

Respite Report

FALL 2006

Landmark Report Released on the State of Respite Care in Wisconsin

Respite Care Association of Wisconsin has released a groundbreaking report on the demand for respite care and service gaps that exist in Wisconsin. The report confirms the desperate need for respite care across the state, demonstrated by a whopping 443% projected increase in referrals if the program was fully funded and staffed. The findings are based on a statewide study of 44 county health and human service and Head Start agencies across Wisconsin.

A particular emphasis of the project was a gap analysis for respite services for children aged birth to six years, including those with behavioral or emotional disorders, a constituency commonly regarded as most vulnerable to abuse or neglect. Relieving parent/guardian stress and isolation is widely viewed as a practical strategy for preventing abuse or neglect. Data from the report confirms that if respite services were funded and available, 358% more caregivers of children in this high-risk category would be served. The largest service gaps exposed in the study were found in Milwaukee, Eau Claire, Kenosha and La Crosse counties.

Participants in the research study were given the opportunity to suggest changes or improvements to respite care services in Wisconsin. The most often mentioned were:

- increasing the pool of providers (including more providers trained to care for children with special needs), and
- an increase in funding for the service.

The research shows the primary barriers to referring to respite for more caregivers (of children birth to six with behavioral or emotional disabilities) to be related to money, whether related to the cost of respite service or lack of government funding for the child. Additionally, when asked to identify a single reason that most prevents a respite referral, more than one-third cited *"caregivers do not follow through with referrals."*

The study was supported by a grant from the Children's Trust Fund of Wisconsin. The full report is available online at no charge via the web at www.respitecarewi.org. ■

Did You Know...

\$2 billion is the amount the state of Wisconsin spent in 2004 on long-term care for roughly 60,000 seniors and people with disabilities in settings ranging from homes to assisted living to nursing homes. ■

11,500 is the number of Wisconsin citizens on waiting lists for community-based care statewide. ■

PRESIDENT'S C O L U M N

I made a promise to you when I became president of the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin, which I reiterated in my last column:

“...you have my pledge that RCAW will continue to demonstrate the fiscal and emotional value of respite care, and we will continue to advocate for statewide access to this critical resource.”

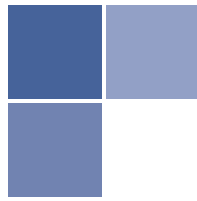
As you read this newsletter, understand there are more than words at play here, there are deliverable and actionable initiatives underway at RCAW:

- The results of a comprehensive study of the state of respite care in Wisconsin—for the first time we have a baseline of data regarding the status of respite care and clearly identified gaps in service. And while you and I have known this anecdotally and through experience in the field, we are now armed with scientific survey data to underscore the plight. Log onto our website at www.respitecarewi.org and download the complete report.
- A revised and user-friendly respite care training manual is now available. The guidebook is an inclusive resource for agencies, trainers and others to build capacity or use as a refresher for volunteers and staff. The new edition includes training exercises, resources for identifying and reporting abuse, and handouts in support of each module, and much more.
- How to cope with challenging behavior is a hot topic. RCAW is developing a training session chock-full of information, intervention methods and supports that we can all use to assuage hesitations and instill confidence in respite providers who care for children.

This is *your* organization, *your* support and *your* resource. We are here to arm you with the information and materials you need to continue providing an excellent, cost-effective and powerful service.

You have my promise. ■

—Nichole Hunkins



Engaging Our Communities: How Respite Programs Build Partnerships

More than three dozen managers from across the state gathered in Wisconsin Rapids to explore new strategies to solve common problems. From recruiting respite care providers to building community collaboration to fundraising, experts from Madison to Vermont rolled up their sleeves and tackled issues relevant to respite care agencies:

- the importance of and difference between “*friend raising*” and “*fundraising*,”
- how to draw the picture of why respite care is vital,
- how to connect the message to the appropriate audience in personal ways, and
- how to help people know your story isn't isolated.

One of the liveliest sessions of the day centered on fundraising—from myth-busting to practical tools—developing resources is an essential component in any respite care program's business plan. And the numbers don't lie; last year in the United States more than **\$260 billion in private money** was given to nonprofit organizations. More than half of this money came from middle class, working class and the poor.

Asking for money is one of the hardest things to do and yet in one form or another, we all help to “make the ask.” According to Andy Robinson, there are a few principles to keep in mind when developing your plan:

1. Identify your prospects; do your homework by using the ABCs when qualifying possible donors:
 - a. **Ability**—do they have any *available money* to give?
 - b. **Belief**—does the person *care* about your issue?
 - c. **Contact**—do they have a *relationship* with anyone within your organization?
2. The closer you get, the more you raise. The old adage is “people give money to people, not to organizations.” This principle tracks with the importance of a relationship and a story, as highlighted in the Community Collaboration session.
3. Diversify your donors. In a typical annual campaign, the money raised each year for general support breaks down as follows:
 - a. 10% of donors yield 60% of the money
 - b. 20% of donors yield 20% of the money
 - c. 70% of donors yield 20% of the money

In other words, most organizations rely on a handful of major donors to underwrite the majority of the campaign. But the risk in having the bulk of the program supported by a few donors is that the loss of even one of these donors will have a dramatic effect on the health of the agency. ■

Respite Care Grants Awarded

Respite Care Association, in collaboration with Children's Trust Fund of Wisconsin, awarded grants to five (5) agencies that will manage projects using respite care as a strategy for prevention of the initial occurrence of child abuse and neglect, with particular emphasis on families who do not qualify for respite care through existing programs.

