

Mission Statement
Family & Children's
of La Crosse County

Identifying and responding to safety concerns and needs of children, families and community utilizing a family's strengths and team process along with formal and informal supports to improve child, family and community quality of life.

Nancy Pohlman, Manager



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Kate and John have five children which Kate single parents in her home along with two additional children. She expressed a sense of relief and was open to services when the Department became involved after numerous police contacts/welfare checks and referrals for reasons such as neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse over the last two years. The condition of the home, lack of supervision, domestic situation between Kate and John, lack of follow through with recommended services as well as medical and education care for the children were all concerns.

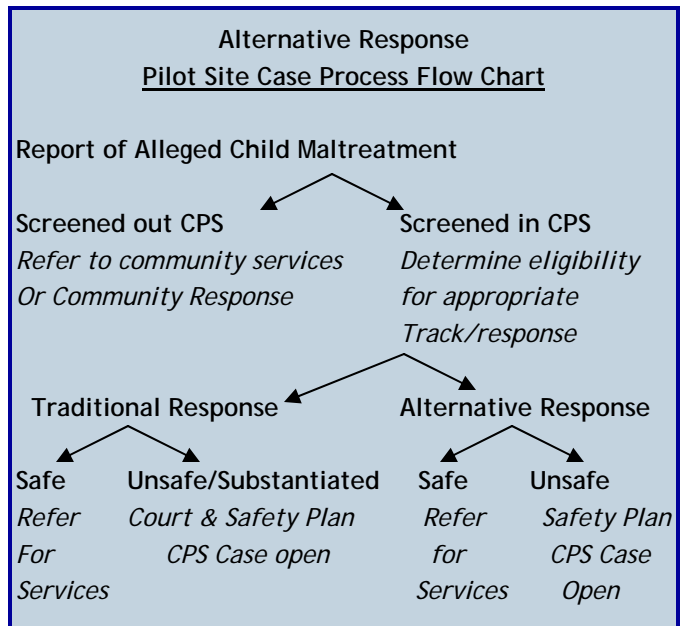
The primary focus offered to Kate by the Department was parent education and support to be better equipped to control the activities in the home, maintain a clean, stable and safe home, and create consistent routine home rules and support for the children. It was also recommended she take an active role in the medical, educational and therapeutic care of the children.

Kate has made tremendous progress towards the goals she agreed to and the court ordered conditions. The changes in her parenting and overall environment in the home have been positive. She is actively involved in all aspects of the children's lives, provides adequate supervision and has successfully established routine and cohesion. She has implemented daily schedules, chores, activities, rewards and consequences for the children. More importantly, she has followed through with these things over a period of time.

Kate has been working with service providers and she is more involved in meeting her children's needs. She actively communicates with school and encourages the children to be involved in extracurricular school activities. Additionally Kate sought and secured a restraining order against John and actively pursued ongoing divorce proceedings. Doing so has empowered Kate and enabled her to focus on her children.



Family & Children's Section provides services to children and families that are encountering significant difficulty in their daily living. The section provides Child Protection Services, Juvenile Justice Services, Children's Mental Health Services, and services to children with physical, emotional and developmental disabilities. We continue to be one of the few counties in the state that has all of children's services under one umbrella. Services are provided within the context of state and federal mandates, Wisconsin Statutes, and the mission of the Department.



Alternative Response

La Crosse County Child Protective Services (CPS) officially began as 1 of 5 pilot counties for Alternative Response on July 1, 2010. La Crosse was awarded a grant to implement this two track system to respond to allegations of child abuse and neglect, combining the existing system of traditional investigation with Alternative response to assess and work with families in moderate to low-risk cases.

Implementation of Alternative response continues to evolve as staff participates in intensive trainings, and feedback and practice sessions with state personnel to develop practice and policy for statewide implementation. Staff is also working with the Department of Children and Families to gather information and data to evaluate implementation and



Family & Children's

608.785.6054

La Crosse County Family and Children's Section, Comprehensive Child Protective Service System

	Assess for Services	CPS Initial Assessment and Referral	CPS Ongoing Case Management
Child Welfare: Referral was not alleging child abuse and/or neglect (CAN) but was a request for services or Alternative Response on select screened out cases	Refer to Community Resources: Domestic Violence Services, Family Resource Center, St. Clare's Health Mission, Place of Grace, Salvation Army, Private Mental Health Providers or AODA counselors, Children's Miracle Network, Healthy Families; Housing Programs/HUD/CAP, Food Pantries; Refer to Specific Programs: Birth to Three, Family Support, Integrated Services Program, Children with Disabilities (COP/CIP), Juvenile in Need of Protection/ Services (JIPS), WIC, W-2 TAB Respite - G/L, Wrap Around funding.		
Low Risk: A CAN referral, unsubstantiated, not open for ongoing	All of the above services and/or programs are possible plus potential short term safety or risk management services	Alternative Response might get involved to link to community/private provider services	
Moderate Risk: A CAN referral may have been unsubstantiated or substantiated with protective parent	All of the above services and/or programs are possible plus potential short term safety or risk management services	Potential short term: Child At Risk Monitoring (Charm), Respite, Child Care, Kinship placement and funding, Wrap around funding during assessment phase only	
Parent Requests Placement	Services may already be provided by Children's Special Needs	Could be opened as a Voluntary Placement	Transferred to ongoing for 6 months of monitoring or formal CHIPS
Significant Risk: CAN case with injuries or safety issues, substantiated with need for control of safety issues	All of the Above ↔	All of the Above ↔	Refer to Specific Programs: In-home Family Counseling, Parent Visitation Monitor, Parent Support Worker, Transportation, Parenting groups, Alternate Care Placement, Court Services (CHIPS), Mediation
High/Severe Risk: CAN case with injuries, multiple uncontrolled safety issues	All of the Above ↔	All of the Above ↔	All of the Above most likely looking at long-term placement and possible alternative permanency plan.



effectiveness of this process. Feedback from both staff and families has been positive in these first months of the pilot, and workers look forward to continuing to develop this exciting shift in CPS practice.

