



Human Services

2023 Annual Report

Director Message:

My initial thought was “What a difference a year makes” as I reflected back on all the positive outcomes DHS achieved in 2023. However, as I really thought it through, it became clear how we were seeing the fruit of initiatives spanning several years, consisting of many players inside and outside of Human Services. In this day and age of YouTube and the particularly attention span killing YouTube “shorts,” if the story takes longer than 30 seconds, we are inclined to keep scrolling. This has leaked over to other areas of our culture and we demand immediate results.

The point being, we still need patience and endurance when working with human beings in complex systems where change does not typically occur overnight. The positive outcomes we have seen over the last year in Human Services are the result of years of planning, hard work, and fortitude. I do not think you can really point to any one thing as the “magic bullet,” but more or less an entire system and community working together to make some good things happen.

Our number one asset is our employees. There has been a great deal of work done over the last couple years to make Chippewa County a great place to work. The changes regarding wages, courthouse hours, and other benefits have contributed to the recruitment and retention of qualified staff. Throughout this region, there are counties struggling to find qualified staff, with some positions being open for months. Having engaged staff who feel valued is where the rubber meets the road and is a must in the provision of excellent customer service.

Another factor is our community partners. Schools, law enforcement, public health, non-profits, and a multitude of grassroots organizations such as Take a Stand Against Meth, Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), and others have been instrumental in moving our community forward. By its very nature, Human Services is geared towards intervention. Yes, one could argue that through intervention we are preventing future issues; however, I am talking about true prevention efforts, which are so critical in the overall plan. For this, we rely on our partners.

Some of the achievements that come to mind are the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and their ability to develop efficiencies to finally get a bit ahead of the ever-increasing demand for services and meet state deadlines. Out-of-home placements, which had been running about a million dollars over budget since 2018, ended the year with the fewest amount of kids in care since 2015. Equally jaw dropping is the initial forecast for our out-of-home placements to be significantly under budget for 2024. Yes, things can definitely change, but again, let’s look at this as a huge win. Economic Support, Children with Differing Abilities, and adult mental health/substance use services all had their equally impressive wins as well.

New challenges will always arise. Most recently, the closing of Sacred Heart/St Joseph’s Hospitals, along with the Prevea clinics, were a devastating blow to our community. We know some of the immediate, more obvious effects; others are yet to be seen. What I do know is our community does not back down from doing hard things. We will get through this; there will be some bumps and bruises along the way. However, on the other side of the storm, we will be stronger for it.

What I also know, is that in my almost 15 years at Chippewa County, I have never seen a more dedicated group of people who make up this organization known as Human Services. Take a moment to read through this report and help us celebrate the many wins. As I indicated, there will always be more problems tomorrow. But for now, let’s take a moment to be present; yesterday has already happened, tomorrow has yet to come. The present is a present. Give yourself that gift for a few minutes.



MISSION

Strengthening our community through partnerships and services to promote dignity, increase resilience, and provide hope.

VISION

Everyone reaching their full potential to live their best life.

VALUES

Advocacy

Compassion

Empowerment

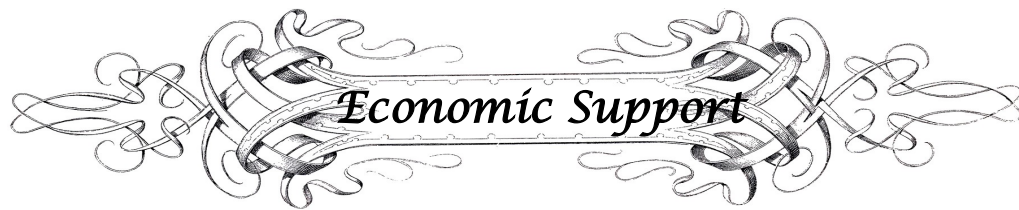
Partnership

Respect

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

- ⇒ **Build a culture of community engagement.**
- ⇒ **Utilize data driven decision making.**
- ⇒ **Demonstrate fiscal responsibility.**
- ⇒ **Build a culture of service.**
- ⇒ **Continue to build and maintain a healthy workplace.**





The Economic Support Division administers programs and services that assist eligible Chippewa County consumers, empowering them to achieve positive outcomes when they face economic challenges. The Economic Support Division helps families in need to become self-sufficient and independent from public assistance. This is done by assessing each family's financial situation to determine eligibility for public assistance programs. Chippewa County Economic Support is part of the Great Rivers ten-county consortium (GRC).

