

# REPORTS OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING ALLEGATIONS & SUBSTANTIATIONS TO CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

DIVISION OF SAFETY & PERMANENCE

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Wisconsin Department of  
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## Introduction

Child Protective Services (CPS) is a key component of the Child Welfare System. CPS intervention is initiated when there is a report that a child may be unsafe, abused or neglected, or at risk of maltreatment. This report focuses on a subset of CPS response in Wisconsin as it relates to allegations and substantiated allegations of child sex trafficking. This report covers a three-year period from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021. A comprehensive report on the entirety of the Child Protective Services System, including an overview of the CPS process and key terms such as Initial Assessments and Access Reports, can be found in the annual [Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Report](#).

Passage of the federal [Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act \(Pub. L. 113-183\)](#) and [Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act \(Pub. L. 114-22\)](#) added child sex trafficking as a form of child abuse to the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). As a result of these federal law changes, [2015 Wisconsin Act 367](#) went into effect in Wisconsin on May 29, 2017. Act 367 requires child welfare agencies to screen-in referrals of suspected child sex trafficking, even if a parent or primary caregiver was not the suspected trafficker. Act 367 also requires that suspected cases of sex trafficking of a child under the age of 18 must be reported to local child welfare agencies or local law enforcement in Wisconsin. Under Wisconsin statute, child welfare agencies must report these cases to law enforcement, and law enforcement must report any suspected or alleged cases involving a minor to child protective services.

Under federal law, sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age (22 USC § 7102). Under [Wis. Stat. 940.302\(1\)\(a\)](#), a commercial sex act includes the following acts for which anything of value is given to, promised, or received, directly or indirectly, by any person: sexual contact; sexual intercourse; sexually explicit performance; and, any other conduct done for the purpose of sexual humiliation, degradation, arousal, or gratification.

## Wisconsin Data on Child Sex Trafficking

This is the second report on child sex trafficking in Wisconsin. For data from June 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018, please reference the previous [Reports of Child Sex Trafficking Allegations & Substantiations to Child Protective Services](#). Data for this report come from eWiSACWIS, Wisconsin’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, a comprehensive automated case management tool that supports child welfare practice. Wisconsin counties use this system to document information for all child abuse and neglect referrals, allegations, and substantiated allegations made to their jurisdictions. While some counties had informal processes for tracking suspected child sex trafficking cases, 2015 Wisconsin Act 367 formalized the requirements for the child welfare response to child sex trafficking. Any data collected, analyzed, or reported prior to the Act’s effective date of May 29, 2017, are not based on current state guidance or policy. Thus, readers are cautioned against making direct comparisons to previous reports issued on this topic by entities other than the DCF and/or reports that utilize older data. Such reports may have applied different definitions and/or methodologies than those recommended and used by DCF in this report.

Additionally, DCF has undertaken extensive education and awareness efforts, both immediately prior to and after Act 367 went into effect; this affected the child welfare response to child sex trafficking in Wisconsin and collection of reliable administrative data in eWiSACWIS. These efforts provided training to CPS workers on identifying and understanding child sex trafficking and guidance on how to screen and assess suspected cases. However, DCF acknowledges that the information presented here likely still represents underreporting of cases. The child welfare system relies on

### The importance of language

Throughout this report, the word “victim” is used sparingly. The word “prostitute” is *never* used to refer to children who have experienced sex trafficking. It is acknowledged that there are times when the word “victim” is appropriate, such as discussing the crime of sex trafficking and its victims; however, children may not want to be thought of or referred to as a victim. All individuals who work with young people and discuss these difficult issues in the public sphere are strongly encouraged to use judgement-free, person-first language when talking to children about their experiences. The [Guiding Principles](#) should be referenced for more information.

individuals making a report of child abuse. As awareness of the problem and possible indicators of child sex trafficking grows, so too will the reports to authorities who are in a position to respond and intervene.

In May 2017, DCF issued guidance to counties on responding to sex trafficking cases in Appendix 9 of [Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards](#). In Wisconsin, sex trafficking of a child falls under the definition of sexual abuse. When entering an Access Report, the maltreatment allegation is sexual abuse with a descriptor of sex trafficking in eWiSACWIS. A few cases in this report also involved an allegation of neglect with a descriptor of sex trafficking by the primary caretaker for not providing sufficient protection to the child in their care. For ease of discussion, the term “child sex trafficking” is used in this report to refer to all these allegations.

