



Jim Doyle  
Governor

State of Wisconsin

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** November 4, 2009

**To:** Secretary Karen Timberlake, Department of Health Services  
Secretary Reggie Bicha, Department of Children and Families  
Secretary Matt Frank, Department of Natural Resources  
Secretary Kelli Trumble, Department of Tourism  
Secretary Rod Nilsestuen, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

**From:** Mary Pesik, Department of Health Services  
Linda Mc Cart, Department of Health Services  
Freya Reeves, Department of Tourism  
Elizabeth Kluesner, Department of Natural Resources  
Kathy Schmitt, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection  
Janel Hines, Department of Children and Families

**Re:** Wisconsin Families Interdepartmental Initiative Proposed Plan

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**Background:** The Interdepartmental workgroup consisted of representatives from DATCP, Tourism, DCF, DHS and DNR. The group's purpose was to identify opportunities to improve family access to state resources and activities and promote Wisconsin opportunities for families through interdepartmental collaboration.

**Conclusion:** The workgroup believes that there are opportunities for the agencies to work together to increase participation and awareness about the programs that each agency offers to children and families. The group developed two broad action items that capitalizes on interagency relationships: 1) emphasis on using technology to share information; and 2) promotion and marketing under a common brand that will be recognizable to the public. Implementation of the strategies in the body of this report will institutionalize the idea of sharing information, working together and accomplishing our common purpose of improving the quality of life for children and families in Wisconsin.

**Goal:** The goal of the workgroup is to widely publicize information on Wisconsin resources, promote travel across the state, and subsequently increase opportunities for families to:

- ✓ Increase physical activity among children, youth and adults
- ✓ Engage children and youth in hunting and fishing and outdoor recreation
- ✓ Encourage fathers to be more involved with their children through outdoor activities

**Proposed Plan:** The workgroup identified short, mid- and long-term projects for secretarial review and consideration. The group proposes that it continue to meet and expand to add staff from other departments to implement the strategies and expand interdepartmental collaboration.

### **Short-Term Projects (0 to 6 months):**

1. Encourage existing state employees and contractors to participate in, promote and market Wisconsin resources to families. This includes getting key programmatic information into direct service providers in each agency (health care providers, childcare providers, caseworkers, etc.) and raising overall awareness for all state employees about what each agency has to offer to children and families.
  - Use the interdepartmental workgroup to maintain communication among state agencies about activities, initiatives, and grants that focus on family-friendly activities.
  - Expand workgroup to include other departments.
  - Create a monthly bulletin board for agency intranets and newsletters to highlight activities, programs and resources for children and families.
  - Ensure that agency websites have a link to the Tourism website
  - Challenge: Incompatible databases and firewalls prohibit some agencies from sharing information and linking to other state sites.
  - Collectively scope the creation of a statewide standard/tool (IT) that allows agencies to easily share/import electronic information.
  
2. Increase collaboration among state agencies on initiatives targeted to children, families and communities.
  - Create a common brand identity for this initiative that each agency can use on its web page, on the state portal and in promotional materials for the Governor and Cabinet.
  - Develop an electronic survey to take an environmental scan of each agency to identify existing family-friendly programs, initiatives and resources.
  - Provide support to state agencies applying for funding for different programs through letters of commitment and technical assistance (e.g., ARRA funding).
  - Identify who is responsible for the Wisconsin Kids webpage and how updates are made.
  - Explore all opportunities to include family friendly recommendations on TravelWisconsin.com.
  
3. Use direct service staff to promote local activities, i.e., post and distribute information.
  - Challenge: Language and/or literacy levels of clients.
  - Develop a special section or flag for materials that are available in multiple languages.
  - Encourage departments to consider lower literacy levels for materials produced.
  - Work with PIOs to develop core messages promoting activity/wellness that can be woven into messaging for agency programs, secretary remarks, etc.

### **Mid-Term Projects (6 months to a year):**

1. Use state portal to better promote WI resources and activities for children and families.
  - Update the Wisconsin Kids webpage to reflect information that promotes state agency resources for families.
  - Reorganize the current subject listing on the state portal to promote all family-friendly state activities and resources.
  
2. Use a common brand to represent family-friendly resources that is consistent with Wisconsin's new brand.
  - Create a common logo, slogan or symbol to identify family-friendly opportunities, activities and resources for families.

3. Create a Healthy and Active Family Statewide Initiative.
  - Designate a kick-off day with the Governor and cabinet secretaries.
  - Engage local medial and elected officials.

**Long-Term Projects (1 year+)**

1. Coordinate interagency information through GIS mapping software. This could allow citizens to identify and local family friendly activities available through any state agency and possibly other entities within a given area.
  - Explore existing models for coordinating GIS software.
  - Challenges:
  - Time consuming – each item would have to be reviewed.
  - DET must be involved.
  - Software licensing is costly.
  - Keeping information current.
2. Continue to explore opportunities for joint funding of projects as part of the interdepartmental collaboration including seeking grants, leveraging existing resources or shifting resources.