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👉 Details: Audit Report 06-1 and Report 06-2, Milwaukee County Child Welfare, Department of Health and Family Services

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Joint

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

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Janice Mueller
State Auditor

DATE: February 7, 2006

TO: Karen Asbjornson and Pamela Matthews
Committee Clerks to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee

FROM: Paul Stuiber 
Deputy State Auditor for Program Evaluation

SUBJECT: Reports 06-1 and 06-2: An Evaluation of Milwaukee County Child Welfare

Enclosed is our evaluation of the Milwaukee County Child Welfare program. The Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) began administering Milwaukee County's child welfare program in January 1998, following a 1993 class-action lawsuit filed in federal court and the enactment of 1995 Wisconsin Acts 27 and 303.

An audit of the program was requested by the co-chairs and Senator Darling. Concerns had been raised about a number of issues, including media reports of children being harmed while in the care of DHFS's Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, problems with child welfare contractors, and high turnover among child welfare staff. Our findings are presented in two reports: report 06-1 is a comprehensive review of program management and performance; and report 06-2 addresses program funding, expenditures, and staffing issues.

In the audit, we reviewed 73 high-risk cases that were most likely to involve child abuse or neglect. In 69 of these cases, the Bureau and its contractors took reasonable and appropriate action. However, efforts were insufficient to ensure children's safety in four cases, including one case in which children were allowed to live in a condemned home for more than four months and another in which an infant died as a result of abuse.

We also found other programmatic issues that need to be addressed. For example:

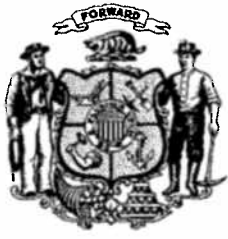
- The Bureau exceeded the 60-day statutory time limit for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect in 4,397 investigations, or 30.9 percent of those it completed from January 2004 through June 2005.
- Early in 2005, only 27.4 percent of court-ordered services for families whose children were removed from their homes were provided in a timely manner.

- Turnover among case managers employed by contractors increased from 30.1 percent in 2003 to 38.6 percent in 2004, while annual turnover among the Bureau's staff has been approximately 10.0 percent.
- We identified \$677,694 in unallowable and questioned costs charged by six contractors that provided most program services in 2004. This included a \$541,604 duplicate reimbursement request submitted by one contractor, Lutheran Social Services.

We have included recommendations for program improvement and for reports from DHFS to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee in March 2006 and February 2007 on efforts to address the concerns we identified. Report 06-1 and report 06-2 will be released on Wednesday, February 8, at 9:00 a.m. Please contact us if you have any questions.

PS/km

Enclosures

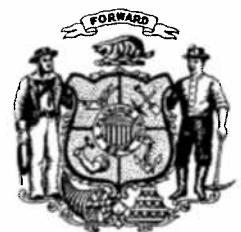


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1 East Main Street, Suite 200
Madison, WI 53703



An Evaluation

**Milwaukee County
Child Welfare:
Program Issues**

Department of Health and Family Services

2005-2006 Joint Legislative Audit Committee Members

Senate Members:

Carol A. Roessler, Co-chairperson
Robert Cowles
Scott Fitzgerald
Mark Miller
Julie Lassa

Assembly Members:

Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairperson
Samantha Kerkman
Dean Kaufert
David Travis
David Cullen

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The Bureau is a nonpartisan legislative service agency responsible for conducting financial and program evaluation audits of state agencies. The Bureau's purpose is to provide assurance to the Legislature that financial transactions and management decisions are made effectively, efficiently, and in compliance with state law and that state agencies carry out the policies of the Legislature and the Governor. Audit Bureau reports typically contain reviews of financial transactions, analyses of agency performance or public policy issues, conclusions regarding the causes of problems found, and recommendations for improvement.

Reports are submitted to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee and made available to other committees of the Legislature and to the public. The Audit Committee may arrange public hearings on the issues identified in a report and may introduce legislation in response to the audit recommendations. However, the findings, conclusions, and recommendations in the report are those of the Legislative Audit Bureau. For more information, write the Bureau at 22 E. Mifflin Street, Suite 500, Madison, WI 53703, call (608) 266-2818, or send e-mail to leg.audit.info@legis.state.wi.us. Electronic copies of current reports are available on line at www.legis.state.wi.us/lab.

State Auditor - Janice Mueller

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Kate Strom Hiorns

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Janice Mueller
State Auditor

February 8, 2006

Senator Carol A. Roessler and
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator Roessler and Representative Jeskewitz:

We have completed an evaluation of the Milwaukee County child welfare program, as requested by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. The program, which protects children from abuse and neglect, is administered by the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare in the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS), which contracts for most services. In June 2005, the program served 3,188 children who had been removed from their homes to ensure their safety. An additional 266 families received services without having a child removed from the home. From January 2001 through June 2005, program expenditures totaled \$493.7 million. Our review of program expenditure and staffing issues is report 06-2.

DHFS has taken important steps in recent years to improve the welfare of children in Milwaukee County, including significantly reducing the number of children in out-of-home care. However, we identified concerns with the timeliness of investigations of child abuse and neglect, as well as the timeliness with which court-ordered services are provided. Collaboration and coordination among child welfare staff is limited, and problems related to establishing permanent placements were documented in 25 of 48 cases we reviewed. We make a number of recommendations for the Bureau to improve program management.

