

Proposed Minutes
Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana
May 18, 2016, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Indiana State Library, Room 211
History Reference Room

Members Present:

- Dr. Jerome Adams, Indiana State Health Commissioner, Indiana State Department of Health
- Brian Bailey, Director, State Budget Agency; Indiana Department of Correction
- Christine Blessinger, Director, Department of Correction, Division of Youth Services
- Mary Beth Bonaventura, Director, Indiana Department of Child Services
- Representative David Frizzell
- Senator Travis Holdman
- Jane Seigel, Executive Director, Indiana Judicial Center/State Court Administration
- Larry Landis, Executive Director, Public Defender Council
- Senator Tim Lanane
- Susan Lightfoot, Chief Probation Officer, Henry County Probation Department;
- Danielle McGrath, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
- Kevin Moore, Director, Division of Mental Health and Addiction
- David Powell, Executive Director, Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council
- Representative Gail Riecken
- Glenda Ritz, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indiana Department of Education
- Justice Loretta Rush, Chief Justice of Indiana
- John Wernert, M.D., Secretary, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration
- Greg Zoeller, Indiana Attorney General

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Chief Justice Rush welcomed all attendees to the meeting and recognized Alan Berry and Garin Grist from the Department of Education for their help in providing webcasting support for the Commission on Improving the Status of Children (CISC).

Chief Justice Rush welcomed Jane Seigel to the CISC. Ms. Seigel is the Executive Director of the Indiana Judicial Center/State Court Administration. She replaces Lilia Judson who will be retiring soon. Chief Justice Rush noted that Representative Gail Riecken and Attorney General Greg Zoeller were in their last year on the CISC.

Chief Justice Rush also recognized Holly Merz and Barry Salovitz, Casey Family Programs (CFP), for their assistance with the CISC.

2. Approval of Minutes from the February 17, 2016 meeting.

The minutes from the February 17, 2016 meeting were approved.

3. Casey Family Programs Update, Holly Merz, Casey Family Programs.

a. *Task Force Retrospectives.*

Holly Merz provided a retrospective look at the work of the CISC through its task forces over the last three years to examine the efficiency of the current task force structure and suggest potential improvements. A draft of the retrospective was provided as part of the meeting's materials.

The retrospective concentrated on three principal areas of focus: communication between the task forces, the Executive Committee, and the full CISC; identification and implementation of priorities and activities; and CISC structure, including task force functioning and resources.

Ms. Merz first addressed the communication between task forces, the Executive Committee, and the CISC. Several relationships have been built out of the work done by the task forces. These relationships have created trust between agency members and trust in the CISC itself.

However, task force chairs reported feeling a "looseness" in their directives and responsibilities. They requested increased clarity in these areas to better respond to what the CISC is asking of them. In many cases the original purpose that led to the creation of the task force has been accomplished. The task force chairs suggested that short-term task forces could be created and aimed at a specific issue, then dissolved once they have completed their work.

Ms. Merz next addressed the identification and implementation of task force priorities and activities. Task force chairs were concerned about whether their assignments duplicate the work of another system or agency. Teen suicide was cited as an example; in addition to several task forces directly or indirectly addressing the issue, another outside entity was already actively pursuing solutions to the problem. Additionally, the breadth of some assignments left some task forces feeling more like study committees, a function they felt they lacked the resources to fulfill. The chairs believed that clarity in their directed tasks from the Executive Committee or the CISC would resolve those issues. If directives were sufficiently tailored to avoid these problems, the task force chairs felt that their groups would be more productive and more responsive to what the CISC sought.

Some task force members felt they were being asked for recommendations on matters in which their employment would normally prohibit them from doing so. In those circumstances, they felt that a process should be developed so that those recommendations came from the CISC, rather than the individuals.

Ms. Merz next turned to CISC structure, task force resources, and task force functioning. First, those task forces who had assigned staffing found it to be a huge blessing. Tasks like taking minutes, creating agendas, gathering and distributing documents, and finding locations for meetings were much easier when a staff person was assigned to the task force. Task forces without staff keenly feel their absence, and try to find staff from their own agencies to assist, although usually they are unsuccessful. Task force chairs are holding chair meetings before CISC meetings, and they find that practice to be a helpful one.

Task force chairs and Executive Committee members alike felt that the CISC had a chance to become a trusted entity in Indiana to make changes on behalf of Indiana's children if it uses its "political capital" wisely. The CISC is in a position to tackle complex, systemic problems that individual agencies could not solve on their own. All interviewed parties want to leverage that power to make a substantial difference in the lives of Indiana's children.

Ms. Merz made five principal recommendations for the CISC:

1. Develop a strategic plan for the next three years, including an ability to measure the impact of the work done by the CISC;
2. Explore time-limited and task-focused subcommittees in lieu of some task forces;
3. Clarify the roles, responsibilities, and functions of the task forces and any future subcommittees;
4. Identify processes that could benefit from more formalization or a more consistent framework for task force chairs to follow; and
5. Engage a full-time staff person whose duties would be to organize and staff the CISC, Executive Committee, and task forces.

On recommendation 4, Danielle McGrath added that submitting recommendations to someone like her to vet the implications of the recommendation might be useful. Sometimes, while a recommendation might not be appropriate for the CISC, it might be fine for an executive branch entity to handle. Filtering these recommendations will result in greater efficiency.

