



## Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

### 2009 Building Bridges to Economic Success Fact Sheet

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- ◆ Wisconsin families are struggling to make ends meet during difficult financial times that have hurt national, state and local economies. Poverty and economic hardship can result in long-term social and economic costs for children, families, communities and states, but the overall effect can be felt by the economy at large. Poverty produces significant costs for states and the nation, with childhood poverty estimated to cost the U.S. economy approximately \$500 billion annually. Living in poverty can also hinder cognitive development, as well as contribute to poor social, emotional and behavioral outcomes for children. Children who grow up poor are likely to earn less as adults, complete fewer years of formal education and face significant health issues.
- ◆ It is critical that we develop a unified approach to working with all state and local, private and public partners to delineate strategies that will lead to stronger Wisconsin families and short and long term reductions in poverty.
- ◆ The National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices recently awarded \$12,000 grants to ten states to convene Governors Summits on Poverty and Economic Opportunity. Wisconsin was one of the ten states selected to host a Summit. This summit will be focused on developing strategies to reduce poverty and increase economic opportunity.
- ◆ On behalf of Governor Doyle, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is taking the lead in planning the 2009 Building Bridges to Economic Success Summit. To ensure the success of the summit and future statewide activities regarding improving economic opportunity, DCF is engaging key stakeholders throughout the state to help plan and execute the summit and develop strategies to reduce poverty.
- ◆ The Building Bridges to Economic Success Summit will engage a public/private, interdisciplinary group of local and state stakeholders – including elected officials, faith leaders, businesses, advocacy organizations, and non-profit organizations – in holding open and honest discussions on strategies to mitigate the effects of poverty throughout the state. The *proposed target audience* includes elected officials, agency executives–CAP agencies, Family Resource Centers, Vision 2020 Coalition, business leaders, faith and community based leaders and foundations.
- ◆ The Building Bridges to Economic Success Conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin during the first week of May 2009.