

Wisconsin's Children's System of Care Strategic Plan 2024-2030

(Children Come First Advisory Committee Revision 7/28/2026)



Timeline Green: Short Term (1-2 Years) Blue: Mid Term (3-4 Years) Yellow: Long Term (5-6 Years)

Introduction

The Wisconsin Children's System of Care Strategic Plan, 2024-2030, was developed by youth, families, groups that advocate for youth and families, service providers, child-serving agencies, tribal nation health and human services agencies, county health and human services agencies, and people who influence or make policies, administrative codes, and laws.

The work to create this strategic plan began at the Wisconsin Children's System of Care Summit held April 24-25, 2023, in Wausau. Workgroups were formed after the event to establish objectives and key results for the five priority areas for Wisconsin's Children's System of Care identified at the summit.

The five focus areas of this strategic plan include:

- Governance, funding, and state-local partnerships.
- Public health approach: health and mental health integration
- Crisis support, specialized residential services, and respite care.
- Parent and youth peer support initiatives.
- Workforce development.

The Children Come First Advisory Committee managed the development of this strategic plan.

The Children Come First Advisory Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the activities listed for each objective.

This work is grounded in the core values of Wisconsin's Children's System of Care.

- **Family and young adult voice and choice** means families and young people are supported in determining the types of services and supports provided, and they are involved in decision-making roles in system-level policies, procedures, and priorities.
- **Community-based** means that to the extent possible services and supports are provided in community settings, like homes, schools, and primary care offices, with the responsibility of managing the system of care grounded in community-level structures, processes, and relationships.
- **Culturally and linguistically responsive** means that services and supports are adapted to the diversity of the child and their family to ensure equity in access and quality.
- **Unconditional** means that all partners in the system of care work toward meeting the needs of a child and their family even when faced with challenges and setbacks.

What is Wisconsin Children's System of Care?

Wisconsin's Children's System of Care seeks to improve the health, safety, and well-being of children and families. It recognizes the importance of family, school, and community in promoting the full potential of every child by addressing their physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and social needs.

Vision

Children and families are valued, understood, and supported in their communities.

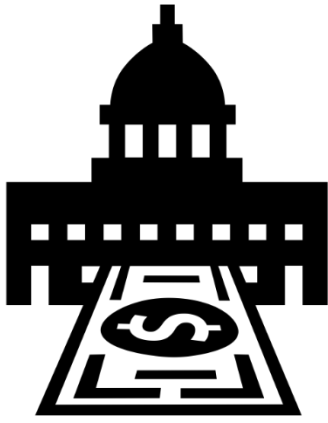
To achieve this vision, many agencies need to work together to ensure children and families have access to what they need to thrive. These agencies include organizations focused on physical health, mental health, education, child welfare, and youth justice.

Mission

Wisconsin's Children's System of Care is a way of helping children and families receive the right help, at the right time, in the right amount by connecting and coordinating the work of all system partners.



Priority 1: Governance, Funding, and State-Local Partnerships



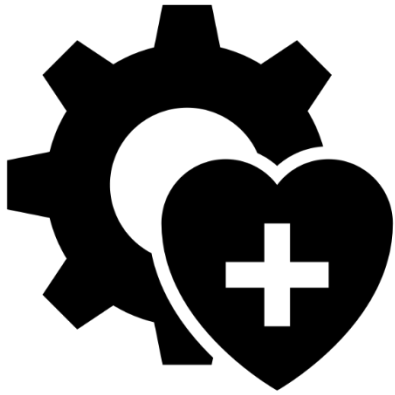
Objective

The funding and policy strategies of agencies at the federal, tribal nation, state, and county levels are aligned to meet the needs of all children, young adults, and families in Wisconsin.

Key results

- 1.1 The Children Come First Advisory Committee makes recommendations for at least 10 (no more than 10) funding and policy system changes based on data from the Wisconsin Children's System of Care Summit, listening sessions, surveys, and other sources that will improve access to services for children and families and improve the efficiency of service delivery for tribal nations, counties, and service providers.
- 1.2 The Children Come First Advisory Committee will conduct a self-analysis of system partners on the Children Come First Advisory Committee, identify gaps, and intentionally seek out system partners to strengthen the committee that can best serve in a children's system of care advisory capacity.
- 1.3 The Children Come First Advisory Committee develops strategic partnerships and an intentional communications structure with 10 key partners and organizations who are not members of the Children Come First Advisory Committee but have mutual interests in improving Wisconsin's Children's System of Care.

Priority 2: Public Health Approach: Health and Mental Health Integration



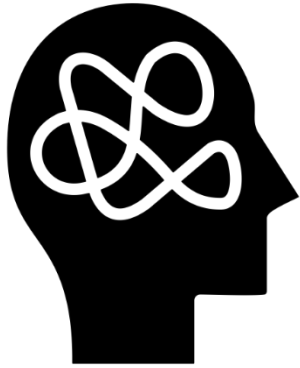
Objective

All Wisconsin children, youth, and their families will have the highest quality collaborative integrated health and wellness system, emphasizing and including education and outreach, prevention, screening, and early intervention strategies.

