

SURVIVAL COALITION 2025-2027 BUDGET PRIORITIES

CHILDREN'S LONG TERM SUPPORTS BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Development of a Children's Programs Ombudsman

Families continue to have challenges navigating critical systems or report having mixed experiences with county programs. When this happens, options for solutions are extremely limited.

This is the last piece of the proposed Disability Resource Center for Children and Families (DRCCF) request (2023 -25) that was not resolved by the creation of Wisconsin Wayfinder.

Medicaid Rate Study for Children's Services

With rates being consistently less than private insurers, new providers are not incentivized to serve Medicaid families. Some have stopped providing service entirely, publicly pointing to low rates as the reason, and others have stopped accepting new Medicaid patients. A comprehensive study of Medicaid rates for children's services is needed to identify areas where perceived low rates are leading to service deserts in rural areas and contribute to the inability of families to access services needed to support their children at home, statewide. The study must include comparisons with private insurance rates. Findings should be publicly available and distributed to decision makers.

Here are three examples of the impact of continued low Medicaid rates:

Dental care: Families continue to have great difficulty accessing children's specialized dental care. There are few providers offering the service under Medicaid and for those that are, many are no longer accepting new patients. Often families give up seeking preventive services, contributing to an increase in demand for preventable emergency dental care.

Private Duty Nursing (PDN): PDN's serve medically fragile children at home. Children's Hospitals report having to drop policies requiring these services to be established prior to discharge, not because they aren't needed, but because the service cannot be found. Rural areas are especially troubled by this. Many families report they are unable to find this care because the pay rates are much lower than for nursing home care, in addition to the requirement of a Prior Authorization Liaison (PAL) involving many hours of uncompensated time by an RN each month. These challenges lead to single parents leaving employment and becoming dependent upon other social programs, or for two-parent households, one parent leaves the workplace completely.

Autism treatment providers: More applied behavioral analysis providers have ended serving children with Medicaid this year, pointing to consistently low rates as the reason. When started early, this evidence based therapy greatly improves long term outcomes for children. Low rates are locking

children out of this important care, which creates obstacles to an independent and Self-Determined life.

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