishments

- The Public Assistance Collections Section recovered \$28,495,000 in overpayments from parents receiving Badger Care—Medical Assistance, Wisconsin FoodShare, or Wisconsin Shares child-care subsidy benefits, Wisconsin Shares providers, and Wisconsin Works (W-2) participants.
- Implemented the first phase of the Benefit Recovery Investigation Tracking System (BRITS) in November 2016 and an enhancement in July 2017. This application facilitates the creation and tracking of fraud-investigation referrals for the Badger Care Medical Assistance, Wisconsin FoodShare, Wisconsin Shares and Wisconsin Works programs. Over 59,000 referrals for investigation have been created since BRITS began to be used in November 2016.
- Exceeded the Governor's 5% goal for Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) spending for the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, with 11.6% in the 2016-17 fiscal year.
- Issued 1,482 contracts with grantees and service providers (including local governments, tribes, and both for-profit and non-profit entities).
- Collected about \$1.65 million in excess reserves, un-allowed profit, or disallowed costs as a result of audits and reviews.
- Strengthened sub-recipient monitoring by developing training and resources for DCF contract administrators and developing and deploying the Provider Agency Audit Tracking System (PATS), a database that tracks when local-partner audits or fiscal reviews are due.
- Created a new STAR-compliant chart-of accounts, accounting procedures, training materials and job aids, and successfully transitioned to STAR's PeopleSoft financial modules, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, billing, travel, general ledger, commitment control, project costing, customer contracts, and grants. Communicated new payroll coding for all DCF employees and provided assistance in the 2016-17 conversion to the new time-and-leave system.
- Successfully implemented a new, internally developed, web-based local-agency expense-reporting and payment system, called SPARC (Sub-recipient Payment and Reporting on Contracts), replacing the Central Office Reporting (CORE) system. During 2016-17, SPARC interfaced with STAR to pay more than \$170 million to counties and other local agencies.
- Reviewed and responded to 585 single-audit reports from partner agencies, and completed 41 fiscal reviews of sub-recipients of federal funds by DCF

## **Bureau of Human Resources (BHR)**

The Bureau of Human Resources provides recruitment, payroll, and other staffing and personnel services, including administering the employee-assistance program (EAP), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and Department-level employee training and development.

In addition to STAR, a significant impact on BHR's work was the implementation of 2015 Wisconsin Act 150, signed in February 2016, with most changes taking effect during 2016-17. The law eliminated civil-service exams in favor of resume reviews, and was intended to allow hiring for most positions within sixty (60) days. Additionally, 2015 Wisconsin Act 150 created service-wide work rules and a uniform progressive-discipline process, requiring updating Department policies, and new training for all supervisors and state-service staff.

### Accomplishments

- *Trauma-Informed Care.* The BHR Training Section arranged training for all DCF leadership and staff on trauma-informed care principles and becoming a trauma-informed organization, including identifying a core team, trauma guides, and integrating training for new hires into the on-line training module. The December 2016-January 2017 training was the first time since agency creation that all DCF employees at all levels of the organization had taken classroom training on a single subject.
- The Training Section also developed on-line training for new employees: All new DCF staff complete the on-line new-employee welcome training within the first ten days of employment, and required enterprise training (common to all state employees) within the first thirty, covering topics such as open records, public-records management, and cybersecurity.
- BHR hired 376 classified, four (4) unclassified, ten (10) project, and fifty (50) limited-term employees (LTEs). Nineteen (19) of the hires had been W-2 participants.
- DCF met or exceeded all goals related to hiring a diverse workforce: As of June 30, 2017, DCF has no classifications that remain underutilized for women or minorities.
- DCF's BHR was instrumental in fully implementing the new Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS), which transitioned from the longtime Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) effective October 4, 2015. BHR contributions included hiring a DMCPS administrator, providing recruitment and selection services (including refining the process for recruiting Initial Assessment Specialists) and assisting the Division in establishing its performance-management and training programs (employee-evaluation and development processes).
- Met all timelines for implementation of STAR and 2015 Wisconsin Act 150, successfully streamlining DCF's recruitment process to fit within the 60-day benchmark.
- The BHR Training Section developed comprehensive job aids about entering time and leave in STAR and had several requests from other agencies to use our presentations and materials.

