



Commission on Improving the Status of Children

Commission on Improving the Status of Children

JANUARY 15, 2025

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Consent Agenda
 - a. **Action:** Approve Minutes from the October 2024 meeting

Agenda

- 3. CISC Initiatives and Legislative Affairs Update**
 - a. Mark Fairchild, Executive Director**



Commission on
Improving the
Status of Children

Children's Commission Initiatives & Legislative Affairs Update

MARK FAIRCHILD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Overview of 2025 CISC Initiatives

- BEST Youth Initiative - Chronic Absenteeism
- Expansion of youth, family and caregiver engagement
- Suicide prevention, bullying, and online safety
- Continued support of Youth Justice Oversight Committee

BEST Youth Initiative - Chronic Absenteeism

- Indiana's partnership with the Forum for Youth Investment to investigate and make recommendations for addressing chronic absenteeism through multi-systemic intervention.
- Regular meetings of "Team Indiana" are occurring, with current agencies transitions we expect membership shifts.
- Additional representation is needed regarding youth, families and caregivers with recent, direct experience with this issue.
- An initial report including discovery phase findings will be presented in detail at next month's CISG meeting.

Youth, Family & Caregiver Engagement

- An ongoing effort that began 4 years ago with the addition of two Youth Representatives to the CISG.
- We now have youth and parent involvement on various task forces and subcommittees, as well as BEST Youth, but with room for more.
- Family and Youth Engagement summits, our recent strategic sharing series, and Day of the Child activities have been widely successful.
- Future plans for expanding these efforts will involve supporting other state agencies and community efforts, while continuing to improve our internal ability to integrate youth, family and caregiver voices.

Bullying Prevention, Suicide Prevention & Online Safety

- Identified as issues that, although not directly noted in our strategic plan, needed attention and support from the CISC.
- This also presented an opportunity to create youth, family and caregiver engagement roles from the start of our work.
- The new Suicide Prevention, Bullying and Online Safety Task Force has provided us with tremendous opportunities to learn and grow while investigating these issues.
- The framework being developed in this Task Force, and lessons learned during its creation, will create a model for future similar efforts.

Support of the Youth Justice Oversight Committee

- The Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) was created in 2022 based on recommendations from the CISC's Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force.
- The YJOC developed plans to improve the Indiana Juvenile justice system in area such as data collection, screening and assessment, behavioral health, diversion and transitional services.
- This included plans that became legislation creating juvenile diversion, communitive alternatives and behavioral health grant programs.
- As YJOC engages in work to implement its plans, the CISC continues to provide staff support, including logistics and legislative affairs.

2025 Legislative Affairs Update

- Ahead of the 2025 Indiana General Assembly, CISC assisted in drafting two pieces of legislation, both of which have been introduced:

House Bill 1098: Youth, Family and Caregiver Engagement Initiative

- Authored by Representative Dale Devon
- Awaiting a hearing in the House Family, Children & Human Affairs Committee

House Bill 1403: Juvenile Justice Matters

- Authored by Representative McNamara & coauthored by Representative Meltzer
- Awaiting a hearing in the House Judiciary Committee

House Bill 1098 Overview

- Provides that the CISC must create and provide staff support to a statewide youth, family, and caregiver engagement initiative to:
 - Support to CISC Youth Representatives and youth, family and caregiver members of CISC task forces, committees & subcommittees.
 - Develop a statewide plan to support, encourage and expand the engagement of youth, families and caregivers in policymaking impacting youth and children.
 - Provide and support educational opportunities, convenings and other experiences that facilitate increased youth, family and caregiver participation.
 - Support other state agencies and community organizations to encourage and expand the engagement of youth, families and caregivers.
 - Requests an appropriation of an additional \$90,000 annually for staffing needs.

House Bill 1403 Overview

- Amends the duties of the Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) to reflect its ongoing work in implementation of its plans:
 - Researching, identifying, and making recommendations regarding barriers to implementation, including systemic, legislative, and data collection barriers.
 - Researching, identifying, and making recommendations regarding effective and ineffective interventions.
 - Researching, identifying, and making recommendations regarding the needs of rural communities with limited service capacity.
 - Supporting education and outreach regarding the statewide procedures, protocols, policies, and processes identified in the YJOC plans.