Chief Justice Rush stated that the August CISC meeting would be a strategic planning meeting for the CISC, to focus on where the CISC is going from here. Chief Justice Rush suggested that task force chairs should at least be asked if they want to remain on their respective task forces to avoid the feeling that they are stuck “appointed for life.”

Dr. Wernert suggested the examination of transformational metrics for the CISC. He wondered if it would be helpful to examine how other states have measured change in a transformational way.

Chief Justice Rush previously examined other states’ Children’s Commissions and worked backward to review their minutes. Some commissions never meet or slowly disband over time. Chief Justice Rush was skeptical that anything could be gained from that examination at this point because other states’ commissions have had only a modicum of success. The biggest thing learned from the first year of this CISC’s existence was that the people working with Indiana’s children did not know each other. The focus for the CISC should be on what it can accomplish next. The CISC has built the necessary foundation, and should now turn its attention to what it can get done. Chief Justice Rush would be interested in a successful model from other states, but did not find one when she searched for one.

Ms. Merz indicated Casey Family Programs (CFP) would look again for one. Ms. Merz suggested a focus on how other commissions might be examining their outcomes, how they set their priorities, and how they may have staffed themselves. Merz could only recall South Carolina as a potential source of that information.

b. *Strategic Review and Analysis of the Governor’s Adoption Study Committee Final Report.*

Ms. Merz presented CFP’s analysis of the Governor’s Adoption Study Committee’s final report, which CFP performed at the request of the Executive Committee.

CFP suggested the Child Services Oversight Committee should be responsible for implementation oversight of all the Governor’s Adoption Study Committee’s recommendations. Because the Child Services Oversight Committee might not have all the necessary people to effectively handle this task itself, CFP recommended that a subcommittee be created for which others could be brought in to assist in fulfilling the task of studying and advocating adoption. The Child Services Oversight Committee could act as a steering committee for the subcommittee. Based on the task force retrospective, Ms. Merz urged that the task given to this subcommittee be clearly defined and explained.

Chief Justice Rush recounted that the goal is to make Indiana an adoption-friendly state, and the task is to figure out how to get there. Chief Justice Rush noted the use of the term “long stayers” in the report, used to describe children who have been in care for two years or longer who are waiting on permanency.

Ms. Merz explained that it is a relatively new term used in the child welfare field. There is a renewed emphasis on this population in the field, with many feeling this population needs to be addressed in a different way and reexamined to help move them to permanency, sometimes by eliminating systemic barriers and others by rethinking a permanency option. CFP is doing a fair bit of work in this area.

4. Updates to Governor’s Adoption Study Committee Final Report, Department of Child Services. *Jane Bisbee, Department of Child Services.*

Jane Bisbee presented on updates to the final report issued by the Governor’s Adoption Study Committee. Ms. Bisbee chaired that committee, and stated that there were three areas in which recommendations were made by the Governor’s Adoption Study Committee to the Department of Child Services (DCS): adoption awareness, a social media campaign on adoption, and paying for fingerprints for DCS adoptions.

For adoption awareness, Ms. Bisbee noted that DCS had created an adoption brochure prior to the recommendation that detailed post-adoption services for adoptive families. Ms. Bisbee believes that any adoption brochure must cover both DCS-related adoptions and private adoptions. DCS offers post-adoption services to both families who adopted through DCS and families who adopted privately. Adoptive families receive this brochure when they adopt through the child welfare system. In addition, the brochure is available online and is handed out at county fairs, adoption events, and Heart Gallery sites. Often families only become aware after adoption that their adopted child needs services. The brochure is designed to explain what services are available and how the adoptive family can access them. The number of families taking advantage of post-adoption services in Indiana has risen in each of the last four years, from 200 families in 2012 to 318 families in 2015.

Chief Justice Rush asked if the brochure could be supplied to trial court judges who perform adoptions and to probation officers who may need information on these resources. Ms. Bisbee believed DCS could do so. Ms. Bisbee noted that families were the primary contact point for these brochures. Ms. Bisbee recently spoke to the Child Welfare Improvement Committee, who are working on a project involving legal orphans. Legal orphans are children who both have their parents’ rights terminated and who have been in care for longer than two years.

One conclusion arising from the Governor’s Adoption Study Committee was that DCS needed to be more visible in promoting adoption, particularly in social media. DCS is working on doing so. DCS had these outlets active before the study group, and has ramped them up since the study group’s findings were released.

On Facebook, the accounts [IndianaAdoptionProgram](#) and [IndianaHeartGallery](#) are dedicated to promoting adoption efforts. The Heart Gallery rotates pictures of special needs youth who are available for adoption. Accompanying the pictures is a brochure individualized to that child, talking about the child’s personality, the type of potential family who would best fit the child, and how to learn more about adopting that child. The Heart Gallery travels all across the state to different places and events, including libraries, churches, and other family-friendly places where people congregate. The Heart Gallery features mostly older children who have been in the system for some period of time. Occasionally one of the children featured will come and speak at the opening of the Heart Gallery, which can be quite emotional. Bisbee also mentioned Family Fun Fairs, which DCS runs at local county fairs and other family events.

The website adoptachild.in.gov provides information about adoption to prospective adoptive families and includes children available for adoption. Twitter accounts @IndianaDCS, @adopt_in_IN, and @INHeartGallery also promote adoption in the state. Traditional media sources, including newspaper articles, also provide publicity for adoption.

