



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Bureau of Youth Services Newsletter

APRIL 2024

The Bureau of Youth Services is a unit within Wisconsin's DCF that is dedicated to being more responsive to the needs of older youth in and at risk of being involved in the child welfare or youth justice system. If you have questions or ideas, please contact us!

Leadership

TBD
Director

Evelyn Joy Coker
Youth Justice Section
Manager

Nikki Weiss
Strategic Initiatives
Coordinator

Youth Justice Team

Youth Justice Policy
Coordinators

Alana Peck
Carlton Frost
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Youth Services Team

Asia Jackson
Anti-Human Trafficking
Coordinator

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Youth Services
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Youth Services
Policy Coordinator

Kelsey Hill
Independent Living
Coordinator

Hello everyone! I write this note with mixed feelings, as it is my last BYS Director's Message. I'm not going far - I've transitioned into the Deputy Administrator position for DCF's Division of Safety and Permanence, and the recruitment process for the next BYS Director is well underway. It has been an honor and a privilege to work alongside all of you in our collective efforts to improve services to young people. I look forward to continuing that collaboration in my new role, and I know that the good work will continue thanks to your dedication and hard work. Thank you.

Reminder to Register for YS Conference

Remember to register for the 2024 Youth Services Conference!



The theme of the YS Conference is "Growing Together". We invite our program providers, child welfare professionals and other system partners to attend with a growth mindset and expand the opportunities of how professionals can work together to achieve positive outcomes for youth and families.

The conference will be delivered in a hybrid format with both in-person and virtual capabilities. The conference will be held on May 7-9, 2024 at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells and cost \$100.00 (flat rate for in-person or virtual) to attend.

For more details, please see the conference flyer:

<https://btnt.short.gy/2024YSBrochure>

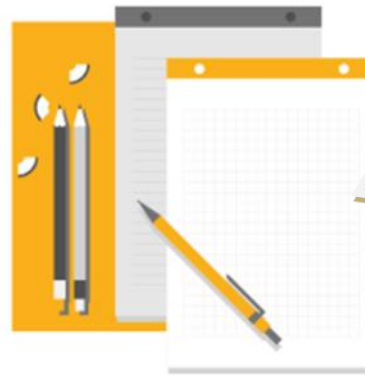
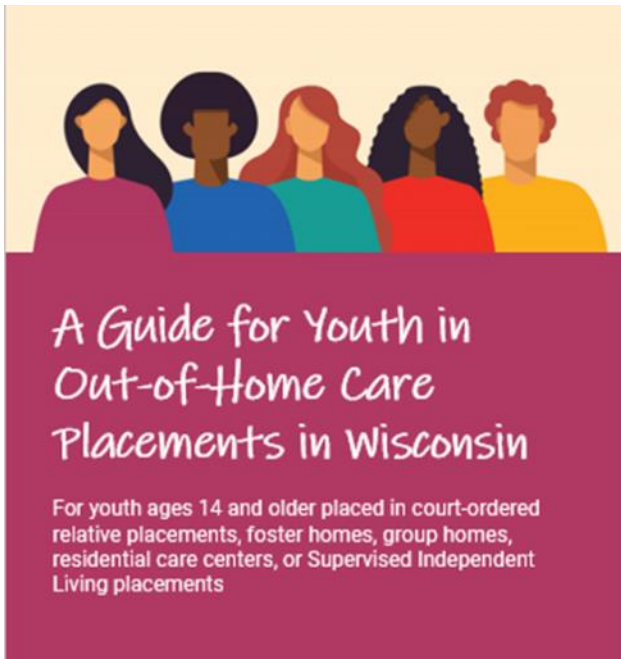
Register for the conference at: [https://](https://btnt.short.gy/2024YSConf)

btnt.short.gy/2024YSConf.

Questions? Please contact Kim Eithun at:

keithun@wisc.edu.

Check it Out! Revised Guide for Youth in OHC!



* Do what you need to do to make this guide, and your out-of-home care experience, work for you! Doodling, highlighting, underlining, dog-earring the pages and taking notes in the margins are highly encouraged!



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

BYS staff have worked hard to revise the existing DCF Handbook for Youth in Foster Care, which is provided to young people who are 14 and older and placed in out-of-home care. BYS developed the resource in partnership with a youth consultant and other teams in DCF. It includes information young people have asked for and deserve to know while in out-of-home care. For example, types of out-of-care placements, key players and events in a child welfare case, expectations while in care, what to know about discharging from care, resources, and more. It is colorful, youth-friendly, and packed with information – and hopefully a good resource both for young people in care and their child welfare team.