Achievements/Successes of 2023:

Operations

- ◆ Continued work in Lead Teams towards accuracy and consistency through regular meetings, Program, Policy, and Procedure Manual (PPPM) updates, and HUB Sharepoint announcements.
- ◆ Updated the GRC handbook.
- ◆ Creation PPPM Chapter 10 "leads."
- ◆ Rollout of Modern SharePoint.
- ◆ Successful navigation of unwinding.
- ◆ Maintained performance measures with increased caseload growth from the pandemic, learned new policies and reintroduced previous policies that had been on hold, minimal use of overtime and did not change coverage requirements for call center, agencies continue to maximize Wednesday afternoons for staff meetings, and for time to stay up-to-date on policy changes and trainings.
- ◆ First year of navigating through the revised Wisconsin Department of Human Services New Worker Training (NWT) Cohort.
- ◆ Genesys call back feature was implemented in the call center to help with increased call volumes and to manage customer expectations and wait times.

Staffing - Across the GRC

- ◆ Resignations: Nine (one lead, one child care, one EBD and six Family) EBD-Elderly, Blind, and Disabled.
- ◆ New Staff: Twelve (ten Family staff and 2 EBD).
- ◆ Promotions: Two Family staff promoted to lead (Pierce and Douglas).
- ◆ Chippewa County had no Income Maintenance (IM) vacancies in 2023.

Benefit Recovery (BR)

- ◆ FoodShare overpayments resumed.
- ◆ Navigated policy changes including shifting the focus more on intentional fraud for Medicaid and no longer using the Intentional Policy Violation (IPV) waiver for FoodShare.

Childcare

- ◆ Successful annual subsidy review.
- ◆ Assign childcare cases across county lines to even childcare cases across the team.
- ◆ Assessed and reduced childcare team size to allow staff to focus more on childcare cases in the call center.

IM Programs

- ◆ Successful Foodshare Management Evaluation Review (MER). Active Error Rate 1.64 percent and Case and Procedural Error Rate 25 percent. GRC was described as "consistently providing compassionate, professional customer service and accurate benefits while offer good training opportunities for staff."
- ◆ Unwinding of pandemic policies and reintroduction of healthcare renewals.

Challenges of 2023:

- ◆ Some policies are still attached to the Public Health Emergency (PHE).
- ◆ Support staff during unwinding.
- ◆ Adjust to workload during unwinding.
- ◆ Retention/Recruitment.

Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2023
FoodShare	6,488
Medical Assistance	15,432
Child Care	342
Total	22,262



The simplest version of the ADRC mission is to say that we are here to help older people and people with disabilities remain as independent as possible in the setting of their choosing. Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) are the first place to go to get accurate, unbiased, and timely information on all aspects of life related to aging or living with a disability. ADRCs are friendly, welcoming places where anyone - individuals, concerned families or

friends, or professionals working with issues related to aging or disabilities - can go for information tailored to their situation. It isn't about what we feel is best for the individual, but rather it's about presenting options so they can make an informed choice.

We also recognize that people don't always know what they need...that's okay too because ADRC staff have extensive training at asking the right questions. The questions not only help people figure out what they need or want, but also help identify their strengths. When help is requested with applying or connecting to programs or services, ADRC staff will assist.

The ADRC of Chippewa County provides more than information and assistance. We also have programs that can help people remain in their home. Meals on Wheels, Senior Dining, Transportation Coordination, Caregiver Respite, In-Home Support, Healthy Living workshops, Memory Screening, Dementia-related programs, and Brain Health education are just some of the programs our agency offers. Our Options Counselors present customers with an array of choices that can help their situation along with assistance in accessing if needed. We also have highly trained Benefit Specialists that assist with Medicare, Social Security, Consumerism, Housing, Medical Assistance, and other private and public benefit questions. Complicated issues require extensive training and our Benefit Specialists work directly with attorneys who specialize in all of these areas as they relate to older people and people with disabilities.

One thing that sets ADRCs apart from other governmental agencies is the fact that we are legislatively required to provide advocacy on behalf of the people we serve. Sometimes that means talking to local businesses and sometimes that means connecting with legislators. But most importantly, it means providing people with information so they are empowered to advocate on their own behalf.

Achievements/Successes of 2023:

- ◆ Continued to improve upon our Senior Farmers Market Voucher program distribution and we were able to provide more vouchers than ever before AND do it in record time.
- ◆ Increased the number of offerings for Medicare and You workshops while also offering a virtual option once a month. This, and word of mouth, led to a 77 percent increase in attendance at these workshops.
- ◆ The new Options Counselor process resulted in compliance with ALL aspects of options counseling including returning calls, documentation, home visits, and administering the long-term care functional screen.
- ◆ The Dementia Care Specialist Program expanded outreach, developed new partnerships, and provided new programs in both Chippewa and Dunn Counties. New events included Growing Connections, Respite For All workshop, Caregiver Skills Fair, Art Classes, and more.
- ◆ Advocacy efforts led to an increase in Meals on Wheels and ADRC state funding with the biennial budget.
- ◆ Awarded a grant from Bureau on Aging & Disability Resources to pilot a program that is designed to delay or eliminate enrollment into Medicaid funded long-term care programs (three county collaboration).
- ◆ Increase of 181 percent in customers served through our in-home support (housekeeping) program with an increase of 380 percent in hours of housekeeping services provided.