This report utilizes eWiSACWIS data on child sex trafficking allegations and substantiated allegations from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2021. Tables provide information by Milwaukee County, Balance of State, and the total for Wisconsin’s 72 counties. Balance of State refers to the 71 counties in Wisconsin other than Milwaukee County. While these data provide important information about Wisconsin’s child welfare cases, it is important to note that an unsubstantiated finding does not necessarily mean that a child did not experience sex trafficking. For some cases, it could be that the responding child welfare agency did not have the preponderance of evidence available at the time of the investigation. There are many reasons that this can occur, including child welfare and/or law enforcement not being able to interview the alleged maltreater/trafficker, which is a requirement of Standards to make a substantiated finding. Additionally, a child may still be served in the child welfare system even if there was not a substantiation. This would occur if there was a safety determination made on the case that resulted in services being offered to the child and family.

## **Child Sex Trafficking Allegations**

A child maltreatment allegation is an assertion of one type of child abuse or neglect involving one or more alleged maltreater(s) for a single alleged victim. Maltreatment types include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. Sex trafficking is documented as sexual abuse with sex trafficking listed as a descriptor. Allegations are ‘screened-in’ when the allegation of child maltreatment in the Access report has been deemed as rising to the level of maltreatment or threat of maltreatment, as defined by Wisconsin statutes, and therefore must be assessed. Such allegations are then subject to further assessment to determine whether the allegation is substantiated or not, meaning there is a preponderance of evidence that the maltreatment allegation has occurred.

In 2019, there were 474 allegations of child sex trafficking across Wisconsin. This figure represents 409 unique individuals with a child sex trafficking allegation, as some youth had multiple allegations. Of the 474 allegations, 158 occurred in Milwaukee County, representing 33.3 percent of all child sex trafficking allegations statewide.

In 2020, there were 430 allegations of child sex trafficking across Wisconsin. This figure represents 382 unique individuals with a child sex trafficking allegation. Of the 430 allegations, 124 occurred in Milwaukee County, representing 28.8 percent of all child sex trafficking allegations statewide.

In 2021, there were 445 allegations of child sex trafficking across Wisconsin. This figure represents 406 unique individuals with a child sex trafficking allegation. Of the 445 allegations, 142 occurred in Milwaukee County, representing 31.9 percent of all sex trafficking allegations statewide.

In 2019, across Wisconsin, 53.6 percent of allegations of sex trafficking involved a child identified as White, 34.6 percent involved a child identified as Black/African American, 3.8 percent involved a child identified as American Indian / Alaskan Native, 2.3 percent involved a child identified as Asian, and .6 percent involved a child identified as Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. The percentage of cases in which ethnicity was not documented was too high to accurately calculate the percentage of allegations involving a child identified as Hispanic.

**Table 1**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Primary Race**

January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

| <b>Primary Race</b>                           | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Primary Race</b> |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>White</b>                                  | 39               | 215                     | 254                       | 53.6%                                   |
| <b>Black/African American</b>                 | 110              | 54                      | 164                       | 34.6%                                   |
| <b>American Indian / Alaskan Native</b>       | 3                | 15                      | 18                        | 3.8%                                    |
| <b>Asian</b>                                  | 1                | 10                      | 11                        | 2.3%                                    |
| <b>Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander</b> | 1                | 2                       | 3                         | 0.6%                                    |
| <b>Unable to Determine / Not Documented</b>   | 4                | 20                      | 24                        | 5.1%                                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 158              | 316                     | 474                       | 100.0%                                  |

In 2020, across Wisconsin, 61.4 percent of allegations of sex trafficking involved a child identified as White, 26.7 percent involved a child identified as Black/African American, 4 percent involved a child identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, 2.6 percent involved a child identified as Asian, and 5.3 percent involved a child whose race was unable to be determined or not documented.

