

Sheltering Parenting Minors in Wisconsin

Gloria Reyes: Briarpatch Executive Director
Tyler Schueffner: Street Outreach Program
Whitney Thomas: Street Outreach Program



Defining the Issue

- A parenting minor has limited personal rights, let alone parental rights under current Wisconsin Law.
- Wisconsin is a state that has very strict emancipation rules, meaning minors are provided few legal rights / options when it comes to being parents of their own children.
 - [emancipation2014.pdf \(wahrs.org\)](#)
- Finally, what does it mean to "shelter" a minor?
 - [Child Welfare Facility Licensing - Group Homes, Residential Care Centers, Shelters, Child Placing Agencies | Wisconsin Department of Children and Families](#)

What currently happens?

Briarpatch Shelter is (often) the assumed resource for expecting and parenting minors, who are also experiencing housing insecurity.

- However, we have restrictions regarding who we serve and how we serve youth. This is often based on age (12-17) and expertise (runaway and homeless teens) and of course State Legislation and guidelines.
- Many assumptions are made about what can be done for a parenting teen.
- In some cases, the child of the child is resourced through county social services (CPS) or deferred to the parent(s) of the teen parent.
- But what happens if the teen parent lacks appropriate caretakers?
 - They struggle, and are often neglected, fending for themselves with little protection and legal support.


Starting Point: A need for Infrastructure

Stakeholder must be mindful, aware, and realistic about the challenges when confronting this issue;

- Prepare for a significant increase in public investment.
- Realistic organizational capacity to serve the challenges of a teen and an infant / baby.
- Address legislative barriers and liability issues which are massively restrictive.

Is it worth the
work and
investment?



A stylized illustration of a couple embracing. The man is on the right, wearing a dark suit and a large, prominent red circular earring. The woman is on the left, with dark curly hair. They are shown in profile, facing each other. The background is a solid grey color. The text "Love... and perseverance" is overlaid in the center in a white, sans-serif font, with a thin white horizontal line underneath it.

Love... and
perseverance



Advocacy and Collective efforts

Wisconsin Association for Homeless
and Runaway Services | Home
(wahrs.org)