



# Wisconsin State Budget training for disability advocates



disabilityrights | WISCONSIN



# We will cover:



- What's in and not in the Governor's proposed budget
- Before we start, what are you interested in?
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Transportation
  - Caregiver crisis
  - Medicaid
    - Children's Long Term Support, Birth to 3, Dental Care, Badgercare expansion, other changes
  - Health care coverage
  - Mental health
  - Juvenile Justice, Corrections (Adult)
  - Other issues (Voter registration, Aging, Housing)

# Why is the State Budget Important?



- It is passed every two years and includes funding programs and services important to people with disabilities (like Family Care, public transit etc.)
- The budget determines how much money will be spent on different state programs and services.
- Some budget changes may impact policy, and change programs without impacting cost.

# Where are we now?

- 1) Governor's budget referred to Joint Finance Committee (JFC)
- 2) Legislative Fiscal Bureau preparing analysis
- 3) JFC will announce hearings
- 4) JFC decides to add money, reduce funding, eliminate funding etc.
- 5) JFC sends revised budget to legislature
- 6) Senate and Assembly pass
- 7) Budget sent to Governor to sign



# Education

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- Increases the reimbursement to local school districts for special education from 24% to 60%
- \$63M for access to mental health services for school age children, additional services staff, and training for staff and parents.
- Changes funding mechanism so costs of high-cost special education students' are always fully covered.

# Education

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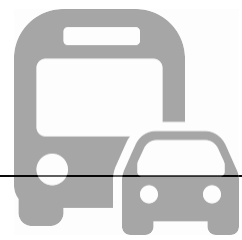
- Changes the Special Needs Scholarship program back to the original funding of around \$12,000 per year.
- No new schools or students will be allowed to enroll in the program.
- Increased accountability to include teacher licensing requirements and meeting the same criteria as other voucher schools.
- Does not include other accountability measures important to disability advocates

- Increases amount of funding school districts can receive for special education transition incentive grants
- Increases funding for special education transition readiness grants
- Supports continued expansion of Project SEARCH

- Automatic minimum wage increases
  - No reference to address people with disabilities being paid sub-minimum wage
  - Unintended consequences for caregiving workforce whose salaries are set by the state within Medicaid rates

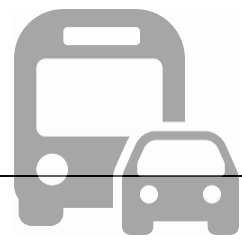


# Transportation



- Increases general transit aids by 10%
- Creates a transit capital assistance program to help replace aging buses
- \$6M increase to Specialized Transportation aids
- 10 percent increase for paratransit aids
- No Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) reform included

# Transportation



- Clarifies local governments can agree to work together on transit services that cross county or municipal borders
  - Subject to referendum, only applies to local governments who desire to do this and receive permission from voters
  - Unclear what amount of revenue could be generated and what it can be used for
  - Unclear as to what transportation capacity would result

# Caregiver Crisis

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- Increase of \$29M to the Family Care direct care and services capitated rate
- 1.5 percent rate increase to existing funding designed to boost bonuses or wages of direct care workers.
- Budget does not address caregiver wages in IRIS or self-directed Family Care

# Caregiver Crisis

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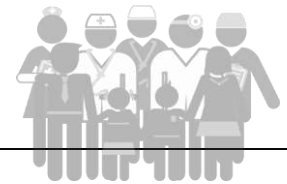
- Current state law requires employers of a certain size to allow employees to take up to 8 weeks of unpaid family leave
- Budget expands number of employers that must allow employees unpaid family leave
- Lets employees take unpaid family leave for more relatives

# Caregiver Crisis

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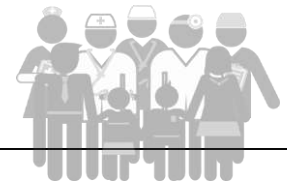
- Caregiver Task Force
  - Created by Governor Evers (Executive Order #11)
  - Charged with finding ways to address low wages, lack of health care and other benefits, training and support.
  - These challenges will need tangible proposals and funding



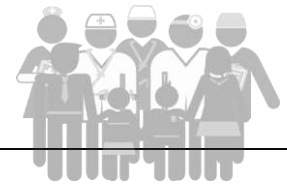
- Children's Long Term Support Program
  - Changes funding mechanism, permanently eliminates waiting list for kids with disabilities
  - Establishes children's Ombudsman
  - Funds improvements to intake and eligibility screening functions, benefits counseling, support for families navigating the system.

