

Putting Families First

“Reaching New Heights”



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Welcome!



Emilie Amundson
Secretary



John Elliott
Administrator, Division of Safety and Permanence



**April is
Family
Strengthening
Month!**



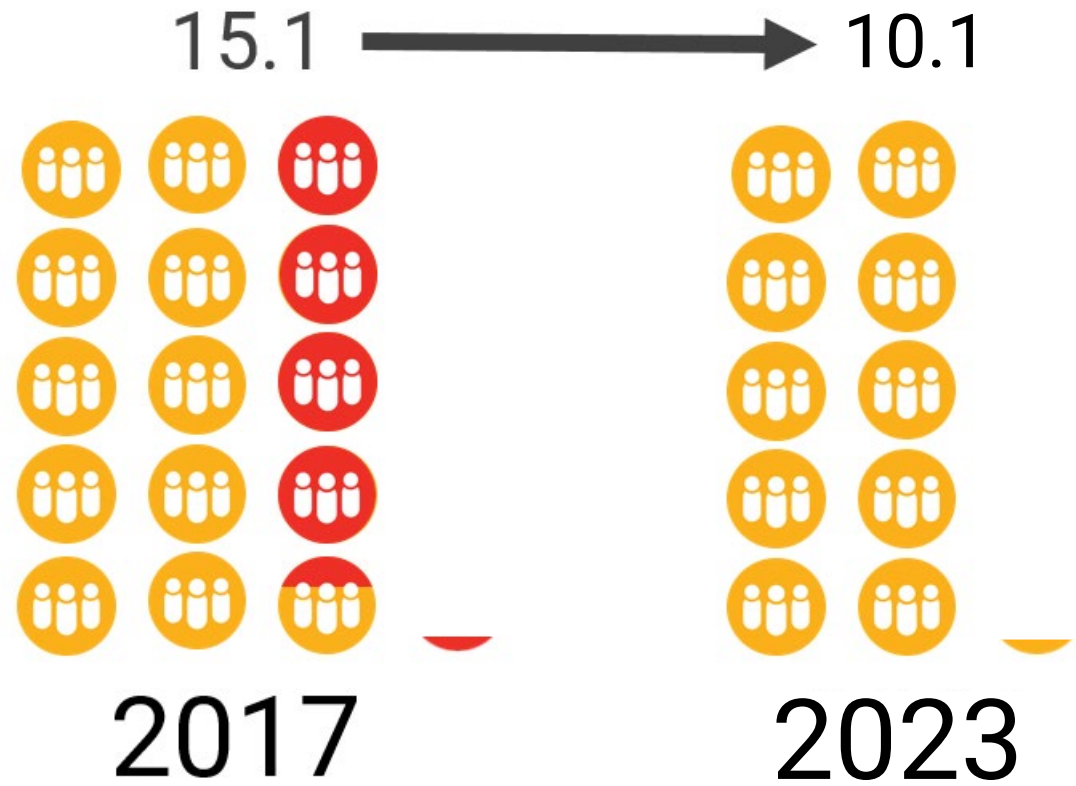
A group of hands holding up small white cards in a circle on a wooden floor. The hands are of various skin tones and are arranged in a circle, with each hand holding a small white card. The cards are held up in a way that they form a ring around the center. The background is a wooden floor with a dark blue overlay.

Vision

All Wisconsin children and youth are safe and loved members of thriving families and communities.

5

fewer children
removed **per day**
since the peak in 2017.



In 2023, more than

4,100 children

were supported with TSSF.





“These funds lead to earlier case closure, improved relationships in the home due to decreased stressors and time for parents to find better employment.”