Key results

- 2.1 The Children Come First Advisory Committee will foster and prioritize opportunities for collaborative partnerships with primary care to achieve:
 - Increased membership of primary care physicians within the Children Come First Advisory Committee to cultivate a holistic approach to health care.
 - Expand outreach opportunities for the Child Psychiatry Consultation Program within primary care settings to enhance mental health support and services for children youth and their families.
- 2.2 To effectively address the needs of children, youth, and families, the Children Come First Advisory Committee will actively identify opportunities for exploration, shared learning, and collaboration with primary care, integrative health, facilities, and other essential partners to promote a holistic approach to health care.
- 2.3 The Children Come First Advisory Committee will create a workgroup to make recommendations for policies that increase access and support an integrated health, mental health, and wellness system for children, youth, and families in Wisconsin by:
 1. Conducting a comprehensive review of integration models for health and mental health services and analyzing their efficacy.
 2. Identifying resource requirements and maintaining adaptability to inform the development of an optimal and sustainable integration model for Wisconsin.
 3. Performing a thorough strength analysis of existing prevention and screening activities, identifying successful initiatives, resources, and community engagement strategies.
- 2.4 Children Come First Advisory Committee members will draft comprehensive communications outlining completed initiatives and proposing forthcoming actions to pertinent groups and partners, ensuring transparency, alignment, and engagement across Wisconsin's Children's System of Care.

Priority 3: Crisis Support, Specialized Residential Services, and Respite Care



Objective

Assure the right service for the right need at the right time in the crisis continuum. Funding is aligned across federal, state, counties, and tribal nations. All families will be heard, receive crisis responses with necessary linkage and follow-up, and have a safe place to get help.

Key results

- 3.1. The Children Come First Advisory Committee supports the development of a psychiatric residential treatment facility as evidenced by the submission of letters of support/recommendation.
- 3.2 The Children Come First Advisory Committee will identify and define the respite care continuum and (map/guidance services and funding) support how that is defined in Wisconsin.
- 3.3 The Children Come First Advisory Committee develops, promotes, and updates a toolkit for the respite care continuum that can be used to describe respite care from least restrictive to most restrictive settings with information about funding streams and access to services included.
- 3.4 The Children Come First Advisory Committee leverages its collective resources to ensure the promotion of a crisis continuum that enhances resources for a mobile response specific to youth.
- 3.5 To enhance the usage of Medicaid linkage and follow-up, the Children Come First Advisory Committee identifies comparable programs and other stabilization models that may include peer support and other helping hands.

Priority 4: Parent and Youth Peer Support Initiatives



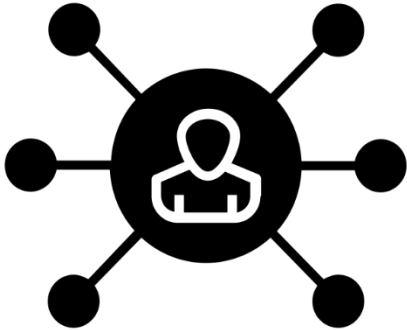
Objective

Effective peer support is available to every youth, young adult, and family involved with Wisconsin's Children's System of Care.

Key results

- 4.1 A study to identify evidence-informed practices and key factors that contribute to successful efforts to provide peer support in other states will better inform partners in Wisconsin's Children's System of Care regarding peer support. These results and examination of the strengths and challenges that exist in Wisconsin will inform the development of a plan to increase access to peer support within Wisconsin's Children's System of Care.
- 4.2 Concurrent with the grant-related efforts to increase the availability of peer support, Wisconsin's Children's System of Care partners will increase the understanding of the terms peer specialists and peer support. Clarification of these terms will lead to a better understanding of how the outcomes for children and families can be improved.
- 4.3 The Children Come First Advisory Committee will recommend approaches to ensure that the provision of support and services are based on family and youth underlying needs and priorities, developed by the child and family team, and that subsequent changes in the plan including discharge are mutually agreed upon.

Priority 5: Workforce Development



Objective

A competent, confident, collaborative, and diverse workforce that reflects families served across Wisconsin.

Key results

- 5.1 The Children Come First Advisory Committee empowers local coordinating committees to identify and leverage resources effectively, thereby enhancing the workforce's capacity to address the diverse needs of children, youth, and families within their communities.
- 5.2 The Children Come First Advisory Committee advocates for the establishment of standards of practice aimed at facilitating career advancement pathways to optimize the workforce's potential to address the comprehensive needs of children, youth, and families.
- 5.3 The Children Come First Advisory Committee collaborates with members and partners to reduce barriers to employment and create pathways.