**Table 2**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Primary Race**

January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

| <b>Primary Race</b>                         | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Primary Race</b> |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>White</b>                                | 42               | 222                     | 264                       | 61.4%                                   |
| <b>Black/African American</b>               | 72               | 43                      | 115                       | 26.7%                                   |
| <b>American Indian / Alaskan Native</b>     | 0                | 17                      | 17                        | 4.0%                                    |
| <b>Asian</b>                                | 6                | 5                       | 11                        | 2.6%                                    |
| <b>Unable to Determine / Not Documented</b> | 4                | 19                      | 23                        | 5.3%                                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                | 124              | 306                     | 430                       | 100%                                    |

In 2021, across Wisconsin, 58 percent of allegations of sex trafficking involved a child identified as White, 30.3 percent involved a child identified as Black/African American, 4.3 percent involved a child identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1.1 percent involved a child identified as Asian, and 6.3 involved a child whose race was unable to be determined or not documented.

**Table 3**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Primary Race**

January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021

| Primary Race                         | Milwaukee  | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Primary Race |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| White                                | 32         | 226              | 258                | 58.0%                            |
| Black/African American               | 97         | 38               | 135                | 30.3%                            |
| American Indian / Alaskan Native     | 2          | 17               | 19                 | 4.3%                             |
| Asian                                | 2          | 3                | 5                  | 1.1%                             |
| Unable to Determine / Not Documented | 9          | 19               | 28                 | 6.3%                             |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>142</b> | <b>303</b>       | <b>445</b>         | <b>100%</b>                      |

In this three-year span, 82.5 percent of child sex trafficking allegations involved youth identified as female across the state. In each year youth identified as male represented a higher percentage of allegations in Balance of State than Milwaukee County. Literature supports that while national data may not reflect the actual number of youths identified as male who have experienced sex trafficking, it is often underreported and under identified.

**Table 4**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Gender**

January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

| Gender       | Milwaukee  | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total percentage by gender |
|--------------|------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 141        | 259              | 400                | 84.4%                      |
| Male         | 17         | 55               | 72                 | 15.2%                      |
| Unknown      | 0          | 2                | 2                  | 0.4%                       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>158</b> | <b>316</b>       | <b>474</b>         | <b>100.0%</b>              |



**Table 5**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Gender**  
January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

| <b>Gender</b>  | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total percentage by gender</b> |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Female</b>  | 104              | 255                     | 359                       | 83.5%                             |
| <b>Male</b>    | 19               | 50                      | 69                        | 16.0%                             |
| <b>Unknown</b> | 1                | 1                       | 2                         | 0.5%                              |
| <b>Total</b>   | 124              | 306                     | 430                       | 100.0%                            |

**Table 6**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Gender**  
January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

| <b>Gender</b>  | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total percentage by gender</b> |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Female</b>  | 110              | 244                     | 354                       | 79.6%                             |
| <b>Male</b>    | 31               | 57                      | 88                        | 19.8%                             |
| <b>Unknown</b> | 1                | 2                       | 3                         | 0.7%                              |
| <b>Total</b>   | 141              | 303                     | 445                       | 100.0%                            |

In 2019, 59.7 percent of allegations statewide involved a child between the ages of 14-17. In Milwaukee, this age group represented 66.7 percent of total allegations.

**Table 7**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Child Age at Report**

January 1, 2019– December 31, 2019

| <b>Age</b>               | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Age</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;1-5 years old</b> | 4                | 24                      | 28                        | 5.9%                           |
| <b>6-9 years old</b>     | 15               | 39                      | 54                        | 11.4%                          |
| <b>10-12 years old</b>   | 17               | 50                      | 67                        | 14.1%                          |
| <b>13</b>                | 14               | 25                      | 39                        | 8.2%                           |
| <b>14</b>                | 21               | 36                      | 57                        | 12.0%                          |
| <b>15</b>                | 30               | 58                      | 88                        | 18.6%                          |
| <b>16</b>                | 30               | 39                      | 69                        | 14.6%                          |
| <b>17</b>                | 27               | 42                      | 69                        | 14.6%                          |
| <b>Unknown</b>           | 0                | 3                       | 3                         | 0.6%                           |
| <b>Total</b>             | 158              | 316                     | 474                       | 100.0%                         |

In 2020, 58.7 percent of allegations statewide involved a child between the ages of 14-17. In the Balance of State, this age group represented 56.7 percent of all allegations.

