



## EXECUTIVE RESIDENCE STATE OF WISCONSIN

---

October 26, 2012

Dear <<Name>>:

I would like to again extend my most sincere thanks to you for your help to make a listening session on Trauma Informed Care possible in your community during April of this year. It was an honor to visit with you and learn from those who are truly on the front lines, fighting every day to provide better services for kids and families.

I am working as a member of a collaborative known as Fostering Futures. Now that this group has had a chance to synthesize what was reported, I'd like to share our findings with you. Because we approached the listening sessions with the understanding that we would honor the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and what they would share, we have chosen to share our findings by providing this summary report, which captures the most prominent and common themes shared by participants of all seven listening sessions held across the state.

First and foremost, nearly all listening session participants agreed that increasing Trauma Informed Care knowledge, understanding, and services could have a significantly positive influence on the health, well being, and long-term outcomes for children and families in Wisconsin. Secondly, we found extremely similar obstacles at each of the listening session sites; the fact that there are common themes in diverse communities across the state is encouraging. Although the obstacles are significant, because we know now that they are consistent across the state, we can more easily address and resolve the challenges.

One of the obstacles most often verbalized during listening sessions was misaligned funding streams. Participants expressed frustration that they find it difficult to receive funding from insurance – both private and public – for trauma-informed services, and that we need to shift from a treatment-model to a prevention-model. Participants expressed that quick fixes will not work, and that we need funding to support long-term solutions for those receiving treatment. Another obstacle that was voiced frequently was a lack of shared language, understanding, and practices surrounding Trauma Informed Care. Participants expressed that we need to increase training, and allocate more time and resources to allow service providers to implement the practices they learn in training.

Additionally, participants expressed a need for top-down understanding by government officials and lawmakers in order to sustain long-term support. And last but certainly not least, a common theme among all participants throughout the state was that we must expand the availability of trauma-informed services to all of a child's caregivers. During the listening sessions, when asked who needs to know about Trauma Informed Care, at least one person in each group responded by saying, "everyone," which was always followed by heads nodding enthusiastically in agreement!

Although this project was not designed to be published, we do intend to use these extremely valuable findings to guide our work moving forward to bring lasting, positive change to children and families in Wisconsin's systems. The work of Fostering Futures will continue to move forward to build upon the coalition that has already begun; we seek to operationalize Trauma Informed Care and increase public awareness. We want to continue to bring additional representation of those who have been on the front lines, for many years now, into active participation with this collaborative effort. Because of that, I look forward to working together with any and all of the listening session participants who are interested, like me, in making Wisconsin a leader in providing Trauma Informed Care to those in need. I am grateful for the work you have done, and look forward to continuing this movement, together.

With appreciation,

First Lady Tonette Walker