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(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

**WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ...
PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS**

2005-06

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Children and Families (AC-CF)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
 - (**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
 - (**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

* Contents organized for archiving by: Stefanie Rose (LRB) (May 2012)

Ayes: (8) Representatives Kestell, Vos, Albers,
Jeskewitz, Vukmir, Grigsby, Sinicki and
Seidel.

Noes: (0) None.

INTRODUCTION AND ADOPTION OF ASSEMBLY
AMENDMENT 1 RECOMMENDED, Ayes 8, Noes 0

Moved by Representative Albers, seconded by Representative Vos
that **Senate Bill 655** be recommended for concurrence as amended.

Ayes: (7) Representatives Kestell, Vos, Albers,
Jeskewitz, Vukmir, Sinicki and Seidel.

Noes: (1) Representative Grigsby.

CONCURRENCE AS AMENDED RECOMMENDED, Ayes 7,
Noes 1

David Matzen
Committee Clerk

Vote Record Committee on Children and Families

Date: 4-27-06

Moved by: ALBERS ~~Albers~~ Seconded by: Vos

AB _____ SB 655 Clearinghouse Rule _____
 AJR _____ SJR _____ Appointment _____
 AR _____ SR _____ Other _____

A/S Amdt 1
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____
 A/S Sub Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

Be recommended for:
 Passage Adoption Confirmation Concurrence Indefinite Postponement
 Introduction Rejection Tabling Nonconcurrence

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Representative Steve Kestell, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Robin Vos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Sheryl Albers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Leah Vukmir	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Tamara Grigsby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Christine Sinicki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Donna Seidel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Totals: _____

Vote Record Committee on Children and Families

Date: 4-27-06

Moved by: Albers Seconded by: Vos

AB _____ SB 655 Clearinghouse Rule _____
 AJR _____ SJR _____ Appointment _____
 AR _____ SR _____ Other _____

A/S Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____
 A/S Sub Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____
 A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Amdt _____ to A/S Sub Amdt _____

Be recommended for: AS AMENDED
 Passage Adoption Confirmation Concurrence Indefinite Postponement
 Introduction Rejection Tabling Nonconcurrency

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Not Voting</u>
Representative Steve Kestell, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Robin Vos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Sheryl Albers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Suzanne Jeskewitz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Leah Vukmir	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Tamara Grigsby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Christine Sinicki	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Representative Donna Seidel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Totals:	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Motion Carried Motion Failed



**WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
AMENDMENT MEMO**

2005 Senate Bill 655	Senate Amendment 1
<i>Memo published: March 9, 2006</i>	<i>Contact: Laura Rose, Deputy Director (266-9791)</i>

2005 Senate Bill 655 requires the Joint Legislative Council to create a permanent, special committee on strengthening Wisconsin's families. The bill lists 12 topics that are among the topics the committee may address.

Senate Amendment 1 adds "health care" to the list of topics the committee may address.

Legislative History

On March 8, 2006, the Senate Committee on Health, Children, Families, Aging and Long-Term Care recommended introduction and adoption of Senate Amendment 1 by a vote of Ayes, 5; Noes, 0; and recommended passage of the bill, as amended, by a vote of Ayes, 5; Noes, 0.

LR:rv



Matzen, David

ANNE 7-9485

From: Sappenfield, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2006 2:50 PM
To: Matzen, David
Subject: SB 655

*SHE CAN DO A SIMPLE!

Here are some possible changes to SB 655:

1. Instead of requiring the special committee created by the bill to study issues related to strengthening WI families and develop recommendations and legislation, require the Jt. Leg. Council to direct the committee to study issues and develop recommendations and legislation. Also, provide the JLC may direct the special committee to study the listed issues, instead stating that the listed issues are issues that the special committee may study.
2. Add as an issue the special committee may study the establishment of a state council to improve the coordination among state agencies of programs that affect families; to set priorities for state agencies based on community and family needs; to consolidate funding for programs and services that affect families; and to encourage communities to form local collaborative entities to coordinate, decrease duplication of, and streamline the delivery of services to families, children, and youth.
3. Sunset the requirement to establish the committee at the end of 2010. This will require the committee to be established for 3 interims.
4. Finally, the Children and Families committee raised concerns about one of the issues the committee may study. It is "core values held by WI families and proposed legislation to incorporate these values into state law." It's #7 on the list of issues.

I'll talk to you soon!

Anne



Strengthening Wisconsin Families AB 655

Research has found that only 2% of the children are adopted in the U.S. yet approximately one third of children placed in residential treatment are adopted. (Levy Handbook of Attachment Interventions) These facilities can cost in excess of \$100,000 per year.