**Table 8**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Child Age at Report**

January 1, 2020– December 31, 2020

| Age             | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Age |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <1-5 years old  | 6         | 22               | 28                 | 6.5%                    |
| 6-9 years old   | 13        | 35               | 48                 | 11.2%                   |
| 10-12 years old | 11        | 26               | 37                 | 8.6%                    |
| 13              | 12        | 26               | 38                 | 8.8%                    |
| 14              | 14        | 33               | 47                 | 10.9%                   |
| 15              | 26        | 51               | 77                 | 17.9%                   |
| 16              | 26        | 55               | 81                 | 18.8%                   |
| 17              | 15        | 56               | 71                 | 16.5%                   |
| Unknown         | 1         | 2                | 3                  | 0.7%                    |
| <b>Total</b>    | 124       | 306              | 430                | 100.0%                  |

In 2021 55.1 percent of allegations statewide involved a child between the ages of 14-17. Across the state, this age group represented 64.1 percent of allegations.

**Table 9**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Child Age at Report**

January 1, 2021– December 31, 2021

| Age             | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Age |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <1-5 years old  | 3         | 21               | 24                 | 5.7%                    |
| 6-9 years old   | 19        | 43               | 62                 | 11.5%                   |
| 10-12 years old | 16        | 45               | 61                 | 14.9%                   |
| 13              | 12        | 34               | 46                 | 8.3%                    |
| 14              | 13        | 41               | 54                 | 13.2%                   |
| 15              | 19        | 45               | 64                 | 19.5%                   |
| 16              | 24        | 44               | 68                 | 14.1%                   |
| 17              | 30        | 29               | 59                 | 12.4%                   |
| Unknown         | 6         | 1                | 7                  | 0.3%                    |
| <b>Total</b>    | 142       | 303              | 445                | 100.0%                  |

## Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations

A CPS Initial Assessment is the comprehensive assessment conducted in response to a screened-in report of alleged child maltreatment. Child welfare agencies are required to make a determination as to whether or not maltreatment occurred, and this determination is either “substantiated” or “unsubstantiated”. In order to substantiate an allegation, the information gathered during the CPS Initial Assessment must show a preponderance of evidence (that is, the proof shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not) that the maltreatment allegation made in the CPS report or identified during a CPS Initial Assessment has occurred. In general, a known maltreater is substantiated for the allegation of child abuse or neglect; however, an allegation can also be substantiated when the maltreater is unknown or not identified. As with other types of allegations, for child sex trafficking allegations the maltreater/trafficker can be someone other than the child’s parent or primary caregiver.

There were 74 substantiated allegations of child sex trafficking statewide between January 1, 2019, and December 31, 2019, representing 66 unique individuals. In 2020, there were 113 substantiated allegations of child sex trafficking across the state, representing 108 unique individuals. In 2021, there were 83 substantiated allegations of child sex trafficking across the state, representing 79 unique individuals.

In 2019 across Wisconsin, 52.2 percent of substantiated child sex trafficking allegations involved a child identified as White, 33.8 percent involved a child identified as Black/African American, 2.7 percent involved a child identified as American Indian / Alaskan Native, 1.4 percent involved a child identified as Asian, and 1.4 percent involved a child identified as Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. The number of substantiated allegations involving a child whose ethnicity was categorized as not documented was too high to accurately report on the percentage of substantiated allegations involving a child identified as Hispanic.

**Table 10****Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Primary Race**

January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

| Primary Race                                  | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Primary Race |
|---|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>White</b>                                  | 7         | 32               | 39                 | 52.2%                            |
| <b>Black/African American</b>                 | 16        | 9                | 25                 | 33.8%                            |
| <b>American Indian / Alaskan Native</b>       | 0         | 2                | 2                  | 2.7%                             |
| <b>Asian</b>                                  | 0         | 1                | 1                  | 1.4%                             |
| <b>Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander</b> | 1         | 0                | 1                  | 1.4%                             |
| <b>Unable to Determine / Not Documented</b>   | 0         | 6                | 6                  | 8.1%                             |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 24        | 50               | 74                 | 100.0%                           |

In 2020, 77.0 percent of substantiated child sex allegations involved a child identified as White, 16.8 percent involved a child identified as Black/African American, 1.8 percent involved a child identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1.8 percent involved a child identified as Asian, and 2.7 percent involved a child whose race was unable to be determined or not documented.