To assess whether the Bureau adequately ensured the safety of children, we reviewed 73 high-risk cases that were most likely to involve child abuse or neglect. The Bureau and its contractors took reasonable and appropriate action in 69 of these cases, but we believe more could have been done to protect children in the remaining 4 cases.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by DHFS and the child welfare contractors. A response from DHFS follows the appendices.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Mueller
State Auditor

JM/PS/ss

Report Highlights ■

Investigations of abuse and neglect have exceeded the 60-day statutory time limit.

Program improvements have reduced both the number of placements and the median stay in out-of-home care.

Improvements are needed to ensure the safety of children who remain with their families.

Sufficient action was taken to protect most, but not all, children from abuse and neglect.

Financial oversight should be improved.

Staff turnover remains a significant concern.

Counties have historically administered child welfare programs in Wisconsin. However, the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) began administering Milwaukee County's child welfare program in January 1998, following a 1993 class-action lawsuit filed in federal court. In June 2005, its Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare had 153 full-time equivalent employees (FTE), including 90 social workers who investigate allegations of abuse and neglect. Contractors employed approximately 500 staff to provide most other program services, such as case management for children who have been removed from their homes because of maltreatment. From January 2001 through June 2005, program expenditures totaled \$493.7 million.

At the direction of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, we conducted a comprehensive program evaluation. Report 06-1 addresses program management and performance, including:

- the timeliness of the Bureau's efforts to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect;
- the effectiveness of both out-of-home care and safety services that are provided when at-risk children remain at home, as well as the coordination of program services; and
- the Bureau's success in achieving 14 mandatory and 10 monitoring standards required by a settlement agreement arising from the lawsuit.

Report 06-2 addresses:

- program funding and expenditures, including the appropriateness of expenditures by program contractors; and
- staff turnover, qualifications, training, workloads, and salaries.

Investigations

From January 2004 through June 2005, the Bureau completed 14,224 investigations that involved 28,474 allegations of child abuse or neglect. A single investigation can include multiple allegations when, for example, more than one child is involved.

Statutes require investigations to be completed in 60 days. The Bureau exceeded the statutory time limit in 4,397 investigations, or 30.9 percent of those completed. It substantiated 15.2 percent of the allegations it investigated during the 18-month period we reviewed.

If the Bureau's investigation indicates that a child has been abused or neglected or that such treatment is imminent, the child is temporarily removed from the home. The Children's Court either determines that the child can safely be returned to the home or orders an out-of-home placement.

Out-of-Home Care

In June 2005, 3,188 Milwaukee County children were in foster care or other out-of-home placements. Nearly 40 percent of placements were in foster homes with non-relatives, although 771 children, or 24.2 percent, were placed with relatives participating in Kinship Care.

Significantly more children receive out-of-home care in Milwaukee County than elsewhere in Wisconsin, but the program's out-of-home placement rate declined 47.7 percent from January 2001 through June 2005. The Bureau's efforts to improve program operations contributed to this decline.

The median stay in out-of-home care also declined, from 39 months in June 2003 to 21 months in June 2005. However, in 25 of the 48 cases we reviewed, we identified problems such as insufficient coordination among child welfare staff. Children leave out-of-home care when their families are reunified, guardianship is transferred to a relative, they are adopted, or they reach adulthood.

Safety Services

Safety services—including parenting education, counseling, and drug and alcohol treatment—are made available to families by program contractors when children are not able to remain in the home without services. Participation is voluntary, although children may be removed from the home if family members do not agree to receive the safety services.

Safety services caseloads declined 63.4 percent from January 2001 through June 2005, from 727 to 266 families. The average period for which services were provided declined from 110 days in January 2003 to 81 days in January 2005. We found that some cases were closed prematurely.

For each family served, safety services contractors are paid \$4,776, regardless of which services are provided or how long the case remains open. Through 2005, both case management and safety services contractors were contractually required to provide quarterly reports identifying the services provided to 10.0 percent of their cases. However, the Bureau has neither requested nor received any of these reports since early 2003.

Improving Performance

We analyzed 73 high-risk cases that were most likely to involve child abuse or neglect. In 69 of these cases, the Bureau and its contractors took reasonable and appropriate action. However, we found four cases in which efforts were insufficient to ensure children's safety. These included one case in which children were allowed to live in a condemned house for more than four months and another in which an infant died as a result of abuse.

We also found that 20.1 percent of children who were reunified with their parents from January through June 2003 reentered out-of-home care within 24 months. Further, 11.4 percent of families who ceased receiving safety services during the first 6 months of 2004 had children removed from the home within the next 12 months. This rate exceeded the 4.0 percent contractual limit. However, because the Bureau does not monitor compliance, no funds have ever been withheld from safety services contractors.

Through June 2005, the Bureau met 8 of 14 performance standards required under the court-approved settlement agreement between the State and plaintiffs in the 1993 class-action lawsuit. Each standard will remain in effect until there is agreement by the parties to the lawsuit or an arbitrator determines that it has been met.