For National Adoption Month, events were held in fourteen of the eighteen DCS regions, including an Adoption Fair held by Governor Pence. One of the recommendations made to DCS was to increase the number of adoptions done during National Adoption Month, which is November. In Lake County, 47 adoptions were completed in November. Chief Justice Rush noted the increased trial court participation in National Adoption Day, and Director Bonaventura extended her thanks to the judiciary for their collaboration in running and promoting National Adoption Day events. Chief Justice Rush also asked if National Adoption Day coverage was linked in local media coverage of Heart Gallery events. Ms. Bisbee stated she believed that was being done but DCS would emphasize that more going forward.

On DCS payment of fingerprint costs for adoptive parents, Ms. Bisbee stated that fingerprint costs are reimbursable through the Nonrecurring Adoption Expenses allotment of \$1,500.00.

Ms. Bisbee also noted that May is National Foster Care Month. Radio and television advertisements from the Department of Child Services recognizing National Foster Care Month were played. Chief Justice Rush expressed concern about the need for more foster parents given the increase in CHINS cases. Unless something changes, the large influx of CHINS cases will result in a greater need for foster and adoptive parents. Director Bonaventura agreed with that opinion, and was hopeful that the campaign would produce more foster parents. If more foster parents did come into the system she suspected the rate at which foster parents chose to adopt would remain relatively unchanged. Further, Director Bonaventura believed based on recent information that while CHINS cases are not decreasing, the rate at which they are increasing is slowing.

Ms. Bisbee stated that DCS was having internal conversations about permanency for long stayers, many of whom are older youth. Those conversations have been supplemented by national data supplied by CFP. DCS is discussing increased vigilance in finding appropriate permanency options for those children who are long stayers. DCS is also seeking providers who will help them think outside the box to find or develop options for these children. Bisbee mentioned Wendy's Wonderful Kids as one service they already use for this purpose.

Dr. Wernert asked if there were any groups of kids for which there was a particular unmet need. Ms. Bisbee replied that teenagers and black males were both populations that needed assistance. Ms. Bisbee stressed the importance of keeping children in sibling groups together, as the practice is better for all of the children in the group. Sometimes DCS or the court must make difficult decisions about whether to split sibling groups where some siblings are more adoptable than others. Ms. Bisbee also mentioned children who have previously been adopted and have returned to the system as difficult to place. However, Ms. Bisbee said that DCS has a child in Collaborative Care currently who is 18 and is being adopted. DCS never stopped looking for permanency options for that child, even when the Collaborative Care transition occurred. DCS diligently looks for homes for 17-19 year olds. When asked about where these kids reside across the state, Ms. Bisbee stated that many are in the bigger counties, citing Marion and Lake as examples. Where smaller counties may have a few of these children on their caseloads, the larger counties have entire caseloads of them.

Chief Justice Rush returned to the National Adoption Day celebrations and the importance of positive media coverage of these events, asking if there were any strategy in the works to be more aggressive about

the size and scope of what's offered. Ms. Bisbee replied that Judge Dana Kenworthy of Grant County has been a major cheerleader for this program and has advocated it to other judges. In 2014, there were 1,038 adoptions. In 2015, the number rose to 1,241.

Susan Lightfoot explained that probation officers were seeing disruptions in their foster placements too, and that there was a need on the probation side for more foster placements. Director Bonaventura agreed that there was a need. A foster family who accepts a delinquent child can be quite different from a family accepting Children in Need of Services (CHINS). Not all foster homes are the same. Director Bonaventura pointed out that the issue for DCS is not having enough foster homes, as they have plenty, but having enough of the right foster homes to match the present need. Nearly every foster home will take an infant, but not every foster home will take a teenager. Even traumatized 5, 6, and 7 year olds can be hard to place. DCS has a really good campaign for teenagers.

Chief Justice Rush noted this issue will be important as the CISC discusses its strategic plan, as the problem is not going away, and that Indiana is a state that is rich for this issue. Bisbee stated that many people in the room had shared positive adoption stories with her. Ms. Bisbee also explained that there are limits on the number of foster children who can be placed in a given foster home. If a foster home adopts all the children placed there, the home is no longer able to be licensed as a foster home. Thus, there is a constant need to renew the supply of foster parents as current foster parents adopt.

5. Indiana State Department of Health.

a. Indiana Violent Death Reporting System, *Katie Hokanson, Indiana State Department of Health.*

Chief Justice Rush welcomed Katie Hokanson, Director of Trauma and Injury Prevention at the Indiana State Department of Health, to talk about the Indiana Violent Death Reporting System. The National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) is a national system with online data currently available for eighteen states. The system expanded to 32 states in 2014, although data are not yet available for the new states. Participating states collect data through partnerships to inform efforts to prevent trauma and violent death. The system includes comprehensive information on violent deaths in those states from an incident-based system. Thus, the system is able to link related deaths such as murder-suicides and suicide pacts. Increased funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2014 is allowing for greater collection of critical data on violent deaths for the next five years. Funding was based on the number of violent deaths, and Indiana was above the national average.

The goal of the NVDRS is to establish a system providing high quality, comprehensive, timely data that can be compared. The manners of death considered by the system include suicide, homicide, undetermined intent, unintentional firearm death, legal intervention, and terrorism. Indiana's system works closely with the state child fatality review system. Ms. Hokanson explained that "Undetermined Intent" meant the case was unclear as to whether it was a homicide or suicide.

