

Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare  
Period 7 Corrective Action Plan: Jeanine B. v. Doyle Settlement Agreement  
May 24, 2010

## **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.7 requires the creation of Adolescent Diagnostic/Assessment Centers and limits the length of stay in Centers. The Bureau created the Centers and will take additional actions to reduce overstay in the Centers.

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**

This provision requires that at least 71% of children in BMCW custody who are reunified with their parents shall be reunified within 12 months of entry into care.

The Bureau's corrective strategies build on actions taken during 2008-2009 which include: permanency staffings for all children in out-of-home care over 9 months, full implementation of the Comprehensive Assessment Process, an Office of Performance and Quality Assurance (OPQA) analysis of cases where children were reunified between 13 to 15 months to identify systemic or other barriers to earlier reunification, and the hiring and maintenance of eleven permanency consultants.

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 plan and implement internal permanency staffings of all children in care at least six months and beyond to identify barriers to achieving permanency, and to discuss resolution of those barriers. Program Managers are responsible for tracking and following up on implementation of issues identified during the staffings.
- 2) The Bureau will evaluate its use of the CST process which will include consultation with The Management Group. BMCW will develop a revised and strengthened teaming model/process by August 31, 2010, and a training plan will be developed by September 30, 2010.
- 3) The Bureau is working with the Court and the District Attorney office to revise the way supervised visitation is implemented. The Bureau is coordinating with the judges to accommodate a more individualized approach to visitation, incorporating best practice guidelines for moving to permanency. A template to assist workers in developing a visitation strategy to assist in moving toward reunification will be implemented by July 1, 2010. Additionally, by July 1, 2010, the Bureau's ongoing case management contractors will submit a plan to BMCW to provide visitation as part of the ongoing team. The plan will include any needed training requirements.

## **B. Length of Stay in Adolescent Assessment Centers (I.D.7)**

Provision I.D.7 requires the creation of Adolescent Diagnostic/Assessment Centers and limits the length of stay in centers. Placement in centers cannot exceed 60 days for pre-disposition cases; and cannot exceed 20 days for children whose CHIPS case has reached disposition.

BMCW put a management plan into place in November, 2009, and as a result saw a sharp decline in overstays – ranging from zero to three children per month from November, 2009 through February, 2010. The Bureau plans to build on this success with the following strategies:

- 1) BMCW will continue to conduct internal placement staffings for all children in centers at the ten-day mark. Required participants include the Program Manager or designee, and the out-of-home care supervisor.
- 2) Each region and Children's Services Society of Wisconsin (CSSW) placement unit will appoint one "center specialist" and one backup to track and monitor the progress of children in the centers by May 1, 2010. The specialists are responsible for making sure that staffing decisions are implemented and paperwork is completed.

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

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

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

- 1) CSSW will increase the number of foster homes by a net gain of at least 185 licensed homes from October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010. Special emphasis will be given to recruiting and licensing foster homes able to meet the placement needs of infants and adolescents. <sup>1</sup>
- 2) The Bureau will redesign the format and frequency of placement stabilization staffings by May 31, 2010 for implementation July 1, 2010. Individual support planning and placement stability planning will be done jointly by the Placement Worker and the OCM. Emphasis will be placed on the coordination and quality of the staffing as well as the follow up.
- 3) In an effort to eliminate instability in higher levels of care, the Bureau will require all Treatment Foster Care (TFC) agencies and Group Homes to submit detailed program information and begin regular collection of outcome data by June 30, 2010. Program information will include array of services, areas of specialization, population served, credentials of staff, and training of staff and foster parents. Outcome data for group homes will include (at a minimum) length of stay, maltreatment, discharge data, AWOL data, and OCM satisfaction data. Outcome indicators collected for TFC agencies will include (at a minimum) number of disruptions, permanency outcome percentages and maltreatment.
- 4) The Bureau will redesign the process for matching children in higher levels of care with TFC agencies and Group Homes by September 30, 2010. It is the Bureau's intent to facilitate better matching based on the information detailed in number (3) above.
- 5) Office of Performance and Quality Assurance (OPQA) and BMCW staff will analyze utilization of the Mobile Urgent Treatment Team (MUTT) by foster parents and make recommendations for increased

1. In transitioning foster parent tracking from the manual system to eWiSACWIS, OPQA identified a discrepancy in the total number of homes going back to 2007. OPQA is working with CSSW to ensure they have an accurate count of total homes by June 30, 2010. Net gain counts to date are accurate and have been validated by OPQA monthly.

utilization by May 1, 2010. If programmatic changes are needed, BMCW will work with the contractor (Wraparound Milwaukee) to implement them.

- 6) BMCW will implement the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool to better identify children's mental health and placement needs by July 1, 2010. Ongoing case managers will complete the CANS within 30 days of a child coming into out-of-home care. BMCW will ensure follow-up services are provided to address the child's identified health needs.
- 7) With the assistance of Casey Family Programs, BMCW will conduct a series of "Permanency Roundtables" in order to focus on youth in care for 24 months or greater. Training will be provided by Casey on April 22, 2010. The first series of Roundtables will occur the week of May 10, 2010. Thirty-six youth will be the focus of the initial series. BMCW will replicate the series at least twice prior to December 31, 2010.
- 8) The Bureau will continue implementing its 2010 BMCW Service Support and Placement Needs Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Plan.
- 9) Relative Coordinators will continue to work with unlicensed relatives to assist them in becoming licensed under the graduated licensing initiative.

#### **D. Other Initiatives**

The Bureau will maintain its focus and commitment to its child welfare workforce initiative activities, 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 ensure that children coming into the Bureau's custody will receive timely (within 5 days) health screens.

The Bureau will fully implement and develop performance indicators for ongoing evaluation and oversight of the Nurse Family Engagement Program, adding 3 nurses and 1 supervisor to Access/Initial Assessment, and adding 6 nurses (2 per region) to the Ongoing Case Management contracts. The program will be fully operational by September 1, 2010.

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>2</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.

<sup>2</sup> CRI agrees to maintain, to not disclose, and to properly destroy all confidential materials provided by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.