Challenges of 2023:

- ♦ Resignation/retirement of several nutrition staff, including the program coordinator, with a total of approximately 100 years of combined longevity and institutional knowledge.
- ♦ Continued rate increases from transportation, nutrition and in-home support providers.
- ♦ Increase in aging population continues to create stress points for our Elder Benefit Specialist programs, particularly related to Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans.
- ♦ Public Health Unwinding and the impacts on our customers financially due to loss of Medicaid, FoodShare, Long Term Care programs, and other benefits.
- ♦ Ongoing changes in the availability of in-home support providers in Chippewa County, which also increases the number of changes that need to be made every month in our resource guide.
- ♦ Planning for the loss of ARPA funds that will occur in 2024 and the impact that will have on available in-home supports (caregiver respite, housekeeping, meals).

ADRC Board

thank you

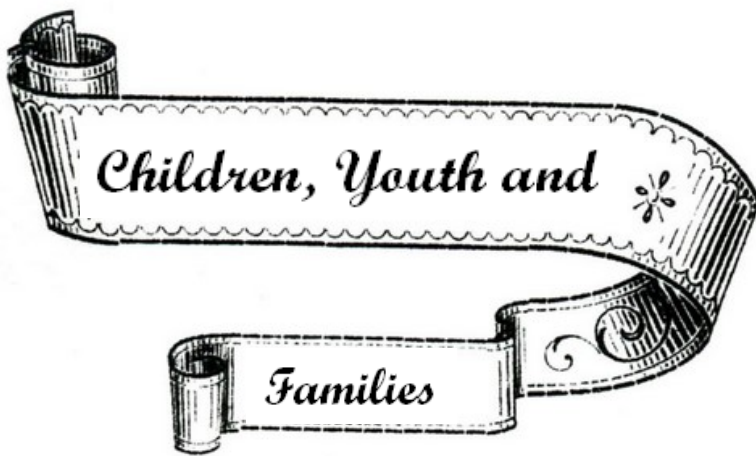


Cindy Spaeth, Glen Howell, Patricia German (Vice-chair), Don Hauser, Larry Marquardt, Kari Ives (Chair), Janet Meier
Not pictured—Mary Frasier

Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2023
Bridging Chippewa County	18,000 copies distributed†
Caregiver Respite	23 consumers 1135 hours of respite
Dementia Related Services*	58 consumers 55 programs/services
Disability Benefits	74 consumers 103 cases
Elder Benefits	584 consumers 1,211 cases/contacts
Healthy Living Workshop Sessions	30 consumers 629 classes/sessions
Information and Assistance/Options Counseling	6,094 consumer contacts 1,690 unduplicated consumers
In-home Supports (housekeeping)	59 consumers 969 service units
Nutrition Program	486 consumers 38,104 meals
Transportation	5,013 rides 261,248 miles

†Does not include the number of online views of the newsletter.

*Dementia consumers does not include numbers of people who attended various presentations or workshops. The number of programs/services reflects separate programs or presentations.



The Children, Youth & Families (CYF) Division is comprised of four units:

- ◆ Birth to Three Program
- ◆ Child Protective Services
- ◆ Children with Differing Abilities Services
- ◆ Youth Justice Services

Birth to Three

Birth to 3 is Wisconsin's early intervention program for infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. Once a child is found eligible and enrolled, a primary coach works with the family to provide support, strategies, and education related to the child's development. The ultimate goal is for the child to be a full participant in their family routines and in their community. Services are provided in a way that makes sense for each family, in the child's natural environments. This family-centered program recognizes the importance of parents, family, and friends in a young child's life and empowers them to be the child's best teachers.

