

**Memorandum of Understanding
Between
Next Door Foundation and
Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW)**

Purpose

The overall purpose of this agreement is to enhance and expand the service network for the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW)-involved children and families and to provide more intensive supplemental services in the local community that will benefit child welfare populations. This initiative is built on the belief that intensive collaboration and coordination between Head Start and the BMCW will provide some of the most vulnerable children and families with access to an enriched learning environment, early identification of developmental delays, early intervention and prevention of health care needs, mental health services, family support, parent education and adult development services for parents and other family members.

Goal: To enroll and sustain participation of eligible children and families involved with the child welfare system to include those in out-of-home care and those served in their own homes.

1. **Recruitment** – NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will actively recruit children referred by BMCW throughout the program year as open slots become available. Children will be prioritized via the agency's selection criteria for enrollment. NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will provide recruitment information to BMCW and its partners. Once annually, NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will provide a recruitment fair for foster parents and case managers.
2. **Enrollment** – NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will provide a single point of contact for BMCW and its partners. BMCW and its contract partners will identify a single point of contact for Head Start & its contract delegates & partners and will identify children who meet eligibility requirements (NOTE: all children between the age of 3 to 5 in out-of-home care are categorically eligible), and provide name, birth date and child welfare status to the identified contact. NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will assist the caregiver or case manager with enrollment.
3. **Information Sharing** – BMCW will obtain appropriate release forms in order to share information with NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION that is directly related to the child's health status (i.e. physical examination, immunization records, and dental examination), mental health/disability services (i.e. IFSP or I.E.P), educational and social-emotional needs. NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will share appropriate information with BMCW and its partners referencing the child's development in the

program. BMCW and NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will collaborate on resources to the extent feasible when family needs are identified.

Goal: To ensure educational stability for children and families involved with the child welfare system.

1. **Threats to Enrollment** – When issues arise that may threaten a child’s continued enrollment in the program, NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will contact the case manager and/or the caregiver for resolution. BMCW will respond by facilitating a meeting with those involved.
2. **Mobility** – If the child should be moved to a different caregiver, or reunified, BMCW and NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall make efforts to maintain the child’s placement. If that is impossible, NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall find another site for the child. If transitioning to kindergarten or to another preschool program, BMCW and NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall work together to help the caregiver select a preschool or kindergarten setting that is an appropriate setting for the transition of the child.

Goal: To encourage and enhance collaboration among the parties in order to improve service delivery to target families.

1. **Case Conferences and Family Team Meetings** – BMCW and NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall work together to inform one another of relevant case conferences involving the child and family.
2. **Permanency Planning** – NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall work with BMCW and its partners to support the child welfare case plan, including permanency planning.
3. **Ongoing Meetings** – BMCW and NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall meet semi-annually to review this MOU.
4. **Training**— Upon request, BMCW will provide training and technical assistance for Head Start staff on topics relating to recognizing child abuse, mandated reporters, responding to child abuse and neglect, Wisconsin reporting laws etc. NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION will provide BMCW training and technical assistance on Head Start policies and procedures relating to enrollment, eligibility and services available.

Goal: To prevent/reduce child abuse and neglect.

1. **Reporting Abuse and Neglect** – NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall report all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to 220-SAFE. In the case where there is an existing relationship with NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION and the case manager, intake staff shall be informed of the relationship with the case manager. Initial Assessment staff is responsible for the completion of the investigation and ensuring an appropriate safety/protective plan.

2. **Abuse/Neglect Prevention Strategies – NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION** and BMCW shall work collaboratively on strategies to strengthen families, such as Parent Cafes. BMCW and NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION shall identify agency representatives to participate in planning for such activities.

The term of this agreement is July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. The agreement may be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and may be terminated for any reason with thirty days notice.

NEXT DOOR FOUNDATION Date

Department of Children and Families Date