



Independent Living For Children

In Out-Of-Home Care

Independent Living
Advisory Committee



Wisconsin Department of
Health and Family Services
Division of Children and Family Services
www.dhfs.state.wi.us



The partners in child welfare must emphasize the development and achievement of positive outcomes for both the individual child and the system in general.



18 19 20 21 22 23

A. The Purpose of the Independent Living Advisory Committee

Established by the Division of Children and Family Services in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Social Work, the Independent Living Advisory Committee convened regularly from June 1999 through June 2000. The purpose of the committee was to advise the Division of Children and Family Services on the Division's programs and policies on independent living services for youth exiting care at age 18. The committee consisted of foster parents, policy makers, service providers and professionals from the various systems that impact the lives of youth making the transition to self-sufficiency. The role of the committee was to determine the needs of these youth and to provide recommendations as to how the current child welfare system can achieve measurable improvements.

The challenges facing these youth are many and varied. While national data chronicling the needs of this population are limited, Wisconsin is in the unique position of having timely and comprehensive data on the non-delinquent youth exiting care in our state. The Foster Youth Transitions to Adulthood (FYTA) Study, conducted by Mark Courtney, Ph.D. and Irving Piliavin, Ph.D. of the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Social Work, has received national recognition and served as a model for other states seeking to conduct evaluations of their independent living programs. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Division of Children and Family Services.

The study indicates that these youth are vulnerable to physical and sexual victimization, unemployment and underemployment, homelessness, incarceration and public assistance utilization in higher numbers than youth in this age cohort who had not been placed in the child welfare system. These are community problems that have a high cost both in financial loss and lost human potential.

Given its custodial and general parental responsibility to these youth, the Division of Children and Family Services must be devoted to assuring the provision of the services and supports necessary to maximize their potential for self-sufficiency during this critical period of transition to adulthood. This must be done through a partnership with the communities in which these youth live. This document represents the committee's recommendation that the Division evaluate the effectiveness of services to youth and strive for the constant improvement of these services.



The committee acknowledges and embraces the increased responsibility of the child welfare system and the community for youth residing in out-of-home care. Upon removal of these children from their parents, the community assumed a shared responsibility to provide for their care and maintenance. Since these youth have been removed from their parents, the community has a responsibility to assure their healthy development, spanning from the moment they enter the system to the time at which they can function in a self-sufficient manner in the community. The consequences for these youth and the community are staggering when this responsibility is unmet. According to the Foster Youth Transitions to Adulthood (FYTA) Study, at 12 to 18 months after exiting care, 12 percent of these youth had been homeless (i.e., living on the street or in a shelter); 32 percent relied on some form of public assistance for at least a portion of their income; 27 percent of males and 10 percent of females had been incarcerated at least once during this period; and 25 percent of males and 15 percent of females reported serious physical victimization, including being “beat up” and other significant violent acts. Given the unique vulnerabilities of this population and the detrimental consequences to their physical, psychological, and emotional well being when they leave care without adequate preparation, it is evident that the community must renew its commitment to the population of youth in out-of-home care.



Governor Thompson and the Department of Health and Family Services are concerned about improving the outcomes for these youth. This concern has also been mirrored at the federal level. The recent passage of the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 serves to double federal spending for independent living preparation services for youth in out-of-home care and to increase the flexibility allowed for the use of these funds. The Act also allows for the provision of a variety of services, including room and board and at state option, for Medical Assistance (MA) coverage of these youth to age 21. Given the prospect for increased allocations for Wisconsin under this legislation and the knowledge we now have as a result of the University of Wisconsin study, this is a timely opportunity for our state to improve its current independent living preparation services. The recommendations contained in this report reflect what the committee has deemed to be the most appropriate, efficient and effective means to meet this challenge.

It is critical that the specific recommendations be considered within the general context of the child welfare system and the out-of-home program. Efforts to achieve excellence in independent living preparation are dependent upon the quality of the overall child welfare system. For example, the best way to reduce the need for independent living preparation is to reduce the number of children in the out-of-home care program and to reduce the length of stay of children who are placed. This requires the development of effective and efficient services to assure that children can be maintained safely in their own homes and to

achieve permanence in a more timely fashion for all children who are placed.

In addition, the committee believes that all children in the child welfare system must have available to them the services and case management coordination necessary to assure effective and efficient involvement with the system, including the utilization of multi-disciplinary coordinated service teams. The partners in child welfare must emphasize the development and achievement of positive outcomes for both the individual child and the system in general. While the recommendations in this report are to the Division of Children and Family Services, it is critical that the Division works with its multiple partners to achieve the outcomes intended in the recommendations.

In terms of the youth who are specifically served with federal independent living funds, the Division should emphasize consideration of the following groups in the priority order listed:

1. Youth who exited care on their 18th birthday and who were in out-of-home care for at least two years prior to their exit.
2. Youth who exited care between their 17th and 18th birthdays and who were in care for at least two years prior to their exit.
3. Youth who exited care after the age of 17 and who were in care for at least one year.
4. All other youth who exit the out-of-home care system.

(Note: For purposes of this report, the term “youth,” unless otherwise specified, means those persons who exit out-of-home care because they have attained the age of 18.)

B. Current Program Administration

Currently, funding is provided to 46 counties, two tribes and the Department of Corrections. The allocation process to counties, tribes and Corrections is not based on a formula distribution. Rather, funding was provided to agencies that applied and justified their budget request with the services to be provided to a self-determined number of youth in out-of-home care. It can be assumed that this current process for allocating funds is not the most efficient use of available dollars.

See Appendix C for data on currently funded programs.



Section Two

Considerations

In developing its recommendations for independent living preparation services for youth, the committee combined current research findings with their professional expertise. A series of community “listening sessions” were held throughout the state to supplement this information with feedback from the community on the needs of these youth in various regions, both rural and urban, of Wisconsin.

Throughout this process, the committee’s work was guided by the following considerations:

Life-Long Learning and Development. Independent living preparation does not begin or end at a specific age. It is a normative developmental process that occurs across one’s life span from early childhood, into adolescence and then into adulthood. Independent living skills are learned throughout a child’s life through experience and the observation of the behavior of adult caretakers. Depending upon any special needs of a child, the experience needed to learn these skills may require specific guidance and support. Independent living preparation takes place for youth in out-of-home care, as it does for youth who are not in out-of-home care, as an integral part of the child’s daily experiences in the home and community. It is an ongoing process driven by consistency, nurturing and example. While self-sufficiency is the ultimate goal for youth leaving care, it is unrealistic to expect complete independence upon exit from the system. As “our children,” it is imperative that we see them through this critical time in their lives.

Depending upon any special needs of a child, the experience needed to learn these skills may require specific guidance and support.

Training Must Be Experiential. While independent living skills are learned through observation and the adequate provision of information, they are mastered through experience. It is essential that youth have the time and opportunity to transfer the knowledge that they learn into practical, real-life experiences. Independent living preparation is a complex process of acquiring both “hard” and “soft” skills. In addition to learning to shop for groceries, budget money and obtain housing, it is important that youth learn critical decision-making skills, self-responsibility and sound judgment.

The continuity of meaningful relationships in the lives of adolescents is paramount.

Training Must Be Individualized. Every child is unique and has special strengths, assets and areas of need. For independent living preparation to be successful, it must be individually tailored to meet the needs of each youth while also building on his or her personal strengths and attributes.

Family Relationships. Families are an integral part of a child's life. Research has shown that youth in out-of-home care maintain relationships with their families and, in large numbers, return to them upon exit from care. In order to result in a successful transition to adulthood, independent living preparation should recognize the bonds that exist between children and their families. Given the often troubled nature of these relationships, which frequently led to the placement of the child in care, independent living preparation should foster healthy and supportive relationships between youth and their families, if it is in their best interests, or assist the child in coping with or avoiding family relationships that are less than healthy and supportive.



Supportive Relationships. The continuity of meaningful relationships in the lives of adolescents is paramount. Given the instability that has marked the lives of children in care, it is essential to a smooth transition to adulthood that they are provided with the opportunity for continuous, supportive relationships with caring individuals in their lives.

Multi-System Participation. Successful transition to adulthood requires a partnership among agencies that is focused on positive outcomes. While these children reside in out-of-home care, their lives are impacted by the multiple systems they experience. As such, successful independent living is dependent on the inclusion and positive working relationships of these various systems.

Community Recognition, Support and Acceptance. Youth in out-of-home care are members of the community. There is often a stigma attached to youth in care that separates them from "regular" youth. The community must recognize that these children are in care through no fault of their own and must re-evaluate its attitudes toward these youth. In order to foster the self-esteem and positive self-image essential to successful adulthood, it is necessary that the community recognize and accept the out-of-home care experience and seek to normalize these youth into community life.



Section Three

Guiding Principles

In formulating its recommendations, the committee embraced several principles. These reflect the values that the committee deems essential to the creation of successful independent living preparation services. They are:

A. Outcomes and Results

The child welfare system and all of its component parts must be driven by agreed-upon and established positive outcomes and result-oriented management. All actors in the child welfare system and in those other systems with which child welfare partners, must share a common understanding of the purpose and goals of the child welfare system.



B. Family-Centered Programs

Strong families are essential to the healthy development of children. Research has shown that children in out-of-home care maintain bonds with their families and often return to them upon their exit from care. Comprehensive independent living preparation services must acknowledge the important role of the family and strive to create positive and healthy relationships between these youth and their families.

C. A Focus on Empowerment

Too often youth in care are denied a voice in the programs and policies that affect their lives and futures. Successful independent living preparation services must reflect the voices of those it is intended to serve. It is essential that a context be created in which youth are encouraged and allowed to advocate for themselves at both the policy level and in their daily lives.

Strong families are essential to the healthy development of children.

D. A Foundation Based on Research, Guided by Evaluation and Focused on Outcomes

Successful policy is based on sound research and experience. Independent living preparation and policies must be based on what we know about the needs of youth and the models that have been found to be successful at meeting those needs. It is essential that independent living preparation services be guided by an understanding of our goals. These goals must be based on independent living literature and research, stated in a way that can be defined by measurable outcomes and continuously evaluated to determine our success.

E. A Strengths-Based Approach

Successful independent living preparation services must seek to build on the individual strengths and assets of youth. While these youth face unique challenges and vulnerabilities, it is important that independent living policy be created to acknowledge and foster their resiliency.

F. Multi-Systemic and Multi-Disciplinary in Nature

Youth exiting care have multiple and varied needs. Making a smooth transition to self-sufficiency depends upon their physical, psychological and emotional well-being. Youth are impacted by the various systems with which they interact and in which they live: educational, physical and mental health, housing, employment, etc. Hence, a successful transition to independence hinges on the collaboration of these systems to create a supportive network for youth as they move from the child welfare system to self-sufficiency.

