



NEWSLETTER

March 2023

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Welcome to the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) March Newsletter!

Children's Mental Health State Budget Priorities

2023 - The Year of Mental Health

Governor Evers has declared 2023 The Year of Mental Health and has included many provisions in his 2023-25 state budget that will improve children's mental health. OCMH has identified the following 10 items as children's mental health budget priorities due to their particular importance in creating access to, and sustaining provision of, the array of quality mental health treatment services children need. Increasing youth voice in identifying priorities for addressing children's well-being is the focus of the final item which would also increase the effectiveness of multiple state efforts to gather youth input on youth wellness..



Access to Mental Health Services and Treatment

- Comprehensive School Mental Health Aid - \$118 million All Funds (AF)* annually for comprehensive school mental health aid, such as navigators, parent training, and the implementation of best practices and to allow sustainable funding for these mental health services.
- School Mental Health Staff Reimbursement - \$18.0 million AF annually to reimburse schools for certain school staff who assist students with mental health issues, such as counselors, school nurses, and social workers.
- Medicaid Behavioral Health Services Rate Increases - \$17.0 million AF over the biennium for a Medicaid rate increase for various outpatient mental health and substance use services and child/adolescent day treatment. These rate increases are implemented only if the federal option to expand Medicaid is adopted. [More](#).
- Qualified Treatment Trainee Coverage Requirement - Mandate all health insurance plans cover services provided by a Qualified Treatment Trainee. No state expense.

Continuum of Care

- Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility Grant Program - \$1.8 million GPR (General Purpose Revenue) in FY25 for grants to establish a 25-bed psychiatric residential treatment facility to serve children and youths with intensive behavioral health needs. Create a new Medicaid benefit for psychiatric residential treatment facilities.
- Youth Crisis Stabilization Facilities Funding - \$1.0 million GPR in annual, ongoing state support for the three Youth Crisis Stabilization Facilities.

- Medicaid Certified Peer Specialists Expansion - \$3.7 million AF in FY25 to expand the use of certified peer specialists in the Medicaid program.
- Support for Child Care Setting Behavioral Issues - \$3.3 million TANF for social emotional training and technical assistance in child care settings with the goal of reducing instances of children being removed from daycare for behavioral issues.
- Wisconsin After 3 Program - \$1.3 million GPR annually to support youth mental health and substance use prevention. Increase funding to the Boys and Girls Clubs by \$500,000 TANF funding in each year for the Wisconsin After 3 program to improve the literacy skills and math proficiency for low-income children.

Youth Voice – Cross Agency Collaboration

- Improve the effectiveness of Youth Councils in the Department of Children & Families, Department of Justice, Department of Public Instruction, Department of Health Services, and the Office of Children’s Mental Health (OCMH) through convening of state staff supporting these councils. Develop a statewide Youth Wellness Network to advise on systems affecting children’s mental health and well-being. Youth for the Network would be recruited primarily from programs such as: Sources of Strength, Hope Squad, RedGen, and Providers and Teens Communicating for Health. Provide 1.0 FTE position, \$63,800 GPR in FY24 and \$78,500 GPR in FY25 to OCMH to support carrying out its duties.

**All Funds = State General Purpose Revenue (GPR) Funds, Federal Funds, and Program Revenue Funds.*

Public Hearings on the Proposed State Budget

The Joint Finance Committee announced four public hearings on the 2023-25 state budget. [Schedule](#). The Legislature’s Joint Finance Committee is accepting [comments from the public on the budget](#) at this website which has additional resources and information on the Committee’s hearings.

Links to the bill version of the Governor Evers’ budget recommendation: [AB43/SB70](#).

Lived Experience Insights

OCMH Lived Experience Partner Crystal Long shares her insights on helping your children when they are struggling with finding themselves.

Being a Parent when your Young Ones Travel through Tough Times

How do we, as parents, cope with our young ones when they are the ones going through a terribly hard and difficult time in finding themselves? And, when I say “cope” I mean effectively deal with and not just mask or hide away the pain. Hard times look different to different people, so I will tell you what that means to me. And, if it looks different to you, that is OK.



Finding yourself is hard for parents

We all search for our place in the world, how we fit in, and what makes us different. Some of us have a harder time as we sort out things like situational circumstances, our environment, or internal issues. We also deal with control differently – the things that are in our control, the things we think we can control, and the things we have no control over. Whether you start this search early in life or later, we all search, and the path is as unique as the person searching.