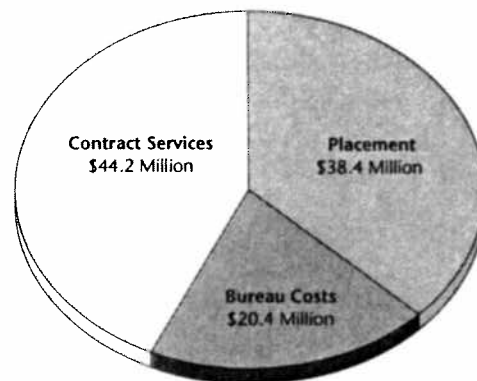
We found errors in the way the Bureau calculates its performance related to one permanency standard, which have overstated program success.

Program Finances

As shown in Figure 1, program expenditures fund the Bureau's costs, placement costs, and services provided by contractors. In 2004, they totaled \$103.0 million.

Figure 1

2004 Milwaukee County Child Welfare Expenditures



We reviewed the appropriateness and reasonableness of costs that nine contractors charged the program in 2004. We found \$677,694 in unallowable and questioned costs charged by six contractors, including payment of a \$541,604 duplicate reimbursement request submitted by one contractor, Lutheran Social Services.

Another contractor, La Causa, has had difficulty controlling costs in the past. As of December 2005, La Causa's debt was \$6.2 million. This debt will have to be monitored carefully because DHFS has awarded La Causa a \$10.6 million contract to provide program services in 2006.

We also have concerns that 2006 case management contracts pay a fixed case rate regardless of the amount of service provided to families.

Staff Turnover

Turnover of child welfare staff is a significant concern in Milwaukee County and nationwide. Among the case managers employed by program contractors, turnover was 30.1 percent in 2003 and increased to 38.6 percent in 2004. In contrast, annual turnover among the Bureau's social workers has been approximately 10.0 percent.

Recommendations

Our report includes recommendations for DHFS to report to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee on its actions to:

- ☑ improve the timeliness of its investigations and the delivery of court-ordered services; reduce the time children spend in out-of-home care; ensure the adequacy of safety services; and improve service coordination with Medical Assistance, W-2, and other social services providers (*p. 82, report 06-1*);
- ☑ monitor families who return for additional safety services within 12 months, as well as those who have children placed in out-of-home care in the 12 months following receipt of safety services, and enforce contractual provisions if returning cases exceed prescribed rates (*p. 52, report 06-1*);
- ☑ ensure that all children in out-of-home care receive annual medical and dental examinations (*p. 66, report 06-1*);
- ☑ continue to work to improve the retention of child welfare staff (*p. 36, report 06-2*);
- ☑ appropriately calculate the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare's compliance with performance standards specified in the settlement agreement (*pp. 57, 59, and 66, report 06-1*);
- ☑ collect and analyze information on services that contractors provide to families (*p. 18, report 06-2*); and
- ☑ monitor and assess La Causa's financial condition (*p. 23, report 06-2*).

In addition, we recommend that DHFS:

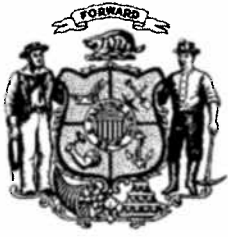
- ☑ require contractors to repay \$582,981 in unallowable costs and to either repay \$94,713 in questioned costs or provide additional documentation (*p. 27, report 06-2*); and

8 ■ ■ ■ ■ REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- ☑ ensure that new staff complete pre-service training before managing cases (*p. 33, report 06-2*).

Finally, we include a recommendation for the departments of Justice, Public Instruction, and Workforce Development to require Lutheran Social Services to reimburse them for public funds spent on unallowable costs (*p. 25, report 06-2*).

■ ■ ■ ■

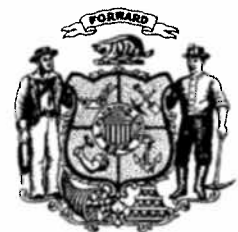


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Madison, WI 53703



An Evaluation

**Milwaukee County
Child Welfare:
Finances and Staffing**

Department of Health and Family Services

2005-2006 Joint Legislative Audit Committee Members

Senate Members:

Carol A. Roessler, Co-chairperson
Robert Cowles
Scott Fitzgerald
Mark Miller
Julie Lassa

Assembly Members:

Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairperson
Samantha Kerkman
Dean Kaufert
David Travis
David Cullen

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Janice Mueller
State Auditor

February 8, 2006

Senator Carol A. Roessler and
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Senator Roessler and Representative Jeskewitz:

We have completed an evaluation of the Milwaukee County child welfare program, as requested by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee. The program, which protects children from abuse and neglect, is administered by the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare in the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS). This review is part of a comprehensive evaluation that also addresses program management and performance (report 06-1).

Program expenditures totaled \$493.7 million from January 2001 through June 2005, when the Bureau had 153 full-time equivalent employees, including 90 certified social workers. The Bureau provides some program services, but most services are provided through contractors with an estimated 500 full-time equivalent employees in 2004.

We identified concerns with the Bureau's oversight of these contractors. For example, contractors have not reported on the services they provided to families, as required by their contracts. We also reviewed the appropriateness and reasonableness of costs that contractors charged to the program in 2004. We found \$677,694 in unallowable and questioned costs charged by six contractors, including payment of a \$541,604 duplicate reimbursement request submitted by one contractor.