## **Bureau of Information Technology Services (BITS)**

The Bureau of Information Technology Services plans and provides DCF's information and communications technology, including supporting program priorities identified by divisions via the internal DCF Service-Level-Agreement/Project-Identification process.

## Accomplishments

- Re-designed the DCF website, implementing a mobile-friendly design with improved navigation and search functionality, making it easier for the public to find relevant information.
- Developed the Benefit Recovery Investigation Tracking System (BRITS), which enhanced the tracking of investigations of potential fraud and overpayment claims established for Wisconsin's major public-assistance programs (BadgerCare Plus, FoodShare, Wisconsin Shares, and W-2.
- Implemented the Child-Support Performance Dashboard. Local agencies are now using this interactive tool to monitor their performance.
- Deployed Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones in all feasible locations, discontinuing unused analog phone lines.
- Evaluated and deployed "zero-client" technology to replace standard desktop computers. BITS estimates these are 50% less expensive and will save \$571 per desktop compared to conventional desktop replacements, saving nearly \$200,000 to date.
- Implemented MyWICChildCare, which converted the child-care subsidy program from a provider-reimbursement structure to one in which parents use a card or other means to approve payments to their providers on terms agreed with them, typically at the beginning of a month.
- BITS implemented web portals for agency workers, child-care providers, and parents—to enhance the information available to them in using MyWICChildCare.
- Launched a Wisconsin Shares "data mart," providing child-care administrative-agency workers with over thirty packaged reports of information on such things as parents' approved authorizations, parents' and children's schedules, benefits paid to both parents and providers, and payments FIS (the contractor responsible for issuing benefit cards to parents, and other MyWICChildCare administrative functions).
- Completed the design of the W-2 Participation dashboard project, making three subject areas available on one dashboard: Job Starts, Work Participation, and W-2 Caseload. The W-2 Data Warehouse also went live, with a focus on participants, placements, and employment data. This is the first phase of a multi-year effort to modernize and consolidate the existing data warehouses for DCF work programs.
- Implemented the first version of the first DCF Child-Support Data Warehouse, which includes case and participant data, and expanded web access to it to over 800 users, including both DCF staff and local child-support agency workers.
- Implemented LIFT (Longitudinal Information on Family Touchpoints) data warehouse and dashboards, through funding from the federal Race-To-The-Top Grant. This system allows research and policy staff to identify distinct counts of the number of children that are simultaneously associated with combinations of key DCF programs at various points in time and how that participation may change over time.
- Implemented the Sex-Trafficking Interactive Map of data points about organizations, and their locations, that serve youth in five domains: Initial response and basic needs, physical and behavioral health, life skills, legal aid and advocacy, and social support. The map will enable users to easily locate all services available to youth and their families.

## **Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO)**

The Bureau of Regional Operations (BRO) provides support to DCF program divisions by overseeing contracts with local agencies administering DCF programs, including child care, child welfare, child support, youth justice, and W-2. BRO conducts program monitoring, provides technical assistance, reviews complaints about local-agency services, and facilitates regional meetings for local agency

staff. The BRO is also responsible for monitoring contractor-agency compliance with federal and state civil-rights requirements.

#### Accomplishments:

- Monitored documentation of caseworker contacts with children in out-of-home placement. Wisconsin exceeded the federal caseworker-contact standard in Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2015 and 2016.

### **Bureau of Performance Management (BPM)**

The Bureau of Performance Management provides objective analysis of DCF program and policy effectiveness in support of its mission and goals for children and families. BPM staff provide advice and guidance about DCF's research agenda and coordinate policies and procedures for making its data available to outside requestors and researchers. They also staff DCF's regular review and discussion of program performance measures, known as KidStat, which is a forum for DCF's management to consider data-driven solutions by studying performance statistics and discussing potential causal factors and options for achieving higher performance. The Bureau's Quality Review and Performance Analysis Section supports continuous-quality-improvement (CQI) of child-welfare practice, and supports DCF's compliance with the Jeanine B. settlement agreement.<sup>2</sup>

