

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: December 31, 2025

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Executive Director, DHHS

Subject: A report from the Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting authorization to increase 2026 purchase of service contracts with Birth to 3 community vendors for Children, Youth and Family Services

File Type: Action File

REQUEST

The Executive Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is requesting authorization to increase 2026 Birth to 3 purchase of service contracts for the Children, Youth and Family Services (CYFS).

POLICY

Per Wisconsin Statutes, the Executive Director of the Department of Health and Human Services is requesting authorization to increase these contracts.

Wisconsin State Statutes:		59.52(31)
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BACKGROUND

The CYFS has executed several contracts with community-based providers to support the continuum of care for justice involved youth, as well as serving children and families in the Birth to 3 and Children's Long-Term Support waiver programs. As part of the 2026 budget process, the County Board approved an amendment to increase funding by \$450,000 for the Birth to 3 program.

The Birth to 3 Program, authorized under Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), supports children with developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three and their families. The program is a federal entitlement which utilizes state, federal, and local funds to enhance the development of children with developmental disabilities, minimizes the need for special education, and decreases rates of institutionalization. Counties are responsible for administering the program based on state and federal guidelines. Specific county responsibilities include establishing a comprehensive system to identify, locate, and evaluate children who may be eligible for the program.

Milwaukee County's Birth to 3 Network

CYFS contracts with three agencies to provide services to families to enhance their child's development. These services may include the following:

- Screening & Evaluation
- Related Health Services
- Family Education Development & Education Services
- Communication Services
- Occupational, Speech & Physical Therapy
- Case Management Services

Collaboration with the Healthier Wisconsin Partnership, Disability Rights Wisconsin, Head Start & Early Head Start Programs, the school system, and other partners has increased awareness and access resulting in increased referrals to Birth to 3 each year. DHHS and the contracted partners identified below, along with other counties across Wisconsin, have collaborated to advocate for additional Birth to 3 funding in Milwaukee County and across the state. These efforts continue under a workgroup sponsored by the Wisconsin Counties Human Services Association (WCHSA) with strong participation from Milwaukee County DHHS.

Of the \$450,000 allocation, \$50,000, has been designated to community-based specialized service providers. CYFS has designated \$25,000 to Hear Wisconsin and \$25,000 to Vision Forward which provide specialized hearing and vision services to kids in Birth to 3. These contracts are not included for approval as they fall below the \$100,000 board approval threshold.

The remaining \$400,000 is being allocated to the three service coordination serving agencies. The following contracts would be effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, to serve an average of over 1,300 children per month. The proposed increases were allocated based on the average number of kids served by each agency in 2025.

Service	Provider	2026 Allocation	2026 Proposed Increase	Total 2026 Allocation
Birth to 3 Early Intervention	Curative Care Network	\$2,347,288	\$264,000	\$2,611,288
Birth to 3 Early Intervention	Penfield Children's Center	\$1,599,451	\$80,000	\$1,679,451
Birth to 3 Early Intervention	St. Francis Children's Center	\$828,261	\$56,000	\$884,261
	Total	\$4,775,000	\$400,000	\$5,175,000

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The CYFS is committed to ensuring that the most vulnerable children and their families in Milwaukee County have access to and enrolled in the Birth to 3 program in an equitable manner. DHHS has lead efforts across the state of Wisconsin, to include other counties and community partners, to work together with other related system and statewide partners to engage in a larger strategic plan to address the funding gaps in the program on a long-term basis.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorize the Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services, or her designee, to increase the purchase of service contracts in a total amount of \$400,000 for the services identified in the accompanying resolution. The effective date of the contract amendments would be the period of January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026.

FISCAL EFFECT

The 2026 DHHS Budget includes funding for all community programs in the CYFS.

TERMS

The purchase of service contracts are effective January 1, 2026 and end December 31, 2026.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director
Kelly Pethke, CYFS Administrator

PREPARED BY:

Kelly Pethke, CYFS Administrator

APPROVED BY:

Shakita LaGrant-McClain
Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director

ATTACHMENTS:

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Hon. Carl Ashley, Chief Judge