The Indiana Violent Death Reporting System started collecting data on January 1, 2015. Preliminary numbers from that date to the present show 1,545 statewide cases: 966 suicides, 396 homicides, 152 undetermined, and 31 accidental. More than 75 of these cases involved children under 18. The project has 44 data sharing agreements with local coroners and 251 with local law enforcement agencies, and has received over 1,000 coroner and law enforcement records. In response to a question from David Powell, Ms. Hokanson clarified that the system does not receive these records until the case is actually closed. The emphasis is on accuracy of the reported data. However, the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is working to improve the timeliness of reporting. This is the first year of the grant for this project, and therefore ISDH is still in the process of establishing a baseline for it.

Routinely, it takes about five days to receive records from law enforcement and about thirty days to receive them from a coroner's office once the case is closed. The coroner or law enforcement agency makes the decision as to when the case is closed. The INVDRS staff members prefer to view the full autopsy or investigative report before adding data to the system, and would rather wait for that report to arrive than jeopardize a pending case. Thus, if a prosecution or investigation is pending, staff will not receive data for that case until that proceeding is concluded, even if it stays open for several years. However, death certificate information is received more quickly and entered upon receipt.

David Powell asked whether the data included drug overdoses. The system recently acquired another new grant to collect all the poisoning deaths in the state, including prescription drug and illegal drug overdoses. Those overdoses will be separately categorized from violent deaths. Chief Justice Rush asked, given the opioid epidemic in the state, if anyone else was collecting this data. Ms. Hokanson said that the ISDH has access to mortality data to confirm these, but in cases where multiple drugs were used, the overdose is simply listed as a poly-drug overdose.

Chief Justice Rush again referenced the growing opioid concerns, stating that everyone is saying the state has seen vast increases in opioid use over the last few years. Ms. Hokanson replied that the last mortality data set they have available, 2014, confirms that surge.

b. Infant Mortality and Other Updates, *Art Logsdon, Indiana State Department of Health*

Art Logsdon explained that infant mortality is defined as the death of a baby before his/her first birthday. Infant mortality is the #1 indicator of health status in the world. There are large disparities of infant mortality in the state, particularly among race and ethnicity. Mr. Logsdon mentioned that there are certain ZIP codes in the state that have as much to do with a prospective mother's health as her own choices. This reality exemplifies the social determinants of health.

Indiana has been statistically worse than the U.S. rate and the national goal every year. Indiana was at 7.1 infant deaths per thousand, as opposed to a 5.82 U.S. rate and a 6.0 national goal. In Indiana, black infants are 2.5 times more likely to die than white infants. Sudden Unexplained Infant Deaths (SUIDs) also typically occur at a higher rate in Indiana. Statistical slides were showing depicting this information.

The Safety PIN bill appropriated \$13.5 million to fight infant mortality. Of that money, \$2.5 million is dedicated to develop a two-way app for pregnant women to encourage better prenatal care. The far larger portion is money to distribute through a grant program seeking innovative approaches to address infant mortality. Applications for the grant are due July 1, 2016.

The Labor of Love public information campaign is another initiative, although it is currently tapering off. It was targeted at five large population centers – Allen, Elkhart, Lake, Marion, and St. Joseph counties. It targeted low-income women of childbearing age, teenagers, and different ethnic groups. Several media were used to conduct the campaign, including radio, digital, and ethnic-specific media. Transit ads were important, and buses carrying the ads traveled nearly 750,000 miles over the course of the campaign. Ads appeared both outside and inside the buses. News boxes out and around the Statehouse were used as part of this campaign. Mr. Logsdon recognized the need for social media use and website updates to keep the message current.

The ISDH is now interviewing for an Infant Mortality Education Liaison to contact specific populations, such as physicians, and carry the ISDH message to them.

The fourth annual Infant Mortality Summit is on October 17, 2016 at the J.W. Marriott in Indianapolis, and is reaching out to first responders this year. The theme is “Success Through Partnerships.” The event features several speakers and a local news reporter as host.

Other programs include: Baby and Me, Tobacco Free to eliminate smoking; an emphasis on breastfeeding; Centering Pregnancy; Child Fatality Review; Marion County Hospital Moms Helpline; Nurse-Family Partnership; Safe Sleep; a Neo-natal Abstinence Syndrome four-hospital pilot study; and, a newborn screening program. Future programs will include Levels of Care, which has been referenced in past meetings. Chief Justice Rush asked if the Neo-natal Abstinence Syndrome study was optional. Mr. Logsdon acknowledged it was, but believed that despite self-reporting, the study would still provide a baseline to work from. The actual numbers will be higher than the study shows. Chief Justice Rush referenced a national rate of 18-20% of newborns with drugs in their system, and asked whether it was possible to calculate Indiana’s rate. Logsdon replied that the Health Department only had the legal authority to conduct the voluntary study currently underway. Dr. Wernert recalled data he had recently read indicating the Nurse-Family Partnership’s success. Mr. Logsdon agreed and mentioned that the program had recently been expanded to include Lake County.

Senator Lanane asked if there were any identifiable reason why Indiana lags behind in infant mortality. Mr. Logsdon stated that as a state, Indiana simply is not a very healthy state. Hoosiers smoke too much, are overweight, and do not focus enough on pre-conception care. Senator Lanane asked what Indiana could do better as a state to try to address the infant mortality rate, suggesting that perhaps education on the topic could be increased in the school system. Mr. Logsdon was cautious of overloading already busy educators, but agreed such an approach could potentially be fruitful.

