

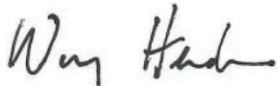


Division of Safety and Permanence

DSP Informational Memo Series 2022-34i

December 16, 2022

To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator
DCF Area Administrators
Child Placing Agency Directors
Child Welfare Agency Directors
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Wendy Henderson
Administrator 

Re: Tailored Dispositional Orders Project

PURPOSE

Children, youth, and families who are involved with the child welfare system have the best chance for success when they are provided with court ordered conditions that are clear, simple, and tailored to their individual needs. In current practice, parents and youth are often required to comply with a long list of undefined terms and conditions that often emphasize sanctions for negative behavior rather than incentivizing incremental positive changes. In youth justice proceedings, when conditions do not connect to the necessity of supervision or towards treatment goals, youth become at risk of incarceration or prosecution for low-level violations of their court orders.

The purpose of this memo is to provide local stakeholders with information related to the completion of the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) item related to court orders and to announce a new project with Children’s Court Improvement Program (CCIP) to assist local agencies in leveraging the lessons learned from the PIP item.

BACKGROUND

The Tailored Dispositional Orders project grew out of the federal Child and Family Services Review conducted in 2018. Led by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Children’s Court Improvement Program (CCIP), it is one strategy in Wisconsin’s Program Improvement Plan to improve permanency outcomes for children. The project promotes the shared responsibility of the parents, child welfare agency, court, and legal partners in achieving





timely reunification for the child. The project makes changes to the current process by tailoring the Conditions for Return to the child’s safety and identifies the parent’s behavior changes that are needed to safely return a child home. Beginning in Fall 2020, DCF and CCIP met with court, legal, and child welfare leadership from three (3) pilot counties. Between March 2021 and June 2021, each of the pilot counties participated in two training modules to preface efforts between legal partners and county agencies in best practices in writing tailored and achievable Conditions of Return. Each innovation zone (each county) had individualized technical assistance to collaborate on the revision of court ordered conditions and to discover other elements impacting court ordered conditions and the judicial system. Innovation Zone participants saw a decrease in the number of court-ordered conditions, an increase in parents understanding of what is required for the safe return of their children and the impact the conditions had on behavior change that improved safety and encouraged trauma-informed and collaborative relationships amongst judicial, legal, county staff, and parents. This PIP item is now complete. More detailed information about this project can be found at:

<https://www.wicourts.gov/courts/programs/docs/pilotsummaryreport.pdf>

INFORMATION SUMMARY

DSP and CCIP will be expanding on the lessons learned through the PIP item, by providing all local agencies the opportunity to examine their dispositional orders for both the child protective services (CPS) and youth justice (YJ) populations. Participation in this opportunity will include receiving training and technical assistance in child safety, family engagement, and developing tailored dispositional orders that are concise, connect to the target behavior for intervention, and explain actionable changes; including the formation of a multidisciplinary team between legal, judicial, and child welfare/youth justice staff to incorporate best practices in the local jurisdiction.

DCF and CCIP have created an issue brief to assist agencies in formulating tailored dispositional orders. This issue brief can be found here:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/5587.pdf>.

NEXT STEPS

DCF and CCIP are seeking local jurisdictions who would like to make their court orders more tailored, both for CPS and YJ involved families. Additional information about how to participate can be found at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/tailored-dispositional-orders>.

Please email DCFDSPPGeneralFosterCare@wisconsin.gov if your agency is interested in participating in this opportunity.

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Program and Policy Analyst
Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care
DCFDSPPGeneralFosterCare@wisconsin.gov

MEMO WEBSITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>





ATTACHMENTS:

[Tailored Dispositional Orders Issue Brief \(DCF\)](#)
[Tailored Dispositional Orders Report \(DCF\)](#)
[Tailored Dispositional Orders Report \(CCIP\)](#)