Achievements/Successes of 2023

- ◆ The Birth to 3 Program received 247 referrals in 2023. On average, between 75-85 children are enrolled in the program at any given time.
- ◆ Our program was awarded \$62,000 in funding for family-focused pandemic recovery efforts through a Wisconsin Department of Human Services ARPA grant. Funds were utilized for training in the Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) framework, which provides a protocol for guiding conversations with families and being more carefully attuned to where caregivers are in their readiness for new information and collaboration toward possible next steps. Funds were used to purchase Eau Claire Children's Museum annual memberships for 111 families and counting, and to provide almost \$29,000 in concrete supports in the form of gas and grocery gift cards, car seats, diapers, and formula.
- ◆ The team welcomed a new Speech Language Pathologist, filling a position that had been open following a resignation. This position, along with our Occupational as well as Physical therapists, are contracted through HSHS/Prevea. This new team member has brought new knowledge and expertise to the team and has allowed services to families to continue with little interruption.
- ◆ An outreach campaign was organized to share information about Birth to 3 services to childcare providers within Chippewa County. This effort resulted in opportunities for Birth to 3 team members to meet with daycare staff at several different centers to talk about the referral process and share strategies and ideas beneficial for all young children. Additionally, the county received five referrals from daycare providers, up from zero in 2022.
- ◆ Chippewa County Birth to 3 received a Determinations Status of Meets Requirements from the State Department of Health Services for the 2021-2022 reporting year, with 93.75 percent of indicators met. This is up from 83.3% the year prior. This indicates strong compliance with reporting and timeline measures and increased child outcomes.

Challenges of 2023

- ◆ Many families enrolled in services are facing significant challenges related to mental health, childcare, and lack of appropriate health care providers and services. The Birth to Three team has worked to maintain partnerships and collaborate with other community organizations that support families. It has also been important for the Birth to 3 team to remain consistent with reflective practice and supporting one another in our work with families who are facing these difficulties.



CYF (continued)

Child Protective Services

The Child Protective Services (CPS) unit assesses families whose children may have been abused or neglected. When an intensive approach is necessary, ongoing services are provided to families. Services may include foster care, parenting support, or other resources to keep children safe. CPS works closely with law enforcement, community organizations, courts, schools, and other community providers to keep children safe and empower families. CPS also provides foster care licensing, foster care placement, and the Kinship program. When safety cannot be reached with a family, the unit works with the court system to find alternative permanency for a child, such as adoption or guardianship.

Achievements/Successes of 2023

- ◆ Child Protective Services served 259 children. Thirty-nine children were removed in 2023. A total of 68 children achieved permanency; of those, 40 achieved permanency through reunification, 11 children achieved permanency through guardianship, and 17 children achieved permanency through termination of parental rights.
- ◆ Chippewa County wrote for and was awarded the Targeted Safety Support Funding (TSSF) grant, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) grant, and the Foster Parent grant – Improving Normalcy for Children in Out-of-Home Care. The first two grants help social workers keep children in their homes with services or help social workers reunify children quicker due to services that can be used in the home to mitigate safety. The Normalcy grant provides funds for children to participate in extra activities such as sports, camps, driver's education, etc.
- ◆ The unit, along with attorneys and judges, completed the Tailored Dispositional Recommendations Training offered through the State; these conditions are tailored to the family's needs to aid parents in reunification of their children.
- ◆ The unit spent a significant amount of time on community education throughout the year. Presentations were given on Mandated Reporting and the CPS Process, which has led to increased collaboration and comprehensive access reports.
- ◆ The Multidisciplinary Team was revived in 2023. CPS collaborates with law enforcement, the Family Support Center, the Child Advocacy Center, the District Attorney's Office, Victim Witness, and other entities when deemed appropriate to perform case reviews that encourage mutual accountability and help to ensure the needs of children and their non-offending caregivers are met sensitively, effectively, and in a timely manner.
- ◆ The CPS unit has been fully staffed since October 2023. This is the first time the unit has been fully staffed for a significant period of time in many years!

Challenges of 2023

- ◆ The unit is struggling with cases that have been open for several years due to no appropriate permanency options being available. Specifically, the unit has struggled with finding least restrictive placements for teenage girls.
- ◆ Many parents are struggling to meet their court ordered conditions due to continued substance abuse and significant mental health concerns. Families are seeing a significant wait period to start services. Many parents and children are forced to wait months for individual counseling and alcohol and other drug abuse assessments/treatment.



CPS and Birth to 3 Team



Children with Differing Abilities

Children with Differing Abilities (CWDA) is the unit that provides services and support to children who have been diagnosed with a physical, developmental, or mental health disability and determined to be functionally eligible in accordance with federal and state standards. Services within the Children with Differing Abilities Unit are voluntary and designed to assist families to maintain their children safely in the community and at home.

The Children with Differing Abilities Unit is comprised of one manager, one supervisor, three Children's Long-Term Support Waiver (CLTS-Waiver) Support and Service Coordinators, and nine Children's Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Service Facilitators.