Superintendent Ritz asked about rates of teenage pregnancies in Indiana. Mr. Logsdon stated that with the help of the Management Performance Hub, the ISDH has been able to identify teenage pregnancy as a significant issue in the state. Superintendent Ritz asked if data could be acquired geographically to identify areas of concern for teenage pregnancy, and Mr. Logsdon agreed to do so. Ritz then asked about who specifically could apply for the Safety PIN grants, and Mr. Logsdon agreed that a way could probably be found for schools to apply as non-profit entities.

Representative Riecken asked about how the child fatality review program was functioning after having been moved to the ISDH. Mr. Logsdon stated it was functioning very well, and there are now child fatality review teams in 91 of 92 counties. Representative Riecken then asked if any trends had been identified from the data gathered by those teams. The statewide child fatality review team meets every year to discuss and analyze the data received. Mr. Logsdon stated that child fatality review is all about prevention, and no fault is attributed through this process.

6. Recommendations from the CISC Task Forces.

a. Educational Outcomes Task Force, Dr. Susan Lockwood, Indiana Department of Correction

Dr. Susan Lockwood identified truancy as one topic the Educational Outcomes Task Force has tried to make an impact on. Dr. Lockwood differentiated between the majority of kids who follow the standard K-12 model, and those children who need assistance to complete their studies in that way. Another path is through the Adult Basic Education system, run through the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). Dr. Lockwood identified a program called Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG), which is run by Leslie Crist, Director of Youth Initiatives at DWD.

JAG is a dropout prevention, recovery, and school-to-career transition program targeted at at-risk youths. There are two parts of JAG: in-school and out of school. Dr. Lockwood focused on the in-school portion. JAG is a class offered in high schools. Governor Daniels first brought the program to Indiana and piloted it in 12 high schools. The JAG program identifies children who could benefit from additional adult support. JAG Specialists aid teenagers with counseling, job searching, skill development, and other career-related activities. The program is operated out of WorkOne's offices. The expected outcomes include high school diplomas, employment, and higher education or military participation. The program has expanded from 12 pilot schools to a total of 106 schools in the state. The legislature recently funded \$11-13 million into the program to allow more schools in the state to take advantage of it. Governor Pence is a member of the JAG national board.

The program usually identifies potential participants in sophomore year of high school, based on the presence of barriers that could prevent them from graduating. These decisions are based on hard data gained from the child and others working with the child. A particular feature of the program is competency attainment, where during the daily JAG class the students work not only on schoolwork but also job and life skills. There are 88 identified competencies in the program. Dr. Lockwood stated that JAG targets students who need the one-on-one assistance and peer group support that JAG can provide. JAG Coordinators assist students with college applications, college tours, the FAFSA, and scholarships.

The top barriers for JAG Indiana students include either the student or their parents having inadequate or no work experience, lacking marketable occupation skills, and being economically disadvantaged. Other notable barriers include truancy, parents not graduating high school, disciplinary history, and transportation.

JAG has a number of partnerships for the purpose of accomplishing the program's goals. These include local businesses, existing JAG schools, state agencies, and other local leaders. The performance goals of the program consist of a 90% completion rate by 12 months past graduation, 80% positive outcomes after the 12 month follow-up phase, and 60% of the participants being employed full-or part-time. Data from 2014 show steady improvement in performance and exceed the performance goals in each category. Further, JAG Indiana expects that 100% of its students will complete Indiana Career Explorer assessments, register on the Indiana Job Matching Website with a resume and cover letter, fill out at least two college applications, take the SAT or ACT, and complete the FAFSA.

The Educational Outcomes Task Force believed this program has meaningfully moved the needle for the target population of truant children. Therefore, the Task Force is recommending that funding for the program be expanded so that every school in the state that wants the program can implement it. The Task Force hoped that the CISC would endorse that recommendation, but was unsure what the next step would be after that.

Dr. Wernert asked about a baseline for the results shown to the CISC, but Dr. Lockwood stated she did not develop the slides and data presented and therefore was unaware of any further information. The data in the slides reflected JAG Indiana's performance since its implementation, but Dr. Lockwood was unsure to what that data was being compared. Dr. Wernert then suggested that part of the strategy for obtaining funding might be to take the demonstrated change in outcomes created by the program and ascribe a dollar value to that change. Dr. Lockwood replied that the Task Force had thought of that strategy and believed it was a viable one. Dr. Lockwood thought the Department of Workforce Development could be helpful in that endeavor.

Senator Lanane remarked that the most striking results were the change in entering employment from 41% in 2010 to 69% in 2014. Dr. Lockwood suggested that the large improvement there could be partially

attributed to the students' completion of high school. Senator Lanane then asked if there were any data about what percentage of these students remained in the work force several years later. Dr. Lockwood stated she was sure such data existed and that DWD would have it.

Based on the already extant 106 programs, Representative Frizzell asked what general amount of additional funding would be needed. Dr. Lockwood was unsure, but the general hope of the Task Force was to make the program available to any public school that wanted to implement it.

Superintendent Ritz brought up a potential obstacle to further funding for this program: whether funding streams for JAG and for alternative school programs could mix. Superintendent Ritz also referenced a potential partnership with the 21st Century Scholars program, noting that the two programs seem to have a natural connection. Both programs are identifying kids who are potentially the first in their family to go to college. The 21st Century Scholars program does not currently have a high completion rate. Dr. Lockwood noted that the Commission on Higher Education and the 21st Century Scholars program are currently partners with JAG. Superintendent Ritz was particularly concerned that the three programs maintain a higher level of communication, because the mentoring provided by JAG is precisely what these students need to stay the course and complete their 21st Century Scholars requirements.