G. Cultural Competence

Culture plays an important role in the lives and development of children. The child welfare system must acknowledge the impact of cultural, ethnic, and racial identity in the lives of youth. The child welfare system must foster a sense of positive identity in children and strive to provide them with opportunities to maintain and strengthen connections with their racial-ethnic-cultural community. The child welfare system must also strive to produce a culturally competent work force that has the knowledge and skills to work successfully with families of all cultures, ethnicities and races.

H. State Leadership

While Wisconsin has a county-administered child welfare system, the Division must take the lead in providing or assuring support and technical assistance to counties and tribes in their efforts to provide independent living preparation services to youth in their care. Uniform standards must be created to assure that youth throughout the state have equal access to these services regardless of where they live. Further, in creating these standards in partnership with counties, tribes and service providers, the Division needs to assist counties and tribes in securing resources, guidance and support. The Division of Children and Family Services must also work closely with the Division of Supportive Living and assure that this cooperation is reflected at the county and tribal level.



Section Four

Vision

The vision of the Independent Living Advisory Committee is that the greater Wisconsin community must be committed to assuring that all youth in care in our state are able to access the necessary services, supports and opportunities during their out-of-home care experience in order to maximize their ability to become self-sufficient, healthy adults. The Wisconsin community must also be committed to fostering the healthy development of youth throughout their transition to adulthood, including the continued access to needed services and supports upon their exit from care.



SECTION

4

Section Five

Mission

The mission of the Independent Living Advisory Committee, reflecting its belief that these youth are “our children,” is to assure that all youth exiting the out-of-home care system in Wisconsin will make the transition to adulthood as self-sufficient, productive and healthy individuals.



SECTION

5

...these youth are “our children,”...

PAGE

8

Section Six

Goals

Through the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Living Advisory Committee, by the year 2002, Wisconsin will see better outcomes for youth. Using data from the FYTA Study as a baseline for future evaluation, Wisconsin will see higher rates of adequate shelter, educational attainment, employment and employment stability, healthy relationships and financial independence. We will see lower rates of incarceration, public assistance utilization, and physical and sexual victimization.

IN ADDITION:

- All youth will receive developmental skills and independent living preparation services, appropriate to their age and development and designed to assure their capacity to exercise judgment commensurate with their age, abilities, strengths and needs. The committee recognizes that some youth in care have developmental disabilities, are teen parents or are otherwise limited in the immediate achievement of certain goals. As such, these goals are established for the system rather than for specific children.
- All youth aged 16 or older exiting out-of-home care will leave care with a minimum of the following:
 - Driver's license or preparation for obtaining a driver's license or other access to transportation to school, employment and other critical activities;
 - High School Diploma or GED or enrollment in an educational program designed to result in a high school diploma or GED;
 - Written employment history;
 - Copies of their birth certificate, social security card, and medical records;
 - Access to funds adequate to support himself/herself for a period of three months following exit from care;
 - Access to and knowledge of local resources, including but not limited to food pantries, human service agencies, health clinics and mental health facilities; and
 - A safe and stable living environment.



Section Six: Continued

This report contains recommendations and strategies for improving the current out-of-home care system and independent living preparation services for youth. Our recommendations are built around the following areas:

	PAGE
A. Excellence in Child Welfare Services	10
B. Normalize Life Skills Development Within the Child Welfare System	16
C. Recognition of Older Adolescence as a Crucial Transitional Phase Toward Self-Sufficiency	19
D. Creating Bridges to Self-Sufficiency for 18 to 21 Year Olds ...	25
E. Recognizing the Role of All Social Institutions in Helping Youth Achieve Self-Sufficiency	28

A. Excellence in Child Welfare Services

The committee recognizes that effective independent living preparation must take place within an effective child welfare system. The research on youth exiting care in Wisconsin clearly indicates that functional problems in the child welfare system impede successful independent living preparation for youth. Interviews with youth prior to their discharge from care conducted for the FYTA Study revealed that adolescents had, on average, resided in care for approximately three years and two months and, during that time, had experienced an average of three placements. Given the negative impacts resulting from disruption in the continuity of care, successful independent living preparation is dependent on the elimination of factors that necessitate multiple placements.

The purpose of this report is to identify how greater assistance can be provided to children who age out of care. Given the limited funds available for this purpose, it is critical that the number of children to be served be reduced as much as possible. This entails fewer children coming into out-of-home care and a reduction in the length of stay for children who do come into care.

While Wisconsin youth generally reported their out-of-home experiences as positive (72 percent indicating that they were “generally satisfied” with their experiences in care and roughly 75 percent agreeing that they were “lucky” to have been placed in care), there were negative sentiments expressed by a significant portion of the youth interviewed. Approximately 40 percent indicated that they had “moved around too much” while in care. Equally troubling was the finding that 26 percent of youth felt that the child welfare agency “did not have their best interests in mind.” Given the stated goal of the child welfare system to provide a sense of permanency for youth in care, these numbers indicate that this goal is not currently being met for a large number of these youth.

“If the child welfare system as a whole is not working the way it should, all of the independent living skills training in the world won’t help these kids.”

County administrator who attended a regional meeting of the Independent Living Advisory Committee

In making independent living preparation services an integral part of the child welfare system, it is necessary to make alterations within that system to best meet the challenges facing these youth. The committee recognizes that this is a significant undertaking and is outside of the scope of the work for which it was commissioned. It is critical, however, if the recommendations in the report are to be implemented. The committee recommends that the Division of Children and Family Services, with its partners, assure that its strategic plan for child welfare services is based on excellence, is comprehensive and focused on outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION A1

The child welfare system needs to intensify its efforts to recruit and retain quality foster parents and other caregivers and child welfare services staff that are able to meet the unique needs of adolescents in care.

Providing services to youth during this critical phase of development presents unique challenges. In addition to the normal developmental tasks facing adolescents, many youth in care have distinct emotional, psychological and physical needs resulting from their experiences with abuse and neglect. To effectively meet the challenges of providing care to youth, the child welfare system must be results-oriented and based on quality standards. The system must also be staffed by foster parents and other caregivers and social workers who are knowledgeable of the special circumstances facing these youth and skilled in techniques effective for intervening with this population. To recruit and retain quality individuals, the child welfare system must provide the training and compensation necessary for them to successfully meet their responsibilities.

STRATEGIES

PROVIDE TRAINING, FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND OTHER INCENTIVES FOR CAREGIVERS. Create “core competencies” and specialized training for foster parents and other caregivers with children in their care, with corresponding incremental increases in foster care rates as incentives for participation in these programs.

ASSURE THAT MASTERING AND SUPERVISORY SUPPORT ARE AVAILABLE TO CASE MANAGERS. Case managers are required to make significant decisions that affect the relationships within families and need the advice and support of “master” social workers and supervisors. This is not an issue of trust; it is a matter of utilizing experience and knowledge in a manner that reflects the importance of the decisions being made.



Section Six: Continued

PROVIDE SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR CASE MANAGERS. Assure that case managers are provided with the necessary specialized training to meet the unique needs of older youth in care.

SUPPORT FOSTER PARENTS. Implement the recommendations of the Division's Foster Parent Advisory Committee in its report entitled "Supporting Foster Families as Team Members Serving Children and Their Families."

REIMBURSE FOSTER PARENTS AT A LEVEL REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR COSTS. Re-evaluate the Uniform Foster Care Rate to assure a system of reimbursement that recognizes increased training, expertise and service provision. Increase the basic foster care maintenance rate to equal the median of the Region V states. The rate should reflect the actual costs of foster parents and should never fall below the Region V median.

PROVIDE PEER SUPPORT FOR FOSTER PARENTS. Utilize experienced foster parents to recruit and retain new foster parents and to provide peer training and support to newly licensed foster parents.

MATCH CHILDREN WITH APPROPRIATE CAREGIVERS. Target foster and adoptive parent recruitment efforts to identify prospective families that may be appropriate for older adolescent placements to increase the ability of agencies to match children and caregivers.



RECOMMENDATION A2

The Division needs to assure quality improvement in the child welfare system through the provision or arrangement of technical assistance and support to assist county and tribal agencies in assuring the quality of their out-of-home care resources.

Wisconsin is one of 14 states whose child welfare systems are state-supervised and county-administered. As such, the best aspects of that organization should be recognized and emphasized. The Division should share information, assure excellence and consistency of quality, and assist counties and tribes in accessing the technical assistance they need to create effective and efficient out-of-home care systems. This is increasingly important in light of the new federal child welfare outcome measures, or site reviews, and the potential for significant financial penalties.

Nearly one-third of youth who are out of foster care in Wisconsin end up living with a member of their family of origin within 18 months of leaving care.

“These research findings are really helpful. Until this study we had no idea what happened to the children we discharged from the system.”

Social worker who attended a regional meeting of the Independent Living Advisory committee.

STRATEGIES

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES. Create uniform statewide professional standards and best practices for the provision of out-of-home care services applicable to all vendors and service providers, to be supported by the Wisconsin State Automated Child Welfare Information System (WiSACWIS).

REVIEW AND REVISE ADMINISTRATIVE RULES. Amend Child Caring Institution (CCI) and group home rules to require the provision of independent living preparation services in all facilities and require a formal, written independent living assessment and service plan for all youth in their charge.

RECOMMENDATION A3

Child welfare services need to be process-oriented and outcome-focused through the establishment of goals, the evaluation of achievement of those goals, data collection and the use of research.

Effective child welfare services and best practices are based on a sound understanding of the needs of the youth utilizing those services. This understanding must come not only from practice, experience and wisdom, but also from quality research. This effort must be guided by the relevant research currently available as well as continuous evaluative efforts to monitor our progress on meeting this goal.

STRATEGIES

FORMULATE GOALS AND ARRANGE FOR EVALUATION. The formulation of well-defined goals with regard to outcomes for youth in care in Wisconsin and the development of mechanisms for the measurement of these outcomes which are consistent with current research and federal guidelines.

COLLECT AND ANALYZE RELEVANT DATA. The state must assure the collection of relevant outcome and system performance data as designed in the WiSACWIS.

UTILIZE AND DISSEMINATE RESEARCH. Ongoing dissemination of current research and evaluation efforts to the counties, tribes, service providers and child welfare professionals to guide the formation and continuous improvement of child welfare programs and services.



Section Six: Continued

RECOMMENDATION A4

Child welfare agencies must recognize and strengthen the unique bonds that exist between children and their families through continual efforts to increase the involvement of these families in the provision of services to youth in out-of-home care.

Families are important to the healthy development of children. In spite of problems that necessitate out-of-home placement, research shows that children in care maintain strong emotional ties to their families of origin. The FYTA Study found that 32 percent of youth interviewed prior to discharge from care felt “very close” to their mothers, with another 25 percent indicating that they felt “fairly close.” Although youth more frequently reported feeling distanced from their fathers, a large portion, 41 percent, indicated feeling “very close” or “fairly close” to their fathers. Further, research has shown that youth frequently return to their families of origin upon their discharge from care, with approximately one-third of the youth interviewed for the FYTA Study indicating that they lived with biological relatives at 12 to 18 months after exiting care. Given the important role that families play in the lives of youth and the turbulent nature of these relationships that often resulted in their involvement with the child welfare system, strides must be made to foster healthy relationships between youth and their families.