A significant problem hampering effective program management is staff turnover. In 2004, turnover was 10.9 percent among the Bureau's social workers. Among contract staff, turnover was significantly higher and ranged from 25.5 percent for those serving families whose children remained in the home to 38.6 percent for those serving families whose children were removed from the home. We include a number of recommendations related to improving oversight of contractors and program funds, staff retention, and staff training.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by DHFS and the child welfare contractors. DHFS's response follows the appendices.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Mueller
State Auditor

JM/PS/ss

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Improving Performance

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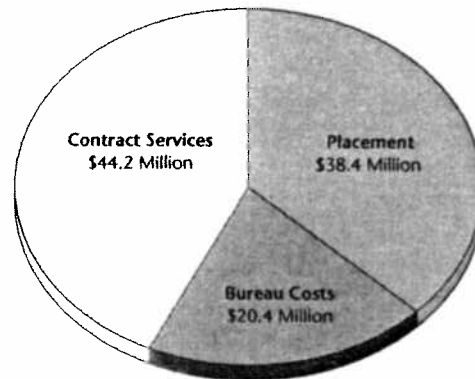
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We also have concerns that 2006 case management contracts pay a fixed case rate regardless of the amount of service provided to families.

Staff Turnover

Turnover of child welfare staff is a significant concern in Milwaukee County and nationwide. Among the case managers employed by program contractors, turnover was 30.1 percent in 2003 and increased to 38.6 percent in 2004. In contrast, annual turnover among the Bureau's social workers has been approximately 10.0 percent.

Recommendations

Our report includes recommendations for DHFS to report to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee on its actions to:

- improve the timeliness of its investigations and the delivery of court-ordered services; reduce the time children spend in out-of-home care; ensure the adequacy of safety services; and improve service coordination with Medical Assistance, W-2, and other social services providers (*p. 82, report 06-1*);
- monitor families who return for additional safety services within 12 months, as well as those who have children placed in out-of-home care in the 12 months following receipt of safety services, and enforce contractual provisions if returning cases exceed prescribed rates (*p. 52, report 06-1*);
- ensure that all children in out-of-home care receive annual medical and dental examinations (*p. 66, report 06-1*);
- continue to work to improve the retention of child welfare staff (*p. 36, report 06-2*);
- appropriately calculate the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare's compliance with performance standards specified in the settlement agreement (*pp. 57, 59, and 66, report 06-1*);
- collect and analyze information on services that contractors provide to families (*p. 18, report 06-2*); and
- monitor and assess La Causa's financial condition (*p. 23, report 06-2*).

In addition, we recommend that DHFS:

- require contractors to repay \$582,981 in unallowable costs and to either repay \$94,713 in questioned costs or provide additional documentation (*p. 27, report 06-2*); and

8 REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

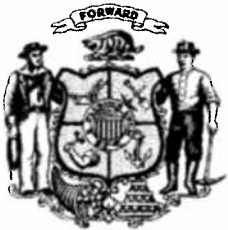
- ensure that new staff complete pre-service training before managing cases (*p. 33, report 06-2*).

Finally, we include a recommendation for the departments of Justice, Public Instruction, and Workforce Development to require Lutheran Social Services to reimburse them for public funds spent on unallowable costs (*p. 25, report 06-2*).

. . . .



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

February 8, 2006
For Immediate Release

Stephanie Marquis, Communications Director, (608) 266-1683

**Statement by Secretary Helene Nelson
Regarding the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare Report by Legislative Audit Bureau**

“Keeping children safe is our top priority. One of the Department’s most important and challenging responsibilities is protecting children in Milwaukee who are at serious risk of abuse or neglect. We are committed to improving the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare’s performance in helping vulnerable children and families.

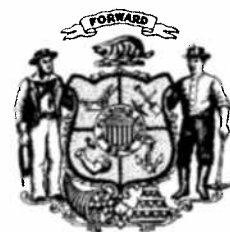
“The audit recognizes the important progress that the Department has made in improving the lives of children in Milwaukee County, such as significantly reducing the number of children in out-of-home care. The report also highlights challenges that are still facing us, such as reducing turnover of child welfare workers and ensuring timely services to families. Steps to address these and other underlying issues are in place, and although it takes time to see measurable results, there is already evidence of improvement.

“The audit raises some new issues that we will address immediately, while other concerns outlined in the audit are not new and strategies are being implemented to address them. We appreciate the thoroughness of the auditors. Their work will help us and our private agency contract partners to move forward in strengthening the system and helping more children to have the life and opportunities they deserve.”

- END -



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



WAFCA

**Wisconsin Association of
Family & Children's Agencies**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 2006

Contact: Linda Hall, (608) 257-5939

WAFCA Responds to Child Welfare Audit

The Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies (WAFCA) welcomes the evaluation of the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare released today by the Legislative Audit Bureau. The report recognizes the significant progress made in recent years, while identifying areas in which continued improvement is needed.

"This evaluation demonstrates that the systemic changes on which we have worked with the Bureau are precisely those that are most needed in order to better serve Milwaukee's at-risk children," said Linda Hall, interim executive director of WAFCA. "As the report makes clear, work remains to be done. We look forward to further collaboration with the Bureau to bring about lasting improvements in the child welfare system.