Superintendent Ritz also cautioned that the simple act of acquiring employment was not enough; these students need to obtain a sustainable wage in order for the program to be truly successful. With those reservations, Superintendent Ritz praised the program, stating it provided mentoring and support for students who are most in need of it.

Dr. Lockwood then reiterated the Task Force's recommendation that the program be offered to all schools. Danielle McGrath suggested the next step should be conferring with DWD to find out the needed amount of funding and support. In reference to Superintendent Ritz's comments on a sustainable wage, she noted Governor Pence has appropriated \$48 million this biennial for marketable skill education. Using the SkillUp program which is part of those funds, students who receive lower skilled jobs can be transformed into higher skilled workers. Ms. McGrath suggested the Governor's Office can help ensure that all these different programs are coordinating with each other and being as efficient as they can be for the benefit of Indiana's youth.

Chief Justice Rush complimented the Educational Outcomes Task Force on its high activity level and effort to identify programs that are actually working to improve the situation for students in Indiana. Chief Justice Rush noted the need for a coordinated response and cooperation between the active programs in this area to ensure this effort is effective and not duplicative. As she understood it, Chief Justice Rush stated the Task Force was seeking the CISC's endorsement of their recommendation to further implement the JAG program in Indiana, after which the Task Force would then take that endorsement to resume work on the project. The Task Force, then, will answer the question of what the next step is if the recommendation is endorsed.

Superintendent Ritz noted the graduation rate for youths with an individualized graduation plan who participate in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program is 95%. That program, however, is for 11th and 12th graders. Indiana needs to identify the kids who need a program like this and get them in the CTE pipeline earlier to provide them with all the available resources to succeed. A concerted effort is necessary to coordinate these programs and bring them all to bear on those who need them most. Another relevant issue is mobility. Ritz cited a poverty rate of 22% and explained that those students move around a lot. Thus, these students do not necessarily attend the same high school for all of their high school years. Ensuring continuity and access from school to school and county to county will improve the chances of

these youth to be successful. As such, access to the youth's information needs to be able to flow between the programs in different places.

The motion to approve the Task Force's recommendation and charge the Task Force with reporting back to the CISC on the next steps passed unanimously.

7. Legislative Update. *Parvonay Stover, Department of Child Services*

Parvonay Stover, Legislative Director, Department of Child Services, provided the CISC with an update on legislation. Many pending bills were discussed at the CISC's meeting in February, and the language in those bills is substantially identical to February's presentations. Thus, Stover did not revisit many of those bills.

Part of SEA 305 - Department of Child Services Matters is the creation of a new CHINS category for human trafficking cases. Stover paused to thank Representative Frizzell and Senator Lanane for their support in ensuring the passage of SEA 305. Existing law generally requires DCS to make reasonable efforts to reunify children with their parents. However, if the parent has committed a serious offense such as murder, courts may find that DCS is not required to make reasonable efforts to reunify. Human trafficking is now one of those offenses.

HEA 1005 – Various Education Matters is primarily an education bill, but it includes a provision requiring schools to conduct a Child Protection Index check on all potential hires in response to high profile cases involving teachers engaging in inappropriate conduct with students. The bill also prohibits schools from hiding known information about substantiated claims of abuse or neglect when the employee seeks a job elsewhere and the new employer seeks a reference. DCS believes that the bill will assist in ensuring the safety of students from potential perpetrators.

SEA 339 – Daily Fantasy Sports legalizes daily fantasy sports in the state of Indiana. Contained within the bill is a provision allowing the collection of delinquent child support from fantasy sports winnings. DCS is hopeful the bill will allow for increased collection of delinquent child support for children in Indiana.

SEA 357 – Registry of Convicted Child Abusers requires the courts to create an online child abuse registry containing information about convicted child abusers. Related offenses include neglect of a dependent, child selling, sex offenses against a child, or battery against a child. The law was created in response to a child's death at an in-home daycare a couple of years ago. The daycare provider had a conviction for neglect of a dependent. The child's parents worked with Senator Yoder and other legislators to ensure that other parents would have a mechanism to check the safety of people working with their child.

Chief Justice Rush mentioned HEA 1369 – Juvenile Justice, which required the CISC to study and evaluate innovative juvenile justice programs, including juvenile community corrections, and consult with the Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council about the distribution of funds for juvenile community corrections. The Cross Systems Youth Task Force is looking at that issue, along with the Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee. Chief Justice Rush requested that if any CISC member knew of any entity also considering the issue, they inform the CISC so that work on the task can be effectively coordinated.

On SEA 357 – Registry of Convicted Child Abusers, Chief Justice Rush stated the judiciary received funding from the legislature for Court Technology last year, and part of that funding is going toward the creation of this child abuse registry. Some of that funding is also being applied toward implementation of

NPLEX, which tracks methamphetamine precursor sales. There may be a demonstration of the registry offered to the CISC at some point in the future.

8. Open Discussion.

a. CHINS cases, recent increase

Director Bonaventura offered data on the increase in CHINS cases throughout the state. CHINS cases have risen from 13,763 in April 2011 to 20,821 in April 2016. Informal Adjustments have risen from 1,830 in April 2011 to 2,868 in April 2016. Director Bonaventura discussed the national drug epidemic as a potential cause of this dramatic increase. There used to be areas in Indiana where either methamphetamine or heroin was used; now users are consuming both. The Governor's Task Force on Drug Enforcement, Treatment, and Prevention has done considerable work in this area, including treatment options, availability of facilities, and length of stay.