STRATEGIES

INVOLVE FATHERS IN THE LIVES OF THEIR CHILDREN. Improve efforts at establishing paternity and increase the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. In addition, the system needs to develop an understanding of and respect for the role of fathers in the lives of their children.

ENCOURAGE AND MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION. Establish and maintain channels of communication between foster parents and other caregivers, kin caregivers and families. Move toward a more collaborative effort between families and caregivers on behalf of the youth based on mutual responsibility and respect.

ESTABLISH COORDINATED SERVICE TEAMS FOR ALL CHILDREN. Establish coordinated service teams (comprised of foster parents and other caregivers, parents, informal family supports and professionals) to create a wrap-around approach to assessment and case management services for all child welfare cases. Assessment services offered by Occupational Therapists are of special importance in determining the specific needs of these youth.

CLARIFY THE ROLE OF ALL ACTORS. Clarify the roles, rights, authority and responsibilities of foster parents and the child’s parents with regard to service provision for youth in out-of-home care.

SUPPORT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS. Identify, develop and nurture supportive relationships between youth in care and their nuclear and extended families, when it is in the child’s best interests.

ASSIST YOUTH IN MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS. Teach youth to successfully manage potentially turbulent relationships with relatives. Assist youth in identifying potential sources of danger within the family as well as potential sources of support.

RECOMMENDATION A5

The child welfare system must recognize and respond to the important role of culture in the lives of children and continually strive toward increased cultural competency in its provision of services to culturally, ethnically and racially diverse populations of children and families. This effort must also include an analysis of the causes of minority child overrepresentation in the out-of-home care system.

Culture is integral to a child's sense of self. To instill in youth the positive self-esteem needed for successful adult functioning, it is important that the child welfare system recognizes the significance of culture in the lives of children and strives to create a workforce competent to provide services in a multi-cultural community. The child welfare system must be responsive to youth in a way that is affirming and respectful of the important role of culture in their lives.

STRATEGIES

ANALYZE THE REASONS FOR MINORITY OVER-REPRESENTATION. The Division and its partners should determine and address the reasons for the increasing over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.

ENCOURAGE CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN THE WORKFORCE. Increased efforts must be directed toward the strengthening of a culturally competent workforce skilled in providing services to ethnically diverse populations.

RECRUIT AND RETAIN QUALITY STAFF. Increased recruitment and retention efforts should be directed toward the establishment of a child welfare services staff that is reflective of the diverse communities that it serves.

RECOMMENDATION A6

The child welfare system, in association with other service agencies and systems, must strive to achieve timely physical, psychological and emotional permanency for all youth in out-of-home care.

Regardless of age, all children in out-of-home care deserve permanency of relationships in their lives. While physical permanency may be more difficult to achieve for older adolescents, given the shortage of adoptive placements for such youth, the sense of psychological permanency that results from consistent,



Section Six: Continued

meaningful relationships remains important to their healthy growth and development. Further, research has suggested that older youth in care long for a sense of permanency, with 41 percent of the youth in the FYTA Study indicating that they would like to have been adopted.

STRATEGIES

ACHIEVE PERMANENCE FOR CHILDREN. Reduce the number of youth who exit care at age 18 by striving to achieve physical permanency through reunification, older-adolescent adoptions, relative adoptions, guardianships and subsidized guardianships.

STABILIZE OUT-OF-HOME CARE PLACEMENTS. Stabilize out-of-home care placements to reduce the number of placements per episode to maximize consistency and continuity in the lives of children.

PLACE CHILDREN IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES. Make every effort to assure that, when children are placed in out-of-home care, they are maintained in their own community and school.

EXTEND FOSTER CARE BEYOND AGE 18. Consider extending the foster care system to provide foster care services to youth up to age 21 while the child is still in school or obtaining a GED to allow continuity of relationships between youth and foster families.

B. Normalize Life Skills Development Within the Child Welfare System

The committee recognizes that effective independent living preparation does not begin at adolescence nor is this a process that is unique to youth in out-of-home care. Throughout childhood, youth acquire a multitude of skills (such as problem solving, interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, consequential thinking, and coping skills) which are vital for success in adulthood. All youth, regardless of whether raised within their family or in out-of-home care, must master these skills in order to be successful.

While independent living preparation is a normative process that occurs throughout life for all youth, current independent living policies and programs do not recognize the vital nature of skill acquisition prior to the age of 16. Current programs and policies serve to differentiate independent living

The most common source of independent living skills training reported by foster youths is a foster parent.

“Independent living services should not just be shoe-horned into a foster child’s package of services after the age of 16; Learning to be self-sufficient is something that all of us do throughout our whole lives.”

Foster parent who attended a regional meeting of the Independent Living Advisory Committee

preparation from other components of the out-of-home care experience, treating it as a separate, distinct entity as opposed to an integral function of the out-of-home care system. This current approach to independent living fails to address the importance of the life-long acquisition of skills necessary to be successful in adulthood. In seeking to normalize independent living preparation throughout the out-of-home care experience, the committee offers the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION B1

The child welfare system should better utilize foster parents, other caregivers and social workers as essential resources and primary trainers of independent living preparation training for all children and youth in out-of-home care.

An essential component of learning for youth is observation. Throughout childhood, children observe behavior modeled by the significant adults in their lives and integrate these skills into their own repertoire through imitation. Foster parents and other caregivers are invaluable resources in this regard. Their consistent presence in the daily lives of youth in care make them ideal candidates to be trainers of independent living skills. Not only are foster parents and other caregivers available on a daily basis to model behavior in the real world setting, they are also able to provide coaching and feedback to youth in their performance of these important skills. Further, this approach to independent living preparation is most akin to the ways in which youth generally learn independent living skills as an integral component of their daily lives. Given that 35 percent of the youth interviewed in the FYTA Study indicated that they felt they were “somehow different from other youth,” it is important that we normalize the out-of-home care experience for youth. Utilizing foster parents and other caregivers to integrate independent living skill development and training in children in care, regardless of age, is a first step in this regard.

STRATEGIES

ESTABLISH A SYSTEM OF MANDATORY FOSTER PARENT TRAINING. Foster parents play a critical role in the life of a foster child. It is essential that they have access to the information and skills they need to assure that children are provided with the guidance, nurturance and information they need to become successful, self-sufficient adults.



Section Six: Continued

EDUCATE ALL ACTORS ON LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT. Through comprehensive training, educate foster parents and other caregivers, kin caregivers, case managers and supervisors about age appropriate life skills for all children and youth and how they can foster the development of these skills through their daily interaction with youth in their care. Assure that foster parents and other caregivers think about independent living preparation training early in the out-of-home care experience of all youth.

UTILIZE MULTI-AGENCY TRANSITIONAL PLANNING. Assure that child welfare and school staff establish consistency between a special education transition plan and an independent living transitional plan.

DEVELOP AND PROVIDE SOCIAL WORKER TRAINING. Assure that the University of Wisconsin Partnerships integrate life skill development, transition to independence and prevalence of emotional and other delays in youth into the core curriculum for training of social workers.

RECOMMENDATION B2

Independent living preparation services should be designed to meet the individualized needs of youth in care, regardless of their age.

Effective independent living preparation must acknowledge the individuality of youth and seek to address their distinct needs and histories. A “one size fits all” approach to independent living preparation services does not recognize the unique characteristics of children in care; nor does it make effective or efficient use of independent living preparation resources.

STRATEGIES

BASE TRAINING ON THE CHILD’S READINESS. Take a graduated approach to independence based on a child’s assets, needs and maturity.

USE ASSESSMENT TO GUIDE PRACTICE. Both formal assessment tools and caregiver’s informal assessments of the needs and assets of youth in their care are valuable and necessary to effectively target independent living preparation services.

INVOLVE YOUTH IN THE SERVICE PLANNING PROCESS. Create a context in which youth are able to communicate their needs to the significant adults in their lives.

UTILIZE STRENGTHS. Utilize a strengths-based approach to independent living preparation training.

INVOLVE OTHERS. Nurture consistent formal and informal relationships in the lives of foster youth. Recognize relationships that are important to youth and utilize these individuals as key players in the independence preparation process.

More than two-fifths of youth who aged out of foster care in Wisconsin expect that they will be able to return to the child welfare system for help, should they experience personal, financial, health, employment or family problems.

INVOLVE THE LARGER COMMUNITY. Regard children in care as members of the community. Assure that they are included in state and local community activities and efforts on behalf of youth in the community (e.g., Alliance for Wisconsin Youth and the Brighter Futures Initiative). Utilize existing and appropriate state and local programs to meet the individualized needs of these youth.

ADDRESS ANY SPECIAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN. Recognize and address the special needs of children with disabilities in out-of-home care.

C. Recognition of Older Adolescence as a Crucial Transitional Phase Toward Self-Sufficiency

While independent living preparation is a normal developmental process that occurs throughout life, the committee recognizes that older adolescence serves as a crucial transitional phase in the movement toward self-sufficiency. While the child welfare system has a responsibility to provide an appropriate foundation for independent living training for all youth in care, it has a heightened responsibility for youth who will reside in care until the age of majority. Serving as these youth's "parents" during this phase of development, we must prepare them to leave our care with the tools necessary to successfully navigate the world on their own. In addition to needing the essential decision-making and interpersonal skills that are developed throughout childhood, youth need concrete assistance in money management, locating and securing housing, obtaining and maintaining employment, accessing health and mental health care and educational planning. Without this vital assistance and training, youth are unprepared to manage the daily tasks of life as self-sufficient, responsible adults.

Older adolescents exiting care have myriad and diverse needs. Sadly, many of these youth hold the misconception that the child welfare system will be available to them after their formal discharge from care to help them meet those needs. Over half of the youth interviewed for the FYTA Study indicated that they were "likely" or "very likely" to seek help from the child welfare system in obtaining housing after leaving care. More than 40 percent reported that it was "likely" or "very likely" that they would turn to the child welfare system for help should they experience personal, financial, health, employment or family problems.



Section Six: Continued

While the majority of youth interviewed for the FYTA Study indicated that they had received some form of independent living preparation training prior to exiting care, their feeling of being unprepared in several key areas raises serious questions as to how well we are preparing these youth for life after out-of-home care. When presented with a list of several training areas, including money management, housing, employment, educational planning, food preparation and use of community resources, 76 percent (on average) indicated that they had received some type of training in at least one area. However, when asked how prepared they felt to live on their own, only approximately 25 percent of the youth stated that they felt prepared in several critical areas. Particularly troubling were findings that approximately one-third of the youth felt unprepared to secure housing, approximately one-third reported feeling unprepared to manage money and about one-quarter indicated that they felt unprepared in their knowledge of available resources in the community.