House Bill 1403 Overview (continued)

- Supporting the juvenile diversion and juvenile community alternatives grant programs and the juvenile behavioral health competitive grant pilot program.
- Partnering with the CISC to integrate the expertise of youth, families and caregivers with direct experience in the juvenile justice system into the YJOC's research, identification of issues, and recommendations.

Additional Provisions:

- Adds language to bring the grant programs into closer alignment.
- Clarifies the definition of collaborative service planning requirements.
- Strengthens the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute's ability to manage and support grants.

Commission Member Discussion

- Bills or issues for monitoring and potential legislative action?

Currently identified issues:

- Early childhood mental health
- Suicide prevention
- Bullying prevention
- Online safety
- Addressing chronic absenteeism
- Supporting the Youth Justice Oversight Committee
- Increasing access to quality childcare
- Improving YRBS participation rates
- Promoting youth, family and caregiver engagement

Agenda

- 4. Day of the Child Updates
 - a. Blane Cook, CISC Coordinator

Strategic Sharing Summit Recap

October 24-
Keynote and
Q&A

Stories of Our Lives: Strategic Sharing Summit

Join us for an inspiring webinar that focuses on the power of personal storytelling, the significance of lived experiences, and practical strategies for leveraging your story to drive meaningful change.

Meet Our Keynote Speaker

Introducing Anthony Barrows, a social justice advocate and trailblazer in strategic sharing.



Anthony Barrows is the founder of the Center for Behavioral Design & Social Justice where he organizes people with lived experience to build community and pursue systems change rooted in research evidence and lived expertise.

Strategic Sharing Summit Recap

November 6-
Training

Stories of Our Lives: Strategic Sharing Summit

Meet Our Strategic Sharing Trainers



Joshua Christian Oswald

Joshua is an alumnus of the child welfare system and a dedicated advocate for children, youth, and families. He has successfully influenced key federal and state legislation through mobilizing advocates and leading campaigns to persuade lawmakers to support youth and young adults transitioning out of foster care. In August 2020, he became the first Youth Engagement Coordinator at the Administration for Children and Families. From February 2022 to April 2024, he served as the Policy Manager and lobbyist for the Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy. Currently, Joshua is a therapeutic specialist working directly with Hoosier children and families, and he aims to continue his advocacy efforts at local, state, and national levels alongside fellow child welfare leaders.

Rimy, a dedicated advocate for foster care, draws from her own experiences and the challenges faced by other youth in the system. As an active leader in various advocacy organizations, she uses her lived experience to empower others and has recently started her own business, The Collective. As the founder and CEO of The Collective, Rimy and her team are actively working on creating sustainable and equitable resources, tools and trainings for individuals who interact with the child welfare system.



Rimy Morris

Strategic Sharing Summit Recap

November 21-
Young Advocate Panel

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEtB3msGXciTzglogZchO9cAjGmGws9UZ>

Day of the Child

February 17- President's Day

Breakfast at the Statehouse

10am- State of the Child in House chamber, Indiana
Youth Institute (IYI)

Lunch program from the Marion County Commission
on Youth (MCCOY)

Day of the Child

February 18- Strategic Sharing Summit continued

- Keynote
- Young person track
- Professional track
- Lunch and combined activity

Youth, Family, & Caregiver Engagement

Virtual Summit Recording Playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEtB3msGXciTzgloqZchO9cAjGmGws9UZ>

Day of the Child registration link:

<https://secure.mccoyouth.org/a/dayofthechild2025>

Contact: blane.cook@courts.in.gov

Agenda

5. CISC Task Force and Committee Updates



HEALTH AND SAFETY TASK FORCE

Co-Chairs: Sonya Rush (DCS) and VACANT

Commission on Improving the Status of Children
January 15, 2025

MEMBERSHIP

Tammie Carter:
LifeSmart Youth

Olivia Clark:
IDOH

Christina
Commons: FSSA

Katie Goodwell:
FSSA

Maureen Greer:
IPQIC

Rachael Fisher:
CHN

Kristi Linson:
IDOH

Ashley Mager:
MCH grassroots
leaders

Sue McKinney:
OECOSL

Carey Michels:
FSSA

Natasha Crespo:
IDR

Hannah Milner:
Foster Success

Samantha
Mundt: IDOH

Derika Parris:
Goodwill NFP

Karen Hayden
(repl. Angela
Smith-Grossman:
DCS

Maria Grinston
(repl. Willie
Taylor): DCS

Jack Turman Jr:
MCH Grassroots
Leaders

Elizabeth Wahl:
FSSA

Jeffrey
Whittman:
PCAIN

Kimberly Irvin:
DCS

Brittany
Winebar: Prevail



STRATEGIC GOAL 1 (2023-2025)