As an aside, Director Bonaventura noted that the length of time children are in care has increased, and correlated that extension to the considerable time and effort required for parents to attain sobriety from opiates. In her prior experience as Lake County judge, Director Bonaventura handled all termination of parental rights cases, and in her estimation 95% of them had substance abuse problems.

Director Bonaventura showed a second graph that indicated the vast majority of cases brought in month-to-month are neglect cases, with much smaller amounts of physical abuse and sexual abuse. This matches national and international trends. Most of these neglect cases relate to parental substance abuse, although they do not specifically list it as the cause.

A third graph showed that DCS has increased the percentage of CHINS placements in the state from 29% to 35%, and decreased foster care placements and residential placements.

Chief Justice Rush noted the huge spike in 2015 and asked if DCS was seeing the same sort of spike in 2016. Parvony Stover explained that from the end of fiscal year 2014 to the end of fiscal year 2015 there was a 26% increase in CHINS cases. From the end of fiscal year 2015 to present, there is currently a 12% increase in CHINS cases. Thus, CHINS cases in the state are still increasing, but the pace of growth is slowing.

Chief Justice Rush asked if any other trends were being observed in neglect cases besides the presence of substance abuse issues. Director Bonaventura stated DCS had identified no other trends, but as part of their new contract with Redwood Toxicology DCS now knew a lot more about which drugs were being taken and where they were being taken. The top three drugs in the state are opioids (including both prescription drugs and heroin), marijuana, and alcohol.

Chief Justice Rush asked if children being removed from the home were being generally screened for drugs. Director Bonaventura believed they generally were not, unless there was a reason to believe the child was using. DCS knows not to take personal items or clothing from children removed from a home where methamphetamine is being made because those items are covered with the substance. Chief Justice Rush's concern was that many removed children screen positive as a result of secondary exposure.

Chief Justice Rush asked how DCS was managing to keep up with the significant increase. Director Bonaventura replied that assistance from the Governor's Office and legislature has been crucial in the agency's ability to deal with the increased numbers. The addition of new case managers has been one strategy. Director Bonaventura acknowledged that some around the table might feel that with more case

managers comes more cases as a matter of course, but she did not agree with that sentiment. No one person in DCS makes the final decision about a removal. Such a decision is always a team decision. In Director Bonaventura's experience, younger case managers are more likely to leave a family intact than more experienced ones, because they believe they can save more families. Adding more case managers, though, is only a short term answer to meet the statutory mandate of DCS. In the long term, though, this is not just a DCS issue – it is a societal problem. Director Bonaventura believed that Indiana was leading the way on fighting this battle on a number of fronts.

Director Bonaventura referenced a recent report released by President Obama containing a number of recommendations about preventing child fatalities. DCS has already been implementing some of these recommendations. DCS has contacted a group called Eckerd in Florida which has information on children most at risk to suffer a fatality and will be using this information in conjunction with removal decisions to help prevent future fatalities before they occur. Eckerd gained this information by profiling victims of child fatality and identifying common traits. The program, Rapid Safety Feedback, began in Tampa. Tampa has not had a child fatality since the program was instituted.

Senator Lanane asked about the most common drug information. Director Bonaventura clarified that methamphetamine was not classified as an opioid. Users are generally poly-substance abusers; those who test positive for heroin are probably drinking and using marijuana as well when they cannot get heroin. Director Bonaventura believed that the order of prevalence was alcohol, marijuana, and then opioids. Senator Lanane asked if there was any way to tell definitively what percentage of CHINS cases are substance abuse related. Director Bonaventura explained that only one particular reason for removal can be listed, and usually DCS lists the most egregious one. Therefore, if there is a substance abuse issue and a sexual abuse issue in the same case, DCS will list the sexual abuse. DCS knows that roughly 52% of removals are directly tied to substance abuse, but that number largely undercounts the amount of removals where substance abuse is involved.

Representative Frizzell commented that for the first time, he is receiving positive comments about the work of DCS from constituents who call him rather than criticism. Representative Frizzell credited that to Director Bonaventura's leadership in her role.

b. Strategic Planning for the Commission on Improving the Status of Children.

This matter was delayed for discussion following Barry Salovitz's presentation.

9. Report: *Within Our Reach – A National Strategy to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities.* Barry Salovitz, Casey Family Programs

Barry Salovitz is a consultant assigned by CFP to the state of Indiana. Mr. Salovitz briefly summarized the child welfare background of CFP. Salovitz reviewed the work of the national Commission to End Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities (Commission). Dr. David Sanders, Executive Vice President at CFP and former child welfare director of the City of Los Angeles, chaired the Commission.

Mr. Salovitz related that nothing is more soul-crushing than a child dying at the hands of their caregivers. This Commission was created in 2013 to develop a national strategy to reduce abuse and neglect-created fatalities. Insufficient data exist regarding child abuse and neglect fatalities and ways to prevent them. While these fatalities may not be remedied 100%, there still should be an interest in what more could be done to ensure fewer fatalities occur and more children are protected. It is estimated that there are between 1,500-3,000 abuse and neglect fatalities each year. The Commission had 12 members and about 20 staff.

They spent two years doing fact-finding and research review around the country, and collecting expert testimony in public hearings. The result of that effort was a report entitled *Within Our Reach*. A fact sheet was contained within the materials, and the full report could be obtained at <https://eliminatechildabusefatalities.sites.usa.gov>. The full report includes a minority report from one of the Commission members.