"We've seen a substantial reduction in out-of-home placements," Hall said. "Caseloads are now one of the lowest in the nation, allowing case managers to know each child better and more thoroughly understand their needs. A more collaborative case plan development process is allowing for better coordination between families, case managers, providers, and others involved.

Hall added: "We commend Division Administrator Burnie Bridge's initiatives aimed at addressing ongoing problems identified in the report, including incentives that will reduce staff turnover; enhancements in worker training; and new strategies for collaboration within the community, particularly those with faith-based organizations.

"When children are removed from their parents' homes, the government becomes their guardian. The public and private partners in the Milwaukee Child Welfare system are clearly working hard to give these children an opportunity for a fulfilling life surrounded by adults who truly care."

###

WAFCA

Wisconsin Association of
Family & Children's Agencies

131 W. Wilson Street
Suite 901
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 257-5939
Fax (608) 257-6067

John R. Grace
Executive Director

Linda A. Hall
Associate Director

MAKING PUBLIC POLICY WORK FOR FAMILIES & CHILDREN

WHAT IS WAFCA?

The Wisconsin Association of Family & Children's Agencies (WAFCA) is a non-profit organization that develops and provides advocacy, training and information services for its member agencies and the people they serve.

WAFCA represents 46 private agencies that provide mental health, education and social services to people in need. Most of our agencies have been providing services for over a half century. Membership in WAFCA is open to private incorporated family and children's service agencies.

Our members' services include personal and family counseling, adoption, group and family foster care for emotionally disturbed children, family-based services, employee assistance programs, and family life education.

WHAT DOES WAFCA DO?

WAFCA's primary goal is to promote effective and accountable human services programs, both in Wisconsin and nationally. Our action plans - in advocacy, training and information development - are designed to enhance the basic quality of life for families and children, especially those in crisis.

Advocacy: WAFCA represents the perspective of private child and family service agencies to government and to the public. Our public policy leadership has helped to make child and family services more comprehensive by increasing programs for abused and neglected children and by enhancing community-based mental health services.

Training: WAFCA organizes training programs for its members and other professional groups. These programs, presented by nationally recognized consultants and teachers, cover such topics as family systems therapy, child welfare legal issues, and management strategies for private child and family service agency executives and boards of directors.

Information: WAFCA provides program and management information to help its members respond to both current and developing needs. Our information services include strategic planning consultation, client and program data analysis, and public policy forecasting.

Staff:

John R. Grace, Executive Director
Linda A. Hall, Associate Director
Sharon Gust, Executive Assistant

2006 WAFCA MEMBER AGENCY FACT SHEET

COMBINED WAFCA MEMBER AGENCY 2006 BUDGETS: over \$500 Million

TOTAL STAFF EMPLOYED: over 10,000

FUNDING SOURCES:

Government Purchase of Service	75%
United Way, Contributions, Etc.	15%
Private Insurance Reimbursement	10%

46 MEMBER AGENCIES

- Adoption Resources of Wisconsin
 - Aurora Family Service
 - Benet Lake Child & Adolescent Treatment Ctr
 - Bethany Christian Services
 - Carmelite Home for Boys
 - Catholic Charities-Green Bay
 - Catholic Charities of LaCrosse
 - Catholic Charities of Madison
 - Catholic Charities of Milwaukee
 - Children's Health System
 - Children's Service Society of Wisconsin
 - Chileada Habilitation Institute
 - Clinicare
 - Family & Children's Center
 - Family Service-Madison
 - Family Service of Northeast Wisconsin, Inc.
 - Family Service-Racine
 - Family Service-Waukesha County
 - Family Services of Southern WI & Northern IL
 - Family Works
 - IMPACT
 - Jewish Family Services
 - La Causa
 - Lad Lake, Inc.
 - Lutheran Social Services
- Mental Health Center of Dane County
- Mercy Options Cooperative CCI
- Meta House
- Milwaukee Women's Center
- My Home, Your Home, Inc.
- New Horizon Center
- Norris, Inc.
- Northland Community Services
- Northwest Passage
- PATH Wisconsin
- Penfield Children's Center
- Rawhide Ranch
- St. Aemilian-Lakeside, Inc.
- St. Charles Youth & Family Services
- St. Rose Youth & Family Center, Inc.
- Southeastern Youth & Family Services
- Task Force on Family Violence
- The Counseling Center of Milwaukee, Inc.
- Tomorrow's Children
- WI Assoc of Child & Youth Care Professionals
- Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Services

SERVICES PROVIDED BY WAFCA AGENCIES

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Adoption | Family, Group and Individual Counseling | Outreach Migration/Refugee Services |
| Aftercare | Family Resource Centers | Prevention Programs |
| Birth Parent Services | Foster Care | Residential Care |
| Case Management | Group Homes | Runaway Programs |
| Chemical Dependency Treatment | Home Health Care | Shelter Care |
| Consumer Credit Counseling | Homemaker Services | Single Parent Programs/Services |
| Crisis Intervention | Home Visiting Services | Services for People with Disabilities |
| Day Care | Independent Living Services | Services for Older Adults |
| Day Treatment | In-Patient Services | |
| Domestic Violence Programs | In-Home Treatment | |
| Educational Programs | Out-Patient Mental Health Therapy | |
| Employee Assistance Programs | | |