The United States is the most violent country in the industrialized world – particularly for children. Children and youth are victimized more than adults in every category – physical abuse, assault, bullying, rape. (Levy)

There was a 300% increase (1986-1993) in the number of children seriously injured by maltreatment – mostly by violent parents. (Children's defense fund 1997)

The statistics go on and on about how our children are abused and neglected and how that creates intergenerational patterns of these horrific behaviors.

Attachment is the deep and long lasting emotional connection established between a child and caregiver in the first several years of life. That is the definition of family.

"The children described in this book are our children. They were horribly mistreated by their original parents. They were placed in the custody of the government. As citizens, we became responsible for providing them with a childhood that would meet their psychological needs."

The Social Services system does not have the expertise nor the financial resources to provide for these horribly injured children starting as young as age four requiring extensive therapy.

We are left with the only option to keep placing these children into \$100,000 a year placements to warehouse them until they are 18. Then they are released into the mainstream where they are either preyed upon or prey on others. One child we spent a half million dollars on was a success, because he refused to go through with the plot to murder an old lady. He called the Sheriff before his companions could carry it out – they are in prison.

The answer is to build and strengthen families rather than continuing to triage the wounded and mangled that come through our doors every day.

The state and the state leadership can take this first step by approving this bill and recognizing the importance of family in Wisconsin. We believe that this is a bi-partisan effort that is critical to everyone in Wisconsin.

This effort was initiated because we are tired of fighting a losing battle. We believe if you and other leaders of our state recognize the importance of family and provide the

needed support, we can move forward in setting a national standard for family support and improve the life chances of our most vulnerable and valuable population – our children.

The five elements we are proposing are:

1. Development of statewide consensus.
2. A system that supports families.
3. A revitalized set of family values for Wisconsin.
4. A focus on family strengthening decision making throughout our legislative process.
5. A commitment from the Governor and Legislature that reflect family values and provide the leadership for initiative in:
 1. family values
 2. family, fatherhood and economic development to support families
 3. making families an integral part of the state budget process

There are six actual areas that can be focused on to improve outcomes for families.

1. Family systems approach
2. Brain development and attachment
3. Economic participation
4. Fatherhood initiative
5. Integrated systems and interdisciplinary systems
6. Leadership

A. B. 655 is composed of the twelve action plans – bold actions. (Concept of Senator Stepp) These are broken out into implementation outcomes and measurements in order to assess the success. This was a recommendation of Representative Huebsch.

We need a champion for families. We are hopeful that the Governor and Legislature will provide that leadership. This committee will bring together the experts and the believers in family. They will provide the seed of leadership that we hope will blossom into broad-based support for families, for prevention of abuse and neglect and for helping our average citizen provide for the basic nurturing that all human beings need.





The greatest Joy.....
GIVING

The most destructive habit..
WORRY

The greatest "shot in the arm" ...
ENCOURAGEMENT

The most prized possession
INTEGRITY

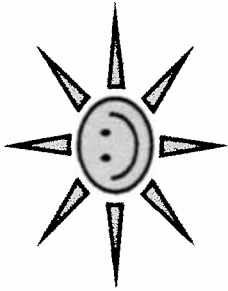
The greatest loss.....
SELF-RESPECT

Our greatest
natural resource
OUR YOUTH

The most crippling failure
disease.....
EXCUSES

VALUES

The most beautiful
attire.....



A SMILE!

The most powerful channel
of communication

PRAYER

The most endangered
species....
**DEDICATED
LEADERS**

The two most power-
filled words.....

"I CAN"

The most powerful force
in life.....

LOVE

The most worthless
emotion.....

SELF-PITY

The ugliest personality
trait...

SELFISHNESS

The greatest problem
to overcome.....
FEAR

The most effective
sleeping pill...
**PEACE OF
MIND**

The worst thing to
be without....
HOPE

The greatest asset...
FAITH

GRANT COUNTY'S FAMILIES' FIRST PLAN

This document contains ideas on how we can reinforce and support the American family to raise healthy children so the next generation doesn't fall behind.

We must come up with solutions given the horrific decisions that must be made. Systems are shutting down and we must respond now.

These ideas do not represent a huge commitment of money – there is some up-front money and some shifting of tax dollars – but it boils down to a public will to get it done: each of us caring for and helping our neighbors.

