



**JIM DOYLE**  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF WISCONSIN

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June 29, 2004

Dear Colleague,

As you know, I have been working hard to implement *KidsFirst*, a comprehensive strategic plan to invest in Wisconsin's children. It is my pleasure to inform you that the National Governors Association (NGA) has selected Wisconsin as one of six states to participate in a featured study on children and families.

The central component of the NGA study is to gather information on strategic partnerships and local innovations that help families access key services more easily. I invite you to join with the state Departments of Health and Family Services, Workforce Development, and Public Instruction to identify models that improve the way we serve children and families in Wisconsin.

Local leaders are at the forefront of Wisconsin's proud tradition of trying new ideas and making government work for people. I know there are exciting models in local communities that are providing coordinated services for families. I want to hear about these models, collaborate with you to identify best practices, and recognize and reward your commitment to ensure a strong, successful future for Wisconsin's children.

Please review the attached call for information and join the effort to put *KidsFirst* in Wisconsin!

Sincerely,

Jim Doyle  
Governor

## Attachment I

### Call for Information

June 29, 2004

#### **WE'RE DOING WHAT IT TAKES FOR OUR CHILDREN – TOGETHER!**

Wisconsin's future depends on the success of our children today.

You know it . . . and you are committed to make a difference for children. And like others in communities across Wisconsin, you know that we must do better, to **give all children** a chance for a healthy, successful future.

We want to work with you to do just that. **Please read on to see how.**

#### **Who Are We?**

We're the statewide steering committee for a new effort – the ***Doing What It Takes for Kids initiative***. Our vision is to create community partnerships that ensure Wisconsin children grow up safe, healthy and successful in strong families.

We're just starting our effort to transform **how communities work together** to improve the outcomes of the most vulnerable children and families. Our goals are to:

- Increase economic security of families;
- Improve child safety and well-being;
- Close academic achievement gaps;
- Empower families to take charge; and,
- Establish a sustainable process for continuing system improvement.

Building on Governor Jim Doyle's commitments to put children at the top of the state government agenda, this effort began with a strong commitment from top officials in state government: the Secretary of Health and Family Services; the Secretary of Workforce Development; the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and, Governor Doyle's legislative director. These leaders invited a range of public and private partners to join them in the steering committee. Our steering team includes also a private sector CEO who chairs the state Workforce Investment Council, a representative of private philanthropy, the Director of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, a county human services director, and a representative of non-profit children and family service providers. We're getting technical expertise and other support through a National Governors Association policy academy promoting best practices in state service integration efforts related to children and families.

This effort focuses attention on the kids most at risk. We'll work to improve outcomes for kids in families that are now engaged in, or at risk of needing services from at least two of these three service systems – the W-2 system, the child welfare system, and/or mental health or substance abuse treatment systems. We believe we can improve outcomes by fostering a

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more integrated, family-responsive and flexible approach to service delivery. We think this approach will ultimately be more efficient, effective and family-friendly.

### Our Invitation

**We're looking for community partners to join us.** We're seeking demonstration projects across Wisconsin to be an integral part of our statewide effort to transform services and results for our most vulnerable families. **We know that there are exciting models for services in local communities that are crossing traditional service boundaries to better serve families. This is your chance to tell us what is working and how responding to families can be improved in Wisconsin.**

We envision supporting a number of innovative demonstration projects around the state. Each will implement changes to deliver services and family supports in a more integrated, family-responsive way.

Each project will focus on integrating services to families now in, or at risk of being in, both W2 and child welfare systems. Projects may focus on a particular population within this group if desired. The geographic scope of projects may be low-income neighborhoods in large urban areas, a school attendance area, a city, a county, or a multi-county collaboration.

Because of the multiple needs of many families, more integrated case management and clear means of connecting families to other needed services will be key elements of the projects. Other key elements will be methods of engaging families themselves in their case plans and the use of family-empowering approaches in service delivery, with voluntary services meeting family priorities where possible. Locally tailored strategies may include:

- Better assessment of service needs including barriers to family success;
- Easier, more coordinated access to services and benefits by co-location, better use of technology and service referral agreements, and new service delivery models;
- Quick movement into jobs where possible, supplemented by access to other benefits that help families escape poverty;
- Better strategies for successful job placement and retention;
- Integrated case plans/coordinated case management across systems;
- Engagement of a wider array of extended family and informal community supports;
- Engagement of families and children in early childhood education and schools;
- Co-location/joint service delivery in community locations or schools; and,
- More cost-effective public-private partnerships.

If your community is motivated to demonstrate better outcomes for families through these kinds of service integration strategies, let us know! You may want to build on the success of current local projects to integrate services, or try something new in your area. We'd like to

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work with you to support your success, and then spread the learning from your experience to statewide reforms.

This is a **Call for Information** – not a “Request for Proposal.” We’re asking community groups who share our goals and want to integrate services to let us know of your interest and specific ideas. It’s essential for us to hear from you about what is working - and what needs

to be changed – to serve families better in your community, as the starting point for us to work together to make those improvements.

### *State Level Support for Community Partnerships*

State level support for your partnership will vary depending on local needs, the scope of your project, and other factors. We’ll work that out together after we learn of your interest in participating.