The discrepancy between the reported training received and the level of preparedness felt by youth in care may reflect that “training,” in and of itself, is not very effective. Classroom and workbook instruction is not enough. When asked specifically about concrete assistance and training received prior to discharge from care, the number of youth reporting having received training drops significantly, with only 18 percent reporting concrete assistance in the area of job training; 12 percent reporting assistance in obtaining housing; 11 percent reporting concrete assistance in securing health insurance; and 14 percent reporting assistance in securing employment.

Given the severity of the consequences when we fail to meet our responsibility to prepare youth for independence, increased services, support and training must be provided to youth prior to their release from our care. To help us better meet this responsibility, the committee offers the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION C1

The child welfare system must foster the formation and continuity of relationships with caregivers and peers available to youth in out-of-home care.

Meaningful relationships are an invaluable support for youth exiting care. Given the numerous disruptions that occurred throughout their lives, youth exiting care must be provided with consistent, caring relationships with adults who can serve as resources to them as they move through the critical transition

Youth who aged out of foster care in Wisconsin are more than 12 times as likely as other young adults to end up homeless. Over one-fifth report living in four or more different places within 18 months of leaving foster care.

from adolescence to self-sufficiency. The sentiment most frequently echoed in our listening sessions throughout the state, from youth and child welfare professionals alike, was the important role of consistent, continuous and supportive relationships in the lives of youth.

STRATEGIES

PROVIDE PEER MENTORING. Develop and utilize peer mentoring programs. Allow youth who have made a successful transition to serve as role models and sources of support for youth currently moving through this process.

UTILIZE VOLUNTEERS. Develop and nurture the volunteer community. Volunteer mentoring programs, such as Volunteers in Probation, have found success in supporting youth making critical transitions in their lives.

EMPLOY AN INTER-GENERATIONAL APPROACH. While peers are valuable role models, it is also important to have adults in the community who can serve as resources to youth both in care and exiting care.

MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS. Create incentives to maintain the relationship between the youth and his or her foster parents and to encourage foster parents to continue to work with the youth's family.

RECOMMENDATION C2

Wisconsin communities must develop and support transitional living arrangements for youth in care, including supervised living and transitional living options. The Division must assure the greatest regulatory flexibility possible to allow a variety of transitional options while maintaining its responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of children.

While independent living skills are learned through observation, they are mastered through experience. Unfortunately, far too many foster youth leave care before mastering the skills and acquiring the resources necessary to achieve self-sufficiency. One result of this is a high level of housing instability among young adults who have left care. For example, the FYTA Study revealed that 14 percent of males and 10 percent of females interviewed at 12 to 18 months after leaving the child welfare system reported being homeless at least once since discharged from care.



Section Six: Continued

It is important to note that the definition of “homeless” for the purposes of the study was limited to living on the street or in a shelter; these figures do not include the numbers of youth living “doubled-up” with friends or relatives or those living in substandard housing conditions. This is particularly troubling given that this rate of homelessness is more than 12 times the general rate of homelessness for youth in this age group. Also troubling was the general instability in housing for a substantial number of youth interviewed, with 22 percent of youth reporting having lived in four or more different living arrangements in the 12 to 18 months since their formal discharge from the system.

It is essential that youth be provided with the opportunity to transfer the learning that occurs through training into practical, real-world experience prior to formally leaving care. Transitional living arrangements allow youth exiting care to apply the knowledge that they acquired throughout adolescence and formal independent living training to real world situations while providing them with continued guidance, support and supervision. The transitional living arrangement is a valuable tool for allowing youth to experience adult responsibilities and master critical independent living skills in the community prior to their formal discharge from care.

STRATEGIES

PROVIDE SUPERVISED LIVING OPTIONS. Develop a variety of transitional living arrangements to meet the diverse needs and abilities of adolescents in care. Supervised, semi-supervised and unsupervised transitional living arrangements allow youth a range of opportunities based on their individual assets, strengths and limitations.

PROVIDE TRANSITIONAL LIVING OPTIONS. Utilize “cluster” and “scattered-site” transitional living arrangements, as appropriate to the needs and abilities of the youth, to provide youth with the level of independence and support necessary and appropriate for their unique situation.

PARTNER WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES. Explore partnerships with Community Action agencies and other housing agencies to maximize currently available opportunities and funding.

ALLOW REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY. Review current statutes, regulations and policies to determine if changes need to be made to allow any necessary flexibility for transitional living arrangements. Revise Ch. HFS 12 to define youth receiving support from foster parents as “clients” for purposes of the criminal background check.

PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. Provide technical assistance on models of transitional living arrangements and on funding alternatives.

ALLOW FOR TRANSITIONAL LIVING PLAN OPTIONS. Allow youth to remain with foster parents or in another home or placement as a specific transitional living plan.

RECOMMENDATION C3

The child welfare system must increase its efforts to promote the active participation and involvement of older adolescents exiting care in the decisions affecting their lives.

Effective independent living policies and programs must be responsive to the needs of those it is intended to serve. As such, it is essential that youth in care be provided with a voice in the formation of the programs and policies that affect their lives and well-being. In providing youth exiting care with avenues to express their concerns, needs and experiences, we are empowering them to advocate for themselves and other youth in care. Youth preparing to live independently must have the skills and confidence necessary to effectively take action on their own behalf. We must provide them with opportunities to acquire and strengthen the skills that are essential to survival in the adult world prior to leaving our care.

**STRATEGIES**

INVOLVE YOUTH IN ALL PROCESSES. Involve youth in decision-making processes throughout their stay in care. Allow them a voice whenever possible in their case planning and service provision. Include youth in care in the development of independent living programs and policies.

SUPPORT YOUTH ASSOCIATIONS. Support the development of associations for youth in care and who have left care.

PROVIDE AN ANNUAL TEEN CONFERENCE. Continue to support annual teen conferences for youth in care.

RECOMMENDATION C4

The Division and its partners must promote the dissemination of resource information to youth exiting out-of-home care and to service providers working with older adolescents in care.

Despite their beliefs that the child welfare system will be a resource to them after leaving care, the current system does not provide formal avenues of support for youth once they have been discharged from care. This is particularly troubling given that nearly 30 percent of youth interviewed indicated that they felt “not at all prepared” or “not very well prepared” in their knowledge of



Section Six: Continued

community resources available to them. Given these statistics, independent living preparation services must provide youth with the knowledge of where they can turn for help should difficulty arise once they leave the out-of-home care system.

STRATEGIES

ESTABLISH A WEB PAGE. Develop a Web page listing resources in the community available to youth exiting care. Assure that youth leaving care know that they can access this Web page through the Internet at any public library.

PROVIDE YOUTH WITH ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS. Assure that youth have their medical records, birth certificates and other essential documents when they leave care.

PROVIDE RESOURCE PEOPLE. Assure that all youth leaving care have the names and phone numbers of resource people they can contact for follow-up assistance and guidance. Also assure that foster parents and other caregivers have this information so that they can pass it on to youth who might contact them after leaving care.

DEVELOP A RESOURCE GUIDE. Provide older youth in care with a resource manual or wallet card listing important community resources, such as local food pantries, public health clinics and counseling resources. Do not wait to inform them of sources of support in the community until their discharge.

ARRANGE FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. Assure that independent living preparation services, particularly for children aged 16 and older, are experiential.

DEVELOP A PERMANENCY PLAN. Assure that all children in out-of-home care who are aged 16 or older have an independent living plan as part of the permanency plan.

PROVIDE AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENT LIVING CONFERENCE. Continue the statewide independent living conferences. They allow professionals in the community an opportunity to learn about available resources and exchange information with other service providers.

DISSEMINATE BEST PRACTICE INFORMATION. Provide residential child care facilities with current research and information regarding program models, assessment and evaluation tools, and relevant training curricula with regard to independent living preparation

UTILIZE EXISTING RESOURCES. Assist counties and tribes in recognizing and accessing funding sources that are available for use with these youth.

“We experience independence; we don’t “learn” it.”

Member of the Independent Living Advisory Committee

A substantial proportion of young adults who aged out of foster care in Wisconsin report having had problems most or all of the time in life domains that are critical to well-being, such as medical care, income, employment, housing and family relations.

D. Creating Bridges to Self-Sufficiency for 18 to 21 Year Olds

Once released from our care, typically at age 18, youth exiting the child welfare system are in a critical period of transition. While youth who were not raised in out-of-home care often rely on their families and other relationships for assistance and support during this phase of transition, youth exiting the out-of-home system oftentimes do not have such support available to them. While complete self-sufficiency at the age of 18 is an unrealistic expectation for youth raised even under the best of circumstances, it is particularly unrealistic for youth exiting the foster care system. Given this, we must provide increased assistance and supports to youth who exited out-of-home care to assure their successful transition to adulthood. Over time, the Division should redirect a large share of the independent living resources from youth currently in care to those youth 18 to 21 years of age who have left care.

There are “bumps in the road” for all young adults just starting out on their own. We experience independence; we don’t “learn” it. In establishing their lives as adults, youth often need support, assistance and guidance. Whether it be something as simple as needing a copy of their medical records or something more urgent, such as not having enough money to pay the rent, youth often return to their families in these moments for guidance in pointing them in the right direction or for some assistance. Youth who exit care generally do not have access to this type of assistance. In our listening sessions, we heard stories again and again, throughout the state, from social workers, foster parents and youth that, when difficulty arose, these youth had nowhere to turn to for help except the child welfare system that raised them. While compassionate social workers and foster parents may have been able to provide them with informal assistance, there are currently no formal avenues for accessing the system for help once a youth is discharged from care. Professionals and foster parents who were able to provide assistance did so out of their own generosity and were not compensated for their efforts. Simply stated, many of these youth do not have a home to go back to.



Section Six: Continued

In recognizing that complete self-sufficiency upon formal discharge from the child welfare system is not viable for many youth, the child welfare system must strive to create bridges for these youth making the transition to adulthood. In seeking to meet this challenge, the committee offers the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION D1

The child welfare system must extend assistance and support to foster youth to include youth aged 18 to 21, including aftercare services and continued involvement by foster parents and other caregivers.

The movement from adolescence to adulthood is legally complete at age 18. Practical experience, however, shows us that youth are not ready for life on their own simply because the calendar deems them adults. It is not the expectation that parents pack their children's bags upon their 18th birthday and set them out into the world alone.

STRATEGIES

ENCOURAGE ONGOING FOSTER PARENT INVOLVEMENT.

Review the barriers in foster care licensing and policy that prevent foster parents from continuing to provide housing and support to foster youths in their charge who have reached the age of 18.