#### Accomplishments

- Led the Lean Initiative in DCF since January 2016 by working closely with DOA's Lean Government Program, supporting divisional Lean Coordinators, and building on the skills of Lean practitioners. DCF completed twelve (12) Lean projects in the biennium.
- Coordinated and produced thirty-five (35) KidStat meetings during the 2015-2017 biennium. BPM staff work with program divisions to identify and track measures and ways to graphically present them. The data reports and information shared at KidStat meetings help Department leadership and program staff hold each other accountable for program outcomes.
- Coordinated eight (8) "DCF Learning Exchanges," with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP); these allowed DCF staff to learn about research supported by DCF, or other topics relevant to the Department, including Incarceration and the Family, Early Learning and Child Care Quality, and Trauma-Informed Practice.
- Completely overhauled the CQI Case-Review process in coordination with county partners and the UW School of Social Work—including developing instruments, instructions, and training for staff using them to review the Access and Initial-Assessment stages of child-protective services.
- Trained twelve (12) county-staff Certified Peer Reviewers in use of the Access Review Instrument and more than thirty state and county staff in the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) On-Site Review Instrument.
- Conducted over 2,000 independent statewide reviews, including more than 1,000 Access Reviews, 271 Initial-Assessment Reviews, and over 600 Ongoing-Services Case Reviews.

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<sup>2</sup> The settlement agreement was entered into by the State of Wisconsin in 2002 in response to a lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union Children's Rights Project (now Children's Rights, Inc.). The State assumed direct responsibility for child-protective services in Milwaukee County and agreed to achieve specific outcomes regarding the safety and wellbeing of children from the County who are placed in out-of-home care.

- Completed and published Access, Initial-Assessment, and Ongoing-Services Case-Record Review Reports, which support DCF's Child Welfare CQI system.
- Presented a paper at a National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics conference, titled, "A New Child Welfare Case Review Process: Using Data to Inform System Change."

## DIVISION OF SAFETY AND PERMANENCE

The Division of Safety and Permanence (DSP) has responsibility for overseeing the administration of the child-welfare and community-based youth justice (YJ) systems. The purpose of the child-welfare system is to keep children safe and promote safe, permanent, and nurturing homes for children. The vision for the YJ system is to help each youth, individually, within the context of his or her family and culture, to acquire the tools to thrive in adulthood, while protecting public safety. DSP also operates related programs, including licensing child-welfare service providers; finalizing public adoptions, providing adoption assistance, and performing adoption searches; providing financial aid and policy guidance to counties administering the kinship-care program; and financial aid to domestic-violence service providers.

### **Administrator's Office**

The Administrator's Office (AO) manages the Division and directly administers high-priority policies and programs that are cross-cutting across multiple DSP Bureaus, DCF Divisions, and/or state agencies.

### Accomplishments

- In September 2015, DCF collaborated with the Wisconsin Department of Justice to establish the Wisconsin Anti-Human-Trafficking Task Force and develop a coordinated, comprehensive plan to address youth trafficking. The Task Force is co-chaired by the DCF Secretary and Wisconsin Attorney General and is comprised of 37 leaders from across the state representing child welfare, law enforcement, counties, medical providers, other service providers, attorneys, judges, tribes, and local communities.
- The Task Force has met quarterly since December 2015 and has guided the creation of several important tools to combat human trafficking, including the Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Indicator and Response Guide, a Human Trafficking 101 training curriculum for child-welfare workers, and Core and Advanced Core Competencies necessary for working with this population.
- DCF reallocated an existing position to create a full-time Anti-Human-Trafficking (AHT) Coordinator, hired in May 2016.
- DCF concluded contracts to expand services (through a pilot AHT Regional Hub) to youth who have experienced sex trafficking, and to develop a statewide prevention and awareness campaign and a documentary video that will feature Wisconsin residents affected by human trafficking.

### **Bureau of Safety and Well-Being**

The Bureau of Safety and Well Being develops and issues child protective services (CPS) policy standards and practice guidance for CPS agencies in Wisconsin. The bureau also manages child-welfare and child-abuse/neglect prevention services; monitors federal and state legislation related to child welfare; supports cross-system services that benefit children and youth in the child welfare system; manages family violence prevention and intervention programs; and oversees child-welfare staff and provider professional-development activities.