“The Families First Plan”

1. **Develop a statewide consensus** that a village of families is necessary to raise strong children. A village that supports mothers at the expense of fathers, or supports children at the expense of families, is doomed to failure.
2. **Develop a system that supports families**, provides for the healthy development of children, builds strong communities, gives people in marginalized communities a sense of hope, involves fathers in their children's lives, and expects our bureaucrats to commit to these goals.
3. **Revitalize a set of values for Wisconsin.**

*******Wisconsin Values*******
 1. The State of Wisconsin is committed to building broad-based supports for families in everyday life.
 2. The impact on Wisconsin families will be paramount in all state decisions.
3. All things being equal with respect to specific law or agency mission, the most family-strengthening decision will be chosen (e.g. community safety vs. returning a father to his family).
4. The Governor and Legislature will demonstrate a commitment to families by:
 - a. Passing laws that reflect family values.
 - b. Developing statewide initiatives around families, fatherhood and economic development to support families.
 - c. Conduct an annual conference to evaluate progress and establish goals to build strong families for the next year.
 - d. Including Family First as part of the state Budget.



Families First

Child welfare removes a mother, a 6-year-old boy, and 6-month-old child from their sexualized family home and places them in a treatment foster home. The father is in jail. In a puzzling display of self-destructive behavior, the mother sends the 6-year-old to get the foster home dad to come see her, splayed naked with the 6-month-old. Shocked, the foster home calls child welfare. The traditional approach would be to remove the children from their mother, split up the family, and create another generation of lost children.

Hopeless? Not quite.

We know why these problems occur. A 2000 survey of child abuse literature identified six factors associated with child abuse: (1) family history of abuse, (2) family isolation, (3) economic deprivation, (4) lack of coping skills of parents, (5) patterns of aggression within the family, and (6) lack of parenting skills.

We have the skills to assess these problems. It is clear that societal problems such as crime, welfare, and poverty are directly related to family problems such as neglectful, absent or abusive parents. Scientific proof supports our long-standing claim that public welfare programs should focus on children and families as much as jobs and job training.

We can provide services without additional funding, if the delivery system is streamlined.

Six critical areas are identified below, and discussed in brief on the following pages.

⚙️ **Family Systems:** a family is more than the sum of its parts. Improve the patterns of interaction (family dynamics) to stabilize and organize families.

⚙️ **Brain Development & Attachment:** Loving, attentive parents create healthy children and families. Enrich the environment of pre-natal children and infants to promote children more capable of succeeding in life. Provide a secure and nurturing environment to teach trust and instill a sense of social connection and responsibility.

⚙️ **Economic Participation:** Establish the ability and the will to participate as fully as possible in the mainstream economy.

⚙️ **Fatherhood Initiatives:** Families need fathers and children need their dads. Engaging fathers must be a prominent part of the next phase of welfare reform.

⚙️ **Integrated Systems and Interdisciplinary Services:** we cannot afford to maintain separate bureaucracies and disciplines – they must be integrated. We can have a significant impact without increased funding.

⚙️ **Leadership:** Build the “corporate will” needed to implement the structural and moral changes to significantly impact struggling individuals, families and communities.

Family Systems

In the example above, both children’s attachment to their mother is devastated, creating permanent developmental injury and a new generation of the unattached. Perhaps she deserved to be separated from them, but they didn’t deserve to be separated from her. Using family systems therapy, we can facilitate this mom and others like her to change so they no longer deserve to be separated from their children. Families could be reunified, saving countless lives and taxpayer dollars.

This cycle is repeated and amplified with the generations. We have intergenerational child abuse - sexual, physical and emotional - that occurs repeatedly in many of our troubled families. Often these families are economically disadvantaged and suffer patterns of family abuse and disintegration which they are ill prepared to overcome. The solution is to create interventions for change to

Improve patterns of interaction to stabilize troubled families.

Family Systems Theory was the last great leap in family therapy. It addresses the dynamics of the whole family, which is greater than the sum of its individual family member parts. Mother, father, and children working together is the most effective way to raise a strong healthy family.

Brain Development & Attachment

Fifty years of research demonstrates that a sense of safety and security creates attachment (pro-social behavior) and stimulates brain development in babies. A sense of being unsafe or insecure creates detachment (anti-social behavior) and impairs higher brain functioning. Attachment and brain development research is the next great leap in the treatment of families.

Loving, attentive parents create healthy children, families, workplaces, communities, and societies.

Whether self-interested or altruistic, our common agenda and primary goal must be to strengthen the family.

Economic Participation

Our expectation as a society and culture is that all people work to support themselves. If they don't, they suffer the consequences, up to and including death. Few, if any, in this country support the death penalty for failing to participate in our economy. Many, however, support a policy of benign neglect that does result in the destruction of families and the cultural crippling of their children. The answer is not to eliminate the requirement that people support themselves, but to Facilitate people's participation in the mainstream economy.