**Table 11****Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Primary Race**

January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

| Primary Race                            | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Primary Race |
|---|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>White</b>                            | 11        | 76               | 87                 | 77.0%                            |
| <b>Black/African American</b>           | 12        | 7                | 19                 | 16.8%                            |
| <b>American Indian / Alaskan Native</b> | 0         | 2                | 2                  | 1.8%                             |
| <b>Asian</b>                            | 0         | 2                | 2                  | 1.8%                             |

|   |    |    |     |        |
|---|----|----|-----|--------|
| <b>Unable to Determine / Not Documented</b> | 0  | 3  | 3   | 2.7%   |
| <b>Total</b>                                | 23 | 90 | 113 | 100.0% |

In 2021, 66.3 percent of substantiated child sex trafficking allegations involved a child identified as White, 27.7 percent involved a child identified as Black/African American, 3.6 percent involved a child identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 2.4 percent involved a child whose primary race was unable to be determined or not documented.

**Table 12**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Primary Race**  
 January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

| <b>Primary Race</b>                         | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Primary Race</b> |
|---|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>White</b>                                | 8                | 47                      | 55                        | 66.3%                                   |
| <b>Black/African American</b>               | 19               | 4                       | 23                        | 27.7%                                   |
| <b>American Indian / Alaskan Native</b>     | 1                | 2                       | 3                         | 3.6%                                    |
| <b>Asian</b>                                | 0                | 0                       | 0                         | 0.0%                                    |
| <b>Unable to Determine / Not Documented</b> | 1                | 1                       | 2                         | 2.4%                                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                | 29               | 54                      | 83                        | 100%                                    |

In all years across the state, a majority of substantiated allegations involved a child between the ages of 14 and 17, with 17-year-olds representing the highest presenting age group in 2019 and 2020.

**Table 13**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Child Age at Report**

January 1, 2019– December 31, 2019

| <b>Age</b>               | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Age</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;1-5 years old</b> | 0                | 4                       | 4                         | 5.4%                           |
| <b>6-9 years old</b>     | 1                | 12                      | 13                        | 17.6%                          |
| <b>10-12 years old</b>   | 3                | 7                       | 10                        | 13.5%                          |
| <b>13</b>                | 2                | 4                       | 6                         | 8.1%                           |
| <b>14</b>                | 2                | 2                       | 4                         | 5.4%                           |
| <b>15</b>                | 5                | 8                       | 13                        | 17.6%                          |
| <b>16</b>                | 5                | 6                       | 11                        | 14.9%                          |
| <b>17</b>                | 6                | 7                       | 13                        | 17.6%                          |
| <b>Total</b>             | 24               | 50                      | 74                        | 100.0%                         |

**Table 14**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Child Age at Report**

January 1, 2020– December 31, 2020

| <b>Age</b>               | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Age</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;1-5 years old</b> | 1                | 5                       | 6                         | 5.3%                           |
| <b>6-9 years old</b>     | 0                | 8                       | 8                         | 7.1%                           |
| <b>10-12 years old</b>   | 2                | 5                       | 7                         | 6.2%                           |
| <b>13</b>                | 0                | 3                       | 3                         | 2.7%                           |
| <b>14</b>                | 3                | 9                       | 12                        | 10.6%                          |
| <b>15</b>                | 7                | 17                      | 24                        | 21.2%                          |
| <b>16</b>                | 5                | 21                      | 26                        | 23.0%                          |
| <b>17</b>                | 5                | 22                      | 27                        | 23.9%                          |
| <b>Unknown</b>           | 0                | 0                       | 0                         | 0.0%                           |
| <b>Total</b>             | 23               | 90                      | 113                       | 100.0%                         |

**Table 15**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Child Age at Report**

January 1, 2021– December 31, 2021

| <b>Age</b>               | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Age</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;1-5 years old</b> | 1                | 3                       | 4                         | 4.8%                           |
| <b>6-9 years old</b>     | 2                | 4                       | 6                         | 7.2%                           |
| <b>10-12 years old</b>   | 1                | 8                       | 9                         | 10.8%                          |
| <b>13</b>                | 3                | 7                       | 10                        | 12.0%                          |
| <b>14</b>                | 3                | 12                      | 15                        | 18.1%                          |
| <b>15</b>                | 6                | 9                       | 15                        | 18.1%                          |
| <b>16</b>                | 6                | 7                       | 13                        | 15.7%                          |
| <b>17</b>                | 7                | 4                       | 11                        | 13.3%                          |
| <b>Unknown</b>           | 0                | 0                       | 0                         | 0.0%                           |
| <b>Total</b>             | 29               | 54                      | 83                        | 100.0%                         |



As noted in Tables 16-18, male children accounted for 27 percent of statewide substantiated allegations of child sex trafficking in 2019. In 2020, male children accounted for 7.1 percent of substantiated allegations of child sex trafficking statewide and 21.7 percent in 2021.

