
What Parent Education and Family Support Efforts Has Wisconsin Invested In?

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No comprehensive overview of parent education and family support programs in Wisconsin is available at this time. However, there are a wide range of public and private organizations providing effective parent education and family support programming throughout the state of Wisconsin.

This section of the briefing report will provide an overview of the parent education and family support programs that are available in Wisconsin by examining the range of local programs and services funded through the Children's Trust Fund, which was created by the Wisconsin State Legislature in 1983 to expand family support and parent education services statewide. The Children's Trust Fund provides funding for two major programs: Year-long Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programs, and Family Support Centers.

Between the years of 1991 and 1993, nearly \$1.3 million of grants for Year-long Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention grants were awarded to 36 different Wisconsin programs. Each program was awarded a maximum of \$20,000. A range of public agencies received funding including community nursing agencies, family resource centers, hospitals, human and social service departments, public health departments, school districts, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Universities, and University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension. Other providers included Advocates Inc., Boys and Girls Clubs, Catholic Social Services, Children's Service Society, Community Action Programs, Exchange Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse, Family Service Associations, Family Support Centers, Lutheran Social Services, Mental Health Association, Parents Anonymous, Pregnancy Hotlines, Renewal Unlimited, Rosalie Manor, Teen Pregnancy Services, UP Connection, and Women's Health and Resource Centers.

The Children's Trust Fund also provides \$675,000 a year (\$75,000 per center) for funding of nine Family Resource Centers. The Family Resource Centers are located in La Crosse, Ladysmith, Madison, Manitowoc, Milwaukee (two programs), Prairie du Chien, Wausau, and West Bend. Each year in Wisconsin, the Family Resource Centers provide a wide range of services including more than 1,400 group based parent education and support services; nearly 4,000 individual parent education and support services; more than 700 life skills, educational, and vocational skills classes, and nearly 800 child care sessions. Furthermore, more than 3,000 visits are made to resource libraries, 4,000 calls to "warmlines", and 8,000 requests for parent education and support.

The Children's Trust Fund is a public-private partnership with an annual budget of approximately \$1.4 million. The majority of that funding comes from a \$5 charge on duplicate Wisconsin birth certificates. The Children's Trust Fund receives additional funding from federal matching funds and gifts from private individuals, corporations, and foundations. The Children's Trust Fund is administered by the 14 member Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board consisting of six governmental members and eight members from the public with expertise on child abuse and neglect.

The goal of the Children's Trust Fund is to prevent child abuse and neglect in the state of Wisconsin. This goal is achieved by providing assistance and funding to comprehensive community-based child abuse and neglect prevention programs; developing public information campaigns that promote awareness and understanding of child abuse and neglect prevention issues; and advising state and local policy makers on child abuse and neglect prevention statutes and policies. The Children's Trust Fund also provides public education through a quarterly newsletter; parent education kits and information; training conferences; and advocacy for children and families at the state legislature. In fact, since 1988 close to 180,000 free parenting booklets, have been given away. In addition, 10,000 parents receive parenting kits each year.

References

Children's Trust Fund (1993). Children's Trust Fund: Biennial Report, 1991-1993. Madison, WI: Children's Trust Fund.

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