



# DR. BRET RINGDAHL INITIATIVE

## Wisconsin Domestic Violence Research Initiative

State of Wisconsin | Purple Cactus | Est. 2026

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The Dr. Bret Ringdahl Initiative is a statewide research program dedicated to advancing evidence-based understanding of domestic violence in Wisconsin — examining its root causes, systemic intersections, and lasting effects on families — to inform policy, improve intervention strategies, and protect the most vulnerable members of our communities.*

### PRIMARY RESEARCH FOCUS

#### Substance Abuse, Mental Health & Domestic Violence

This initiative will conduct rigorous, longitudinal research examining the interdependent relationships between substance use disorders, mental health conditions, and domestic violence incidents across Wisconsin communities.

#### Key Research Areas:

- Prevalence of co-occurring substance use disorders among domestic violence offenders and survivors in Wisconsin
- Impact of opioid, alcohol, and methamphetamine use on the frequency and severity of domestic violence incidents
- Mental health diagnoses (PTSD, depression, anxiety) as risk factors and consequences of domestic violence
- Effectiveness of integrated treatment programs addressing substance abuse and domestic violence simultaneously
- Gaps in Wisconsin's current mental health and substance abuse support infrastructure for DV survivors

### SUB-RESEARCH CATEGORY

#### Impact of Domestic Violence on Child Witnesses

Children who witness domestic violence face profound and lasting developmental, psychological, and social consequences. This sub-initiative will dedicate focused research to understanding and addressing this critical population.

#### Research Objectives:

- Short- and long-term psychological effects on children who witness domestic violence, including trauma, behavioral disorders, and attachment issues
- Academic performance, social development, and school engagement outcomes for child witnesses in Wisconsin
- Intergenerational transmission of violence — likelihood of child witnesses becoming perpetrators or victims in adulthood
- Effectiveness of school-based and community intervention programs for at-risk youth in Wisconsin
- Barriers to mental health access for children in DV-affected households

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative & qualitative data collection  
Statewide surveys & longitudinal case studies

### STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

TBD

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Evidence-based policy recommendations  
Improved intervention frameworks  
Stronger child protection protocols