Milwaukee Child Welfare System & Best Practice Issues

Then vs. Now

(Current Public/Private Partnership compared to previous County Program)¹

Measure	Milwaukee Child Welfare (prior to January, 1988)	Milwaukee Child Welfare (in 2005)
Children in Out-of-Home Care	6,100 (increased to 6,800 in 1999)	2,800
Safety Services (Early Intervention/ Working with families to provide safety at home)	Limited capacity for any type of early intervention	Hundreds of families annually
Caseload	Up to 100 children per worker and many children with no worker	Maximum 11 families per worker with an average of 2 children per family
Caseworker Visits	Many children had no visits	Each child seen at least once a month
Health Status	Access for many, but not all children	Child Protection Center does health screening on each child, usually within 5 days
Information/Data	3 x 5 cards with limited information and no cards for some families	WISACWIS data management system with information on every family

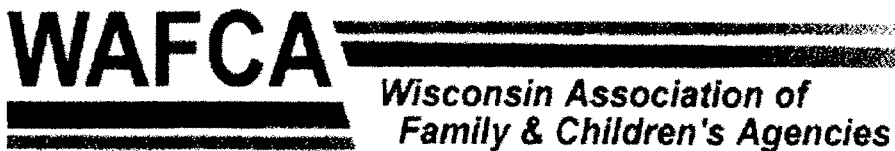
Redesigning for Better Outcomes

(System Redesign Initiatives in Process)

✓ Training Redesign – Modifications underway to better prepare case managers for their work and to increase their skills for working with families
✓ Caseworker Recruitment and Retention – Improved methods for recruiting caseworkers as well as salary increases, improved training and support to address unacceptable turnover rate
✓ Foster Family Recruitment - New strategies for working with the community -- particularly the faith-based community -- to recruit and support foster parents
✓ Court Case Processing – Milwaukee Children's Court has established Service Implementation Hearings and other administrative changes that have accelerated families' access to services and decreased the time necessary for cases to move through the court system
✓ Quality Improvement - Improving practice through new, nationally-recognized quality improvement system
✓ Improved Coordination of Services - Increasing coordination and access to behavioral health, health care services and support services for children and families in the system
✓ Improving Prevention - Piloting two new projects to integrate W-2 and child welfare prevention services for families at risk of child abuse and neglect.

The public and private partners in the Milwaukee Child Welfare system are working together to create a system that will attract and support trained, committed and experienced professionals who work effectively with families to support them in becoming strong, caring families capable of keeping their children safe and secure. Rather than working towards compliance with process standards, the partners are focusing on systemic issues and best practice that will promote quality outcomes for the children and families in the system.

¹ Data Source: Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare 2005 Annual Progress Summary Report, January-December 2005, on Janine B Settlement Agreement Requirements.



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 2006

Contact: Linda Hall, (608) 257-5939

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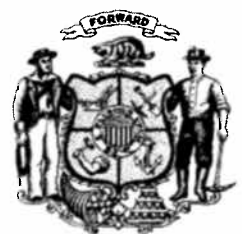
Hall added: "We commend Division Administrator Burnie Bridge's initiatives aimed at addressing ongoing problems identified in the report, including incentives that will reduce staff turnover; enhancements in worker training; and new strategies for collaboration within the community, particularly those with faith-based organizations.

"When children are removed from their parents' homes, the government becomes their guardian. The public and private partners in the Milwaukee Child Welfare system are clearly working hard to give these children an opportunity for a fulfilling life surrounded by adults who truly care."

###



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Matthews, Pam

From: Handrick, Diane
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2006 3:24 PM
To: Matthews, Pam
Subject: Channel 3000: audit

Audit Finds Questionable Spending In Child Welfare Program

Contractors Racked Up Nearly \$700K In Costs In 2004

UPDATED: 11:53 am CST February 8, 2006

MADISON, Wis. -- An audit released on Wednesday shows a state contractor used tens of thousands of dollars meant for helping abused and neglected children in Milwaukee County to buy clothes and watches for staff members.

The state Legislative Audit Bureau said that six contractors working with the Milwaukee County child welfare program racked up nearly \$678,000 in questionable costs in 2004.

The audit said that one contractor, Lutheran Social Services, is responsible for the lion's share -- nearly \$570,000.

Among the questionable expenditures cited in the audit are nearly 1,300 fleece jackets, 280 shirts, 350 watches and 1,200 keylights for staff members.

The audit also finds the state Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare exceeds the 60-day statutory time limit for investigations into allegations of child abuse in more than 30 percent of its cases.

Child welfare programs in Wisconsin typically are run by the counties, except in Milwaukee County. The state took over child welfare operations in 1998 after a class-action lawsuit.