**Table 16**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Gender**

January 1, 2019– December 31, 2019

| Gender       | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Gender |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 21        | 33               | 54                 | 73.3%                      |
| Male         | 3         | 17               | 20                 | 27.0%                      |
| <b>Total</b> | 24        | 50               | 74                 | 100%                       |

**Table 17**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Gender**

January 1, 2020– December 31, 2020

| Gender       | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Gender |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 19        | 86               | 105                | 92.9%                      |
| Male         | 4         | 4                | 8                  | 7.1%                       |
| Unknown      | 0         | 0                | 0                  | 0.0%                       |
| <b>Total</b> | 23        | 90               | 113                | 100%                       |

**Table 18**

**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Allegations, by Milwaukee and Balance of State, by Gender**

January 1, 2021– December 31, 2021

| Gender       | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage By Gender |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 23        | 42               | 65                 | 78.3%                      |
| Male         | 6         | 12               | 18                 | 21.7%                      |
| Unknown      | 0         | 0                | 0                  | 0.0%                       |
| <b>Total</b> | 29        | 54               | 83                 | 100.0%                     |

It is important to distinguish the number of substantiated sex trafficking allegations from the number of *unique children* with a substantiated sex trafficking allegation. Tables 19 through 24 below show the number of children who had at least one substantiation of child sex trafficking, by gender and age. In each year, most of these substantiations involved female youth between the ages of 14 and 17.

**Table 19**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Unique Children, by Gender**  
 January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

| Gender       | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Gender |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 19        | 32               | 51                 | 77.3%                      |
| Male         | 3         | 12               | 15                 | 22.7%                      |
| <b>Total</b> | 22        | 44               | 66                 | 100.0%                     |

**Table 20**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Unique Children, by Gender**  
 January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

| Gender       | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Gender |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 19        | 81               | 100                | 92.6%                      |
| Male         | 4         | 4                | 8                  | 7.4%                       |
| <b>Total</b> | 23        | 85               | 108                | 100.0%                     |

**Table 21**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Unique Children, by Gender**  
 January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

| Gender       | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Gender |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Female       | 21        | 40               | 61                 | 77.2%                      |
| Male         | 6         | 12               | 18                 | 22.8%                      |
| <b>Total</b> | 27        | 52               | 79                 | 100.0%                     |

**Table 22**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Unique Children, by Age at Time of Report**  
 January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019

| <b>Age</b>               | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Age</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;1-5 years old</b> | 0                | 3                       | 3                         | 4.5%                           |
| <b>6-9 years old</b>     | 1                | 7                       | 8                         | 12.1%                          |
| <b>10-12 years old</b>   | 3                | 7                       | 10                        | 15.2%                          |
| <b>13</b>                | 2                | 4                       | 6                         | 9.1%                           |
| <b>14</b>                | 2                | 2                       | 4                         | 6.1%                           |
| <b>15</b>                | 4                | 8                       | 12                        | 18.2%                          |
| <b>16</b>                | 4                | 6                       | 10                        | 15.2%                          |
| <b>17</b>                | 6                | 7                       | 13                        | 19.7%                          |
| <b>Total</b>             | 22               | 44                      | 66                        | 100.0%                         |

**Table 23**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Unique Children, by Age at Time of Report**  
 January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020

| <b>Age</b>               | <b>Milwaukee</b> | <b>Balance of State</b> | <b>Total in Wisconsin</b> | <b>Total Percentage by Age</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;1-5 years old</b> | 1                | 5                       | 6                         | 5.6%                           |
| <b>6-9 years old</b>     | 0                | 8                       | 8                         | 7.4%                           |
| <b>10-12 years old</b>   | 2                | 5                       | 7                         | 6.5%                           |
| <b>13</b>                | 0                | 3                       | 3                         | 2.8%                           |
| <b>14</b>                | 3                | 8                       | 11                        | 10.2%                          |
| <b>15</b>                | 7                | 15                      | 22                        | 20.4%                          |
| <b>16</b>                | 5                | 20                      | 25                        | 23.1%                          |
| <b>17</b>                | 5                | 21                      | 26                        | 24.1%                          |
| <b>Total</b>             | 23               | 85                      | 108                       | 100.0%                         |