You can preview the Guide for Youth in Out-of-Home Care Placements in Wisconsin at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/405.pdf>. The resource will soon be available for on-demand printing via <https://docsales.wi.gov/Home.aspx?content=HowToOrder>. DCF will share more information when the document can be ordered.

BYS staff will provide sample copies of the Guide at the Youth Services Conference in May; first come, first served.

Save the Date! Fostering Success Day Camp 2024

The UW-Stout Fostering Success program is collaborating with UW-Eau Claire and UW-River Falls to host another Fostering Success Day Camp on **June 13, 2024!** This camp is for **any student in grades 9-12 who has experienced out-of-home care, which includes, but is not limited to foster care, legal guardianship, kinship care, group homes, late-stage adoption, or court-ordered placements.**

Check-in is between 8:30am and 9am, and pick-up is between 5pm and 5:30pm. During this camp, students will start at UW-Stout and then choose to travel to either UW-Eau Claire or UW-River Falls for the second half of the day. At each campus, students will get to explore the services offered by the school's Fostering Success program, go on campus tours, and listen to admissions presentations. **This camp is completely free; lunch and transportation between campuses will be provided (however, transportation to and from camp will not be provided).** To register, visit

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=o4Eat5UvgUObicYjQ6ZgUkchjuc791NEIzOSvTjtRCIURE5SSEM4UIY1WVFaOUMyUVpCSkFMSVpPOS4u>

or scan the QR code below.



Reach out to fosteringsuccess@uwec.edu with any questions or for more information.

Youth Services Updates

Independent living updates

Based on asks from tribal and county child welfare partners to learn more about independent living, BYS's IL team provided an "IL 101" overview in late February. Staff offered the same training three times during the final week of February and covered important basics like federal and state background information, IL program structure and key players, IL eligibility, IL requirements and best practices, and IL fields and functionality in eWiSACWIS. About 200 total people attended the sessions and each session included great questions, comments, and overall participation by attendees.

About 100 Child Welfare Agency and Transition Resource Agency partners attended a follow-up meeting in early March that was focused on increasing regional IL collaboration. CWA and TRA staff had the chance to learn about the IL supports and services they each provide and identify ways to collaborate moving forward.

Thanks to everyone who attended! Contact DCFILCoordinator@wi.gov if you have questions or comments.

Youth Justice Updates



Innovation Grants

The 2025 Innovation grant application will be posted late spring!

We encourage counties to start thinking about the application process and program areas their county could benefit from. If counties are looking for inspiration or a “place to start”, please attend the Innovation Grant Quarter 2 meeting. Hear from your county YJ peers how they utilized the funding, challenges, and solutions they have created through the grant period.

Come one, come all! Please join us on April 23, 2024 via Zoom.

<https://dcfwi.zoom.us/j/83426455437?pwd=bDBUOWRZLy9vL1JseGJXSkrRudnJuQT09>

Meeting ID: 834 2645 5437

Passcode: 381918

OR please contact DCFYJ@wisconsin.gov for more information.

Interested in past Innovation grant projects? Please check out our [2024 project summaries](#) and [2019-2021 Innovation Grant Final report](#). A complete Innovation Grant library can be found on the [DCF YJ webpage](#) (Innovative practice tab).

2022 YJ Referral and Intake Report now available online

The Youth Justice Referrals and Intake Report provides information on youth referred to the YJ system, YJ referral details, and YJ intake decisions logged in eWiSACWIS during one calendar year (CY). In CY2022, county human service agencies logged 13,892 YJ referrals for 8,809 unique youth into eWiSACWIS. This was a slight increase from CY2021 but was still fewer youth and referrals overall than the first year of available data, CY2019.

Read the 2022 report here: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/5549.pdf>.

Truancy Prevention Learning Communities

In February and March, DCF and DPI cohosted a series of learning sessions focused on truancy prevention for school staff and county human service professionals. The series kicked off with a review of Wisconsin statute and best practice strategies to address truancy. Three additional topics – family engagement strategies, using data to approve attendance, and school-county collaboration – were selected based on frequently asked questions and feedback from truancy presentations given at conferences in fall 2023. Each session featured school district and county human service professionals from across the state directly involved in the implementation or delivery of promising programs and practices.

Recordings of each session and materials shared by presenters can be found on [DPI's School Attendance](#) page.