I was a very late searcher. I did not even start thinking about these things until well into my thirties, and I am still finding my place. I didn't realize how messy finding yourself really is. Now looking back I can honestly say my search started a lot earlier than my reality would allow me to see.

Finding yourself is hard for children

I had children very young, and my focus was always on them, so when they got to the age of starting this search for themselves I had no clue what to expect. I did not recognize their process because it looked drastically different than mine.

When my oldest started, it was like a barrel of unimaginable weight came pouring down on top of him, and the pressure became too much for him to bear. Even though I thought I was there lifting the weight from him, he felt as if I was standing over him pushing the weight down faster and heavier. There were many therapists, hospital visits (emergency room and psychiatric), police involvements, and out-of-home placements before we could get stabilized enough to understand what was going on.

It was way too easy for me to take his pain and make it my own, to think he was going through this because I was a failure as a parent – if only I was better, like I've been told so many times in my life. I was there through every appointment, hospital visit, police interaction, out-of-home placement and heard everything from “when he leaves here he will be better,” “when I'm done with him he will do better,” and “he will wake up one day and snap out of this.” Initially I took those words as insults because I thought what they were really saying was I wasn't good enough. However, as I observed, I noticed they were doing basically the same things as I was doing – they were more experienced and professionally trained, and they were getting the same outcome. So, I must not be a complete failure.

What I learned

This journey has been like so many other mental health journeys I have made on my own and with my children. Here are my thoughts on how I've been able to cope:

- I can have my own pain but not someone else's, even if they are my children.
- I can't carry somebody else's pain for them and expect them not to be affected by it.
- I have done the best I could with the knowledge I had, and every day I obtain more knowledge
- I am imperfect yet honest.
- We all have our own path and no one can pave the way for anyone else, we can just be there with them when needed.

- *By: Crystal Long, Office of Children's Mental Health Lived Experience Parent Partner*

OCMH Updates

Save the Date: Children's Mental Health Week – May 7-13, 2023

2023 is the Year of Mental Health | Moving from Awareness to Acceptance to Action

OCMH Webinar

Helping you get ready to support Children's Mental Health Week

Thursday, April 20, 2023 • 12-1 pm

Register for the webinar [here](#).

Get Ready for Children's Mental Health Week

Join this webinar to prepare for Children's Mental Health Week in your community.

2023
The Year of Mental Health

📅 Thursday, April 20 🕒 12:00 pm-1:00 pm

📍 RSVP at children.wi.gov

Awareness → Acceptance → Action

Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health

Social Connectedness of Youth Impact Team Goals

OCMH launched its Social Connectedness of Youth impact teams last June. There are four teams: two Family teams, Cultural Identity/Community, and Supportive Adult. Since June 2022, the teams have been working on identifying the goals they will work on. Grounded in each teams’ vision, the following goals were approved in the team's February meetings.



Team	Team Vision	Team Goal
Cultural Identity/Community	Young people are regularly involved in spaces that help them feel connected to one another and their culture or identity.	Build community collaborations that provide opportunities for youth to connect to others and their culture, elevating youth voice in this work.
Family Team A	Children have warm, positive relationships with their family that make them feel like they belong, are safe, cared for, valued, and supported.	Family voice is at the center and authentically leads in service planning/delivery.
Family Team B		Support the early childhood/childcare workforce and professionals serving this population with children’s mental health/well-being education and resources.
Supportive Adult	Adults, especially older adults, connect with and establish affirming relationships with youth.	Equip adults to form supportive relationships with youth, including youth voice in this work.

The teams bring together a broad range of people from across the state interested in children’s mental health. All total 116 people are involved in this work. They come together on a monthly basis and are collectively leading to new ways of thinking about service, measurement, and outcomes for children’s mental health in the state of Wisconsin.

Collective Learning – Recording Link Available

Dr. Tracy Loken Weber shared insights from over five years of research on her doctoral dissertation – From Adverse Childhood Experiences to General Education Development: A Qualitative Phenomenological Case Study of Women and Their Journey Through Adult Literacy and Educational Transformation on February 24, 2023. Her presentation included systems change recommendations based on her research. Listen to the recording [here](#).