**Table 24**  
**Wisconsin Child Sex Trafficking Substantiated Unique Children, by Age at Time of Report**  
 January 1, 2021- December 31, 2021

| Age             | Milwaukee | Balance of State | Total in Wisconsin | Total Percentage by Age |
|-----------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <1-5 years old  | 1         | 3                | 4                  | 5.1%                    |
| 6-9 years old   | 2         | 4                | 6                  | 7.6%                    |
| 10-12 years old | 1         | 8                | 9                  | 11.4%                   |
| 13              | 3         | 5                | 8                  | 10.1%                   |
| 14              | 3         | 12               | 15                 | 19.0%                   |
| 15              | 4         | 9                | 13                 | 16.5%                   |
| 16              | 6         | 7                | 13                 | 16.5%                   |
| 17              | 7         | 4                | 11                 | 13.9%                   |
| Unknown         | 0         | 0                | 0                  | 0.0%                    |
| <b>Total</b>    | 27        | 52               | 79                 | 100.0%                  |

## DCF Efforts to Address Child Sex Trafficking

In DCF’s child welfare transformation work, the department is working to strengthen all Wisconsin families to support their children, because children belong with their families. This means transforming our approach by keeping more families and children together and moving away from a focus on foster care and other out-of-home placements. This transformation is critically important in both preventing and addressing child sex trafficking. We know that young people who have been involved in the child protective services and youth justice systems are at higher risk of sex trafficking. DCF also seeks to continue to fund community-based services for young people who have experienced trafficking.

DCF currently funds services within Youth Services Regions to provide case coordination and referral services, support groups, case management, multidisciplinary team staffing, training services to counties and communities as well as tools and guides to assist county agencies and community-based services with the identification and support of youth who have experienced sex trafficking. Services are being provided within Child Advocacy Centers, Youth Justice, and Outreach and Drop-in Centers. Currently, four grantees are providing these services, and their service areas include the following counties and communities: Douglas, Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago counties, the Menominee

Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oneida Nation, Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Milwaukee, the Forest County Potawatomi Tribe, Kenosha, Walworth, Racine, and Douglas County. Furthermore, Anti-Human Trafficking funds have been made available to increase training and service capacity within DCF funded [Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs](#) and [Independent Living Transition Resource Agencies](#).

In 2020, DCF released a documentary film titled '[It Happens Here](#)' that gives voices to Wisconsin residents who have been directly impacted by sex trafficking. This film can be used in educational settings, particularly with youth, to help prevent future sex trafficking cases from occurring. DCF has partnered with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to train school staff and prevention educators on facilitating use of this film in educational settings. Additionally, DPI has created a school-based facilitation guide to assist teachers with facilitating this film and responding to student questions and possible disclosures. The film also can be used in community awareness events as there is also a public facing facilitation guide that can be accessed on the [DCF website](#).

DCF continues to partner with other state agencies and partners to support anti-human trafficking efforts. Previous collaborations include the Wisconsin Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, co-chaired by DCF and the Department of Justice and composed of a broad range of stakeholders, and the DCF Anti-Human Trafficking Advisory Council. These efforts strengthened cross-system collaboration; developed training for child welfare workers, professionals servicing youth, and staff in the hotel industry; and supported the development of public awareness campaigns and prevention videos. DCF continues to collaborate with partner agencies in promoting awareness, prevention, and effective services to youth survivors of trafficking.

It is also important to note that the DCF is just one entity in a broader set of people, organizations, and state agencies with a central role in this work. The Departments of Justice, Public Instruction, Health Services, physical and mental health providers, Tribes, counties, other service providers, and members of the public are all important stakeholders in combatting child sex trafficking in Wisconsin.

Individuals wanting to know about the DCF's efforts on the topic of trafficking should visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ys/aht>.