– *CPS Professional, Sawyer County*



2024 Putting Families First Awards

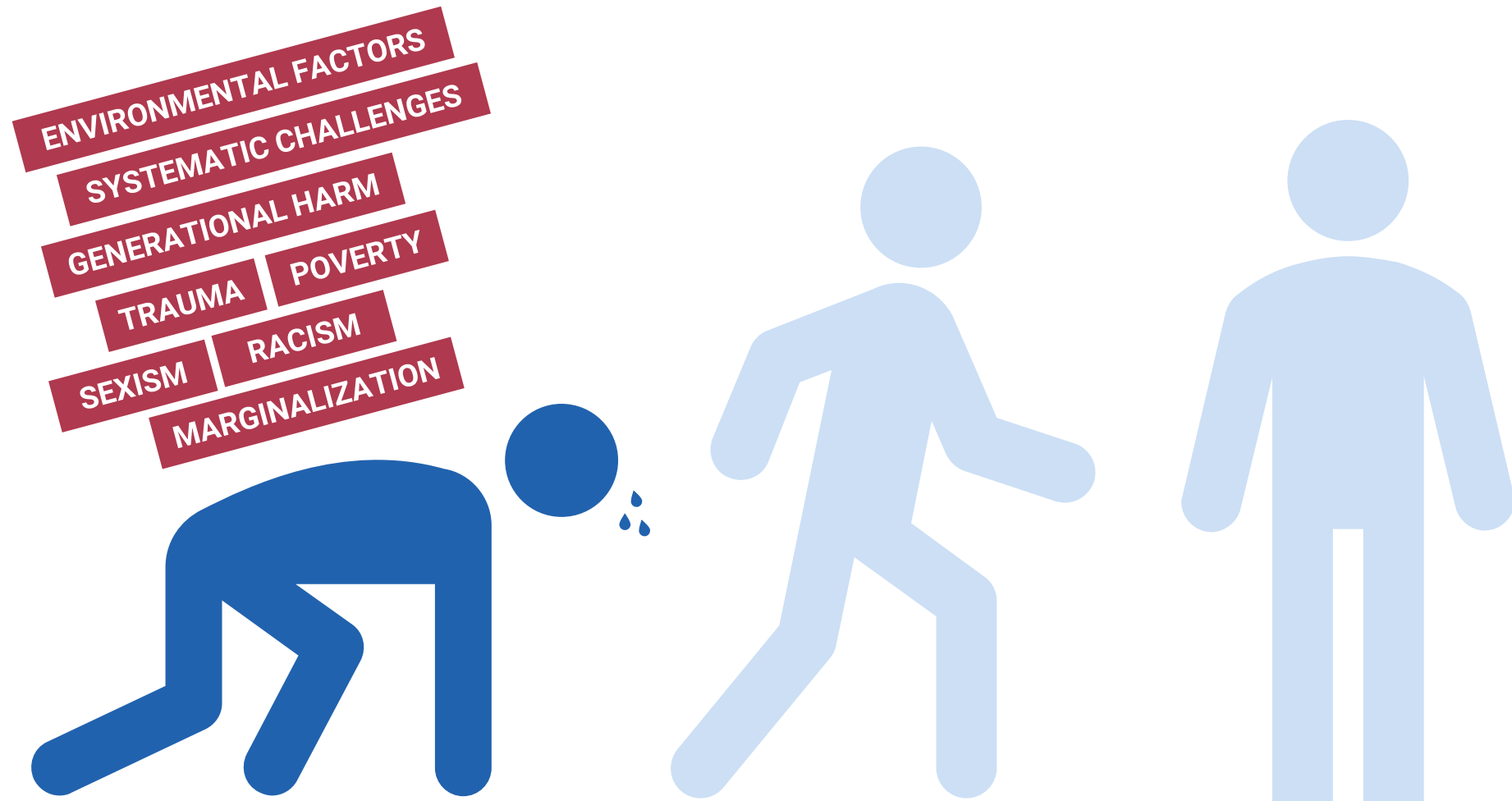
- DSP restructured our awards ceremonies to **celebrate more key partners of Putting Families First efforts**, including:
 - Child welfare professionals.
 - Parents with lived experience.
 - Community partners.
- **9 individuals and teams** were honored at the inaugural ceremony on April 23!



1 in 3 households in Wisconsin face significant economic challenges.



Families carry . . .





New: Putting Families First Grants

County and tribal child welfare agencies have stressed the importance of **flexible, ready funds** in keeping families together.