Achievements/Successes of 2023

- ◆ We have been filling positions that have been pre-approved by the Chippewa County Board to assist in us keeping up with the demand for services in CLTS-waiver, as well as Children's CCS.
- ◆ Children's CCS workers have been receiving training in the wraparound philosophy, as CCS will be transitioning to this modality of practice. Wraparound will be more inclusive of the family's natural supports to assist in providing sustainable success after the youth has reached their goals in CCS and are able to transition back to community based services.

Challenges of 2023

- ◆ The average number of referrals to our Single Point of Entry for Children's CCS and CLTS has remained constant from 2022, which is a significantly higher monthly average previously seen during and before COVID.
- ◆ Lack of provider availability and provider waitlists impact our ability to provide services to consumers in a timely manner.
- ◆ With the growth of CCS and CLTS, we outgrew our space capacity at the courthouse; therefore, we are transitioning to a telecommuting status for staff.

Youth Justice

Youth Justice is the unit that works with youth referred to court under Wisconsin Statutes 938. These youth have either committed a delinquent act, are habitually truant from school, or have uncontrollable behavioral issues. Youth Justice social workers work in conjunction with the legal system, the youth, and parents by developing a plan to reduce risk factors such as substance abuse, negative peer associations, truancy, and other risk factors that negatively influence youth behavior and provide the youth with competencies for a successful future.

Chapter 938 or 48 are the only statutes that allow for placing children out of the home in foster care, group home, or residential treatment level of care. When complex needs youth require one of these out-of-home placements, they typically come through the court system in our unit via Chapter 938-Juvenile in Need of Protection and/or Services-Uncontrollable. Ongoing Youth Justice workers work diligently with families and service providers to keep youth in the community.

The Youth Justice Unit is comprised of one Juvenile Court Intake social worker, plus three full-time social workers and one half-time social worker providing ongoing services.





Youth Justice (continued)

Achievements/Successes of 2023

- ◆ We were awarded the Community Intervention grant again, continuing and enhancing our ability to deliver Aggression Replacement Training (ART) and have added Girls Moving On (GMO) skills group for medium to high risk youth. Additionally, with this grant, we have been able to continue to support our partnership with Restorative Justice to provide more services to Chippewa County youth.
- ◆ Youth Justice out-of-home placements have continued to decrease, and we ended the year with only four youth in out-of-home placement.
- ◆ Our caseloads have decreased, which has allowed staff to spend more time working on discharges from out-of-home placements. More importantly, lower caseloads have allowed staff to prevent out-of-home placements by focusing on building relationships, working on skill building, and empowering parents to be more present and active in their youth's success.

Challenges of 2023

- ◆ Lack of service resources for youth who are not served in CCS.
- ◆ Lack of funding to support and create additional services for YJ Youth in the community.
- ◆ Lack of county level and treatment level foster homes that will accept teenage youth into their homes.
- ◆ On a statewide level, we continue to see youth being served in the youth justice system, when their needs are mental health. This is primarily because in Wisconsin, Chapter 938 (the Youth Justice code) is the only means for placing youth out of their home when and if the need arises to that level.
- ◆ Staff spend a significant amount of time addressing truancy matters with minimal success, as there is yet to be identified an evidence based intervention to high need truancy behaviors.

CYF Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2023
Birth to Three Program	247
Child Protective Services	1,175
Children's Crisis Services	142
Children's Waiver Services	Opened 49 cases
Children's Comprehensive Community Services	Opened 48 cases
Juvenile Court Intake Referrals	243
Youth Justice Ongoing Court Supervision	47 new court referrals



Just a few of donations received in 2023 for the Foster Care Program and Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Closet (more on page 13)





Chippewa County Recovery Wellness Consortium (RWC) is a part of the nine county Western Region Consortium. The RWC is a resource hub for individuals experiencing mental health emergency (crisis), mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Programs available include: Crisis Services (including case management of mental health commitments), Community Support Program (CSP), and Comprehensive Community Services (CCS). A service facilitator is assigned to each consumer who becomes their advocate and assists them in their recovery journey. Functional and financial criteria determine program eligibility. Based on assessed need, the following are examples of some services available: psychiatry, mental health and substance abuse counseling, supported employment and individual skill development. Chippewa County maintains a collaborative relationship with Buffalo and Pepin Counties. Referred to as regionalization, this collaboration means we all act as one entity with Chippewa (Lead County) providing administrative and clinical oversight of the Medicaid certified programs (CSP and Crisis). This relationship allows citizens in Buffalo and Pepin counties access to these certified programs.

