

**Human Services Department Report to County Board
May 2021**

ADMINISTRATION (ADMIN)

Advocacy

Human Services Deputy Director Audra Martine has been appointed to a two-year term on Wisconsin's Long-Term Care Advisory Council. The Council is charged with advising the Department of Health Services on long-term care, with an emphasis on design, effectiveness, efficiency and quality of Family Care, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, and the IRIS self-directed supports waiver.

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC)

SAVE THE DATE: Aging Advocacy Day 2021

This year's Aging Advocacy Day will be held virtually on Wednesday, May 12, from 1:00-2:00 PM with small group virtual legislative meetings with state lawmakers or staff. No experience necessary; online training will be provided on Monday, May 10, from 1:00-3:00 PM (and recorded for anyone unable to attend live training). To learn more, or to register, go to <https://gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-online-2021>.

ECONOMIC SUPPORT (ES)

College Students and Temporary Eligibility for Food Share

The Federal Department of Education started sending emails to college students with expected family contributions of \$0 on March 31, 2021. The email notifies students of their temporary eligibility for Food Share due to the covid-19 pandemic. As part of the covid-19 relief bill passed in December 2020, students enrolled at least half-time in an institution of higher learning, who are either eligible for state or federal work study or have an expected family contributions of \$0, are temporarily eligible for Food Share. Under normal Food Share rules, most college students are not eligible for Food Share. As a result of the efforts by the Department of Education, Consortia are preparing to receive an increase in Food Share applications from college students.

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S (FC)

Foster Care Event

Spring has arrived and we are starting off with a coloring contest for all youth in foster care. This will be our second year offering the coloring contest and the youth are excited to get their picture entered for prizes. As we start to plan for foster care month in May, we are organizing virtual events and fun activities to offer throughout the month to show our appreciation to foster and relative care providers. We plan to get yard signs up throughout the county as we do every year and will be posting on Facebook how Foster Care makes a difference in La Crosse County.

**INTEGRATED SUPPORT & RECOVERY SERVICES (ISRS) &
JUSTICE SUPPORT SERVICES (JSS)**

Collaborative and Creative Positions

The Justice Support Services (JSS) and Integrated Support and Recovery Services (ISRS) sections worked throughout the month of March to collaboratively envision the future of the "Fresh Start" program, started in 2017 under a Federal Second Chance Act grant. This collaboration takes the known gaps between the mental health/substance abuse systems and the criminal justice system and intentionally bridges those gaps, bringing needed mental health and substance abuse services to those who find themselves in the criminal justice system. The next phase of this sustainability plan is to support intentional collaboration between JSS and ISRS to bring a Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) worker into the JSS fold, creating more efficient and effective connections to clients in need.