Legislative & Policy Update

State Legislation. AB 53/SB 82. This bill requires all high schools, beginning in the 2024-25 school year, to collect statistics on violations of municipal disorderly conduct ordinances and certain crimes, including homicide, sexual assault, burglary, battery, and arson, that occur on school property or on transportation provided by the school. The high school must collect statistics about the crime or disorderly conduct only if: 1) it occurred on a weekday between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.; 2) it is reported to law enforcement; and 3) a charge is filed or citation is issued. The bill further requires that the collected statistics be reported to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and included on the annual school and school district accountability report. Finally, the bill clarifies that DPI may not consider

crimes statistics reported by a school or school district for purposes of determining a school or school district's performance on the annual school and school district accountability report. AB 53 passed the Assembly Committee on Education on a partisan vote of 9 to 5. [More](#)

AB 69. This bill requires all public schools to report any incident that occurs in a school building or on school grounds to local law enforcement. The bill provides that, if 100 or more incidents occur in and on public school buildings and grounds during a school semester, and at least 25 of those incidents result in an arrest, the school must, no later than the first day of the next school year, employ or contract for the employment of a law enforcement officer as an armed school resource officer (SRO) to work at the school. Under the bill, "incident" is a defined term that includes violations of state and municipal disorderly conduct laws and certain crimes, including homicide, sexual assault, burglary, battery, and arson. However, the bill provides that, for purposes of counting the number of incidents that resulted in arrest, "incident" does not include incidents related to use or possession of alcohol, cigarettes, nicotine, tobacco products, or vaping devices. AB 69 passed the Assembly Committee on Education on a partisan vote of 9 to 5. [More](#)

President Biden's FY 2024 Budget Provisions on Children's Mental Health. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Mental Health America, and others applauded President Biden for his focus on mental health. Among the children's mental health budget items included are: \$578 million to increase the number of school-based counselors, psychologists, social workers and other health professionals and \$50 million to develop, expand and enhance community-based alternatives to youth incarceration. In addition to these children's mental health provisions, NAMI highlights a number of items that affect parents and adults. [More.](#)

Children's Mental Health in the News



OCMH Senior Research Analyst Amy Marsman spotlights recent articles, resources and research findings impacting youth mental health.

Teen girls and LGBTQ youth plagued by violence and trauma.

Adolescent girls across the country are facing record levels of violence, sadness and despair, according to new survey data from the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Read [article](#), [report](#), and [details](#). For a Wisconsin perspective, [listen](#) to WPR segment on the mental well-being of girls.

Nearly half of U.S. teens have been bullied or harassed online.

According to research released by the Pew Research Center, 46% of teens report being cyberbullied. Older teen girls are especially likely to report being targeted by online abuse overall and because of their appearance. Cyberbullying included the following behaviors: offensive name-calling, spreading false rumors, physical threats, constant monitoring, receiving explicit images, or having explicit images of them shared without consent. Read [report](#).

Seattle Public Schools files lawsuit against tech giants TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Snapchat for harming student mental health.

The Seattle lawsuit says between 2009 and 2019 there was a 30% increase in number of students who were depressed. The school district blames the social media platforms for worsening mental health and behavioral disorders including anxiety, depression, cyberbullying, and disordered eating; making it more difficult to educate students; and forcing schools to hire additional mental health professionals, develop lesson plans about the effects of social media, and provide additional training to teachers. Read [article](#).

Wisconsin ranked 17th in Integrated Efficient Early Care and Education Systems Report.

Addressing persistent childcare problems, which greatly impacts the U.S. economy, and hoping to advance the delivery of childcare and early learning programs, the Bipartisan Policy Center updated their state-by-state analysis on the efficiencies in early childhood care and education. Read the [full report](#), and [WI profile](#).

Wisconsin's childcare industry continues to face staffing crisis as workers struggle with burnout and exhaustion.

A national survey conducted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, surveyed nearly 1,200 childcare providers in Wisconsin. The survey found 80% of early childhood educators are facing burnout and exhaustion and that 63% of Wisconsin centers are experiencing staffing shortages. Read [article](#).

Reducing evictions could improve mental health.

Research highlighted in a recent Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) policy brief explains the social costs of eviction. Data show that mental health hospital visits jumped 130% following evictions. This brief concludes that eviction prevention efforts can be a cost-effective way of reducing childhood deprivation while safeguarding cognitive development. Read [IRP Brief](#) and related [OCMH Fact Sheet](#).

