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NEWS RELEASE

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WAFCA Supports Governor's Proposal to Form New Department Focused on Families

In response to Governor Doyle's announcement today regarding a proposal to create a new state Department of Children and Families, Linda Hall, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Association of Family and Children's Agencies (WAFCA), shared her enthusiastic support for the Governor's plan.

"The Governor's KidsFirst agenda was the first of its kind in Wisconsin and today the Governor has proposed another first for Wisconsin's families," stated Hall. "The formation of a new Department of Children and Families is an opportunity to provide more efficient and effective services to the vulnerable families that we serve. State level leaders whose focus is the whole family – economic, social well-being and child safety – will think differently about how available funding and services can be aligned to support individual families' real needs."

"The Department of Children and Families will be able to provide the leadership, visibility and accountability necessary to protect children and empower families as they seek to build a safe, nurturing environment for future success."

WAFCA represents 46 private agencies that provide mental health, child welfare and support services to families and children throughout the state of Wisconsin. WAFCA promotes effective and accountable human services programs, working with state and local government to enhance the quality of life for families and children, especially those in crisis.

"We look forward to working with the Administration and the Legislature as this proposal develops. Our member agencies have a long track record working with both DHFS and DWD in the current structure and we know how these programs function at the local level. We are well situated to bring a voice of experience to the table to advocate for a newly focused department that better integrates the array of services families need to be strong and to nurture their children," emphasized Hall.

For more information or to be referred to a local family serving agency representative for comment, please contact Linda Hall or Kathy Markeland at 608/257-5939.