PROVIDE ONGOING SUPPORT FOR FOSTER PARENTS. Examine possible mechanisms to support foster parents who keep youth in their care after they reach the age of 18, especially for those youth enrolled in educational programs.

EXTEND FOSTER CARE SERVICES BEYOND AGE 18. Examine possible ways in which youth over the age of 18 might continue to receive the assistance and support for which they were eligible as foster youths under the age of 18.

DEVELOP AND PROVIDE AFTERCARE SERVICES. Develop aftercare services for youth and their families upon formal discharge from the system. Recognizing that many youth return to their families of origin upon leaving care, providing formal services to youth and their families during this transition would seem advisable.

ASSURE FLEXIBILITY IN SERVICE PROVISION. Allow for flexibility in service provision to youth age 17 to 21. Provide a menu of assistance and support that can be accessed to meet the unique needs of youth based on their maturity, needs and assets.



RECOMMENDATION D2

The child welfare system must create avenues, such as outreach services, for youth to return to the child welfare system for assistance after their formal discharge from care.

Findings from the FYTA Study indicate that a substantial portion of youth experienced problems “most” or “all of the time” since discharge from care in a number of critical areas. Thirty-two percent (32 percent) of youth interviewed at 12 to 18 months after exiting foster care stated that they experienced difficulty with not having enough money; 44 percent with obtaining medical care; 25 percent with managing relations with their family; 18 percent with locating a job; 14 percent with obtaining transportation; and 9 percent with securing housing. Given the high percentages of youth who experienced these problems “most” or “all of the time” since leaving care, we must create channels for these youth to obtain needed assistance after their discharge from care.

STRATEGIES

PROVIDE FOR ONGOING SUPPORT. Remove legal barriers that prohibit youth from returning to the system for short periods of time to address episodic problems.

PROVIDE CENTRALIZED SUPPORTS. Assure that a mechanism exists for youth to access numerous specialized services and supports in a centralized location.

PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR YOUTH IN GROUP CARE. Provide increased services and supports to youth exiting CCI's and group homes who may not have an identified person to whom they could return to for assistance upon discharge from care.

DEVELOP OUTREACH RESOURCES. Utilize the “street worker” concept to provide outreach and services to these youth, perhaps in concert with existing program models (e.g., runaway services programs). Use a proactive approach to service provision.

PROVIDE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES. Provide case management and follow-along services to youth between the ages of 18 to 21 to identify and address problems that may arise in their transition to independence.



Section Six: Continued

E. Recognizing the Role of All Social Institutions in Helping Youth Achieve Self-Sufficiency

Upon the removal of these youth from their family of origin, the community assumed responsibility for their parenting. While the child welfare system is considered the primary caretaker for youth in out-of-home care, all social institutions (e.g., schools, legal services, recreational organizations, the adult services system and the faith community) play a crucial role in their healthy development. Youth leaving care and youth who have never been in care utilize community resources to meet a variety of their needs. In addition to these normative needs of adolescence, youth in out-of-home care may have unique physical, psychological and emotional needs resulting from their histories of abuse and neglect. These needs are further heightened by the numerous disruptions that occur in a youth's life once he or she enters care.

Although the need for these services does not disappear once youth age out of the out-of-home care system, their ability to access these services becomes more difficult once they have been discharged. While 47 percent of youth reported receiving mental health or social services while in care, the number of youth reporting receiving such services at 12 to 18 months after exiting foster care decreased to 21 percent. Further, while 90 percent of youth interviewed prior to discharge from care were still attending high school, 37 percent of youth still had not completed high school at 12 to 18 months after discharge. The discrepancy between the need for these services and their provision to youth who have been discharged from the out-of-home care system is cause for alarm. Collaboration between the various systems involved in the lives of these youth is essential in addressing this discrepancy and assuring continuity of needed services and supports throughout the transition from out-of-home care to adulthood. The committee offers the following recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION E1

The child welfare system must strive to create a firmer linkage and easier transition between the child and adult services system.

Problems experienced by youth in out-of-home care do not instantaneously disappear once they become adults. Mental health issues, substance abuse issues, physical, cognitive and learning disabilities, emotional disturbances and chronic

“These foster kids belong to all of us, they are ‘our children,’ but we seldom treat them that way.”

Community member who attended a regional meeting
of the Independent Living Advisory Committee

health problems are issues that often follow abused and neglected youth throughout their transition to adulthood.

STRATEGIES

ORIENT WORKERS TO THE ADULT SERVICES SYSTEM. Educate child welfare staff working with older adolescents in the child welfare system about the adult services system.

UTILIZING SERVICE LINKAGES. Assure that foster parents and other caregivers and social workers are knowledgeable about how to efficiently and effectively link clients exiting the out-of-home care system with the appropriate adult services provider.

TRANSITION YOUTH TO ADULT SERVICES. Begin to transition youth to the adult services system prior to their discharge from care. Utilize joint planning between the child and adult services systems for older youth in care. Closer collaboration between the youth services provider and the adult services provider is needed to assure continuity of care.

DEVELOP CASE MANAGER SPECIALIZATION. Agencies should assign a case manager to work with youth leaving care who is knowledgeable about both the child welfare and the adult services systems. This person should establish an ongoing relationship with adult service providers to reduce problems associated with a youth being considered a “new” client by the adult services system.

FACILITATE INTER-SYSTEM COOPERATION. The state and counties should review all statutes, regulations and policies that might create a rationale for the child welfare and adult services systems not working together cooperatively for these youth.

CREATE PRIORITIES TO AVOID WAITING LISTS. Adult services agencies that have waiting lists should examine any criteria they might have for those lists to recognize that these youth, especially those who are developmentally disabled, often have no family or other support systems and should be given a priority for services.

RECOMMENDATION E2

The child welfare system must increase its efforts to utilize the community in its provision of support to older adolescents exiting care, to promote the notion that youth in out-of-home care are members of the community and to assure that youth in out-of-home care are included in community activities and organizations.

Children in out-of-home care are integral parts of the community. While they are not at fault for the circumstances that led to their placement, children in



Section Six: Continued

out-of-home care still experience stigmatization as a result of their status as “foster youth.” Of the youth interviewed for the FYTA Study, 35 percent of respondents indicated that they perceived that they were “somehow different from other youth.” An additional 27 percent stated that they “did not want to let on that they were in out-of-home care.” These sentiments were echoed in our listening sessions when we heard stories from youth who left care who indicated that they felt discriminated against in the community simply because of their status as children in out-of-home care. To help facilitate the successful transition to self-sufficiency, we must foster positive self-esteem in youth of all ages in out-of-home care. An essential piece of this process is to regard children in out-of-home care as members of the community.

STRATEGIES

INVOLVE YOUTH IN COMMUNITY PROGRAMS. The child welfare system must work with state and local communities and foster parents and other caregivers to assure that youth are included in prevention efforts and programs for all youth in the community.

RECOGNIZE THAT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL. Strive to facilitate the understanding at the state and local levels that the child welfare system cannot and should not provide all the needed services. Community supports are essential in assisting youth in making a successful transition to adulthood.

INVOLVE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS. Involve community organizations in a variety of roles supportive of youth transitioning from out-of-home care to self-sufficiency.



RECOMMENDATION E3

The child welfare system must promote the formation of multi-disciplinary teams to provide services to youth leaving care and should increase its efforts to promote effective and efficient communication among the multiple systems working with youth.

Given the multitude of needs of youth exiting out-of-home care, multi-disciplinary teams provide an efficient avenue for effective service delivery. Throughout the state, various service professionals at our listening sessions commented on the lack of communication among the various systems involved in the lives of youth. Others emphasized the success that can be achieved through coordination across systems to achieve desired outcomes. Research and the testimony of youth who aged out of care at our listening sessions revealed gaps

Over one-third of young adults who aged out of foster care in Wisconsin still did not have a high school diploma or the equivalent 12 to 18 months after their discharge from the system and less than one in 10 had attended any college.

between the needs of youth exiting care and their access to services to address those needs. Given the staggering gap between the needs of youth exiting care and the availability of adequate services to meet those needs, more open communication and collaboration must occur across systems and among the various professionals involved in the lives of youth.

While some would state that there is insufficient time to engage in multi-disciplinary teams to assist youth, it must be noted that under the current system a significant amount of time is spent in an environment of crisis. A lack of effective communication will most likely result in more time being spent on individual cases because those cases will be open for longer periods of time and services provided will not be as effective. Most often, a front-end investment of time will result in savings to the community.

STRATEGIES

PROMOTE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS. The Division should promote and foster a “team” approach to service delivery for youth exiting care. Multi-disciplinary teams should be utilized to assure that the needs of youth in care are adequately addressed.

REQUIRE CROSS-SYSTEM COLLABORATION. Increased collaboration needs to occur among the child welfare system and the various other systems providing services to youth exiting out-of-home care. Cross-systems training about the particular needs of youth in out-of-home care and how collaborative assessments and case plans will be developed and implemented will be necessary.

RECOMMENDATION E4

The child welfare system must work closely with child support enforcement agencies to assure the collection and allocation of child support payments for youth in care, including the establishment of savings accounts for youth in care and increased efforts to determine paternity.

Child support payments are a potentially valuable resource for youth exiting out-of-home care. Current policy states that any child support payments collected on behalf of youth in out-of-home care will be used to reimburse child welfare agencies for the cost of caring for these youth. The FYTA Study revealed that only 46 percent of the youth interviewed at 12 to 18 months after discharge from care reported leaving care with at least \$250 in savings. This, coupled with the finding that 32 percent of youth reported having problems with not having enough money “most” or “all” of the time since discharge from



Section Six: Continued

care, suggests that we need to assure that youth leave care with an adequate level of savings. Given that 32 percent of youth interviewed at 12 to 18 months after discharge from care relied on public assistance for at least a portion of their subsistence and an additional 10 percent had received cash assistance from a public or private agency (excluding AFDC, SSI or GA), the costs to the community when youth leave care without adequate savings can be large. Allowing youth in care to receive child support payments collected on their behalf and to use these in saving for life after care can help maximize their potential for self-sufficiency and reduce the costs to the community resulting from their lack of adequate resources.

STRATEGIES

MAXIMIZE THE USE OF CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS. The child welfare system must collaborate with child support enforcement agencies to alter current policies on child support payment allocation to allow youth in care to receive child support payments collected on their behalf. The Division should establish a work group with representatives of the DWD Bureau of Child Support to identify how child support collections can be used to support youth in care.

INCREASE CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS. The child welfare system must work in conjunction with child support enforcement agencies to increase collection of child support payments for youth in care.

COLLECT CHILD SUPPORT AFTER AGE 18. The child welfare system must work closely with the family court system to encourage court-ordered collection of child support up to the age of 21 if the youth is still in school.

FACILITATE PATERNITY DETERMINATIONS. The child welfare system must work with child support agencies to facilitate paternity determinations. This will increase child support payments to benefit these youth and will also create possible relative placements and ongoing support for these youth.