# Medicaid

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- Birth to 3 Program
  - Increases funding to expand services to kids exposed to lead.

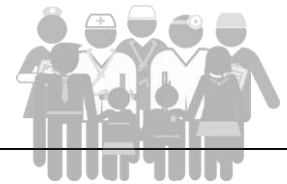


- Dental Care package:
  - \$5M for payments to dental providers that serve Medicaid recipients with physical and intellectual disabilities
  - 50% increase in Medicaid reimbursement for non-profit dental providers who serve 50% or more of people who don't have dental insurance or who use Medicaid
  - 30% increase in Medicaid reimbursement for for-profit dental providers who serve at least 5% of persons in Medicaid.



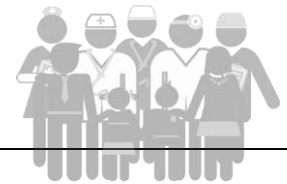
# Medicaid

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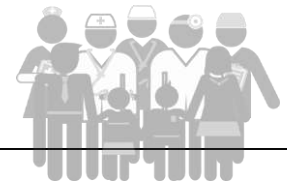
- Increases in Medicaid reimbursement for dentists serving people enrolled in Medicaid managed care.
- Licensure of Dental Therapists in Wisconsin who work under the supervision of a dentist and help to extend access to dental care

# Medicaid

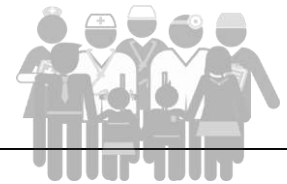


- Adds \$45M for Medicaid Community Health benefit
  - Provides non-medical services, social determinants of health approach
  - Improving Medicaid recipient's housing, nutrition, transportation, stress management, and other services has been demonstrated to improve health outcomes

# Medicaid

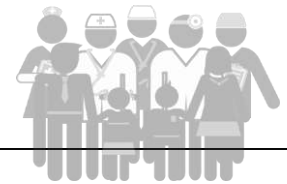


- Allow people making up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to access health care through Badgercare
  - low-income people with disabilities, family caregivers, and low-income workers providing care services for people with disabilities.
  - 30% of Wisconsin's paid caregiving workforce is in Badgercare
  - family caregivers are also in Badgercare.



- Increase staffing for DHS's Division of Quality Assurance
  - Oversees quality improvements in Medicaid programs
  - Funding for staff to review assisted living facilities (including Adult Family Homes and Community Based Residential Facilities)

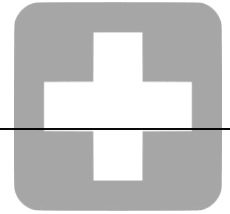
# Medicaid



- Restores authority to DHS to submit Medicaid waivers
- Restores authority to DHS to submit Medicaid state plan amendments
- Repeals forthcoming Badgercare waiver revisions
  - work requirements, premium payments, a health risk assessment, nonemergency use copays and a health savings account

# Health care coverage

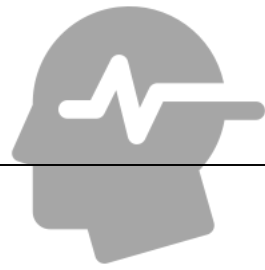
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- Pre-existing condition protections
  - Ensures people with preexisting conditions can't be denied insurance
  - Prohibits denial or lower cost coverage of claims because of preexisting conditions
  - Prohibits plans from having higher premiums, co-pays, deductibles, coinsurance because of preexisting condition
  - No lifetime or annual limits on benefits;
  - Requires coverage of essential health benefits and preventative services

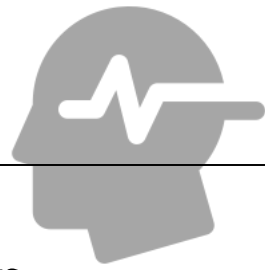
# Mental Health

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- Funding to establish five new regional crisis centers
- Provides some state funding for crisis intervention services delivered by counties for treatment of mental illness, intellectual disability, substance abuse, and dementia.
- Creates a new medical admissions unit at Winnebago Mental Health Institute
- Raises Medicaid rates for physicians and medical clinics providing mental health, behavioral health and psychiatric services

# Mental Health: Missing from Budget



- Capacity to provide “direct services” for Wisconsinites who are hard-of-hearing, deaf and deaf-blind and have mental illnesses and/or substance use disorders
- Expansion of Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) program
- Statewide expansion of the Child Psychiatry Consultation program.