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Diane Handrick

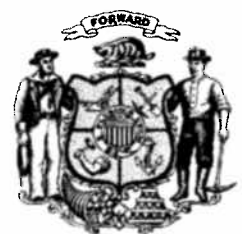
*Office of Rep. Sue Jeskewitz
608-266-3796
1-888-529-0024 toll free in Wisconsin only*

*314N, State Capitol
Madison WI 53708*

Have you looked for unclaimed property in your name? www.missingmoney.com



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Diane Haubner
Certified Information Systems Auditor
Project Management Professional

February 8, 2006

Dear Senator Roessler and Representative Jeskewitz,

I am following up with you via email as recommended by your assistant Karen, regarding a published article concerning the audit of IT excesses. I am doing so simply because of my involvement in one of the items. I am an independent consultant that evaluated the UW payroll project and wrote the Risk Assessment that ultimately put that project on hold. Since my relationship with the UW is positive, I would hope that you respect the privacy of this communication at this time.

My reason for writing is that as you progress through the process of conducting your IT state audit, I would be happy to talk to you regarding your approach or other concerns since I believe I may have some useful thoughts for you. By the way, I am certified both as a CISA (Certified Information Systems Auditor) and an international PMP (Project Management Professional) just so you understand my credentials for making such an imposition on you by writing this email.

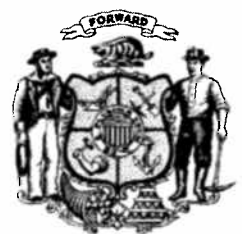
Good luck with your project and let me know if there is anything I can do for you.

Sincerely,

Diane Haubner
CISA, PMP



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Matthews, Pam

From: Asbjornson, Karen
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2006 10:49 AM
To: Matthews, Pam; Shannon, Pam; Chrisman, James
Subject: FW: Child welfare funds spent on gifts, state audit finds - Case managers still leave in large numbers By MARY ZAHN Posted: Feb. 8, 2006
Importance: High

fyi....

Karen Asbjornson
Office of Senator Roessler
608-266-5300/1-888-736-8720
Karen.Asbjornson@legis.state.wi.us

From: maureen.norwood@nmfn.com [mailto:maureen.norwood@nmfn.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2006 10:20 AM
To: Rep.Grigsby; Sen.Roessler
Subject: Child welfare funds spent on gifts, state audit finds - Case managers still leave in large numbers By MARY ZAHN Posted: Feb. 8, 2006
Importance: High

Good Morning,

This article made me sick. I grew up in Milwaukee and moved away in 2000. I was a Human Service Worker with Milwaukee County before the State took over. I can't believe **NO** progress has been made. I was a child welfare "intake" worker which meant that I was the one to go out and investigate the allegations. You may think I'm crazy for saying this but, I loved the job. Most allegations were unfounded, made by grandparents with unreasonable standards, neighbors who want to cause trouble, sometimes even police who wanted to cause trouble for someone. Anyway, most of my time was spent talking to children. I had to leave the position after one year because I was TERRIFIED that I would be on the news as the person who didn't do their job and a child was hurt or killed because of it. If I remember correctly, the state standard/requirement was that allegations must be investigated with 24 hours of them being received. The referral didn't make it to my desk within 24 hours 99% of the time. From the phone room to my desk took at least 24 hours. Another requirement was that a person in my position receive 3-5 referral per week. I would receive 3 per day! No that wasn't every day, but it's physically impossible to investigate 3 referrals within 24 hours even if you have the whole day, 8 hours to do it. I averaged 10 referrals per week, double the maximum recommended. This isn't what anyone wants to hear, but what's needed is more workers. Private agencies don't do it better. Why would anyone stay in a position they thought could end their career for doing the best job humanly possible? They wouldn't, thus the turn over, thus the lack of experienced workers, thus the lack of coordination and collaboration, etc. Pay increases don't matter to someone who is conscientious and cares about the children. The pay was adequate comparatively speaking. Worker's just want to be able to do a good job.

The whole master's program for County worker's was a joke. The worker's received a good education but few completed their obligation to stay with the County for the required period of time. I had plans to move out of state before I could complete the required service so I didn't apply to the program. What a deal, receive your salary and go to school for free.

I guess this may just be some ramblings of a frustrated citizen who cares about children, but if I could help in some way, please let me know. If you have questions or want information from an insider, I have contacts.

02/09/2006

Thanks for listening.

Maureen

Maureen Norwood

Financial Representative

111 E. Broadway Suite 1400 Salt Lake City, UT 84111

(801) 533-8444 Telephone (801) 359-7330 Fax

maureen.norwood@nmfn.com

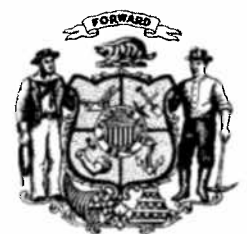
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WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

1555 NORTH RIVERCENTER DRIVE, SUITE 220
MILWAUKEE WI 53212
Telephone: (414) 220-7000
Fax: (414) 220-7062

* Pastor Archie Ivy, Chair

* Julius Agara

* Burnie Bridge

Elisa Castellon

County Supervisor Toni Clark

State Senator Spencer Coggs

State Senator Alberta Darling

* Linda Davis

* Judge Thomas Donegan

State Representative Tamara
Grigsby

* David Hoffman

* County Supervisor Willie
Johnson, Jr.

Mary Howard Johnstone

Wanda Montgomery

* Denise Revels Robinson

Leonor Rosas

Judge Michael Skwierawski

State Representative Jeff Stone

County Supervisor Peggy West

Dr. Earnestine Willis

Bregetta Wilson

Associate Members

* Deborah Blanks

* Colleen Ellingson

Captain Debra Davidoski

Francine Feinberg, Psy.D.