RECOMMENDATION E5

The child welfare system must work closely with the public school, vocational-technical college and university systems to assure that the educational needs and access to educational opportunities for youth exiting out-of-home care are reflected in program and funding options.

Education is vital for successful functioning in the adult world. One simply cannot survive in today's competitive work force without adequate educational preparation. While youth interviewed for the FYTA Study prior to discharge from care were optimistic in their educational aspirations, with 79 percent of youth indicating that they desired to enter college, few youth would actually

Over two-fifths of young adults who aged out of foster care in Wisconsin have trouble most or all of the time in obtaining needed medical care. Less than half of those who received mental health services while they were in foster care continue to do so after they are discharged.

meet their goals. At 12 to 18 months after discharge from care, only 55 percent had completed high school and only 9 percent had entered college. Also troubling were the educational deficits exhibited by a number of youth while still in care, with 32 percent of youth interviewed prior to discharge from care reading at or below an eighth grade reading level; 30 percent having failed at least one grade; and 37 percent attending one or more special education classes. Given the significant educational needs of youth in care, the child welfare system must work closely with the public school system to assure that youth exiting care receive adequate educational training.

STRATEGIES

DEVELOP A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING. The Departments of Health and Family Services (DHFS) and Public Instruction (DPI) will encourage counties and local school districts to establish memoranda of understanding (MOUs) regarding services for youth in out-of-home care. These MOUs should include agreements regarding the following:

- Which local systems need to be involved in helping to improve services to youth in out-of-home care (e.g., social services, schools, law enforcement) and what each system is responsible for doing;
- How special education transition plans and independent living transitional plans should be coordinated;
- Efforts to maintain these youth in their respective schools;
- How information will be shared among systems, including the educational plans of these youth; and
- Meetings to develop, maintain and update responsibilities (e.g., how often meetings will be held, who will organize and facilitate the meetings).

DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE PUBLICATIONS. DHFS and DPI together will develop brief, user-friendly publications to help people working with youth in out-of-home care understand guidelines and available services for these youth.

UTILIZE EXISTING MODEL PROGRAMS. As appropriate, assure that children and youth have access to such programs as Integrated Services and Children Come First projects.

UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN. Child welfare staff must assist education professionals in understanding the unique needs of youth in out-of-home care and the manifestations of those needs. DPI will assist school districts in understanding that because of the special challenges youth in out-of-home care face, they are a target population that often requires alternative education programming and services (much like school-age parents, truants, adjudicated delinquents and dropouts).



Section Six: Continued

PUBLICIZE THE AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES. DPI will share information with school districts about currently available services that may be appropriately targeted to youth in out-of-home care through its Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Program (WEOP) offices.

CREATE POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES. DPI will provide pre-college opportunities and help facilitate post-secondary opportunities for youth in out-of-home care through its WEOP offices.

FACILITATE THE ATTAINMENT OF A GED. DPI should consider waiver requests to allow a youth in out-of-home care to work toward an alternative degree (i.e., GED or HSED) prior to age 18 when it is anticipated the youth will not successfully complete high school prior to aging out of out-of-home care.

PROVIDE ACCESS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION. The public school system must work in conjunction with the university and vocational-technical systems and the child welfare system to assist children exiting out-of-home care to access higher education.

PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS. The Division must collaborate with the university and vocational-technical college systems to develop scholarship opportunities for older adolescents exiting out-of-home care

ASSURE ACCESS TO DRIVER'S EDUCATION. The child welfare system must work with the public school system to assure that all youth aging out of care have received driver's education and have obtained their driver's license or preparation for obtaining a driver's license prior to exiting care.



RECOMMENDATION E6

The child welfare system must collaborate with public health and Medicaid agencies and officials to assure that youth exiting out-of-home care have access to affordable health care.

Accessing necessary health and mental health services is problematic for many youth exiting the child welfare system. At 12 to 18 months after their formal discharge from the system, 44 percent of youth interviewed for the FYTA Study indicated that they had problems accessing needed medical care most or all of the time and 28 percent of young adults stated that they could not get needed dental care. The majority of respondents attributed their inability to obtain necessary services to lack of insurance coverage (51 percent), with an additional 38 percent indicating that health care was too expensive. The situation was similarly difficult for youth requiring mental health services. While 47 percent of youth interviewed prior to discharge from care reported receiving mental health

Only 61 percent of young adults who were interviewed in Wisconsin 12 to 18 months after leaving foster care were working at the time of the interview. Nearly one-fifth had never worked since leaving care.

services, this number dropped to 21 percent of those interviewed at 12 to 18 months after exiting care. Given that there is no evidence that the need for such services decreased, this decline is concerning. Indeed, scores for youth on the Mental Health Inventory at 12 to 18 months after discharge from care suggested that they experienced more psychological distress than peers in their age group did. Given these statistics, the child welfare system must collaborate closely with public health agencies to assure that the medical needs of youth exiting care are adequately addressed.

STRATEGIES

EXTEND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE COVERAGE. Exercise the federally approved state option to extend Medical Assistance (MA) eligibility to age 21 for youth exiting out-of-home care.

ASSURE THAT YOUTH HAVE THEIR MEDICAL RECORDS. Assist youth exiting out-of-home care in obtaining copies of their medical records prior to discharge from care to assure that future health care providers have the necessary comprehensive medical histories needed to provide appropriate health services.

TARGET PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES. Local public health agencies need to identify all youth in out-of-home care as a target population for outreach, education and services.

RECOMMENDATION E6

The child welfare system must collaborate with the public and private employment sector to maximize job training and employment opportunities for youth exiting out-of-home care.

Employment is critical to self-sufficiency. As such, youth exiting out-of-home care must have access to employment and job training opportunities prior to and after their discharge from care. This is particularly critical given findings from the Wisconsin FYTA Study that indicate that youth exiting out-of-home care had difficulty in maintaining consistent employment. While 81 percent of youth interviewed prior to discharge from care indicated having had at least one employment experience, only 61 percent of those interviewed at 12 to 18 months after discharge from care were currently employed. Further, while all adolescents interviewed prior to discharge from care were at least 17 years of age, only 57 percent of youth were employed when interviewed for the first wave of the FYTA Study. The child welfare system must collaborate with the public and private employment sector to assure that youth exiting out-of-home care have access to job training and employment opportunities throughout their transition to independence.



Section Six: Continued

STRATEGIES

CONNECT YOUTH WITH JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS. Youth in out-of-home care must be connected with existing job training and employment programs. Self-sufficiency is a primary skill to be developed, but youth may need such assistance as rides from caregivers to and from job sites.

CREATE LINKAGES WITH W-2 ADVISORY COMMITTEES. Counties and tribes must strive to create linkages with W-2 advisory committees in their communities to maximize employment opportunities for youth exiting out-of-home care.

PROVIDE YOUTH WITH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. Independent living preparation services must be consistent with employment opportunities and programs. Group homes and CCI's in particular must modify their independent living preparation services to assure that older adolescents are able to participate in employment and job training opportunities prior to their discharge from care.

ENCOURAGE THE SPECIALIZED RECRUITMENT OF YOUTH LEAVING CARE. The Division must strive to educate the public and private employment sector about youth in out-of-home care and the need for specialized recruitment efforts to employ older adolescents exiting the system.

FAMILIARIZE YOUTH WITH JOB CENTERS. Youth must be familiarized in an experiential manner with the local job center, including where it is located, how to get there, how they operate, their purpose and what they offer.

ENCOURAGE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS TO FOCUS ON YOUTH EXITING CARE. The Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) should focus on and respond to the employment needs of youth in out-of-home care, especially those youth who are exiting the system at age 18.

F. Administrative Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION F1

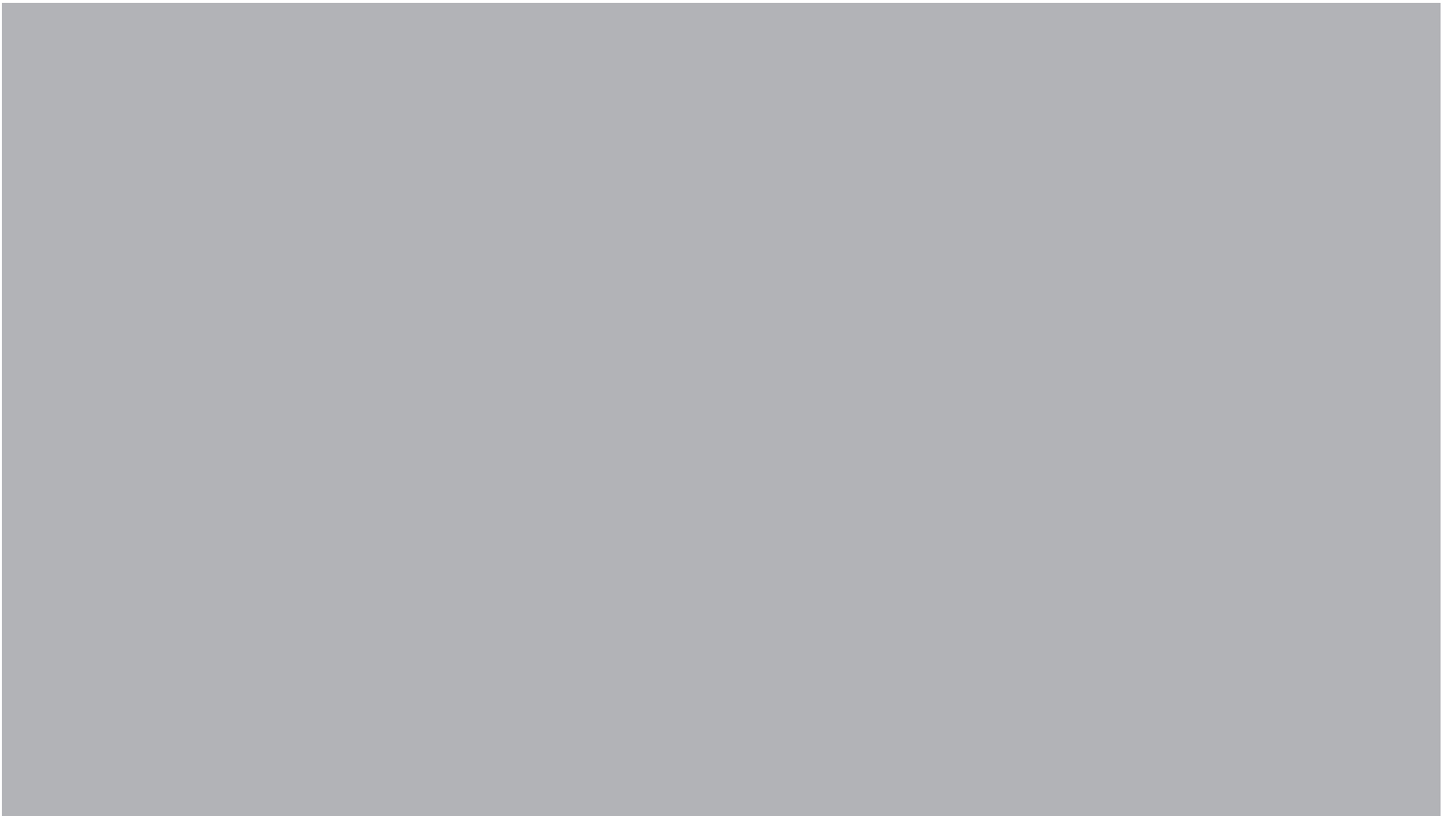
The Division must establish a work group comprised of state, county and tribal staff and representatives of the Division of Juvenile Corrections to develop a formula for the distribution of funds available for independent living preparation services. The formula should be based on best practice considerations and should utilize such data as caseloads and workloads, the number of youth over a certain age in out-of-home care and the number of youth who leave care after age 17. The formula and its implementation must consider each agency's needs and must, when appropriate, be a multi-agency consortium in order to maximize existing funds.