# Juvenile Justice

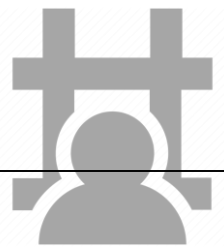
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- Returns 17-year-olds from adult court to the juvenile court system.
- Increases funding for redesign of the youth justice system, for smaller, more community-based facilities, allowing the closing of Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake.
- 14-bed expansion at the Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center to provide mental health services and treatment to youth in the justice system

# Corrections (Adult)

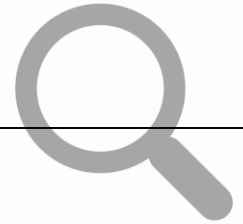
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- Expands Opening Avenues to Reentry Success (OARS) program statewide, and increases capacity in southeastern Wisconsin
- Funds a new unit at the Wisconsin Resources Center to serve the mental health and alcohol and drug abuse needs of inmates at DOC.

# Other

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- Automatic voter registration
- Expands the Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) program to all Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- Expands programs to relieve homelessness and promote *Housing First*

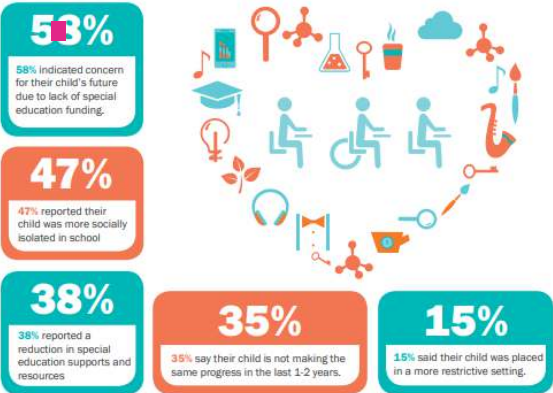
# Education



Wisconsin public schools educate about **118,000** students with disabilities. Students with disabilities represent **14%** of the total student population.

- Research clearly shows that more than **99%** of students – including those with the most significant intellectual disabilities – can learn **grade-level content in the general education curriculum and achieve proficiency on grade level standards with the appropriate supports.**
- Poor educational preparation of students with disabilities translates into a lifetime of **high unemployment, lower wages, and greater reliance on public benefit programs.**

In a **2018 Survival Coalition survey<sup>4</sup>** of almost **600** parents of students with disabilities:



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment

Nationwide, the employment rate for people with disabilities is only **17.9%**, compared with **65.3%** for the general population.

Wisconsin's Expansion Employment First legislation, signed into law in 2018 by Governor Walz, requires employers to actively engage people with disabilities in the hiring process.

Wisconsin's Department of Health Services (DHS), in cooperation with a diverse group of disability stakeholders, has developed community integrated employment programs and is committed to increasing the number of people in Wisconsin's long-term care programs (Family Care, RES) that are working in the community.



Wisconsin families want more employment choices. BPDD has been helping families and people with disabilities that do not have the employment choice and options they need to seek community integrated employment full and part-time jobs in the community.

More than 40% of people with developmental disabilities participating in Medicaid-funded long-term care programs are working in the community.

Nationally, 80% of Medicaid funding for employment and day services for people with disabilities goes into facility-based group services.

Only 20% of funds are instead in community integrated employment. This is consistent with Wisconsin spending.

## Support the Professional Direct Care Workforce: Keep People in Their Homes

In Wisconsin a shortage of professional direct care workers has created a crisis for people with disabilities, older adults, and their families. The need for direct care workers is projected to increase by an additional **20,000** workers by 2026<sup>5</sup>.

When there is no direct care worker, Wisconsin residents with disabilities describe these common impacts on their daily lives:



In 2016, a statewide survey of more than 500 people who rely on direct care services and their families found **95%** had trouble finding workers, **85%** did not have enough workers to cover all their shifts, **43%** couldn't find a worker 7 or more times per month, and **60%** said they get sick more often when they do not have enough staff<sup>6</sup>.

In Wisconsin, the annual worker turnover rate is more than **50%** and can be as high as **67%**<sup>7</sup>.