Jason De Parle's 2004 book American Dream describes the devastation to three African-American mothers navigating the economic system (work and welfare). The results – one has a crack baby, one is convicted of welfare fraud, and the third works but is an alcoholic. No fathers are readily observable, another generation of unattached males.

DeParle states that involvement of the fathers is the one key area for hope with the economically

disadvantaged mothers who typically are involved in Wisconsin Works (W-2).

Fatherhood Initiatives

The Society for Research in Child Development on November 16, 2004 released a study with evidence to

Support the pivotal role dad's play in children's development.

Improved relationship skills and increased earnings capacity are consistently cited as prime factors in encouraging fathers to stay connected with their children (The Prevention Researcher, Vol. 11 No 4, Nov. 2004). The Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc. of Racine, Wisconsin offers a national model of holistic policies and programs that strengthen support systems for children by addressing the employment and supportive needs of fathers and other family members.

Integrated Systems & Interdisciplinary Services

We can combine family systems, attachment therapies, employment & training programs, and a new Fatherhood initiative to facilitate a broad-based approach to repair many of the tears in the fabric of our society and culture.

In healing our communities and its members, we cannot afford to maintain separate bureaucracies and disciplines – they must be integrated. The resources are in place in social welfare, corrections, employment and training, mental health, AODA, etc. to have significant impact without increased funding.

An integrated system with a comprehensive approach can facilitate significant change in dealing with the major social issues of our day – child abuse and neglect, failure to participate in the mainstream economy, strengthening the family, and building a consensus for these values in our daily lives.

All of the pieces are in place except one
*****Leadership*****

We have the dollars, the knowledge, the people, and the infrastructure in place to reach the marginalized participants in our culture. The element that is lacking in addressing these fundamental issues is leadership and "corporate will."

Leadership

In order to build the "corporate will" needed to implement the structural and moral changes to significantly impact these struggling individuals, families and communities – the key is leadership.

The leadership is in place in the local (county) bureaucracy of Wisconsin. What is not in place is the state-level leadership showed by Tommy Thompson's welfare reform and Robert LaFollette's progressive movement in the early 20th century. We need someone who has been elected to and assumed a leadership position. Thompson and LaFollette were both willing to use their "bully pulpits" to proclaim their agendas and create the consensus to

**Make Wisconsin a national model
for effective programs.**

This leader will identify where we want to go prior to deciding exactly how we will get there, using the crucial research and information.

Perhaps the greatest social service that can be rendered by anybody to this country and to mankind is to bring up a family.

George Bernard Shaw

Action Plan for Families First Initiative

Bold Step	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements
<p>1. The governor and legislature pass and sign a family compact that establishes the nurturance and support of families as a top priority for the state.</p>	<p>Hold a series of public meetings held across the state to gather citizen ideas. Include a list of action items and potential outcomes for them to react to.</p>	<p>Increased public awareness and support; bi-partisan structure for committees and process; bi-partisan commitment.</p>	<p>More letters to the editor on family issues; Democrat and Republican membership on committees; increase in jointly-sponsored laws.</p>
<p>2. Change focus from individual constituent groups to families</p>	<p>A. Target services to the whole family not individuals. B. Target funds to the most vulnerable and/or most in need and to families not individuals. C. Redirect money from higher-income families (Family Centers, child care subsidies) to the lower-income and most vulnerable families.</p>	<p>More services for families without additional tax money. More services for poor and vulnerable families without additional tax money. More services for poor and vulnerable families without additional tax money. Shift in funding and program priorities.</p>	<p>See # 3A. See # 3A.</p> <p>Increased number and quality of services available for poor and vulnerable families.</p>
<p>3. Review all existing and proposed laws and policies to determine whether families are strengthened (not just the component parts).</p>	<p>A. Develop criteria for reviewing new and proposed laws and policies to determine if the law/policy improves or builds on 12 impact areas (see attached). B. Each law or policy would be reviewed and scored on a 10-point Likert scale. C. When in doubt, families come first. D. Less priority on individual citizens and demographics (race, sexual orientation, etc.).</p>	<p>Establish bi-partisan commission to review all laws and policies. Cost-neutral. Develop a Denver Inventory (measure movement along a self-sufficiency continuum). Appropriate laws would be modified. Appropriate laws would be modified. Strengthen families to deal with individual issues.</p>	<p>Implementation and impact. Actual modification of laws. 3% modified. 3% modified. Less conflict around individual issues/rights/etc. Strong consensus for family support.</p>