## Accomplishments

- By participating in the statewide Fostering Futures initiative and launching the DCF Trauma Project, DCF has strengthened the use of trauma-informed approaches in child welfare and other systems serving children and families, to help children heal from abuse, neglect, separation, and other traumas. The DCF Trauma Project provides training to clinicians, child-welfare workers, foster and birth parents, and community members on trauma-informed interventions and approaches. As of June 2017, 41 counties and 3 tribes have participated in the DCF Trauma Project.
- DCF expanded the Family Foundations Home Visiting program, which provides evidence-based child abuse and neglect prevention, strengthens maternal and child health outcomes, and promotes positive socio-emotional development for infants and toddlers. Twenty-four (24) counties and five (5) tribes are included as of June 2017.
- DCF implemented the Post-Reunification Support (P.S.) program, which provides case management, formal services, and informal support to children and their families in the initial year after a child transitions from out-of-home care back to his/her family. The program is intended to prevent the recurrence of child maltreatment and re-entry into out-of-home care. As of July 2017, thirty-five (35) counties are participating.
- In January 2017, DCF implemented a new program design for the In-Home Safety Services program. The program provides case management, formal services, and informal support to families in which one or more children are identified to be at risk of removal from family home, but determined to be safe if specific services are provided to the family while the child remains at home. As of July 2017, there were 21 counties and 2 tribes participating in the program.
- In May 2017 DCF implemented anti-human-trafficking legislation, Wisconsin Act 367, which requires local child-welfare agencies to respond to allegations of sex trafficking of a child (person under the age of 18), even if the alleged perpetrator is not the child's primary caregiver.

## **Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care**

The Bureau is responsible for administering the state public-adoption program; providing policy guidance to counties on foster care, kinship care, and other out-of-home-care placements; and licensing and monitoring group homes for children, residential care centers for children and youth, child-placing agencies, and shelter care. It also administers the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), which regulates the safe placement of children across state lines. The purpose of these programs is to promote the health, safety, and well-being of children and families in the child-welfare system and achieve permanence for children placed in out-of-home care.

## Accomplishments

- In partnership with the Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG), DCF is developing a new intervention, Adoption and Guardianship Enhanced Support (AGES), to provide support to adoptive and guardianship families and reduce the risk of crises and disruptions within the family. Wisconsin is one of eight sites selected to participate in developing this new framework of support for adoptive and guardianship families.
- Following Lean-Government analysis, DCF implemented a new electronic process for ICPC requests, replacing the former system that had required mailing large paper files between states and counties. Re-engineering this process has eliminated backlogs and delays in processing cases, expediting the time to permanency, and reducing the staff time required for each case.

- DCF also streamlined the Adoption Assistance and Adoption Assistance Amendment processes through the LEAN Government process. This reduced paperwork and time involved with processing Adoption Assistance and Amendment requests, resulting in a faster turnaround time for families requesting Adoption Assistance or an Amendment to their Adoption Assistance payment.
- DCF implemented the new federal Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards for foster parents and out-of-home-care providers. The new standards allow children and youth placed in out-of-home care to have a normalized experience similar to their peers, including participation in extracurricular, social, sports, employment, and other activities during out-of-home-care stays.

## **Bureau of Youth Services (BYS)**

The Bureau of Youth Services is responsible for improving outcomes for youth in, and at risk of entering, the child-welfare and youth-justice systems. It oversees the federal Independent-Living program for kids aging out of out-of-home care, and the state Brighter-Futures and Runaway-and-Homeless-Youth programs. Beginning in January 2016, the Bureau became responsible for state supervision and financial aid for the community-based juvenile-justice (Youth Justice) system. This includes state supervision of the counties' direct services for youth on delinquency orders, and development of state infrastructure related to the youth-justice system. This does not include any direct services in the youth-justice system or any oversight of the youth correctional facilities. The purpose of all programs under the direction of BYS is to enable youth to thrive in adulthood.

### Accomplishments

- DCF restructured the Independent-Living program to a regional service delivery model that leverages greater employment opportunities for youth aging out of care. The new model aligns the Youth-Services regions with workforce-development regions to promote access to Workforce-Innovation-and-Opportunity-Act (WIOA) services by youth in out-of-home.
- DCF developed a framework for serving youth in and aging out of care. It outlines the expectations that all youth who are in care leave with a high-school diploma, a work experience, permanent connections, and safe and stable housing. DCF provided training to contractors on the new framework.
- To carry out its new Youth-Justice duties in an informed and inclusive manner, DCF developed and implemented an extensive stakeholder-input process to obtain feedback from over 300 system stakeholders. Based on the feedback from the listening sessions, DCF created a strategic plan and began work on development comprehensive training and a data system for Youth Justice.
- DCF developed and implemented an approach to preventing homelessness among youth aging out of out-of-home care.

