



[www.2020wi.org](http://www.2020wi.org)

**Name:** Wisconsin

**Year:** 2009

<p><b>Access to Family Supporting Wages</b></p>	<p><b>C+</b></p>	<p><b>Notable Progress:</b> Recent legislation will make it easier to track economic development subsidies to ensure these public investments are creating family-supporting, high quality jobs.</p> <p><b>Room for Improvement:</b> The state's minimum wage is not indexed to inflation. Also, little has been done to ensure financial aid access for low-skilled workers whose skills do not match up with employer needs and who are trying to return to school to improve their skills and credentials.</p>
<p><b>Safe and Affordable Housing</b></p>	<p><b>C</b></p>	<p><b>Notable Progress:</b> Wisconsin is being helped by increased availability of federal resources and additional funding for housing programs through the economic recovery package. This includes \$38 million to purchase, rehab and sell foreclosed properties to low-income families and to establish a National Housing Trust Fund.</p> <p><b>Room for Improvement:</b> Growing need continues to put pressure on resources cutting into the impact of increased federal funding. In 2008, over 23,000 households were threatened by foreclosures. Recession and loss of jobs/income push working poor deeper into poverty making it more difficult for them to afford housing.</p>
<p><b>Healthy Children</b></p>	<p><b>B</b></p>	<p><b>Notable Progress:</b> Wisconsin enjoyed a relatively high rate of health insurance coverage for children even before the implementation of BadgerCare Plus, and that new program has helped further reduce the number of uninsured children and parents.</p> <p><b>Room for Improvement:</b> Significant health disparities based on race and ethnicity still exist. Dental health services are frequently not available to many children, including those covered by BadgerCare and Medicaid. A shortage of local primary care providers, as well as transportation, language and cultural barriers, can all prevent children from receiving essential health services.</p>
<p><b>Early Care and Education</b></p>	<p><b>B-</b></p>	<p><b>Notable Progress:</b> There have been marked increases in four-year-old Kindergarten participation and access to Wisconsin Shares. Child care services have been consolidated in a new Department of Children and Families, and a state advisory council on early care and education was established.</p> <p><b>Room for Improvement:</b> Wisconsin still does not have a systematic approach to assess and improve the quality of early care and education.</p>

# To reach our goal of ending child poverty in Wisconsin by the year 2020, join us in supporting policies that...

## Promote Worker Skills and Create Family-Supporting Jobs

Investment in the creation of family-supporting jobs and the vital supports needed by working families will provide children with the financial resources they need to thrive.

- Promote opportunities for low-skilled workers to obtain skill training and education that meets the specific needs of employers statewide, including expansion of eligibility for financial aid;
- Ensure that workers earn family-supporting wages;
- Ensure that taxpayer investments are used to create jobs that pay family supporting wages; and
- Facilitate cooperation between Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies, Workforce Development Boards and technical colleges to enhance educational and basic skills offerings, and to help low-income adults complete post-secondary education.

## Expand Access to Affordable, Stable, and Safe Housing

Access to affordable, stable, safe and energy efficient housing is critical to economic self-sufficiency for children and their families. It ensures consistency in a child's education, promotes stable employment for parents and helps ensure that sufficient resources are available in the family budget to meet family member's needs. Children also thrive when they live in homes that are free from environmental toxins and family violence and that are located in safe and thriving communities.

- Create a statewide housing trust fund to support affordable housing initiatives throughout the state;
- Increase local flexibility to allow communities to expand affordable housing and address homelessness using local support and local strategies;
- Ensure the safety of the housing available to low-income families by promoting neighborhood revitalization, lead abatement and other measures; and
- Aggressively address homelessness by targeting resources at prevention.

## Expand Children's Access to Health Care and Ensure that Kids are Healthy

Quality health care promotes healthy child development. Children and families with access to quality health care experience increased success in school and fewer absences from work.

- Ensure that the every child in Wisconsin has access to affordable health care, including dental and mental health care;
- Simplify existing health care programs serving low-income families to minimize confusion, delays and unnecessary terminations from coverage;
- Eliminate racial and income-based disparities in access to health care and treatment;
- Improve health outcomes and services for infants; and
- Ensure that no child in Wisconsin is hungry.

## Ensure Children Have a Quality Education From the Start

From the beginning, the quality of the education that children receive has an enormous impact on their well being, including their future employment, earnings potential, ability to build assets and ability to participate meaningfully in the larger community.

- Create a foundation of excellence in early care and education by emphasizing the importance of highly qualified teachers and providers;
- Expand affordable access to high-quality early care and after-school programs;
- Support learning environments that ensure the health and safety of all children, regardless of ability or special needs; and
- Improve academic achievement for students from economically disadvantaged families.



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