After two years of study, the Commission concluded that 4 to 8 children likely die each day from child abuse and neglect fatalities. One principal finding of the report was that there is no consistent way to count abuse and neglect fatalities, so the Commission could not be precisely sure (hence the estimated 4 to 8). Most of the fatalities are young children: 75% are under 3 years old, and of those, 50% are under 1 year old. There currently is no way to accurately predict fatalities, although considerable research has now begun, of which the Eckerd study previously mentioned is one such effort. The best predictor, currently, is a call to the child abuse hotline. Hotline screening practices are worth reviewing on this basis to ensure potential fatalities are not being screened out of the system. There are few available evidence-based solutions to child fatalities. One such solution is the Nurse-Family Partnership, which evidence shows does reduce the rate of such incidents.

The Commission's first recommendation is a five-year retrospective review of all child fatalities in each state. This recommendation was controversial, in part because of cost. The second recommendation is a review of state screening policies, including screening, response time, and questions asked. The third recommendation is to enable sharing of real-time information among key partners including DCS and law enforcement. The problem of abuse and neglect fatalities for one agency to be able to shoulder the load without help.

The fourth recommendation involves conditioning Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act funding on review of life threatening injuries caused by abuse or neglect along with child fatalities. The fifth seeks federal standards for all agencies to have protocols to reduce child abuse and neglect fatalities, even if their principal purpose is not child welfare. Examples include home visiting programs and Medicaid. Another recommendation is for a federal minimum standard for mandatory professional reporters of child abuse and neglect and quality training for these professionals.

Foundational recommendations to reach the above goals include requiring the Children's Bureau to report directly to the head of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the development of a comprehensive plan in each state to prevent child abuse and neglect fatalities, joint congressional committee hearings, the allocation of funding by Congress for these recommendations, and flexible funding in existing entitlement programs. Indiana has been a pioneer in flexible Title IV-E funding for many years now.

Mr. Salovitz discussed the need for a public health response to the problem of child abuse and neglect fatalities, and suggested that sort of effort has been the hallmark of the CISC's work over the past three years in Indiana. Mr. Salovitz stated the report and its recommendations would have obvious relevance to the Infant Mortality and Child Health Task Force as well as to DCS and the Child Services Oversight Committee. To implement the recommendations, multi-system coordination will be required as well as data fidelity. Salovitz also emphasized the importance of safety-focused interventions like the Nurse-Family Partnership, and encouraged the CISC to seek out other similar initiatives operating in Indiana. Mr. Salovitz suggested the report may be relevant to the strategic planning the CISC is about to undertake, and implementing its recommendations may be a major goal going forward.

Chief Justice Rush suggested it may be helpful to provide copies of the report to each member of the CISC. Mr. Salovitz agreed to look into that. Dr. Wernert asked to what degree the Commission reviewed

multi-generational policies to aid children and resolve issues with parents that might cause risk to children. Mr. Salovitz replied that the report was written very much with a prevention focus from a state as well as a federal standpoint. The intent is to intervene before a terrible incident occurs, with a public health, cross-system focus. Dr. Wernert emphasized the importance of HHS reallocating funds on the health care side. Right now, health care agencies are in the paradoxical position of paying more and getting less. Spending those dollars intelligently is imperative to gain traction in this fight. Salovitz agreed, and noted funding recommendations are among the most controversial in the report. Ultimately Congress will have to make decisions in that arena.

Superintendent Ritz asked what a “place-based intact family court” means. The term was used in the fact sheet distributed to the CISC to help with disproportionate numbers of African-American child fatalities. Salovitz was not exactly sure but said he would get back to her on that matter.

If the CISC selects a couple of the recommendations to attempt to implement or learn more about, Mr. Salovitz asked to be notified. Mr. Salovitz may even be able to bring Dr. Sanders to speak to the CISC and give more in-depth information.

Chief Justice Rush reiterated her desire to get the report into the hands of CISC members to begin delving into the material, and commended DCS on already being involved in initiatives to implement the report. Chief Justice Rush also thanked CFP for their substantial assistance and support to Indiana.

10. Strategic Planning for the Commission on Improving the Status of Children.

Chief Justice Rush stated that the August CISC meeting will be a Strategic Planning meeting where priorities for the next three years will be discussed. The Chief Justice noted there were some legislative requests that the CISC would need to get back to and complete. Options were discussed between holding CISC meetings in both October and December, or the currently scheduled meeting in November. In the interim, CFP will be helping the Executive Committee and facilitating the relationship between the Executive Committee and Task Forces. Chief Justice Rush noted that no one wanted the CISC to be just a “one hit wonder,” although much had been accomplished over the last three years. Thus, the Strategic Planning meeting was important for the CISC’s impact going forward.

Chief Justice Rush then recognized Anne Jordan, staff for the CISC, who will be leaving the Indiana Judicial Center before the next CISC meeting. Ms. Jordan arranged speakers, facilitated the room, and organized meetings for the CISC. A round of applause was given for Jordan’s considerable efforts.

David Powell brought a checksheet produced for first responders by the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council in partnership with the Department of Health. A bound copy was distributed to CISC members to take home. An app for smartphones is also being worked on for this information.

11. Next Meeting –August 17, 2016.

Chief Justice Rush reported the next meeting of the CISC is scheduled on August 17, 2016 at the Indiana Government Center, Conference Room C.