Improve the Health and Safety of Vulnerable Children and Youth

1

Increase community-based social and concrete support for families with children, including those being cared for informally by relatives.

2

Increase housing stability for families with children.

3

Recommend ways to increase the power and voice of children in state care.

4

Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising models for promoting healthy teen relationships, preventing unplanned pregnancy, and reducing the sexual victimization of adolescents.

5

Increase access to early intervention for vulnerable young children.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS



- Healthy Teen Relationships - Tammie Carter, LifeSmart Youth
- Increasing Housing Stability - Dr. Jack Turman, Director, Grassroots Maternal and Child Health Initiative
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data - IDOH
- Onboarding Youth Representative

WHAT'S NEXT

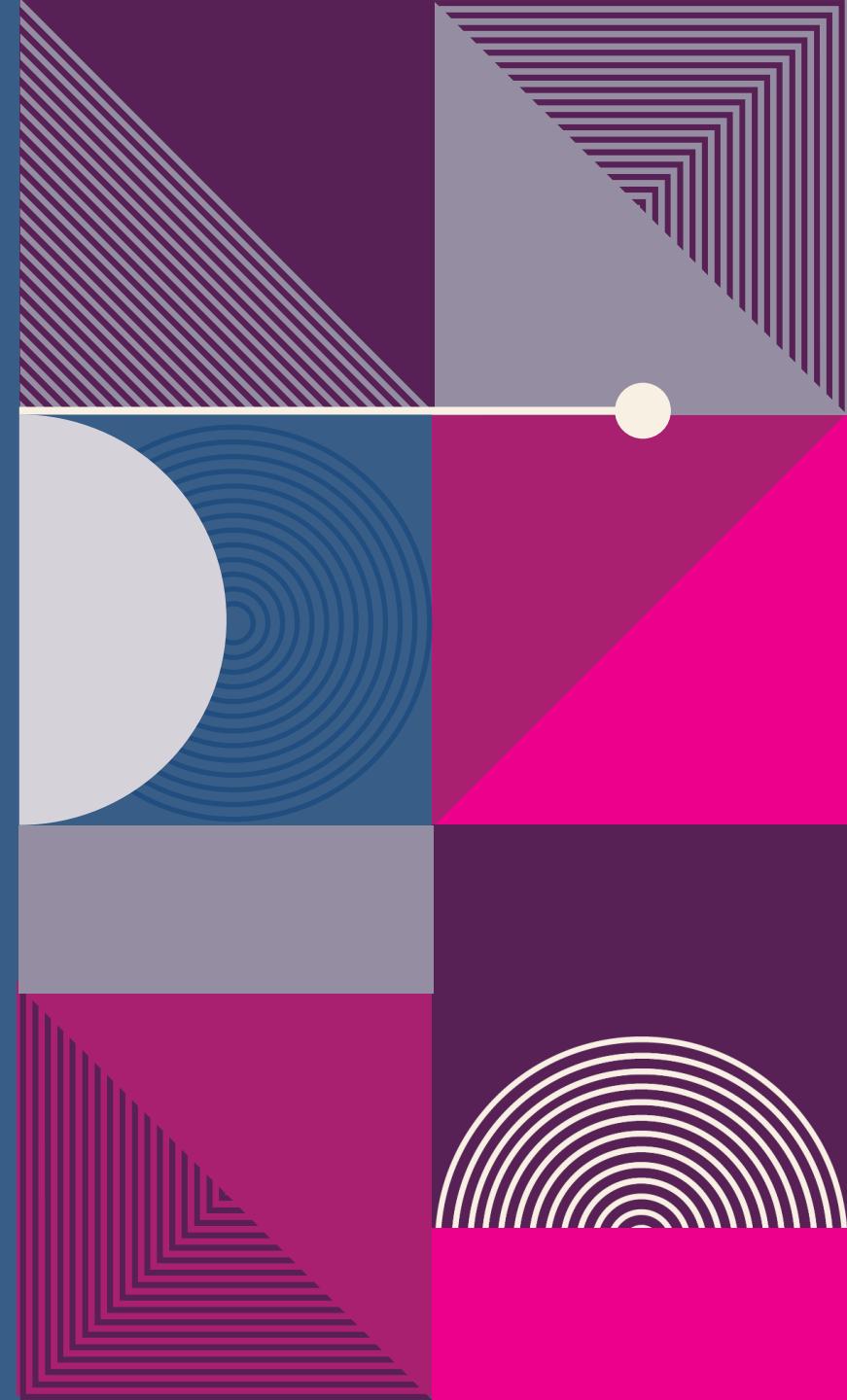
Onboard new
Co-Chair

Welcome youth
representative to
taskforce

Recruit new
members and
subject matter
experts

Increase
awareness of
current situation

Create long-term
impact



COMMISSION ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILDREN

Mental Health &
Substance Use Task
Force



Department of Child Services

Division of Mental Health & Addiction

Indiana University School of Medicine

Mental Health America

Indiana Department of Education

TASK FORCE MEMBER REPRESENTATION

Suicide Prevention

- ▶ Significant growth and attention on suicide prevention efforts & initiatives
 - ▶ Education and support to youth, families, schools & communities
- ▶ Coincides with the expansion of crisis services across the state

SUBCOMMITTEES

Prevention

- ▶ Funding supported various initiatives
 - ▶ Students against destructive decisions
- ▶ State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW)
 - ▶ Social Media impact on youth behavioral health

Early Childhood

- ▶ New committee formed this year
- ▶ Prevention efforts to identify young children and families who may need additional supports
- ▶ Efforts made in the prevention space for young children, toddlers, and families assist in the need for costly more complex interventions down stream