The Grant Evaluation Committee awarded funding to:

- New Horizons North, serving Ashland, Bayfield and Sawyer counties.
- Green Lake County Department of Health and Human Services,

serving Green Lake, Marquette and Waushara counties.

- Children's Service Society of Wisconsin, serving Southeastern Wisconsin.
- Family Connections of Southwest Wisconsin, serving Grant, Iowa and Lafayette counties.
- Green County Human Services, serving Green, Grant and Iowa counties.

This project will provide respite care for children, specifically targeted to prevent the initial occurrence of child abuse and neglect. The projects will bring respite care to areas of Wisconsin that are critically underserved. ■

Succession Planning for Nonprofits

It's rarely talked about in boardrooms or agency offices. Some may think it's boring, some are even insulted by the prospect, but succession planning is key for the stability of nonprofit organizations. And considering the crucial place nonprofits have in our communities—from caring for seniors to providing crisis respite care—nonprofits must remain vital and strong.

Wisconsin is home to more than 31,000 nonprofit organizations ranging from arts programs to community development to senior services. According to the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management, Milwaukee county had the highest number of nonprofits (1,573) followed by Dane county (900).

An aging population of leaders will drive the need for succession planning home. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, "...representatives of the baby boom generation comprise nearly 73% of all nonprofit leaders, with 55% being over the age of 50...". And experts predict within the next ten years nonprofits across the country will need to attract more than 640,000 new senior managers.

In a recent interview with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, John Palmer Smith, executive

director of the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, stated, "For Wisconsin, the need will be for 12,000 senior nonprofit managers to be trained in the state."

The intersection of planned and organic change is expected to happen over the next three years. That is when more than two-thirds of nonprofit executives plan to leave their jobs even though less than half the organizations have no succession plan in place.

Succession plans don't have to be complicated but should include:

- clear job descriptions for all staff,
- a communications plan for staff and clients, funders and sponsors and the board of directors,
- organization strategic goals, and
- must be a shared responsibility between staff and board.

For more information, contact the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management at 414-299-3176 or via the web at www.uwm.edu/MilwaukeeIdea/HBI/. ■

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

It's been a busy past several months at RCAW. We've held a seminar for Wisconsin respite care programs. We've issued a request for proposals and are now moving forward to support five new regional projects using respite care as a strategy to prevent the initial occurrence of child abuse and neglect. We've presented to groups on topics including lifespan respite care and legislative advocacy. We've met a lot of new people and forged new partnerships. And as always, we've responded to many requests for information and technical assistance from families, professionals and programs from throughout the state.

During our busy fall months, I traveled extensively throughout Wisconsin, driving through nearly every county. I was reminded that we live in a beautiful state, rich in flora and fauna and with many incredible views of hills, farms, rivers and lakes. And since my travels coincided with political campaign season, I saw how politically divided we are, as evidenced by the ubiquitous yard sign battles.

Now that the election season is over, and both major parties are talking about "bipartisanship" and "working together," it seems appropriate to mention an area where it's easy for all sides to find common ground. As you might imagine, I'm suggesting a focus on supporting families, and especially the hundreds of thousands of Wisconsin families caring for a family member with special needs. By investing relatively small amounts of money in supports such as respite care, we can strengthen families, prevent out-of-home placements, prevent abuse and neglect, support caregivers' physical and mental health, and save money long-term.

Supporting Families. Wouldn't that look good on a yard sign? ■

—Jim Schroeder

Calendar of Events:

Board of Directors Meeting

December 14, 2006 - Milwaukee

2007 Board of Directors meeting schedule to be determined on December 14, 2006.

Respite Care Training Manual Available

The Respite Care Association of Wisconsin has released a new version of the popular respite care training manual. The updated and expanded manual is designed to provide materials that will build the capacity of lifespan respite care providers. The manual is intended to give a frame for delivering more detailed information on core competencies of respite care including an understanding of respite care, first aid and emergency procedures, agency policies and procedures, and how to identify and report suspected abuse or neglect of a child or senior citizen.

To order the manual for just \$65, please log on to the RCAW website: www.respitecarewi.org. ■

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Nancy Marz, Vice President/Treasurer
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Adoption Resources of Wisconsin

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Visit us on the web at:
www.respitecarewi.org

Lifespan Respite Network Programs

Western Region

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Phone: (715) 832-1782

Northeastern Region

Program Contact: Linda Kimple
Coordinating Agency: Creative Care Options
Phone: (920) 906-5174

Northern Region

Program Contact: Deanna Yost
Coordinating Agency: New Horizons North
Phone: (715) 682-7171 x 35

Southeastern Region

Program Contact: Nichole Hunkins
Coordinating Agency: United Cerebral Palsy of SEW
Phone: (414) 329-4500

Southern Region

Program Coordinator: Karla Jensen
Coordinating Agency: Epilepsy Foundation of SCW
Phone: (920) 356-9870

A Gift to RCAW Is a Gift to THOUSANDS of Wisconsin Families

Budgets are tight for nonprofit organizations, and we are no exception. RCAW needs your help to sustain our efforts toward promoting, supporting and expanding quality statewide respite care across the lifespan. Our efforts impact thousands of Wisconsin families caring for a family member with special needs. Please consider a gift to RCAW as a way of showing your support for our ongoing efforts. As we say, you don't have to give until it hurts, just give until it feels good! ■

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