Achievements/Successes of 2023

- ◆ In 2023, RWC said their goodbyes to Dr. Daniel Hanson and was fortunate to be able to recruit Dr. Kevin Hess. Dr. Hess is an established psychiatric provider in the Chippewa Valley who embraces the philosophy of community mental health treatment.
- ◆ New in 2022 was the addition of peer support/recovery coach embedded in the Crisis and CSP teams. Consumers have shown a positive response to this team member. As a person with lived experience they are able to identify with consumers struggles with mental health and substance use. A peer specialist works with consumers to promote recovery by removing barriers and obstacles to recovery and links the newly recovering person to the recovery community and other natural supports. In the fall of 2023, the Chippewa County Board approved the use of Opioid Settlement Funds to continue this position. The challenge in future is to find financial means to make this position a permanent service.
- ◆ In 2023, all CCS and CSP service facilitators began the engagement process of learning and then implementing development of wraparound services. Wraparound model is based upon four key elements: grounded in the strength perspective, driven by underlying needs, supported by established team (professional and natural supports), and directed by the consumer. This is an evidence-based program design to help individuals be self-sufficient and capable to independently navigate community resources/supports.
- ◆ Collaborative Crisis Intervention Services to Youth (CCISY) Grant is a collaboration established with Lutheran Social Services (LSS), offering a multi-prong approach to improving youth crisis response. In 2023 staff from DHS and Chippewa Falls School District participated in training opportunity to develop a social emotional learning tool to be used in schools, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT-Step A). DBT-Step A focuses on development of emotional regulation skills, interpersonal communication, and decision making abilities. 2023 was the second year of a five-year grant.
- ◆ CSP Program supports adults with serious mental illness in the community. The CSP team has been able to secure funding from Rutledge Charities to offer a wellness support group. The wellness group provides a safe environment to promote psychoeducational skill development in communication, interpersonal interactions, and symptom management. Positive outcomes include members creating meaningful relationships among themselves to support each other in life challenges.

Challenges of 2023

Mental health service needs for Chippewa County jail inmates continues to have an impact on crisis services. In the last six months of 2023, there were 57 requests for crisis evaluations through Northwest Connection Crisis Call Center. Of these, 33 incidents required a face-to-face clinical assessment. During this time eight inmates were placed on an emergency detention and due to a lack of local/other resources, were sent to the Winnebago state hospital.

- ◆
- ◆ There continues to be a rise in the acuity and complexity of the mental health struggles experienced by consumers. This has resulted in a prolonged need for intensive community treatment. Substance abuse residential treatment options are limited.
- ◆ Gaps exist for someone who is experiencing a mental health emergency, providing an alternative (diversion) placement to acute hospitalization. Creation of a local diversion center can provide services to de-escalate and treat someone who is experiencing a mental health crisis, divert from local emergency rooms and jails.

Recovery & Wellness Consortium (Continued)

Challenges of 2023 (continued)

- ◆ People are living longer (not necessarily healthier) lives. Many individuals will require a court approved “decision maker” in the latter stages of their lives. Families need to be proactive, have the difficult conversation with their loved one to identify a trusted individual that can be appointed the legal decision maker should the need arise. The Adult Protective Services (APS) team in collaboration with Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC) will continue to offer opportunities for residents to create the Power of Attorney (POA) Health Care and Financial documents.

Service/Program	Consumer Data for 2023
Adult Crisis Services	764
Adult Emergency Detentions/Petitions	92
Adult Protective Services	247
Comprehensive Community Services (Adults)	53
Community Support Program	44
New Guardianships	49
Protective Placements	12
Substance Abuse Services	70
Total	1331

Fiscal & Contracts

The Fiscal & Contracts Division supports the Department with a variety of activities including:

- ◆ Medicaid and consumer billing.
- ◆ Vendor contracting and payments.
- ◆ Budget planning and analysis.
- ◆ Grant claiming and reconciliation reporting.
- ◆ Financial accounting and reporting.

2023 results marked a vast improvement from recent years, driven primarily by decreased foster care and high-cost acute children and youth placements. The number of children in placement dropped dramatically. As a result, the department ended the year with a surplus of approximately \$1.25 million dollars (unaudited) and returned money to the general fund for the first time since 2017.