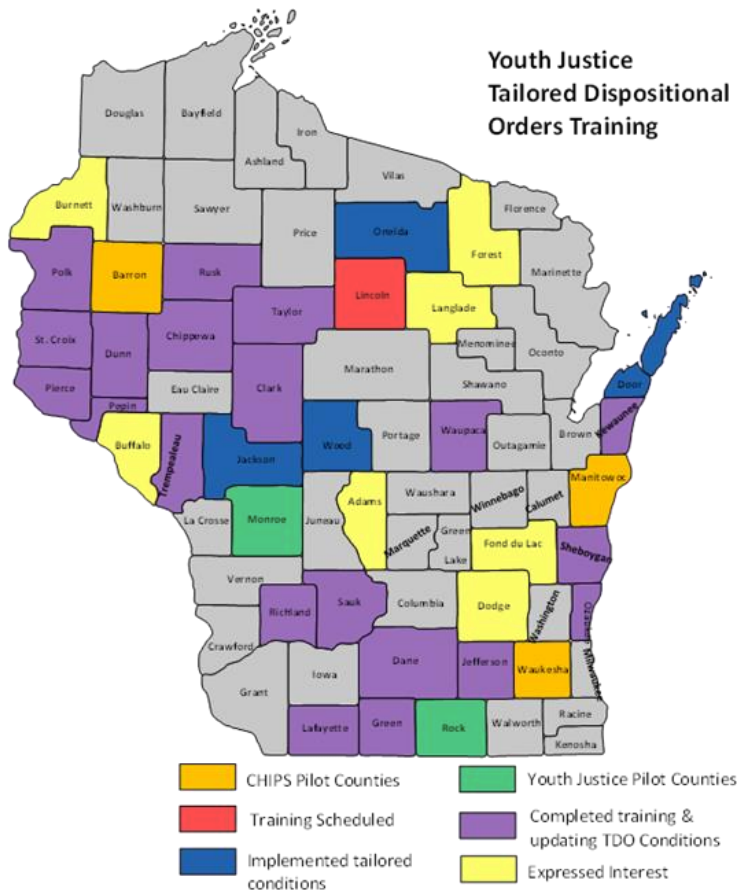
YJ Standards: Transferring Referrals Between Counties

DCF confirms that when transferring a referral to a second county during the intake period, the second county has 40 days to complete its intake. However, under the current standard method for documenting this process in eWiSACWIS, the 40-day task associated with the referral migrates to the second county and the time allotted to complete the task does not reset. We plan to match the online task to the new timeline in a future eWiSACWIS release.

DCF's YJ team still encourages both the original county and the second county to handle incoming referrals as promptly as thoroughness allows and refer YJ Professionals to the Inter-County Agreement for procedures on coordinating transfers.

Youth Justice Tailored Dispositional Order Updates

The Children's Court Improvement Program (CCIP) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) expanded the Tailored Dispositional Orders (TDO) Project statewide. The training project seeks to bring child welfare agency, court, and legal partners together to improve conditions for return in CHIPS cases and conditions of supervision in Youth Justice cases utilizing the SMART goals framework. There has been so much interest in the training that we have onboarded a second YJ TDO trainer. Please contact Kristen Wetzel at Kristen.Wetzel@wicourts.gov if your county is interested in learning more about the Tailored Dispositional Orders Project.



Youth Justice Updates

YASI Monthly Meeting Transition

The former YASI Phase monthly meetings with county YJ professionals are transitioning into *bi-monthly* *BYS - YJ Regional meetings* and will start May/June 2024 for all counties. Meeting start times are 9:00am or 1:00p.m. and days of the week vary based on regional survey results (see your regional schedule below).

All regional meetings will begin with DCF updates followed by a YJ-related speaker or brief training topic, concluding with county discussion (“hivemind”) time. The meetings will continue to provide technical assistance for implementing and maintaining practice with the YASI, but are now extended to provide time and space for more discussion and networking on other complex YJ topics affecting YJ professionals. *Each meeting will have a separate email invite and zoom link, please forward the invite to any YJ staff.*

Region	Counties
Northern	Ashland, Bayfield, Florence, Forest, Iron, Lincoln, Langlade, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Price, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas, and Wood
Southern	Adams, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Juneau, LaFayette, Richland, Rock, Sauk, and Vernon
Western	Barron, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, St. Croix, Trempealeau, and Washburn
Northeastern	Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Sheboygan, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago
Southeastern	Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha

Northern Region

Monday, May 13	(1:00 – 3:00PM)
Tuesday, July 16	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Tuesday, September 3	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Thursday, November 14	(9:00 – 11:00AM)

Southern Region

Monday, May 13	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Tuesday, July 16	(1:00 – 3:00PM)
Thursday, September 5	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Thursday, November 14	(1:00 – 3:00PM)

Western Region

Wednesday, May 15	(1:00 – 3:00PM)
Wednesday, July 17	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Wednesday, September 4	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Wednesday, November 13	(1:00 – 3:00PM)

