**RESEARCH QUESTION**

Will families with children residing in the Northeastern Region of Wisconsin with a finalized adoption or guardianship who request services from one of the identified referral sources who receive Adoption and Guardianship Enhanced Support (AGES) experience a reduction in post permanency discontinuity, improved wellbeing, and improved behavioral health after receiving AGES?

**STUDY DESIGN**

Descriptive

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**PARTICIPATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>77 FAMILIES CALLED</th>
<th>42 SCREENED IN</th>
<th>32 FAMILIES SERVED</th>
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**COMMON ISSUES**

- 89% complicated mental health and medical issues
- 89% difficulty managing child’s behaviors
- 65% children were struggling in school
- 62% experienced caregiver burnout

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**FEEDBACK FROM CAREGIVERS**

Support was essential! Caregivers reported feeling less stressed as a result of having an AGES Worker who listened, provided guidance and advocated on behalf of them.

“[The AGES worker] literally saved our family...I don’t know that I could’ve gotten my point across without her putting it in another perspective for the principal and the guidance counselor. She also has trauma information. She knows how to go about talking to the school about the things that could come up because of their trauma. For whatever reasons, they’re less likely to just listen to [the caregiver] but somehow [the AGES worker] legitimizes our issues.”

"...I am not feeling so overwhelmed because I feel like I have help. [The AGES worker] would do whatever’s needed to be done to help reduce the stress in our family.”

**CHARACTERISTICS OF AGES WORKERS**

Ensuring the Right Fit. AGES workers took the time to get to know what the family needed and matched specific services with family needs.

Flexibility. AGES workers made home visits, met families where it was most convenient, and advocated at important meetings alongside the family.

Being Direct and Candid. AGES workers sometimes needed to have difficult discussions with families, in a gentle but direct manner.
This research summary was designed by staff at the Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing at The University of Texas at Austin, Steve Hicks School of Social Work, in conjunction with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University.

**Evaluation questions?** Please contact Nancy Rolock at nancy.rolock@case.edu or Rowena Fong at rfong@austin.utexas.edu.

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