Mental health and the pandemic: What U.S. surveys have found.

Summary of what surveys by Pew Research Center and other organizations found about Americans' mental health during the pandemic. These findings reflect a snapshot in time, and it's possible that attitudes and experiences may have changed since these surveys were fielded. Authors remind that concerns about mental health were common in the U.S. [long before the arrival of COVID-19](#). Read [summary](#).

Of Interest

New Childcare Podcast

Teacher, Toddlers, and Tissues: Candid Conversations on Health and Childcare is a new podcast aiming to address commonly asked questions about health concerns in child care settings. Well-known early child care specialist Rachel Giannini and pediatrician Dr. Dipesh Navsaria lead the discussions. Learn more [here](#).



Funding Opportunity

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Adolescent Health Team announces a [funding opportunity](#) for Project WISE (Wisconsin Initiative for Student Empowerment), funded by the Wisconsin Title V State Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) grant. Project WISE will utilize Wyman's Teen Outreach Program (TOP) to promote the positive development of adolescents through curriculum-guided, interactive group discussions; positive adult guidance and support; and community service learning.

Doodle for Google

Google's 2023 Doodle contest asks schoolkids what they are grateful for. The contest is for kids in grades K-12. The theme focus aims to promote mental health awareness by focusing on what students appreciate most. For more [information](#). To [enter a Doodle](#).

Renewals will be Necessary for BadgerCare Plus or other Medicaid Programs

All Wisconsinites enrolled in BadgerCare Plus or another Medicaid program will need to renew their benefits by an assigned due date between June 2023 and May 2024. Members should wait until they receive their renewal packet to complete their renewal. During the COVID-19 public health emergency,

the federal government required the Department of Health Services (DHS) to allow BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid members to maintain health care coverage. This policy is ending due to federal legislation passed in December 2022 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023). For [information](#).

DPI Seeks Input on Stronger Connections Grant Program

Wisconsin has been awarded \$12.5 million to administer the [Stronger Connections Grant Program](#) to “high need” Local Education Agencies to support safe and healthy students. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is providing an opportunity for stakeholder input. Two sessions remain:

- March 15, 2023, 2-3 pm – [Join Zoom Meeting](#), Meeting ID: 833 1388 5509 Passcode: 433040.
- March 16, 2023, 5-6 pm – [Join Zoom Meeting](#), Meeting ID: 897 8223 7553 Passcode: 87872

Heads Up: April is Family Strengthening Month

Shining a light on the issue of family strengthening, we all can build healthy children and strong families. April is the month to come together to show our shared commitment to children and families. The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board offers a [toolkit](#). For more [information](#). See Five for Families' [toolkit and content](#) calendar.

March is National Social Work Month

March is the time to acknowledge the important contributions social workers make. Thank you to all social workers! For information from the [National Association of Social Workers](#), and [social media toolkit](#).

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Join the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities in raising awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life. For [information](#).

8 WAYS A CHILD'S ANXIETY SHOWS UP AS SOMETHING ELSE

1. Anger

The perception of danger, stress or opposition is enough to trigger the fight or flight response leaving your child angry and without a way to communicate why.



Chandeliering is when a seemingly calm person suddenly flies off the handle for no reason. They have pushed hurt and anxiety so deep for so long that a seemingly innocent comment or event suddenly sends them straight through the chandelier.

4. Chandeliering



2. Difficulty Sleeping

In children, having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep is one of the hallmark characteristics of anxiety.



5. Lack of Focus

Children with anxiety are often so caught up in their own thoughts that they do not pay attention to what is going on around them.

FOCUS

6. Avoidance

Children who are trying to avoid a particular person, place or task often end up experiencing more of whatever it is they are avoiding.



7. Negativity

People with anxiety tend to experience negative thoughts at a much greater intensity than positive ones.

3. Defiance

Unable to communicate what is really going on, it is easy to interpret the child's defiance as a lack of discipline instead of an attempt to control a situation where they feel anxious and helpless.



8. Overplanning

Overplanning and defiance go hand in hand in their root cause. Where anxiety can cause some children to try to take back control through defiant behavior, it can cause others to overplan for situations where planning is minimal or unnecessary.



The Office of Children's Mental Health

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