Currently, **70%** of personal care agencies are unable to staff all hours needed, and **93%** of agencies find it difficult to fill job openings<sup>8</sup>.

In Wisconsin, **51%** of Home Care workers and **38%** of Nursing Home workers rely on some form of means-tested public benefits<sup>9</sup>.

**29%** of the Home Care workforce are on Medicaid; **35%** of Nursing home workers on Medicaid<sup>10</sup>.



## Medicaid and Medicaid-funded Long-term Care

Medicaid provides services and supports that people with disabilities rely on—such as personal care, school therapies, prescription drugs, transportation, job coaching and employment services, and mental health and substance use disorder services—that are not available or are not available at the level needed on the private insurance market.



Wisconsin Medicaid waiver programs (Family Care/RES) keep people with disabilities and other adults in the community, and out of costly facilities like nursing homes.



Family Care/RES have successfully supported people with complex needs in their homes and community, including people who have previously lived in state institutions (S/I/Out).

# 2019-21 policy platform

<https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/policy-statements/>

## 2019-21 Budget Priorities

[www.disabilityrightswi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Budget\\_Priorities\\_0818-ACC.pdf](http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Budget_Priorities_0818-ACC.pdf)

### 2019-2021 Biennial Budget Priorities for Wisconsinites with Disabilities

Disability Rights Wisconsin asks policy makers to support the following priorities for Wisconsinites with disabilities in the 2019-2021 Biennial Budget. These programs and services are vitally important to Wisconsin adults and children with disabilities and support opportunities to live, work, learn, and enjoy life in the community.

#### CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Every family deserves to be supported. Families of children with disabilities need not face waiting lists, barriers, or a lack of information about where to turn for help.



##### DRW RECOMMENDS:

- Extend to every child with a significant disability a system that supports their development, fosters family life, and encourages full participation in community life by fully funding the Children's Long-Term Support program.
- Create a Family Support and Disability Resource Center to support children with disabilities and their families in accessing supports.
- Establish a Children's Benefit Specialist position at the county level to provide families with accurate information and provide assistance with applying for benefits, programs and services, and appealing denials.
- Expand the Child Psychiatry Consultation Program statewide.

#### EDUCATION

Children with disabilities have experienced an erosion of quality special education services due to flat funding for special education categorical aid over the last decade while costs have increased by 60%.



##### DRW RECOMMENDS:

- Increase special education categorical aid by \$600 million dollars to bring the reimbursement rate from the 26% to 60% and end the decade long flat funding for school districts.
- Increase the mental health collaboration grants from \$3.25 million to \$10 million to fully fund.
- Provide \$44 million in categorical aid to increase pupil services staff and expand the original grant to cover other professionals besides social workers.
- Provide \$5 million to support students and families with training and support, which includes a new state program with peer parent specialists.
- Increase the transition readiness grant to provide \$5 million annually to prepare students with disabilities for community employment and independence after high school.

#### JUVENILE JUSTICE/CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Individuals with mental illness are overrepresented in our criminal justice systems.



##### DRW RECOMMENDS:

- Involve community stakeholders in the Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake shutdown and restructuring of secure juvenile facilities.
- Small community-based facilities with a focus on evidenced-based approaches that will prepare youth to successfully live in the community as quickly as possible.
- Sufficient funding for safe and adequate facilities and appropriate staffing to provide ongoing programming.



# Survival Coalition

2019-21  
policy platform

- <http://www.survivalcoalitionwi.org/index.php/2018/updates/survival-coalition-develops-2019-21-state-budget-recommendations/>



# Ways to get heard

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- Call and email your state senator and state representative with your budget priorities
  - look up your legislators here: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/>
- Attend a JFC hearing and testify on your budget priorities
  - Or E-mail JFC [BudgetComments@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:BudgetComments@legis.wisconsin.gov)
- Like your Representatives social media pages (Facebook, Twitter) and comment on budget related posts
- March 20<sup>th</sup> is Disability Advocacy day



# \*Make your ask

## 1. Introduce yourself

- Your name, where you live (you want to establish yourself as a constituent), a few details to establish your credibility and connection to your community.

## 2. Introduce your issue and experience

- Introduce your issue and how your issue impacts people with disabilities. Share your personal experience with your issue.

## 3. Make your ask

- Make sure to let your legislator know what you want. Do you support what is in the Governor's budget, want to see something added or changed, or want something removed?

