

THE MISSION of Children's Service Society of Wisconsin is to build, sustain and enhance a nurturing environment for Wisconsin children.



What is Family Finding?

Based on a national model, Family Finding locates biological family members for children in out-of-home care. One of the most important factors contributing to the safety and permanence of children in out-of-home care is providing them the opportunity to find a meaningful connections and establish lifelong relationships with biological family members.

Central Office
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin
620 S. 76th St., Suite 120
Milwaukee, WI 53214
cssw.org

Referral process
Referrals can be made by calling:
Children's Service Society of Wisconsin

Eau Claire
2004 Highland Ave., Suite N
Eau Claire, WI 54701
(715) 835-5915

Madison
1716 Fordem Ave.
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 221-3511

Milwaukee
620 S. 76th St., Suite 120
Milwaukee, WI 53214
(414) 453-1400

Wausau
Galleria IV Building
705 S. 24th Ave., Suite 400
Wausau, WI 54401
(715) 848-1457

- Appropriate referrals include:**
- Children in foster care who have little to no family contact.
 - Children who have lost connections to their maternal and/or paternal families.
 - Children who are able to move to a less restrictive setting.



A member of Children's Hospital and Health System.

© 2010 Children's Hospital and Health System.
All rights reserved. exacta 1k 0110 tcd



Out of Home Care Family Finding



How it works

Family Finding uses technology developed by US Search and follows a national model developed by Kevin Campbell, founder of Family Finding, to identify and locate family members using multiple databases.

Once family members are found, Children's Service Society of Wisconsin's Family Finding specialists utilize the Family Group Decision Making model, an effective, collaborative, strength-based tool for engaging family members. The model helps family members re-establish relationships where appropriate and explore ways to establish lifelong connections with children. Families are empowered to be intimately involved in making decisions that ensure the protection, safety and permanence of children. Rather than assuming family members are deficient in protective capacities, the family develops a plan that the child welfare worker and court can support and approve. If family members are involved in the decision-making process, it is more likely to be successful.

Benefits of Family Finding

- Lifelong connections. Children will be able to make a connection that could last a lifetime.
- Emotional improvement. Children have increased and improved family connections, decreased loneliness and a greater sense of belonging.
- Decreased use of out-of-home care placements. Whenever possible, children may be placed with

biological family members.

- More successful placements. Children who are placed with biological family members are more likely to grow and develop. Research demonstrates that biological families are willing to emotionally invest the time and energy to work with children who may have medical or emotional challenges.
- More involved fathers. Fathers and their families can become more involved.
- Compliance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act, Chapter 48 and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008.

Positive outcomes

Children's Service Society's Family Finding program has been in existence since 2008 in Wisconsin. Following are some of the positive outcomes the program has realized since its inception.

Angela, a 6-year-old girl, had spent much of her life in foster care. Family Finding efforts led to the discovery and involvement of her paternal great aunt and uncle. Angela was moved to their home after background checks were completed and within 6 months they had been awarded guardianship.

Michael is a 23-month-old boy, who had spent nearly his entire life in the foster care system. A relative was recently discovered and now is considering taking permanent guardianship.

Olivia is a 17-year-old who has been in care for several years. All of her siblings had been adopted



or were cared for by family members. Olivia was isolated from family. Through this program, she was able to learn family stories and made family connections that kept her from feeling isolated.

Monique is 16-year-old girl who lives in residential treatment facility. She has been in care for most of her life. Monique was committed to learning and being involved with her maternal family. Through the program she learned numerous family stories and made family connections. A great aunt was located and she is becoming involved with Monique.

Robert is a 17-year-old who lives in a group home and had lost contact with all of his relatives. His mom is deceased and the location of his father was unknown. He hadn't visited with any relatives for more than five years. Family Finding was able to locate his grandmother, several siblings and a few distant cousins. Robert contacted his family and has gained a sense of belonging that had been lost.

Sierra is a 16-year-old who had lost contact with most of her relatives. She had not seen her mother in 10 years. Through the program, her mom contacted her, and they developed a relationship. An aunt and uncle also were discovered, and they began a relationship with Sierra.

About Children's Service Society of Wisconsin

Children's Service Society is the state's largest private, not-for-profit provider of child welfare services. From offices and family resource centers throughout the state, Children's Service Society offers activities and programs in four core service areas: out-of-home care, child and family counseling, prevention services and public child welfare. Children's Service Society is a member of Children's Hospital and Health System.

