

# Gov. Walker: First lady travels to DC to promote Fostering Futures

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*Working to help people better recognize, understand, and address the effects of traumatic childhood experiences*

**Madison** - Building on the momentum of sharing her message during Governor Scott Walker's 2017 State of the State address, First Lady Tonette Walker traveled to Washington D.C. this week to promote Fostering Futures, a science-based initiative aimed at understanding the effects of trauma in childhood. Establishing Wisconsin as a national leader in the Trauma Informed Care movement, the First Lady, along with Elizabeth Hudson, Director of Wisconsin's Office of Children's Mental Health, will present at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and meet with lawmakers to promote the initiative to help foster a positive environment in which all people can thrive and prosper. "By recognizing the effects of adverse childhood experiences, and training people so they understand and approach situations in a new light, we know we can change outcomes," First Lady Tonette Walker said. "The benefits of trauma informed care reach far beyond the person affected, extending to the family, community, state, and even the nation." Fostering Futures launched in 2011 as an initiative of Wisconsin's First Lady to raise awareness about how childhood trauma can dramatically shape a person's life. Developments in neuroscience and public health show that toxic stress affects the development of the brain, and that understanding what is causing challenging behaviors can help people avoid triggers and lead to more positive outcomes. Toxic stress can lead to difficulties in forming relationships, regulating and controlling emotions, and managing impulse control. Data also shows that childhood adversity is correlated with risk behaviors and negative health outcomes in adulthood. Creating trauma-informed spaces and services, promoting resilience, and raising awareness on the impact of trauma are all best practices in addressing and preventing the traumatic experiences. In partnership with state agencies and communities, as well as various foundations and nonprofit organizations, the First Lady is working to bring lasting, positive change to children and families by implementing the research-based approach that leverages information to help children and families move beyond cycles of harm caused by adverse childhood experiences.