## DIVISION OF MILWAUKEE CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS), established October 2015, is responsible for providing Milwaukee County children with services to protect them from abuse and neglect. It is the state administrator of child-protective services (CPS) in the County. Often the first point of contact, it performs initial assessments of whether abuse or neglect has occurred. DMCPS works with the family and community partners to provide a safe and secure environment for children who have suffered maltreatment. DMCPS works with families in crisis to keep children safely in the home. The Division oversees contracted services for ongoing case management. When necessary, DMCPS will use foster parents or adoptive families to provide temporary and permanent homes for children unable to stay with their parents. Permanency for children who are removed from their home, and the well-being of children involved in the child welfare service system are also priorities of DMCPS.

DMCPS has two Bureaus: The *Initial Assessment Bureau (IAB)* and the *Quality Operations Bureau (QAB)*. The Division Administrator also has an administrative support team that helps the Division navigate the complexities of collaborative operations within Wisconsin's most populous county.

To address the unique nature of this Division, key positions and service sections have been built into the organizational structure. These positions and service sections include: The Medical Health Services Section, a Community Liaison, and a Clients' Rights Specialist.

The Medical Health Services Section was developed to identify and address the unique health needs of children served by CPS across the child welfare continuum of Access, Initial Assessment (IA), Intensive In-home Services (IIHS), Out of Home Care (OHC), and Reunification and/or Permanency planning. This unit is supervised by the Chief Medical Director and includes two initial assessment (IA) nurses and six ongoing-case-management nurses. As part of the leadership team, the DMPS Medical Director consults with external partners to bring best practices to bear in all health alerts. Principal roles of the IA nurses and the ongoing nurses are to provide consultation and medical expertise to assist IA specialists and ongoing case managers in the identification and interpretation of medical concerns and developmental vulnerabilities that may impact child safety.

The Community Liaison communicates with the police, schools, city of Milwaukee and Milwaukee-County staff, providing community services and engagement activities that promote relationship-building, collaboration, and information sharing. The Community Liaison provides the DMCPS management team with data and information gathered through these activities, to inform all matters relating to reducing child abuse and neglect through community improvement.

The Clients Rights Specialist reviews independent investigations for completeness, to ensure all recommendations are identified for the children and family from the initial referral; and researches and responds to questions or concerns about child and family issues and services.

A 2016 reorganization of the Division created the Ongoing Services Section to focus on managing the programming, policy compliance, and coordination of contract agencies providing ongoing CPS services. This includes direct involvement in the negotiation, monitoring, and performance evaluation of contracts with agencies that provide ongoing case management, intensive in-home services, out-of-home-care placement services, independent living, and other services.

In the 2015-2017 biennium the Division invested in new processes to promote ongoing quality improvement through re-design of both organizational structure and systems.

## **Division-wide**

### Accomplishments

- In 2016 DMCPs completed an infrastructure analysis to complement and guide strategic planning in the ongoing development of the new Division. The strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of DMCPs were considered using the interrelated components of governance, workforce-personnel, accountability and quality standards.
- DMCPs pursued several initiatives to improve staff recruitment and retention, including re-designing new-employee orientation and competing successfully for a grant from *The Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development*, as one of eight agencies in the country to participate in a five-year analysis of workforce strategies to strengthen the DMCPs workforce.
- In October 2016 DMCPs started to implement the First Lady’s “Fostering Futures” initiative, a Trauma-Informed-Care initiative, to become a Trauma-Informed-Care Community of Practice in Milwaukee County.

## **Access Section and Initial Assessment Bureau (IAB)**

The Access Section is responsible for receiving and documenting child-welfare and child-abuse/neglect referrals from the community. The Initial Assessment Bureau (IAB) receives and responds to reports of child abuse or neglect screened-in from the Access Section. The IAB is staffed by Initial Assessment Specialists (IAS), who meet with the alleged victim and conduct a comprehensive assessment in accordance with the Wisconsin Access and Initial Assessment Standards and the Wisconsin Safety Intervention Standards. The purpose of the IAS is to ensure child safety and engage with the family to keep children safely in their home whenever possible.