Benefits to local partnerships from participation in the statewide effort may include:

1. A forum and structure to support joint learning across all the demonstration projects.
2. Technical assistance and facilitation resources for local planning and process improvement.
3. Information about national best practices, and models and tools used in Wisconsin and across the country.
4. The opportunity to request waivers or flexibility in state level requirements for program design, administration, funding categorization, reporting, etc.
5. Joint applications seeking local, state or national philanthropic funds for specific demonstration project needs.
6. In some cases, the opportunity to re-deploy state level funds to better match local needs consistent with the integrated service approach.
7. The chance to participate in a statewide effort intended to change state policies and structures as well as create energy for local innovation around the state.
8. An opportunity to showcase and be recognized for best practices nationwide in serving families through coordinated service delivery.
9. And especially, the benefit of better success for children and families in your area.

We are committed to breaking down barriers to more effective services for families. To that end we will aggressively pursue other funding sources to support local innovation that leads to desired outcomes. We have been working with leaders in the philanthropic community to inform them about this effort. We are asking community partners to pull together existing resources and services in a more cost-effective way. We are offering support to facilitate and leverage this kind of change, and to demonstrate its success. The potential to augment

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current funding will be determined as projects are defined. First, we need to learn about your interest and see if there's a good fit with the goals of the statewide effort.

### How to Let Us Know About Your Proposal

We have scheduled two informational meetings to discuss this **Call for Information** and listen to community stakeholders who may be interested in developing proposals for local demonstration projects:

In Milwaukee, July 8, 2004  
Italian Community Center  
631 East Chicago Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
414-223-2800  
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

In Stevens Point, July 13, 2004  
Holiday Inn  
1501 Northpoint Drive  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-341-1340  
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

After these sessions, we will ask interested parties to submit a short project concept paper – not longer than 5 pages, single-spaced to tell us:

- What you plan to accomplish – linking to the goals and outcomes we've set for the statewide effort. (See Attachment II for more details.)
- Whom you plan to serve – the target group of children and families for the project.
- How you plan to serve them better – by improving system coordination, intergovernmental cooperation, public/private partnerships, and service delivery approaches that empower families and engage communities.
- Who are the partners in the local project? At a minimum this must include the W-2 agency and the child welfare agency as well as other entities necessary to the success of the project.
- A probable time frame for starting, fully implementing, and demonstrating success.
- What you need to succeed, including support from the statewide effort.

**Please submit your concept paper by July 30, 2004 to:**

Katie Boyce, Legislative Director  
Office of Governor Jim Doyle  
115 East State Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702.

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### Next Steps

As you've probably seen already, this isn't a usual state RFP process. It's a less formal approach to learn about community interest in collaborating to serve children and families better.

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We'll look at the concept papers we receive to identify those that seem promising of local improvement in systems and outcomes, and of contributions to statewide learning for overall system improvement. We'll take into account the resources that are needed, and likely to be available from local and state sources. We'll hope to identify about an equal number of projects from large urban areas and from smaller urban or rural communities.

Because this is a "state project," your proposals will be public documents after the evaluation is complete. At the state's discretion, the state may waive immaterial deviations from the call for information guidelines.

Based on our evaluation, we will identify "candidate" demonstration project partners. We'll then work further with them to define how we might collaborate to advance the proposals.

Ultimately a manageable number of projects will be "selected" for support in this process. Our proposed timetable is as follows:

July 8	Milwaukee informational meeting
July 13	Stevens Point informational meeting
July 30	Community concept papers submitted
August 20	Identification of candidate projects
By Sept 10	Agreements on demonstration projects and scope of state collaboration
October	Statewide integrated services conference with demonstration sites
TBD	Implementation per local plans and concepts
TBD	Ongoing collaboration of local & state project leaders

**We're looking forward to learning about your interest...**

**TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES FOR OUR CHILDREN, TOGETHER!**

## Attachment II

### *Goals and Outcomes for Service Integration Demonstration Projects*

#### **Goal 1: Increase the economic security of families.**

##### Outcomes

- Increased job placement
- Increased wages at placement
- Improved job retention and advancement
- Assured receipt of benefits that families are eligible for (e.g. food stamps, EITC, medical assistance, child care, free and reduced-price meals)
- Increased housing stability

#### **Goal 2: Improve child safety and well-being**

##### Outcomes

- Reduced incidence of child abuse and neglect
- Assured timely child protective services
- Reduced out-of-home placements
- Increased stability in children's living situations
- Improved access to mental, physical and dental health services

#### **Goal 3: Close the academic achievement gaps**

##### Outcomes

- Assured proficiency in reading and math in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades
- Increased graduation rates
- Increased access to quality early care and education

#### **Goal 4: Empower families to take charge**

##### Outcomes

- Families are at the center of planning
- All plans are written in the families' own terms
- Families are pleased that plans reflect their priorities, strengths and needs
- Every plan reflects systematic efforts to develop and rely on family and informal supports

#### **Goal 5: Establish a sustainable process for continuing system improvement**

##### Outcomes

- Lessons from local projects will be shared to stimulate improvements in system policies and practices
- Broader engagement of consumers and communities will inform and guide improvement in service systems
- Service delivery systems for child safety, economic security and education will work together so plans with families make sense
- Resources from families and their informal supports will be increasingly valued and included in all plans