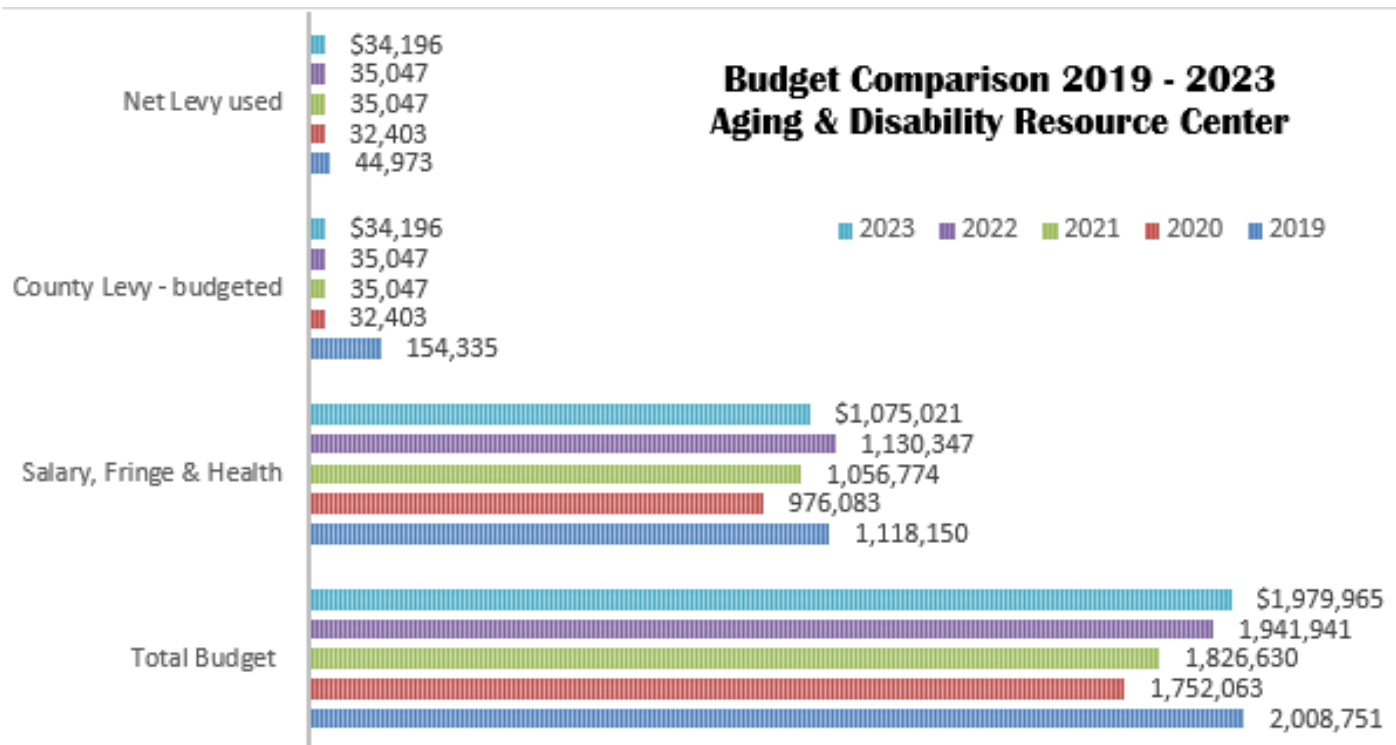
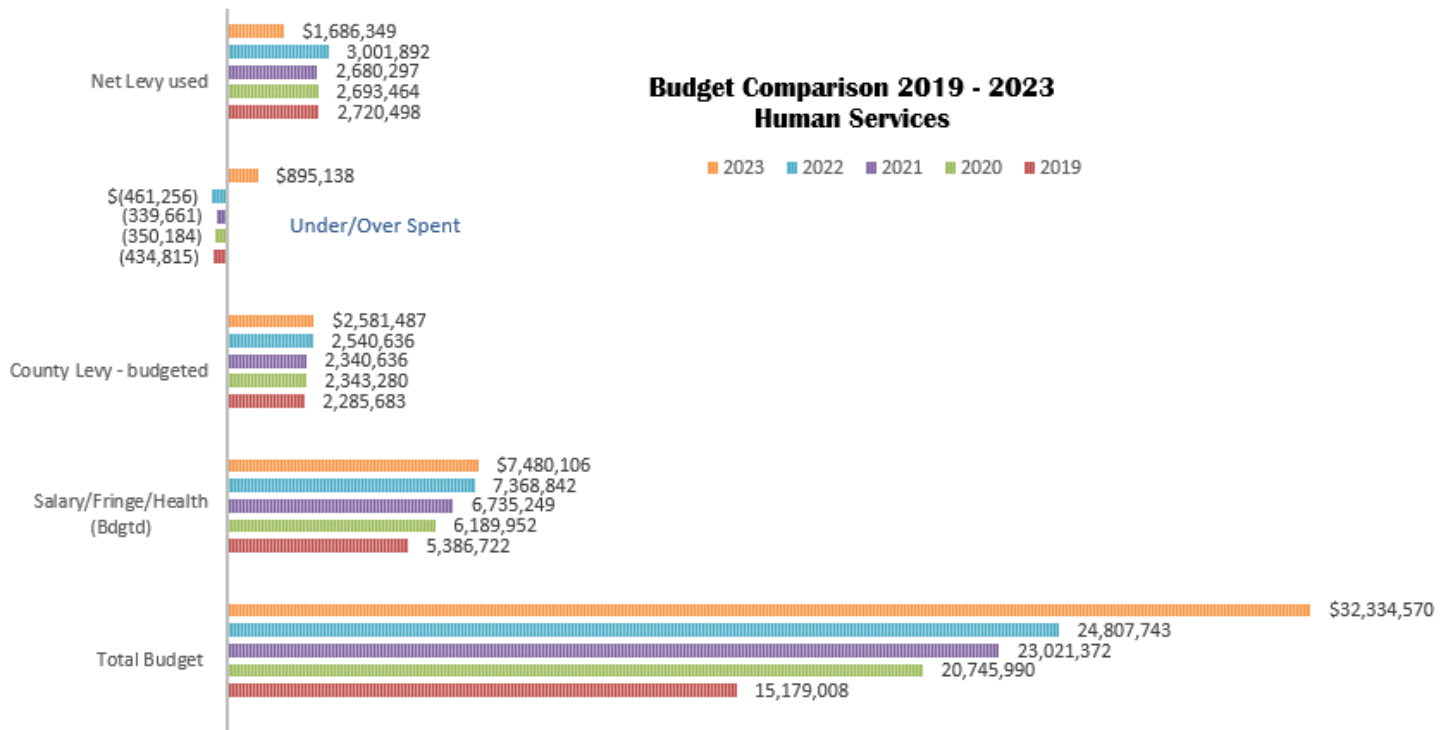
As noted, the surplus was \$1.25 million; approximately 60 percent (\$732,178) was the result of decreased child placement costs. The table to the right shows placement costs for the last four years.