Bold Step	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements
<p>4. Attachment and Brain Development as a science/academically-respected discipline.</p>	<p>Application of attachment and brain development concepts to schools, day care centers, and homes.</p>	<p>Attachment and Brain Development is a scientific discipline. The principles will be included, applied, and utilized in High School classes. Results will be more secure, emotionally healthy children and a well-developed adult who will be able to become a good parent and productive member of society.</p>	<p>Services for parents and grandparents on pre-natal development, new baby, toddlers, day care, early childhood development, 5-10 education, and adolescents.</p>
<p>5. Fatherhood initiatives</p>	<p>A. Change child support rules to give credit for time spent with child(ren). B. Change child support rules to give credit for time spent in parenting education. C. Improve access of non-custodial parent to the child</p>	<p>More time spent with children; less jail time for non-support. More time spent with children; less jail time for non-support. Laws enacted, less time spent in jail for non-support of children, more time spent with children, reduced caseloads for child support.</p>	<p>Laws enacted; reduced Child Support caseloads. Laws enacted; reduced Child Support caseloads. Laws enacted; reduced Child Support caseloads.</p>

Bold Step	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements	
<p>6. Revamp bureaucratic standards to emphasize empowerment values versus entitlement mentality. Providers should be the families not professionals.</p>	<p>A. Establish a bureaucratic czar to assure implementation.</p>	<p>All Dept. rules and regulations would be reviewed by the bureaucratic czar and changed if needed. Empowerment would be the watch word of the bureaucracy rather than entitlement.</p>	<p>Annual report to Legislature.</p>	
	<p>B. Focus on the most vulnerable and encourage families, not institutions or professionals, to care for children.</p>	<p>Community members are competent to help one another; better availability of support.</p>	<p>A reduction in state and local employees as family and community replace them.</p>	<p>Money would be freed up and focused on vulnerable families.</p>
	<p>C. Revamp programs, program standards, and funds to support families.</p>	<p>Domestic violence programs would include putting families together as part of their philosophy.</p>	<p>W-2 would track people through initial employment to good jobs ("W-3").</p>	<p>"</p>
	<p>Family Resource Centers would do more home visits, follow the Hawaii model, and provide the bulk of services to the most at-risk of abuse and neglect.</p>	<p>Child care funds would be focused on the lowest income groups.</p>	<p>Child welfare would reduce child protective services and increase family supports.</p>	<p>"</p>
	<p>Programs for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) would focus away from professionalism for family supports. Reduce the percent of Human Services funding to even the playing field with other vulnerable populations.</p>	<p>"</p>	<p>"</p>	<p>"</p>
	<p>"</p>	<p>"</p>	<p>"</p>	<p>"</p>
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The Insanity of Mitigating Child Safety

The child welfare system in Wisconsin spends millions of dollars on child welfare workers to remove children from their homes. Millions more is spent developing foster homes and other out-of-home placement facilities to keep children out of their homes and to maintain computer systems (WiSACWIS, etc.) to justify removing and keeping children out of their homes.

The media in this country crucify child welfare workers when a child is horrifically injured or killed in his/her own home. The state trains child welfare workers to remove children from their homes whenever the risk is high. The child welfare worker must justify and document that it is okay to leave a child in his/her own home whenever there is a complaint.

The "child advocates" (self-appointed) sue the federal government for placing children in poor/multiple foster homes. The federal government threatens and withholds funds from state child welfare systems because they removed children who were at high risk and put them in poor/multiple foster homes, thereby potentially reducing the few dollars that the states and local child welfare agencies have to keep children safe in their own homes.

Why do we perpetuate this insanity? Insanity is defined here as doing the same thing over and over but expecting different results.

Place 22 year old child welfare workers in this insane environment and you get 50%-80% annual turnover rates. Few child welfare workers will leave a child with his/her parents if there is a moderate-to-high risk level for their own personal liability, as well as their bureaucratic liability. This leads to failing participants maintaining a failing system.

The bias of the system (the pressure of the community to fault the child welfare worker if any child is injured or killed) is to remove the child whenever the risk level is elevated. The current system removes hundreds of children to avoid one child being injured. However, removing a child from his/her family may cause more harm than good. If child safety is defined as avoiding any risk of injury if a child remains with the parent(s), then we must balance risk with safety to avoid emotional harm to the child.

Public blame for injured children needs to be shifted away from the failures of the child welfare system to the failure of society to support families. Prevention, early intervention, and massive supports to families at risk of further abuse or neglect is the answer. A recognition and commitment to keeping families together needs to be the primary goal.

Our dysfunctional child welfare system needs treatment to facilitate its mission of keeping children safe and healthy in their own families. Three things must occur:

1. A shift in the advocacy, education and bureaucratic systems to stop enabling families to fail, practicing elitism, and self-protection. (Detailing this shift would require another paper.)
2. Public commitment to adequately fund the resources to support families (this is more likely than support to break up families, e.g. out-of-home care.)
3. Structurally modify the child welfare system and encourage therapeutic interventions by case managers.