### Accomplishments

- In 2016 the Access Section call center underwent a Lean process to improve the initial-answer rate of calls (versus having to leave a message on a machine). The initial answer rate for calls to the call center rose from 46% to a consistent average rate of 96% in 2017.
- The IAB implemented several quality-improvement initiatives that have garnered positive results:
  - Case assignment rotation has made a more transparent process, allowing IA staff the latitude to better manage their caseloads.
  - Developing Administrative Review Boards to provide managerial oversight to ensure best practice and quality case closures.
  - In June of 2014 DMCPs had 2,918 overdue cases; as of September 2017, it had 254—a reduction of 2,664 cases.

## **Quality Operations Bureau (QOB)**

The Bureau of Quality Operation (QOB) has the primary responsibility for supporting all Division administrative operations and quality improvement. QOB is responsible for the management of division funding and contracts, in coordination with central DCF financial-management staff.

### Accomplishments

- Developed an omnibus Contract Monitoring Report that is distributed monthly to DMCPs contracted service providers. The report identifies DMCPs compliance targets for contractors in specific areas of service and notes current compliance levels.
- Created a SharePoint site to ensure maximum tracking and security of case files with a view to record digitization over the next five years.
- Established a timetable for review of DMCPs policies.
- Initiated a process to ensure the on-time renewal of all DMCPs contracts.

## **Ongoing Services Section (OSS)**

The Ongoing Services Section's responsibilities for managing programming and policy compliance include responsibility for reviewing new data and considering issues related to the Jeanine B. Settlement Agreement (the legal agreement that resulted in the State of Wisconsin taking direct responsibility for CPS services in Milwaukee County).

### Accomplishments

- OSS has developed a tracking process for Independent-Living Case Plans, Transition-to-Discharge Plans, and ongoing-services agencies' compliance with contractual requirements. OSS communicates updated statistics to the ongoing-agency partners each month, and is preparing to incorporate qualitative review of case notes.
- OSS has recruited several new group home and assessment & stabilization center facilities and has taken meaningful efforts to support potential new providers in obtaining licensure and beginning to provide services under a DMCPs contract.

## **GOALS & OBJECTIVES DEVELOPED FOR 2017-19 BIENNIAL BUDGET**

### **PROGRAM 1: CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

- Goal: Provide timely initial contacts in response to reports of child maltreatment.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of all initial-contact visits each month that were completed or attempted timely.

- Goal: Reduce the re-victimization of children.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of children who are not re-victimized within 12 months after a substantiated report of maltreatment.

- Goal: Contact children in out-of-home care on a monthly basis.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of children in out-of-home care who have been visited by their caseworker within a month.

- Goal: Provide stability for Milwaukee children in out-of-home care.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of children in Milwaukee who experience three or fewer out-of-home care placements in their current episode of care.

- Goal: Achieve permanency for children in out-of-home care.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of children who transition from an out-of-home care placement to a permanent family setting within 12 months.

### **PROGRAM 2: ECONOMIC SUPPORT**

- Goal: Participants in DCF employment programs obtain employment.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of employment-program participants who have started a job within 12 months.

- Goal: Engage W-2 participants in employment activities.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of W-2 participants who while receiving a cash grant are engaged full-time in federally qualifying activities such as job search, work experience, and education and training.

- Goal: Increase the quality of child-care programs.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of YoungStar-participating child-care programs that are rated at the 3-star, 4-star, or 5-star levels.

- Goal: Connect parents of children receiving Wisconsin Shares with high-quality child care programs.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of children of Wisconsin Shares participants who are attending child-care programs that are YoungStar-rated at the 3-star, 4-star, or 5-star levels.

- Goal: Establish court orders for child support.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of child-support cases that have a court order established.

- Goal: Increase the payment of current (timely paid) child support.

Objective/Activity: Increase the percentage of child support paid in the month it is due.

- Goal: Increase the payment of past-due child support.

Objective/Activity: For child-support cases with an unpaid debt balance (past-due child support or “arrears”), increase the percentage that have a collection during the federal fiscal year.