The second largest contribution was indirect costs recovered by the RWC consortium that totaled \$510,000.

Year	Acute	Foster Care	Total
2020	\$1,704,374	\$705,549	\$2,409,923
2021	1,665,465	715,079	2,380,544
2022	2,012,352	639,225	2,651,578
2023	1,583,580	335,820	1,919,400
	Decrease 2023 versus 2022		\$732,178

Finally, anticipating historical losses would continue Chippewa County transferred \$750,000 of excess radio tower funds to Human Services in early 2023. Those funds will be transferred back to the General Fund.

Fiscal & Contracts - continued





**Thank you to our Health & Human
Services 2023 Board Members**

Harold (Buck) Steele, (Vice-chair)

James Ericksen, Caden Berg,

Dean Mueller, Dr. Robert Bullwinkel,

John (Jack) Halbleib, Kari Ives (Chair),

Marcia Kyes

Not Pictured - Nichole Wallsch

thank
you!

**We also extend appreciation to the many community entities
who partnered with us throughout 2023 and/or made a
donation (listed below) to our Foster Care Program, Drug
Endangered Children (DEC) Closet, or other entity.**

**A BIG THANK YOU for valuing community
and service to others.**

- ◇ Cailyn Rykal and the FBLA group at Chippewa Falls Senior High School for organizing a donation drive at sporting events to benefit our Foster Care Program.
- ◇ Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls for their "Easter Joy" donation of items needed for foster children and a generous monetary donation.
- ◇ Chippewa Falls High School hockey team for the monetary donation to our Drug Endangered Children (DEC) closet.
- ◇ Joe Hogan and co-workers at Hutchinson Technology monetary donation to foster children in memory of Shannon Hogan.
- ◇ Angela Southworth's 8th grade WEB Leadership class at Chippewa Falls Middle School for the beautiful blankets they made and donated for foster children.
- ◇ Jessi Peterson and the Chippewa Falls Public Library that donated children's books to the third floor reception for children to read there and/or take home with them.
- ◇ The fifth through eighth graders of St. Peter's School in Tilden for the beautiful blankets they made for the foster children.
- ◇ Hailey and the Chippewa Falls Senior High school FBLA for collecting items for children at sporting events and different businesses; plus partnered with Mason Companies for a donation of shoes.
- ◇ Mary J. for donating a large quantity of homemade stuffed animals to children in foster care.
- ◇ Debbie Schemenauer and the Hewlett Parkard employees for their donation of Comfort Backpacks for children going into foster care. Each backpack was packed for an age specific child.
- ◇ Jayna Kelley Memorial Foundation for purchasing Christmas gifts for several foster families that were distributed at the annual Foster Care Appreciation event, along with a monetary donation.
- ◇ Donation of a huge amount of stuffed animals by a Human Services employee in memory of her brother for families/children when visiting the Victim Witness/District Attorney's Office.