The current allocations of funds to counties, tribes and the Division of Juvenile Corrections are not based on a particular formula or indication of need. It is important that funding be provided to all counties and tribes to assure that there is an awareness that all youth in out-of-home care are entitled to and in need of independent living preparation services.

RECOMMENDATION F2

To fulfill its role as articulated in the preceding recommendations, the Division must have an adequate infrastructure and supports. In order to provide technical assistance, consultation and evaluation services, the Division should seek authority for one additional FTE dedicated to the assurance of accountability and the achievement of positive results. The position should also be assigned to assure successful implementation of independent living preparation services and the recommendations included in this report.

The Division currently has one FTE allocated to Independent Living. The primary responsibilities of this position are to administer contracts, arrange training activities and develop the annual federal report and application. It is important that an additional FTE be added to assure that standards are met, necessary statutory language, regulations and policies are developed, to assure that Wisconsin is in compliance with all federal laws and regulations and to provide technical assistance and consultation to all counties and tribes to optimize the services available to these youth.



Placements In Out-of-Home Care, age 15-20 County Populations and Placements Per 100 Population

	CY 99 Placements Age 15-20	CY 98 Placements Age 15-20	CY 97 Placements Age 15-20	3-Year Rolling Average	CY 2000 Population Age 15-19	Placements per 100 Population
Adams	12	12	11	11.7	1,004	1.16
Ashland	11	10	9	10.0	1,410	0.71
Barron	21	17	19	19.0	3,453	0.55
Bayfield	6	6	4	5.3	1,118	0.47
Brown	49	43	41	44.3	15,543	0.28
Buffalo	6	7	7	6.7	1,040	0.64
Burnett	5	8	8	7.0	936	0.75
Calumet	10	9	6	8.3	3,060	0.27
Chippewa	26	29	20	25.0	4,193	0.60
Clark	15	17	29	20.3	2,765	0.73
Columbia	12	10	19	13.7	3,529	0.39
Crawford	8	8	10	8.7	1,337	1.03
Dane	165	185	151	167.0	33,046	0.50
Dodge	29	29	28	28.7	6,132	0.47
Door	5	7	8	6.7	1,892	0.35
Douglas	9	7	5	7.0	3,071	0.23
Dunn	17	15	22	18.0	3,924	0.46
Eau Claire	42	39	34	38.3	8,858	0.43
Florence	0	2	3	1.7	411	0.41
Fond du Lac	13	14	21	16.0	7,336	0.22
Forest	4	2	3	3.0	712	0.42
Grant	5	6	8	6.3	4,490	0.14
Green	9	9	13	10.3	2,281	0.45
Green Lake	10	6	7	7.7	1,496	0.51
Iowa	15	12	10	12.3	1,640	0.75
Iron	2	1	1	1.3	387	0.34
Jackson	1	4	5	3.3	1,318	0.25
Jefferson	16	13	19	16.0	5,861	0.27
Juneau	9	10	7	8.7	1,692	0.51
Kenosha	83	83	64	76.7	10,627	0.72

APPENDIX





Placements In Out-of-Home Care, age 15-20 County Populations and Placements Per 100 Population

APPENDIX

A

	CY 99 Placements Age 15-20	CY 98 Placements Age 15-20	CY 97 Placements Age 15-20	3-Year Rolling Average	CY 2000 Population Age 15-19	Placements per 100 Population
Kewaunee	1	0	0	0.3	1560	0.02
LaCrosse	44	54	47	48.3	9858	0.49
Lafayette	8	10	10	9.3	1406	0.66
Langlade	9	12	11	10.7	1491	0.72
Lincoln	3	4	8	5.0	2232	0.22
Manitowoc	34	35	31	33.3	6302	0.53
Marathon	74	84	74	77.3	9582	0.81
Marinette	9	9	9	9.0	3181	0.28
Marquette	3	1	5	3.0	930	0.32
Menominee	4	3	4	3.7	460	0.80
Milwaukee	1060	900	759	906.3	72136	1.26
Monroe	13	17	20	16.7	3129	0.53
Oconto	21	9	11	13.7	2327	0.59
Oneida	20	29	21	23.3	2265	1.03
Outagamie	32	40	42	38.0	11880	0.32
Ozaukee	6	1	7	4.7	6202	0.08
Pepin	1	7	8	5.3	595	0.89
Pierce	12	15	17	14.7	3504	0.42
Polk	22	16	18	18.7	2793	0.67
Portage	12	16	16	14.7	6546	0.22
Price	5	4	6	5.0	1075	0.46
Racine	64	81	76	73.7	13746	0.53
Richland	2	4	6	4.0	1412	0.28
Rock	72	81	96	83.0	10467	0.79
Rusk	6	5	7	6.0	1169	0.51
Saint Croix	11	10	15	12.0	4445	0.27
Sauk	18	27	22	22.3	3913	0.57
Sawyer	3	4	4	3.7	1099	0.34
Shawano	1	0	2	1.0	2761	0.03
Sheboygan	39	34	34	35.7	7977	0.45



	CY 99 Placements Age 15-20	CY 98 Placements Age 15-20	CY 97 Placements Age 15-20	3-Year Rolling Average	CY 2000 Population Age 15-19	Placements per 100 Population
Taylor	10	7	7	8.0	1636	0.49
Trempealeau	1	3	2	2.0	1807	0.11
Vernon	13	16	9	12.7	2093	0.61
Vilas	7	6	6	6.3	1159	0.54
Walworth	32	41	19	30.7	6566	0.47
Washburn	9	5	6	6.7	1037	0.64
Washington	19	16	16	17.0	8469	0.20
Waukesha	32	35	45	37.3	25897	0.14
Waupaca	12	11	9	10.7	3658	0.29
Waushara	9	6	6	7.0	1358	0.51
Winnebago	42	50	63	51.7	11002	0.47
Wood	40	56	52	49.3	5988	0.82
STATE TOTAL	2450	2384	2218	2350.7	401675	0.58

Note: 15-19 population figures are CY 2000 estimates from DOA demographics services.

Note: 15-20 placement figures are year end counts from HSRS system data.



1997 - 1999

Case Closings by Age

Closure Reason

County/Tribe	17	18+	TOTAL
Adams DHSS	4.7	0.3	5.0
Ashland HSD	3.0	1.3	4.3
Barron DSS	5.0	1.7	6.7
Bayfield DSS	2.0	0.7	2.7
Brown DHS	9.0	5.7	14.7
Buffalo DHHS	2.7		2.7
Burnett DSS	3.0	0.3	3.3
Calumet DHS	1.0	2.0	3.0
Chippewa DHS	10.3	1.7	12.0
Clark DSS	7.7	3.3	11.0
Columbia HSD	2.0	1.3	3.3
Crawford HSD	2.7	2.3	5.0
Dane DHS	43.0	12.7	55.7
Dodge HSHD	5.3	4.0	9.3
Door DSS	2.3	1.7	4.0
Douglas HS	3.3	1.0	4.3
Dunn DHS	9.3	3.0	12.3
Eau Claire DHS	13.7	4.3	18.0
Florence HSD	1.0		1.0
Fond du Lac DSS	9.0	3.0	12.0
Forest SSD	0.7		0.7
Grant DSS	2.0	0.7	2.7
Green HS	0.7	1.7	2.3
Green Lake HHSD	1.3	1.0	2.3
Iowa DSS	3.0	1.3	4.3
Iron DHS	0.3	0.3	0.7
Jackson DHHS	0.7	0.7	1.3
Jefferson HSD	5.0	0.3	5.3
Juneau DHS	2.0	1.3	3.3
Kenosha DHS	30.7	4.7	35.3
Kewaunee DSS	0	0	0
LaCrosse HSD	12.3	4.3	16.7
Lafayette HS	3.7	0.7	4.3
Langlade DSS	2.7	1.3	4.0
Lincoln DSS	1.3	2.0	3.3
Manitowoc HSD	7.0	3.7	10.7
Marathon DSS	32.3	8.7	41.0
Marinette HHSD	5.7	0.7	6.3
Marquette DSS	1.3	0.7	2.0
Menominee HHSD	1.7	0.3	2.0
Milwaukee DHS	74.3	107.0	181.3
Monroe DHS	4.7	2.3	7.0
Oconto DHHS	3.3	1.3	4.7
Oneida DSS	8.0	2.3	10.3
Outagamie DHHS	20.0	7.0	27.0
Ozaukee DSS	3.0	2.7	5.7
Pepin DHS	2.0	1.0	3.0

"Age Out"	Runaway	IL, Not 18	Other	TOTAL
1.0		0.3	3.7	5.0
1.3	0.3		2.7	4.3
2.0			4.7	6.7
0.7		0.3	1.7	2.7
8.3		2.0	4.3	14.7
0.3			2.3	2.7
0.3		0.3	2.7	3.3
1.0	0.3		1.7	3.0
1.3	1.3	0.7	8.7	12.0
3.7	0.3	0.7	6.3	11.0
1.3			2.0	3.3
2.3	0.7		2.3	5.0
10.3	6.0	4.3	35.0	55.7
2.7	0.3	1.0	5.3	9.3
2.3	0.3		1.3	4.0
1.0	0.3		3.0	4.3
2.3	0.7	0.3	9.0	12.3
4.0	1.7	0.3	12.0	18.0
			1.0	1.0
3.3	0.7	3.0	5.0	12.0
		0.3	0.3	0.7
1.0	0.3	0.3	1.0	2.7
1.0		0.3	1.0	2.3
1.0			1.3	2.3
1.3			3.0	4.3
0.3			0.3	0.7
0.7			0.7	1.3
0.3		0.3	4.7	5.3
1.3	0.3		1.7	3.3
1.7	4.0	11.7	17.3	35.3
0	0	0	0	0
4.7	0.7	2.3	9.0	16.7
1.0		0.3	3.0	4.3
1.3		1.0	1.7	4.0
1.3			2.0	3.3
4.3	1.3	0.3	4.7	10.7
9.3	2.7	2.3	26.7	41.0
1.3	1.0	1.0	3.0	6.3
0.3	0.3		1.3	2.0
0.3	0.7		1.0	2.0
96.7	9.3	7.3	68.0	181.3
3.3			3.7	7.0
1.3	0.7	0.3	2.3	4.7
2.3	1.3	0.3	6.3	10.3
8.3	1.7	1.3	15.7	27.0
2.1		0.3	3.0	5.7
0.7			2.3	3.0