Family Advocate

La Crosse County Human Services contracts with Wisconsin Family Ties for the Family Advocate. The Family Advocate is available to all who request her support in La Crosse County. Families do not need referral from the Department to access her services.

Referrals can come from the families, schools, medical providers, and service providers. Practice areas include education issues, applying for benefits and parenting issues. The Family Advocate is a mother of three boys on the autism spectrum. Her knowledge base has been developed from parenting her three boys along with intensive research to ensure that her family has the access to services that will benefit each of them based on their needs. The Family Advocate also is available in the evenings and weekends when families have more time to talk and other service providers are not available.

**CHILDREN'S ALTERNATE CARE
PROGRAM AREAS**

ALTERNATE CARE

RESPIRE

FOSTER CARE-EMERGENCY ON CALL

FOSTER CARE TRAINING

KINSHIP

CHILD CARE PROTECTION

SUSTAINING CARE

TREATMENT FOSTER CARE

PARTNERS IN ALTERNATE CARE

EDUCATION (PACE) - FOSTER PARENT

TRAINING

**CHILDREN'S DISABILITY SERVICES
PROGRAM AREAS**

BIRTH TO THREE INITIATIVE

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

CHILDREN'S CRISIS PROGRAM

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES

CHILDREN'S LONG TERM SUPPORT

WAIVERS

FAMILY ADVOCATE

FAMILY RESOURCE LIAISON

IN-HOME AND INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

CHAPTER 51 & THREE PARTY PETITION

SERVICE COORDINATION

COORDINATED SERVICES TEAM INITIATIVE/

INTEGRATED SERVICES PROGRAM



**DELINQUENCY & JUVENILES
IN PROTECTIVE SERVICES
PROGRAM AREAS**

HOME DETENTION & GLOBAL POSITIONING
SYSTEM (GPS)

ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM

ASSESSMENT FOR JUVENILE DETENTION
FACILITY

TRANSPORT FOR ADOLESCENT SERVICES

COMMUNITY SERVICE

RESTITUTION

RUNAWAY BRIDGE

YOUTH AIDS—AODA

FAMILY TRACKING

IN HOME DELINQUENCY

ACUTE PROTECTIVE SUPERVISION
PROGRAM (APSP)

THINK AHEAD PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

TOUGH CHOICES

SEX OFFENDER ASSESSMENT TREATMENT

LA CROSSE COMMUNITY CONFERENCING

GIRL'S CIRCLE GROUP

RESPIRE

EXCESS ABSENCES

REALITY CHECK

DELINQUENCY PREVENTION EDUCATION

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JUVENILE JUSTICE ACUTE PROTECTIVE SUPERVISION PROGRAM (APSP)

A five year summary of the APSP found it to be successful at reducing delinquency and saving La Crosse County substantial dollars in alternate care funds. This program was implemented to service youth who are adjudicated delinquent and are considered moderate to high-risk for out-of-home care, correctional placements or unable to remain in placement within La Crosse County.

A review of the outcomes suggest both youth and community benefitted from the program. Intervention by law enforcement, social workers and the courts was reduced, which saved time and money that would be required to process these cases. The community profited by having less crime (repair, restitution and taxes) as well as less victims (injury and harm).

The youth improved educationally, socially and personally. Their competency increased providing a healthier and more productive lifestyle.

The Wisconsin Children's Code specifies legal parameters for involvement in families and jurisdiction over children alleged to be in need of protection and services (Chapter 48.13). In addition there are times that we provide services to children, youth and families on a voluntary basis when the child/youth has significant special needs. In order for a child or family to be eligible for services, there must be a concern of abuse or neglect to a child. The Statutory Definition of "abuse" can be found in Chapter 48.02. We provide services to all residents of communities, cities and towns within La Crosse County.



Western Regional Adolescent Center

The Western Regional Adolescent Center (W.R.A.C.) was opened in January of 2009 with a mission to "provide a safe, structured, strength based environment that ensures children are treated with dignity and respect". The W.R.A.C. is licensed as a small 8 bed shelter facility available to provide services to children in need of protection (CPS), youth with delinquent behaviors (juvenile justice) and children with special needs. The facility can also be utilized to provide respite for foster care providers. The W.R.A.C. is a Chapter 34 crisis stabilization site which enables the diversion of children from psychiatric hospitalizations under Chapter 51.

The Western Regional Adolescent Center serves both males and females that are 10 to 17 years old. In 2010 services were provided to youth with an average age of 14, 60% male and 40% female. The average length of stay is approximately 4 days. On average the facility was utilized to serve 70% delinquent youth, 18% CPS, 10% children with special needs/crisis, and 2% respite/other.

CHILD PROTECTION AND OTHER CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM AREAS

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LIAISON/PROGRAMS

ADULT AODA SCREEN

W-2 LIAISON

CHILD AT RISK MONITOR (PATH)

FIT (FAMILY INTERVENTION TIME)

PARENT SUPPORT WORKER

INTENSIVE IN-HOME

FAMILY INTERACTION PROGRAM

INDEPENDENT LIVING

SERVICES TO PERSON IN TREATMENT

PARENT SUPPORT WORKER (PSW)

Visit the Family & Children's WEB site at:

[http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/
HumanServices/FC/index.htm](http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/HumanServices/FC/index.htm)