- This month, DSP launched a non-competitive application process for a one-time, time-limited allocation.
 - Can be used to cover costs of providing supports or services, addressing child, youth and family resource needs, and more.
 - Contract will be for the July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025 period.



Supporting families upstream



Wisconsin selected for Children's Behavioral Health Policy Lab

Nine States Selected for Children's Behavioral Health Policy Lab

January 31, 2024

State behavioral health and children's welfare agency officials from Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin selected to participate.

Health Management Associates (HMA), in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), and the National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMd), will convene a Children's Behavioral Health (CBH) State Policy Lab, February 7-9 in Baltimore. HMA today announced the selection of nine states – **Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin** – that will participate in the policy lab. MITRE, which previously hosted a related federal convening, will also take part in this state convening.

This pioneering effort, made possible by the partner organizations, aims to convene state interagency teams – including child welfare, juvenile justice, behavioral health, Medicaid, and K-12 public education – to collectively strategize, learn from innovators in the sector and promote cross-system alignment to drive outcomes for children, youth, and families.



**Innovative
collaborations
for families.**



Partnership with Genesee Lake School and Chileda Institute

- To make effective residential treatment for children **more accessible**.
- Starting in 2023, DCF contracted with Genesee Lake School (GLS) and Chileda Institute to develop two pilot programs:
 - The SAGE program (GLS)
 - The STEP program (Chileda)
- Programs provide intensive supervision, treatment, programming and aftercare planning.



Supporting families through legislation: Like-kin definition & Kinship Care program

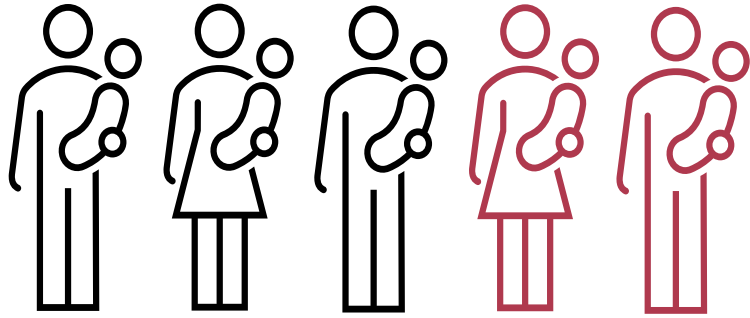
- SB 520 – now 2023 Wisconsin Act 119 – was signed into law in March.
- Two impact areas in child welfare:
 1. Placement with a like-kin caregiver.
 2. Financial support through the Kinship Care benefit program (DCF 58).
- Informational resource available here:
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family-first/toolbox>.



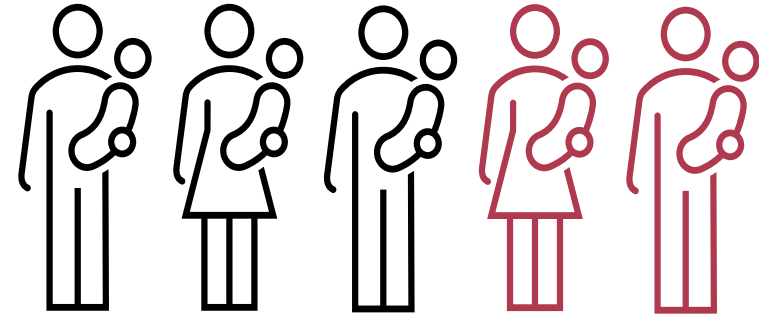
Photo courtesy of the office of Representative Dave Considine.



Opportunities to Support Kin Placements



60% of children in out-of-home care were **not placed with relatives.**



63% of Black children in out-of-home care were **not placed with relatives.**





**Partnering with
families to promote
system change.**

**Upcoming
budget cycle –
an opportunity!**



Upcoming Budget Cycle

- Collaborations will be **more important than ever!**
- There will be opportunities to . . .



Speak with legislators.



Coalition-build.



Consider where you may have connections and abilities to advocate.



Thank you!

Have additional questions? Don't hesitate to reach out!

Putting Families First

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

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Questions?