Judge Christopher Foley

* Hughes George

Steve Gilbertson

Pastor Shawn Green-Smith

* Executive Committee

February 20, 2006

Senator Carol Roessler, Co-Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol, Room 8 South
Madison, WI 53707

Representative Sue Jeskewitz, Co-Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol, Room 314 North
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Senator Roessler and Representative Jeskewitz,

On behalf of the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council, I am writing to request you hold the public hearing on the Legislative Audit Bureau's report on the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare in Milwaukee. Given that the subject matter is specific to Milwaukee, we believe it is the most suitable venue for the hearing. In addition, we want to ensure maximum participation by interested members of the Milwaukee community.

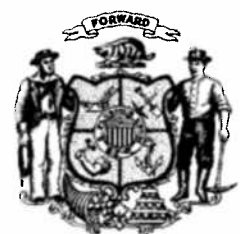
Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Pastor Ivy, Chair
Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Department of Workforce Development
Office of the Secretary
201 East Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 7946
Madison, WI 53707-7946
Telephone: (608) 266-3131
Fax: (608) 266-1784
e-mail: dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us

FEB 23 2006



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Jim Doyle, Governor
Roberta Gassman, Secretary

February 21, 2006

The Honorable Carol A. Roessler
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
8 South
Madison WI 53702

Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz
Joint Legislative Audit Committee
State Capitol
314 North
Madison WI 53702

Dear Senator Roessler and Representative Jeskewitz:

I am writing to report on a recommendation made by the Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) in their report of Milwaukee County Child Welfare: Finances and Staffing (Report 06-02), released earlier this month. On page 25 of the report the auditors recommend "...the departments of Justice, Public Instruction, and Workforce Development (DWD) require Lutheran Social Services to reimburse them for all state and federal funds used in supporting church relations activities."

The DWD Bureau of Finance has performed a review of all funds paid to Lutheran Social Services (LSS) for calendar year 2004, the period of time for which the audit tested expenditures. During that year, DWD provided funding to LSS for two programs;

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) - Rehabilitative Services
- Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) - Refugee Assistance.

DWD Finance staff spoke with LAB to clarify their findings. They indicated their concern was related to church relations expenditures which may have been charged to other public funds as a result of an allocation of administration expenditures. The wages of the LSS staff who worked on church relations activities were charged to administration, the allocation of these expenses is what resulted in public programs being charged for their wages.

Payments for the DVR program were made on a fee for service basis. LSS was paid a per-case rate, based upon verification of receipt of services for an individual client. The state-wide rate is established by DVR. The same rate is used to fund any agency providing these rehabilitative services to DVR clients. Based on the method of payment to LSS, DVR funds were not allocated any charges for church relations activities.

DWD also reviewed reimbursement claims we received from LSS for CY 2004 for the Refugee Assistance grant. Expenditures reported for the Refugee Assistance grant were for direct wages and direct costs. By definition, direct costs do not include allocated charges, but relate exclusively to program operations. This indicates allocated costs for administration wages were not charged to the Refugee Assistance program.

The Honorable Carol A. Roessler
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz
February 21, 2006
Page 2

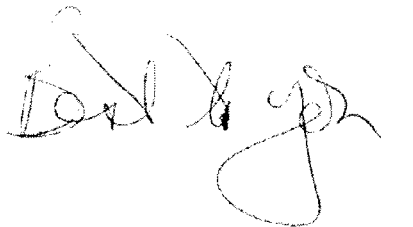
Based on our due diligence review, we do not believe DWD funds provided to LSS during calendar year 2004 included charges related to church relations activities. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to the findings reported in the LAB audit.

Sincerely,



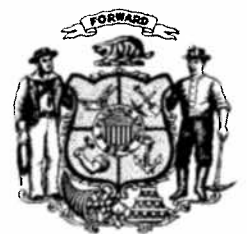
Roberta Gassman
Secretary

cc: Janice Mueller, LAB
Charlene Dwyer, DVR Administrator
Bill Clingan, DWS Administrator
Larry Studesville, ASD Administrator





WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE

Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Committee Co-Chairs:
State Senator Carol Roessler
State Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz

February 23, 2006

Ms. Helene Nelson, Secretary
Department of Health and Family Services
1 West Wilson Street, Room 650
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Dear Ms. Nelson:

The Joint Legislative Audit Committee will hold a public hearing on the Legislative Audit Bureau's evaluation of *Milwaukee County Child Welfare* (report 06-1 and report 06-2), on Tuesday, March 14, 2006, at approximately 11:00 a.m. in the Cooley Auditorium at Milwaukee Area Technical College at 700 West State Street in Milwaukee.

As these reports relate to the activities of the Department of Health and Family Services, we ask you, and the appropriate members of your staff, to be present at the hearing to offer testimony in response to the audit findings and to respond to questions from committee members. Please plan to provide each committee member with a written copy of your testimony at the hearing.

Please contact Ms. Pamela Matthews in the office of Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz at 266-3796 to confirm your participation in the hearing. Thank you for your cooperation and we look forward to seeing you on March 14th.

Sincerely,

Senator Carol A. Roessler, Co-chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz, Co-chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Janice Mueller
State Auditor