SUBCOMMITTEES

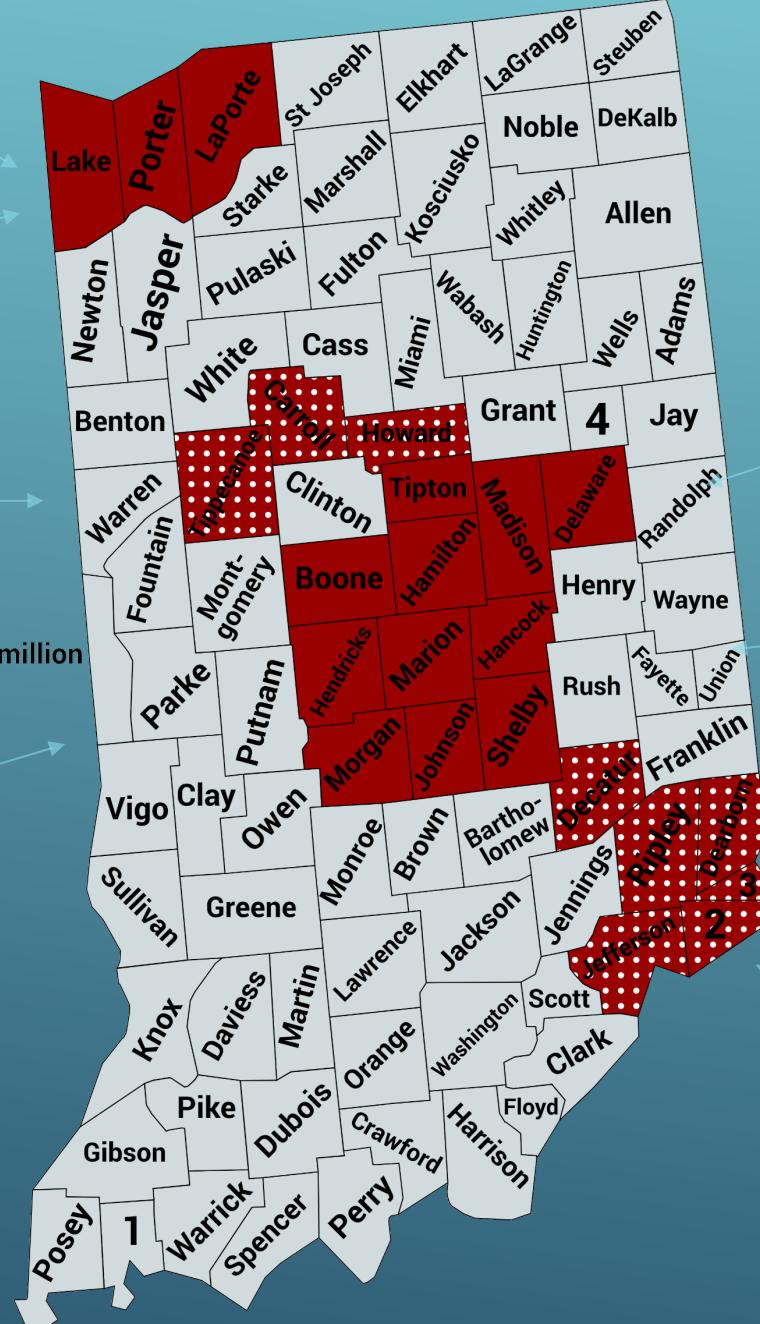
Workforce

- ▶ Collectively addressing youth behavioral health encourages the development and maintenance of a strong workforce
- ▶ Request for Information (RFI) – Youth Transitional Homes

Evidence-Based Subcommittee

Multisystemic Therapy
(MST)

