



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STAFF MEMORANDUM

Memo No. 1

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON STRENGTHENING WISCONSIN FAMILIES

FROM: Scott Grosz, Staff Attorney

RE: Distribution of Materials Requested at the September 26, 2006 Meeting

DATE: October 17, 2006

The following papers were requested at the last committee meeting:

- *Welfare Reform's Effect on Child Welfare Caseloads*, Rob Green, Lynn Fender, Jacob, Leos-Urbel, The Urban Institute, and Teresa Markowitz, On The Mark, Inc. (February 2001).

This paper analyzes in-depth case studies of child welfare caseloads in 12 states in order to determine the effects of welfare reform on child welfare systems. The case studies took place in 1999 as follow-ups to prior 1997 studies. The case studies primarily consisted of in-person, semi-structured interviews with welfare and child welfare stakeholders such as administrators, researchers, supervisors, legislative representatives, and advocates.

Despite widespread expectations of negative effects, the authors found no evidence to suggest that welfare reform has significantly increased child welfare caseloads. After hypothesizing potential effects of welfare reform on child welfare, the paper discusses the methodology underlying the case studies. It then analyzes the results of the studies, including separate analyses for effects of welfare reform on child welfare systems in general as well as effects on Dual-System Families. Finally, the paper considers likely explanations for the absence of the negative effects anticipated by stakeholders.

The paper's executive summary and its conclusion provide a concise summary of the authors' expectations, methods, and findings.

- *A Vision for Eliminating Poverty and Family Violence: Transforming Child Welfare and TANF in El Paso County, Colorado*, Rutledge Q. Hutson, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) (January 2003).

This policy brief describes the efforts of El Paso County, Colorado to stimulate collaboration between county TANF and child welfare agencies in order to achieve a vision of eliminating poverty and family violence. The brief describes the county's achievements in program integration and outlines the history of the county's efforts. It notes the individual efforts of leadership personnel as a key component in the successful collaboration. The paper describes changes to both TANF and Child Welfare operations in El Paso County. In general, the county shifted to less adversarial approaches and reduced court involvement in favor of community involvement. After describing collaborative efforts of TANF and child welfare agencies, the paper describes challenges faced by the county, including issues of confidentiality and funding silos.

An executive summary prefaces the brief and summarizes its contents.

SG:tlu

Enclosures