

Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare  
Period 8 Corrective Action Plan: Jeanine B. v. Doyle Settlement Agreement  
April, 2011

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) identifies and describes the strategies the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW or the Bureau), working with its community partners and contract agencies, is taking, and plans to implement to address the following remaining enforceable Settlement Agreement provisions:

I.B.6 requires that at least 71% of children who are reunified with their parents shall be reunified within 12 months of entry into out-of-home care.

I.D.9 requires that 90% of children in BMCW custody have no more than three out-of-home care placements.

In section II.D, the Bureau has also identified other related actions and quality initiatives that will be implemented as part of its continuing management and stewardship of the Bureau.

## **II. STRATEGIES FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT AND COMPLIANCE**

The Bureau, in partnership with its community partners and contract agencies, will implement the following actions and strategies to address the remaining enforceable provisions.

### **A. Timely Reunification I.B.6**

The Bureau will continue or implement the following actions:

- 1) As part of our continuing focus on expediting permanency for children, the Bureau will continue to implement permanency consultations for all children in care at 5 months, 10 months, and 15 months. For those youth in care beyond 16 months, permanency consultations occur no less frequently than semi-annually, and more often if requested by the ongoing case manager or supervisor. The Bureau developed the permanency consultation protocol based on the Casey Family Programs Permanency Roundtable model. The protocol is prescriptive in terms of process and attendees. Action plans are developed to ensure that everyone understands the next step(s) for which he/she is responsible. Systemic barriers are recorded and presented to management for broader discussion.
- 2) The Bureau will implement a new model of family teaming to begin April 1, 2011. Training for all initial assessment and ongoing staff will

occur in late March, with more intensive follow up training for supervisors to be held in April. The first family contact will occur at the point of case transfer from Initial Assessment to ongoing. Subsequently, family team meetings will be held at 30-days, and every 90 days thereafter. The process is designed to be family-driven. BMCW has developed policies and procedures, documentation requirements, and a variety of job aides to assist in implementation.

- 3) BMCW will continue to move to a therapeutic visitation model as the ongoing agencies bring more of these services in-house. Contract agencies will submit plans to BMCW by June 30, 2011, detailing their strategies to continue integrating visitation services into the ongoing team and to continue to develop models of therapeutic interaction around visitation.
- 4) The Bureau will take steps to move to a redesigned service system that will hold providers accountable to performance including timely reunifications and placement stability. The model increases referrals over time to the highest performing agencies. BMCW will issue an RFP for the newly designed system in July, 2011, with awards to be issued in September, 2011, and the new model will be in place January, 2012.

## **B. Placement Stability of Children in Out-of Home Care (I.D.9)**

In an effort to promote placement stability for children in out-of-home care, the Bureau will take the following actions:

- 1) In an effort to eliminate instability in higher levels of care, the Bureau has required all Treatment Foster Care agencies and Group Homes to submit detailed program information and begin regular collection of outcome data. Outcome indicators include re-entry, reunifications and placement stability. The Bureau will begin matching children to agencies based on program information and demonstrated outcomes beginning April 1, 2011.
- 2) DCF has moved to a model of rate regulation that ensures a better fit between the needs of the child/adolescent and the corresponding placement. The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool is used to determine the level of care needed and the reimbursement rate for the caregiver. BMCW personnel will continue to be involved in the implementation of rate regulation.
- 3) BMCW has also implemented the CANS tool to better identify children's mental health and placement needs. Ongoing case managers complete the CANS within 30 days of a child coming into

out-of-home care. BMCW will monitor provision of follow up services to meet the child's identified mental health needs and will take effective measures to ensure that the contracted agencies provide appropriate services.

- 4) BMCW will promote and expand the utilization of the educational liaison to assist children in care with their educational needs. This will assist foster parents who otherwise may be unable to manage educational issues (particularly suspension and expulsion) which may then result in a placement disruption. Beginning April 1, 2011, the Bureau will track utilization to determine in which cases the educational liaison position is used and the outcomes of involvement.
- 5) The service system redesign will target placement stability as well as reunification. See I.B.6 #4 for timelines.
- 6) BMCW will continue to support the Connecting Bridges foster parent organization, with emphasis on strategies for retention of foster parents. The BMCW Client Rights Specialist will attend foster parent meetings as needed, and respond to any foster parent concerns.
- 7) BMCW will continue to promote the use of the Mobile Urgent Treatment Team by licensed foster homes and unlicensed court-ordered kinship care providers to stabilize placements.
- 8) BMCW will continue to support foster home recruitment and licensing in order to maintain and increase the pool of available homes that meet the placement needs of children in out-of-home care.

### **C. Other Initiatives**

The Bureau will maintain its child welfare workforce initiatives, including pay schedules and career ladders for ongoing case managers, mentors and supervisors.

The Bureau will continue its support of staff educational advancement, including the part-time Master of Social Work (MSW) programs evening courses at reduced tuition for Bureau staff pursuing and MSW degree at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; and stipends for the full-time MSW program.

The full implementation of Training Teams will continue in all programs across all three Regions. Training Teams operationalize a competency-based approach assuring new staff the opportunity to develop their skill and knowledge in a deliberate, sequenced, and progressive manner. All trainee activities on the Training Teams will be conducted under the close supervision of the training

team supervisor ensuring that child safety during staff development always remains the paramount concern.

The Bureau will continue to monitor the health screen timeliness for children coming into the Bureau's custody. The Bureau is working on a programming change to eWiSACWIS that will track compliance with the 30-day comprehensive exam requirement.

The Bureau will provide to plaintiffs' counsel the investigation reports of alleged maltreatment in out-of-home care, including Independent Investigations on licensed care providers and Initial Assessment CPS reports on unlicensed relative caregivers for quarterly review. Such confidential disclosures to Plaintiffs will be for monitoring purposes only and may not be used for any evidentiary or liability purposes in this case or any other matter.<sup>1</sup>

### **III. EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AND FOLLOW UP**

All proposed strategies will be formally tracked and analyzed by the Department of Children and Families Office of Performance and Quality Assurance and reported monthly to Plaintiffs' counsel as agreed upon by the parties. The Office will review this CAP and make recommendations on appropriate reports to Department management and plaintiffs' counsel.

Conference calls will be scheduled at the convenience of both parties to discuss CAP report items, and to respond to any questions or areas of concern. As has been the established practice, the Bureau will promptly follow up and respond to requests for additional information from plaintiffs' counsel.

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<sup>1</sup> CRI agrees to securely maintain, to not disclose, and to properly destroy all confidential materials provided by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.