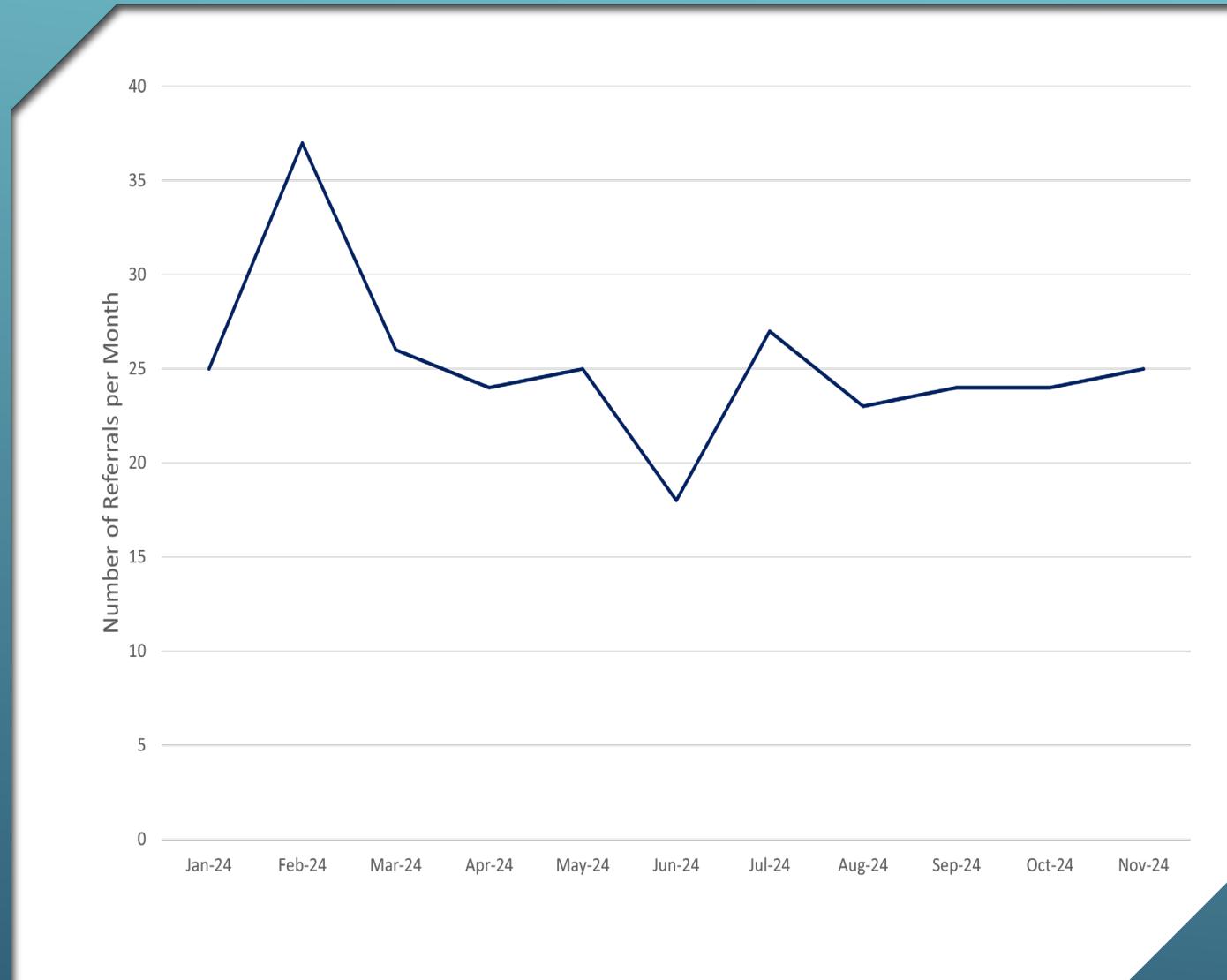




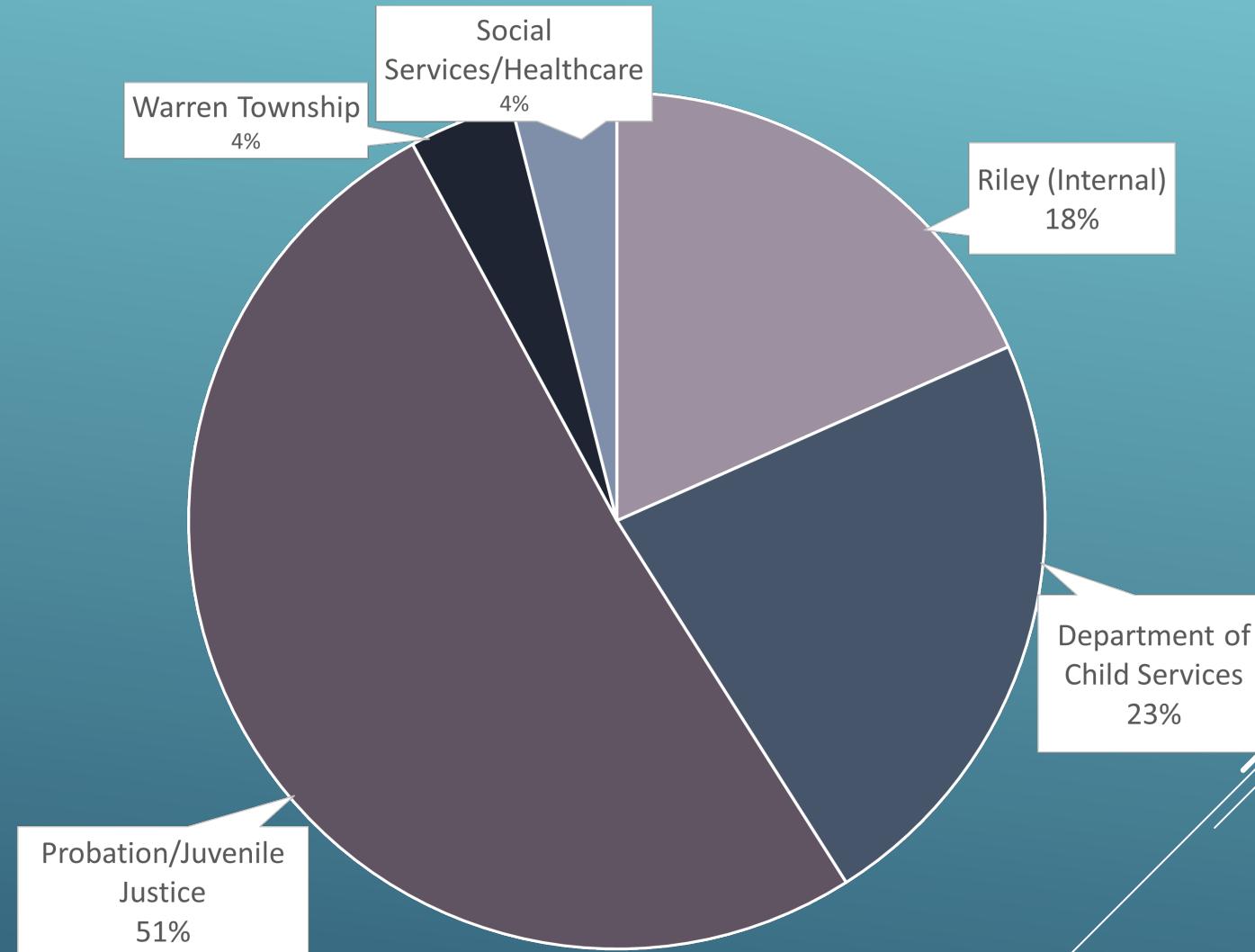
1 Vanderburgh
2 Switzerland
3 Ohio
4 Blackford