A practical mechanism to modify the system is to mitigate safety. The risk/safety system should be modified to reduce the systematic and structural emphasis on risk and removal and shift it to trigger actual services, not just an offer of services.

Legislation and DHFS rules and standards can be developed and implemented to facilitate and support this process. The following concepts should be addressed in that process:

- Shift the trigger for child removal to a higher trigger point.
- Change the offer of voluntary services to mandated in-home family-based services.
- Balance risk with the potential for family unification/reunification by considering the strengths of the family and weighing the benefits of the family being together against the risk of further abuse or neglect.
- Re-direct system thinking towards keeping families together instead of pulling families apart. Comprehensive, in-home service plans should facilitate the decision to allow children to remain in their homes, keeping hundreds of families together, versus the potential of one child being abused or neglected.
- Develop modified risk criteria using statistical analysis on how age and developmental level mitigates risk, types and severity of sexual abuse, not triggering removal for any bruising or injury, the potential for adoption, strength of parent, families, and community supports, not the superfluous checklist currently used in child-at-risk fields.
- Parent-child attachment is a key element in a child remaining in the home. Building and strengthening this attachment for both parents and children is essential to reducing risk.

Finally, middle class standards cannot continue to be used in risk assessment. Basic objective standards need to be established. The community and institutions such as schools must recognize, accept, and support non-middle class parents as necessary for all children.

Essential to addressing services is case managers as therapeutic interveners. Currently, case managers manage safety. In the current system, the only absolutely perfect safety technique is removing a child from his/her home.

A twenty-four hour per day caretaker in the home is almost as effective as removing the child to assure safety. Neither removing the child nor babysitting the parents empowers families to change, nor are these options cost-effective.

Implementing basic in-home services such as parent aides, parent mentors, therapy teams, and other wrap-around services should be built around therapeutic services and interventions that will assure long-term, permanent change as the family's role as nurturer and protector of its children (not the state's children).

There are three major blockers to the implementation of this approach.

One blocker is the protectionism of the licensed professionals and the schools of higher education that are invested in training child welfare workers for the exclusive delivery of these types of services. Public and private higher education need to reinvent themselves to meet the needs of families and their children. If not, other alternatives need to be created (e.g. apprentice programs run by the child welfare agencies).

Another blocker is the state bureaucracy which is looking to protect itself from the federal bureaucracy, the Governor and Legislature (partisan political issues). If leadership steps forward, the Governor and Legislature may be part of the solution. If leadership does not step forward, a system can be developed that bypasses these entities.

The final blocker is the local agency that is often driven by weak leadership, unimaginative supervisors, and low paid, inexperienced case managers. The public can demand strong leadership, imaginative supervisors, and strong therapeutic case managers or the function can be shifted to the private sector.

We must reinvent the child welfare system to keep children safe by healing families not breaking them up. Otherwise,

“We have met the enemy and he is us.”

Bold Step	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements
<p>7. Identify key values common to all citizens of Wisconsin. Build on commonalities and hope.</p>	<p>A. Establish a broad-based consensus on common values regarding raising children and supporting families, i.e. two-parent families are the best place to raise children, families with one parent are the next-best place to raise children, the next best-place is with siblings, the next best is with other adult relatives, and the next best is with another positive adult. The worst is an unstable institutional setting. Divorce is hurtful for children.</p> <p>B. Work is good and valuable in and of itself.</p> <p>C. Expand faith-based, spirituality-based, and values-based initiatives in Wisconsin.</p>	<p>Adopt a set of values in Wisconsin built on community-accepted standards of family. Families would organize themselves around their members, not work or cultural lollipops (TV, computers, etc.) seductions of the marketplace and society.</p> <p>Community and government in partnership with impoverished individuals.</p> <p>Increased respect for faith-based organizations and other spiritual communities. A reduction in the cultural wars so services to families can be increased.</p>	<p>see # 3A.</p> <p>see # 3A.</p> <p>See # 3D.</p>
<p>8. Change the tax structure to reward family-supporting activities and services (value added to families)</p>	<p>A. Exempt foster parents from their portion of the school tax and the county sales tax.</p> <p>B. Expand tax credits for adoptions.</p> <p>C. Provide economic incentives for a parent to stay home with young child(ren).</p> <p>D. Create tax or education credits for community members who volunteer to work with families.</p> <p>Merge Depts. of Workforce Development and Health & Family Services. To keep from creating an unwieldy bureaucracy, spin off Affirmative Action/Civil Rights Compliance divisions to Dept. of Admin. (could consolidate all statewide AA/CRC ops in DOA) and spin off Job Service to Dept. of Commerce.</p>	<p>Foster parents would feel valued and recognized</p> <p>Adoptive parents would feel valued and recognized.</p> <p>More parents staying home with their young children.</p> <p>Community members would volunteer in greater numbers.</p>	<p>More quality foster homes.</p> <p>More quality adoptive families.</p> <p>Improved attachment as measured by more secure children ready to learn when they attend school.</p> <p>More volunteers to work with families.</p>
<p>9. Create a Dept. of Family Supports.</p>	<p>Merge Depts. of Workforce Development and Health & Family Services. To keep from creating an unwieldy bureaucracy, spin off Affirmative Action/Civil Rights Compliance divisions to Dept. of Admin. (could consolidate all statewide AA/CRC ops in DOA) and spin off Job Service to Dept. of Commerce.</p>	<p>Streamline the hodgepodge of assistance programs, save money, provide better service, encourage the culture of mainstream work.</p>	<p>Annual reports coordinate with bureaucratic czar. A change in the bureaucratic ethic as measured by annual surveys.</p>

