



This session Wisconsin has an opportunity to recommit to fair financing of vital family and community supports. We can fund the pivot to more preventative, cost-effective services and enable our behavioral health, child welfare and human services sector to more rapidly respond to the demand for community-based, in-home services while sustaining capacity across the continuum to produce better outcomes and deliver long term dividends.

- Focus on basic needs including childcare & health care to stabilize families and our workforce.
- Invest in community-based services across the continuum of care to keep us moving toward earlier interventions.
- Continue growth of recovery-oriented and family-centered services while reducing inequities and disparities by addressing worker shortages and system inefficiencies.

Investing in Prevention and Early Intervention

WAFCA supports key investments that empower families and strengthen the human services ecosystem across the private and public sector. We know that family economic supports, such as workforce housing, high quality childcare, EITC and extension of Medicaid postpartum coverage directly impact family stability. Research has shown that as states increase their investment in economic supports for families, child welfare system referrals are reduced. Early intervention priorities include:

- Evidence-Based Home Visiting
- Family Resource Centers and Early Care Mental Health Consultation
- Sustainable School-Based Mental Health

Focusing on Our Children with Complex Needs

We lack sufficient provider capacity in our continuum of care for families resulting in delayed or denied access to services and sometimes placement outside of the state. For Wisconsin's children with particularly intensive needs including complex trauma, cognitive and developmental delays, and persistent mental health challenges, the inability to respond with the right resource can exacerbate their conditions as they move from care setting to care setting awaiting an opening in a service that can best serve them. Supporting children and families with complex needs means:

- Financial and Service Supports for Kin and Foster Care and Expansion of Professional Foster Care
- Foundational Funding for Residential Treatment and Youth Crisis Stabilization
- Creating Psychiatric Residential Treatment Level of Care
- Equity in Crisis and Community Support Program Services
- Intensive Family Preservation & Supports for Runaway and Homeless Youth
- Youth Justice Reforms Including Returning 17-Year-Olds to the Youth System

Growing Our Future Workforce to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing

The current mental health crisis is also an opportunity to expand career pathways for a wider array of caregivers and helping professions and to recognize the range of professionals who make critical contributions to the wellbeing of our children and families. Behavioral health and human services careers will become more attractive and more competitive as we continue to evolve our technology and operational infrastructure to increase worker satisfaction and reduce burnout and turnover. Priorities include:

- Increasing Medicaid Rates for Behavioral Health Providers Disproportionately Serving MA Clients
- Grants to Support Qualified Treatment Trainees
- Private Insurance and Medicaid Funding for Peer Specialists and Qualified Treatment Trainees
- DSPS Capacity to Support Licensed Professionals