

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FIRST LADY TONETTE WALKER CONDUCTS STATEWIDE LISTENING TOUR

*Wisconsin's first lady works to better understand children and families
in need to help them move beyond cycles of harm*

(MADISON, WI, APRIL 19, 2012) – Wisconsin's first lady, Tonette Walker, today began a statewide listening session tour designed to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to helping children and families in Wisconsin's systems move beyond cycles of harm.

"Developments in neuroscience have taught us that adverse childhood experiences affect the way the brain grows, develops, and reacts to the environment and to other people – even years down the line," said Mrs. Walker. "We need to provide Wisconsin's children and families with a cohesive system that advocates for ending the cycles of harm caused by those adverse experiences, leverages the information we now have about childhood brain development, and respects past experiences of stress and trauma in order to help move beyond them."

For the past year, the first lady has been working in partnership with a coalition of the Department of Children and Families and various private organizations to support their efforts to develop a researched-based, results-oriented initiative that will bring lasting, positive change for children and families in need in Wisconsin's systems.

The first lady plans to share the information acquired in the listening sessions as part of her endeavors to push forth the work of the coalition to implement necessary systems change to improve the outcome for children through their parents, caregivers, social workers, and providers.

"Through these listening sessions, we will connect with those providing direct care for children, most notably their parents, in order to better understand what they need to help move beyond the cycles of harm."

To learn more about the first lady's initiative, please visit FirstLady.WI.Gov.

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