Northeastern Region

Wednesday, June 12	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Wednesday, August 14	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Friday, October 11	(1:00 – 3:00PM)
Tuesday, December 3	(9:00 – 11:00AM)

Southeastern Region

Thursday, June 13	(1:00 – 3:00PM)
Tuesday, August 13	(1:00 – 3:00PM)
Monday, October 7	(9:00 – 11:00AM)
Wednesday, December 4	(9:00 – 11:00AM)

Youth Voice Updates



Youth Leadership Updates

The Youth Leadership Team (YLT) includes young people ages 14-21 with personal lived experience in the Youth Justice system. The YLT convened a virtual meeting on Wednesday, March 20. The child welfare workforce, youth, and families impacted by the Youth Justice system have expressed the need for YJ specific training, with an emphasis on building up the workforce's foundational knowledge. The training will begin to address some of these identified gaps and is part of our long-term strategy to build-up the YJ infrastructure in the areas of standards, training, and technical assistance. BYS's YJ team facilitated a discussion with YLT attendees about the training and obtained feedback to help design this training for child welfare professionals.

The next hybrid YLT meeting will take place on Thursday, May 2 from 4:30pm – 6:00pm. Youth ages 14-21 with person experience in the YJ system, and their adult supporter who plan to attend the May YLT meeting should RSVP by 5pm on Friday, April 26, 2024 using this link: <https://form.jotform.com/DCFBYS/ylt-meeting-rsvp--may-1-2024>. If you have any questions and/or would like to be added to the YLT listserv please e-mail DCFYJ@wisconsin.gov.

Youth Advisory Council



The Wisconsin Youth Advisory Council (YAC) includes young people, ages 15-26, with lived experience in the Child Welfare system. **The final statewide YAC meeting for 2023 was on December 1 and 2, 2023 in the Wisconsin Dells.** Together, YAC members:

- **elected new officers** for 2024,
- **participated in a strategic sharing training** on how to safely and powerfully share their stories to help advance system change,
- **provided feedback to DCF staff about resources in the works**, and
- **participated in a marshmallow tower (team)building challenge.**

Additionally, **the YAC voted to bring a trainer in for their February 10, 2024 meeting.** [Antonio Grate](#), social emotional strategist, public speaker, and author joined the YAC's February meeting and spoke about his own personal lived experience in the child welfare system and how to find the will and drive to beat negative statistics for individuals with foster care experience. In addition, at that meeting YAC members:

- **welcomed new YAC members** to the group,
- **began planning for the May 14 Youth Advisory Council meeting and May 15 Legislative Day** to take place in Madison, WI,
- discussed **which initiatives are important to them that they would like to discuss** with legislators and senators during the May Legislative Day, and
- **started discussing social media strategies and content for 2024.**

If you know a youth who would like to get involved in the YAC at the local and/or state level, please contact your local YAC advisor for more information: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youthservices/pdf/yac-advisors.pdf>.

BYS Sponsors Two All-Star Interns

Like in years past, BYS is sponsoring two All-Star Internship spots for summer 2024. The All-Star Internship is an intensive leadership opportunity provided by FosterClub, Inc. Each year, more than a dozen young people from across the country who have foster care experience spend six weeks learning how to safely and strategically share their experiences, be in community with others who spent time in care, and advocate for and with others with foster care experience. The internship includes four weeks of virtual and two weeks of in-person learning and collaboration. During the in-person weeks, interns apply what they've learned in a national conference setting. DCF also commonly partners with current or past All-Star interns for resource development, project consultation, input gathering, and more. (A former All-Star consulted on development of the Guide for Youth in Out-of-Home Care mentioned in this issue!)

With BYS's sponsorship, Wisconsin is guaranteed to have youth participate from our state and the internship is at no cost to those participants. If you want to learn more about the internship, visit <https://www.fosterclub.com/allstar-internship>. The application for the summer 2025 cohort will open in February 2025.

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***May every youth in, at risk of, or aged out of
the child welfare/youth justice system
transition to a successful adulthood.***

The goal of the Bureau of Youth Services is to improve outcomes for youth in the child welfare and youth justice systems and other vulnerable youth. Specifically, the Bureau supports service delivery systems that move youth towards academic success, safe and stable housing, employment, permanent connections with supportive adults, and healthy lifestyle behaviors. Youth aged 12-21 in or at risk of entering the child welfare and a youth justice system present unique and complex challenges. The Bureau brings a more coordinated program and policy focus to youth in the child welfare system and other vulnerable youth.

Sign up for our newsletter [here!](#)