APPENDIX

B

1997 - 1999

Case Closings by Age

County/Tribe	17	18+	TOTAL
Pierce DHS	5.0	1.3	6.3
Polk DSS	5.0	1.0	6.0
Portage CHS	5.0	1.7	6.7
Price HSD	2.3	0.3	2.7
Racine HSD	27.3	8.7	36.0
Richland DSS	4.0	0.3	4.3
Rock HSD	26.3	10.0	36.3
Rusk DSS	1.7	0.7	2.3
Sauk DHS	6.3	2.7	9.0
Sawyer HS	1.7	1.3	3.0
Shawano DSS	0.3	0.3	0.7
Sheboygan HHSD	9.7	3.3	13.0
St. Croix HSD	3.0	1.7	4.7
Taylor HSD	4.7		4.7
Trempealeau DSS	1.0		1.0
Vernon DHS	4.7	1.7	6.3
Vilas SSD	3.0		3.0
Walworth DHHS	5.7	3.7	9.3
Washburn DSS	3.0	0.3	3.3
Washington DSS	5.0	2.0	7.0
Waukesha DHHS	15.7	4.3	20.0
Waupaca DHHS	2.0	1.7	3.7
Waushara DSS	1.3		1.3
Winnebago DSS	20.0	7.0	27.0
Wood DSS	11.3	9.3	20.7
Total 1997	525	366	891
Total 1998	582	271	853
Total 1999	528	179	707
Average	545	272	817

Closure Reason

"Age Out"	Runaway	IL, Not 18	Other	TOTAL
1.0	0.3	0.3	4.7	6.3
1.0	0.3	0.3	4.3	6.0
3.0	0.3	0.3	3.0	6.7
0.3		0.3	2.0	2.7
8.3	2.3	1.0	24.3	36.0
0.3	0.3		3.7	4.3
13.3	2.7	3.0	17.3	36.3
0.7			1.7	2.3
2.7	0.3	0.3	5.7	9.0
1.7			1.3	3.0
0.3		0.3		0.7
4.7		1.7	6.7	13.0
1.0		1.0	2.7	4.7
0.7		0.3	3.7	4.7
0.3			0.7	1.0
2.0	0.3	0.3	3.7	6.3
0.7			2.3	3.0
3.3		0.3	5.7	9.3
0.3	0.7		2.3	3.3
3.3	0.3	0.3	3.0	7.0
5.0	2.3	1.7	11.0	20.0
1.3			2.3	3.7
		1.0	0.3	1.3
3.3	0.3	0.7	22.7	27.0
8.3	1.3	0.7	10.3	20.7
290	52	59	490	891
283	55	64	451	853
221	41	49	396	707
265	49	57	446	817

APPENDIX

B



Programs Funded in 1999

APPENDIX

C

	Funded in CY99	CY 99 Contract
Adams	No	
Ashland	Yes	\$6,000
Barron	Yes	11,500
Bayfield	Yes	5,700
Brown	No	
Buffalo	No	
Burnett	No	
Calumet	No	
Chippewa	Yes	22,406
Clark	Yes	16,400
Columbia	No	
Crawford	Yes	9,500
Dane	Yes	88,200
Dodge	Yes	3,000
Door	Yes	12,000
Douglas	Yes	17,000
Dunn	Yes	19,000
Eau Claire	Yes	17,250
Florence	No	
Fond du Lac	Yes	27,000
Forest	No	
Grant	Yes	7,500
Green	No	
Green Lake	Yes	8,296
Iowa	Yes	3,000
Iron	No	
Jackson	No	
Jefferson	Yes	27,500
Juneau	Yes	3,000
Kenosha	Yes	67,000
Kewaunee	No	
LaCrosse	Yes	31,000
Lafayette	Yes	6,000
Langlade	No	
Lincoln	Yes	6,160
Manitowoc	Yes	6,000

	Funded in CY99	CY 99 Contract
Marathon	Yes	\$67,980
Marinette	Yes	17,000
Marquette	No	
Menomonee	No	
Milwaukee	Yes	300,000
Monroe	Yes	9,500
Oconto	Yes	10,000
Oneida	Yes	3,000
Outagamie	Yes	7,643
Ozaukee	No	
Pepin	No	
Pierce	Yes	19,876
Polk	Yes	13,100
Portage	Yes	20,680
Price	Yes	11,400
Racine	Yes	19,000
Richland	Yes	3,000
Rock	Yes	70,345
Rusk	No	
Saint Croix	Yes	20,668
Sauk	No	
Sawyer	Yes	7,198
Shawano	No	
Sheboygan	Yes	20,000
Taylor	No	
Trempealeau	No	
Vernon	Yes	11,400
Vilas	Yes	11,444
Walworth	Yes	7,000
Washburn	Yes	10,000
Washington	No	
Waukesha	No	
Waupaca	No	
Waushara	Yes	8,550
Winnebago	Yes	15,000
Wood	Yes	17,940

STATE TOTAL 47 funded \$1,172,136

Independent Living Advisory Committee

Betty Barrett, Doctoral Student

UW-Madison, School of Social Work
1350 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: (608) 280-9369
Fax: (608) 263-3836
E-mail: ona66@aol.com

Mikki Buss, Foster Parent

636 Elizabeth Street
Menasha, WI 54952
Phone: (920) 725-8955

David Cappon, Executive Director

Housing Authorities
of the City and County of Waukesha
120 Corrina Blvd.
Waukesha, WI 53186
Phone: (262) 542-2262
Fax: (262) 542-0138
E-mail: Dwcappon@aol.com

John Chrest, Director

Wood County Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 8095
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-8095
Phone: (715) 421-8600
Fax: (715) 421-8693
E-mail: jchrestwoodwr@hotmail.com

Cathy Connolly, President

St. Charles, Inc.
151 South 84th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53214
Phone: (414) 476-3710
Fax: (414) 778-5985
E-mail: ganter@execpc.com

Mark Courtney, Ph.D., Consultant

UW-Madison, School of Social Work
1350 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: (608) 263-3669
Fax: (608) 263-3836
E-mail: courtney@ssc.wisc.edu

Nic Dibble, Education Consultant

School Social Work Services
Department of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
Phone: (608) 266-0963
Fax: (608) 267-3746
E-mail: nic.dibble@dpi.state.wi.us

Susan N. Dreyfus, Co-Chair, Administrator

Division of Children and Family Services
DHFS/DCFS
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53708-8916
Phone: (608) 267-9685
Fax: (608) 266-6836
E-mail: dreyfsn@dhfs.state.wi.us

Mark Krueger, Ph.D., Professor

Director, Child and Youth Care Learning
Center University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
161 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 6000
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Phone: (414) 229-5797
Fax: (414) 229-6930
E-mail: markkrue@csd.uwm.edu

APPENDIX

D



APPENDIX

D

Independent Living Advisory Committee

Juan Jose Lopez, Executive Director

Briarpatch, Inc.
512 E. Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 251-6211
Fax: (608) 257-0394
E-mail: jlopez@madison.k12.wi.us

Sinikka McCabe, Administrator

Division of Supportive Living
DHFS/DSL
P.O. Box 7851
Madison, WI 53707-7851
Phone: (608) 266-0554
Fax: (608) 264-9832
E-mail: mccabss@dhfs.state.wi.us

John Metcalf, Director

of Human Resources Policy
Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce
P.O. Box 352
Madison, WI 53701-0352
Phone: (608) 258-3400
Fax: (608) 258-3413
E-mail: jmetcalf@wmc.org

Mark S. Mitchell, Manager

Child Welfare Services Section
Division of Children and Family Services
DHFS/DCFS
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53708-8916
Phone: (608) 266-2860
Fax: (608) 264-6750
E-mail: mitchms@dhfs.state.wi.us

Jeff Muse, Deputy Director

For Health & Human Services
Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council
P.O. Box 9
Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538
Phone: (715) 588-3324
Fax: (715) 588-7900
E-mail: museyip@glitc.org

Denise Revels Robinson, Director

Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare
Division of Children and Family Services
DHFS/DCFS
235 West Galena Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Phone: (414) 220-7029
Fax: (414) 220-7062
E-mail: revelldr@dhfs.state.wi.us

The Honorable Carol Roessler

Wisconsin State Senate
100 N. Hamilton Street, Room 403
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Phone: (608) 266-5300
Fax: (608) 266-0423
E-mail: sen.roessler@legis.state.wi.us

Jane Snilsberg, Director

Ashland County Department
of Human Services
301 Ellis Avenue
Ashland, WI 54806
Phone: (715) 682-7004 ext. 117
Fax: (715) 682-7924
E-mail: jsnilsberg@hds.co.ashland.wi.us

Independent Living Advisory Committee

Paul Spraggins, Director

WI Educational Opportunity Programs
and Office of Urban Education
Department of Public Instruction
125 South Webster Street
Madison, WI 53702
101 W. Pleasant St., #204
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Phone (Madison): (608) 266-3532
Phone (Milwaukee): (414) 227-4413
Fax (Milwaukee): (414) 227-4462
E-mail: paul.spraggins@dpi.state.wi.us

The Honorable Jeff Stone

Wisconsin State Assembly
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953
Phone: (608) 266-8590
Fax: (608) 282-3682
E-mail: rep.stone@legis.state.wi.us

Joel Ungrodt, Executive Director

Family Works, Inc.
222 N. Midvale Blvd., Suite 14
Madison, WI 53705
Phone: (608) 233-9204
Fax: (608) 233-9710
E-mail: joel@family-works.com

Rita Wisnewski, Co-Chair

Wisnewski Group Home
430 Four Mile Creek Road
Mosinee, WI 54455-9783
Phone: (715) 693-6704
Fax: (715) 693-6799
E-mail: CueMeIn@aol.com

Byron Wright, Executive Director

Kenosha Human Development Services
5407 8th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53410
Phone: (262) 657-7188
Fax: (262) 653-2080
E-mail: bwright@co.kenosha.wi.us

Teri Zywicki-Nelson, Division Director

PATH Wisconsin
516 2nd Street North, Suite 209
Hudson, WI 54016
Phone: (715) 386-1547
Fax: (715) 386-2541
E-mail: tzywicki@pathinc.org

APPENDIX

D