Bold Step	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements
10. Create a Reconciliation Council.	Include all cultural and religious groups.	Build commonalities and consensus to support families.	Values established with a broad-based commitment to them. Measure by community surveys and polls by UW system.
11. Identify resources from the private-sector.	Review tax breaks that could be diverted to families (e.g. TIF districts for the poor; enterprise development zones with revenue focused on family/social development as an economic development initiative). Create a tax check-off for the private sector to give up their tax breaks with the money diverted directly to poor families or organizations that work with them.	Increased support by the private sector for supporting families, particularly poor families. Create an endowment from the private sector so that programs may continue without additional tax money.	Increased community support and dollars for the most vulnerable. Also see # 3A. Increased community support and dollars for the most vulnerable. Also see # 3A.
12. Create local governing councils.	Give marginalized communities (20% poverty?) power and control over their budget allocation. Say for example \$100 million is spent annually for police, garbage collection, and child protective services in a community. If the citizens got together and do the policing, clean-up, and family support activities themselves, they'd have that much money to spend on themselves.	Empowerment of communities, families, and individuals to take control of and responsibility for their own communities.	Establish baselines for communities (e.g. # 3A) and measure.
June 1, 2005 JDA/dh			

IMPACT AREA	DESIRED OUTCOMES/MEASUREMENTS
1. Community Contacts and Connections	Connections/liaisons to: community leadership groups, oversight bodies, task forces, coordinating committees, planning committees, etc. Increase in participation rates by low-income community members. Decrease in demographic uniformity of these groups (i.e. fewer exclusive groups).
2. Social Contacts and Connections	Increase volunteerism as measured by number of volunteers, number of volunteer hours donated, value of donated hours.
3. Adult Relationships	Improve parental dyads as measured by number of two-parent households, number of single-parent households, and marriage/divorce rates.
4. Peer Relationships	Improve informal support networks as measured by number of friends and acquaintances.
5. Adult-Child Relationships	Better financial support of non-custodial children as measured by payment rate on child support orders.
	Fewer numbers and lower cost of foster care placements as measured by number and cost of children in out-of-home care. Break out by respite care, foster care, group homes, and CCIs.
	Fewer incidents of termination of parental rights (TPR) as measured by number of children up for adoption, number of TPR petitions filed, and number of grandparents caring for their grandchildren.
6. Child Development	Healthier children as measured by number of children with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental disabilities, emotional disabilities, Reactive Attachment Disorder / attachment issues.
7. Education	Better educated children as measured by rates of school attendance, graduation, drop-out, illiteracy, truancy, school performance (e.g. grades), and standardized test scores (e.g. SAT).
8. Employment and Income	Better jobs and higher income as measured by rates of overall poverty, family poverty, child poverty, unemployment rate, job placement, and wage at placement.
9. Mental Health	Better mental health as measured by number with substance abuse issues, chronic health conditions, length of time and number of people on treatment waiting lists.

10. Health and Nutrition	<p>Better health and nutrition as measured by number and percent of residents on Food Stamps, Medical Assistance, and WIC; number and percent of residents on Senior Care, at COA meal sites, and getting Meals on Wheels; out-of-wedlock birth rate, number of teen pregnancies, number of uninsured residents, number of uninsured children, number without access to a dentist, sex abstinence rate, abortion rate, infant mortality rate, number of low birthweight babies, length of time and number of people on waiting lists for health services, immunization rate, EPSDT participation rates, number and percent of children on free/reduced lunch at school.</p>
11. Safety	<p>Better safety as measured by number of high-risk auto insurance policies/good driver discounts, suspended drivers licenses, OMI citations issued, property crimes, protective services calls, CPS petitions, DSS guardianships, rates of arrest, conviction, and recidivism.</p>
12. Housing	<p>Better housing as measured by number and percent on energy assistance, payments for impending homelessness, numbers of renters in houses that meet code, home ownership rates, mortgage defaults, stability of residence, length of tenancy, cost of housing under 30% HH income, interior and exterior of home in good condition.</p>
June 15, 2005 JDA/dh	

Ancillary Actions:	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements
<p>Improve the public education system to support families</p>	<p>Redo licensing of teachers to allow experienced people to teach. Move special ed teachers out of schools and into homes. Public school teachers do more teaching to the public/parents to teach. Establish meaningful individualized testing in the schools (measure early childhood progress). Support home schooling as a positive value and utilize teachers to support families.</p>	<p>More teachers; better educated parents = better educated families; better testing means better results for kids. The money should follow the family, we would provide 6 hours of family systems education at the 8th grade level, pay education costs in CC's (no double-dipping), and promote individualized education of children (Charter School for Families).</p>	<p>Long-term measurement (5 - 10 years) on educational achievement levels of poorest segments of their population.</p>
<p>Revamp post-high school education</p>	<p>Design training around families. Move back to a mentoring or apprenticeship system. Move technology teachers into the community and workplace. Reward post education based on job placement related to training.</p>	<p>By shortening the length of time young adults spend in school, they will go to work faster, more easily, and with less family trauma. (Technical colleges and colleges store kids too long)</p>	<p>More efficient entry into workforce, particularly the poor. Measure percent of 18 - 25 year olds entering workforce 3 years after reform. Reduction in self-destructive behaviors (e.g. drugs, gangs) by using work as a mechanism for behavior modification.</p>
<p>Institute universal health insurance. Cost-neutral by elimination of middlemen (paper-pushing insurance claims processors).</p>	<p>Cover everyone with basic services. Charge premiums based on a sliding fee scale. Continue competition among health care providers to ensure good service at the best price.</p>	<p>More stay-at-home moms (e.g. farm wives working for health insurance benefits) which promotes attachment and brain development. Stimulate the economy by creating "good" job openings. Remove disincentives for individuals with disabilities (SSI MA) to work for wages.</p>	<p>Percent of population covered. Percent of population working. Reduce cost of medical coverage through reduced administrative costs, better use of Information Technology, systematic measurement of treatment outcomes, and maintain/reduce percent of GDP spent on health care costs.</p>
<p>Consolidate all Regional Offices.</p>	<p>Use Wisconsin's 8 Congressional Districts for all Regional Offices (DWD, DHFS, DNR, DOC, DPI, etc.)</p>	<p>Save money through reduced costs of office buildings, receptionists, information technology, etc. Encourage local efficiencies and ease of communication.</p>	<p>Dollars saved; reductions in number of full-time equivalent staff.</p>
<p>Eliminate all income supports.</p>	<p>Institute a guaranteed annual income with a universal work requirement. Make it so people who work make more than people who don't.</p>	<p>Streamline the hodgepodge of assistance programs, save money, provide better service, encourage the culture of mainstream work.</p>	<p>Reduction/elimination of income support programs. Build on federal initiatives/waivers. Increased emphasis on work with adequate income to care for families. Measure by pre-established standards.</p>

Ancillary Actions:	Action / Implementation Steps	Outcomes	Measurements
<p>Move the concentration of government and government jobs out of Madison and into the rest of the state to support economically distressed areas and to get the buy-in of all the state's citizens.</p> <p>June 1, 2005 JDA/dh</p>	<p>Locate next state office building in inner city Milwaukee; move DNR offices to Hayward; move highway dept to Milwaukee; move call centers to rural areas</p>	<p>Increased respect for poor neighborhoods. Revitalize decaying neighborhoods. Increased incomes.</p>	<p>One state office building built outside Dane County.</p>

Families First Talking Points

1. Fatherhood Initiatives
2. Brain Development and Attachment
3. Economic Participation as a means to family health
4. Integrated systems and interdisciplinary services
5. Leadership
6. Bipartisan
7. Rural-Urban Coalitions
8. Revitalize communities
9. Cost-neutral / not asking for money
10. Imminency – systems are shutting down, must respond now
11. Political expediency – must come up some solutions given the horrific decisions that must be made
12. We are selling a message of hope

3/31/05