MST MONTHLY REFERRALS: JAN-NOV 2024



REFERRAL SOURCES: JAN-NOV 2024



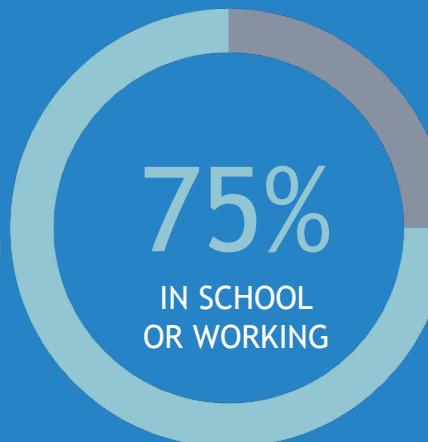
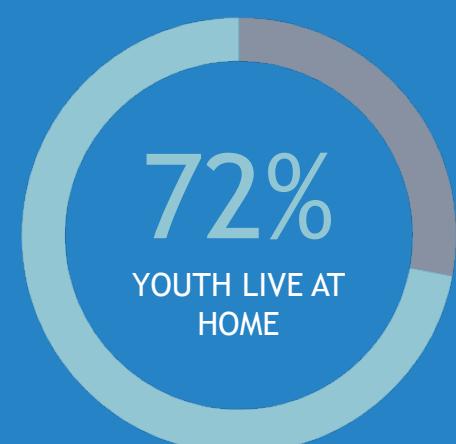
INDIANA MST SERVICES OUTCOMES

January – November 2024

87 youth

~6 months in treatment

At the close of treatment...



THANK YOU!



Juvenile Justice and Cross System Youth Task Force

**A Task Force of the Commission on Improving the
Status of Children in Indiana**

January 15, 2025

Members

Judge Vicki Carmichael – Co-Chair

Clark Circuit Court 4

Nancy Wever – Co-Chair

Indiana Office of Court Services

Steve Balko

Indiana Department of Education

Amber Becker

Division of Mental Health and Addiction

Kate Collins

Department of Child Services

Alison Cox

Indiana Juvenile Detention Association

Ann Davis

Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy (IARCA)

Chris Dixson

Indiana Department of Correction, DYS

Judge Kim Dowling

Delaware Circuit Court 2

Suzanne Draper

Vanderburgh County CASA, Inc.

Rae Feller

Indiana Office of Court Services

Tracy Fitz

Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council

Mike Goodwin

Department of Child Services

JauNae Hanger

Children's Policy and Law Initiative

Jill Johnson

*Marion County Public Defender Agency,
Juvenile Division*

Samantha Lewis

Wayne County Probation

Kiarra Pearson

Division of Mental Health and Addiction

Leah Pezzarossi

Open Door Youth Services

Kaylee Price

Lived-Experience Community

Colleen Saylor

Indiana Office of Court Services

Don Travis

Department of Child Services

Renee White

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute

Joel Wieneke

Indiana Public Defender Council

Strategic Goal: Improve safety and outcomes of youth who come in contact with the justice system

Objective #1

Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising practices for identification, referral, and appropriate services for victims of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)

Objective #2

Identify and encourage adoption of effective policies and practices that promote family engagement, healing, and growth in juvenile status offense cases

Objective #3

Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising programs and practices to support the healthy development of children with an incarcerated parent

Objective #4

Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising practices and policies that integrate the science of child and adolescent development into the justice system's response to children and youth

Objective #1: Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising practices for identification, referral, and appropriate services for victims of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)

Sub-Committee

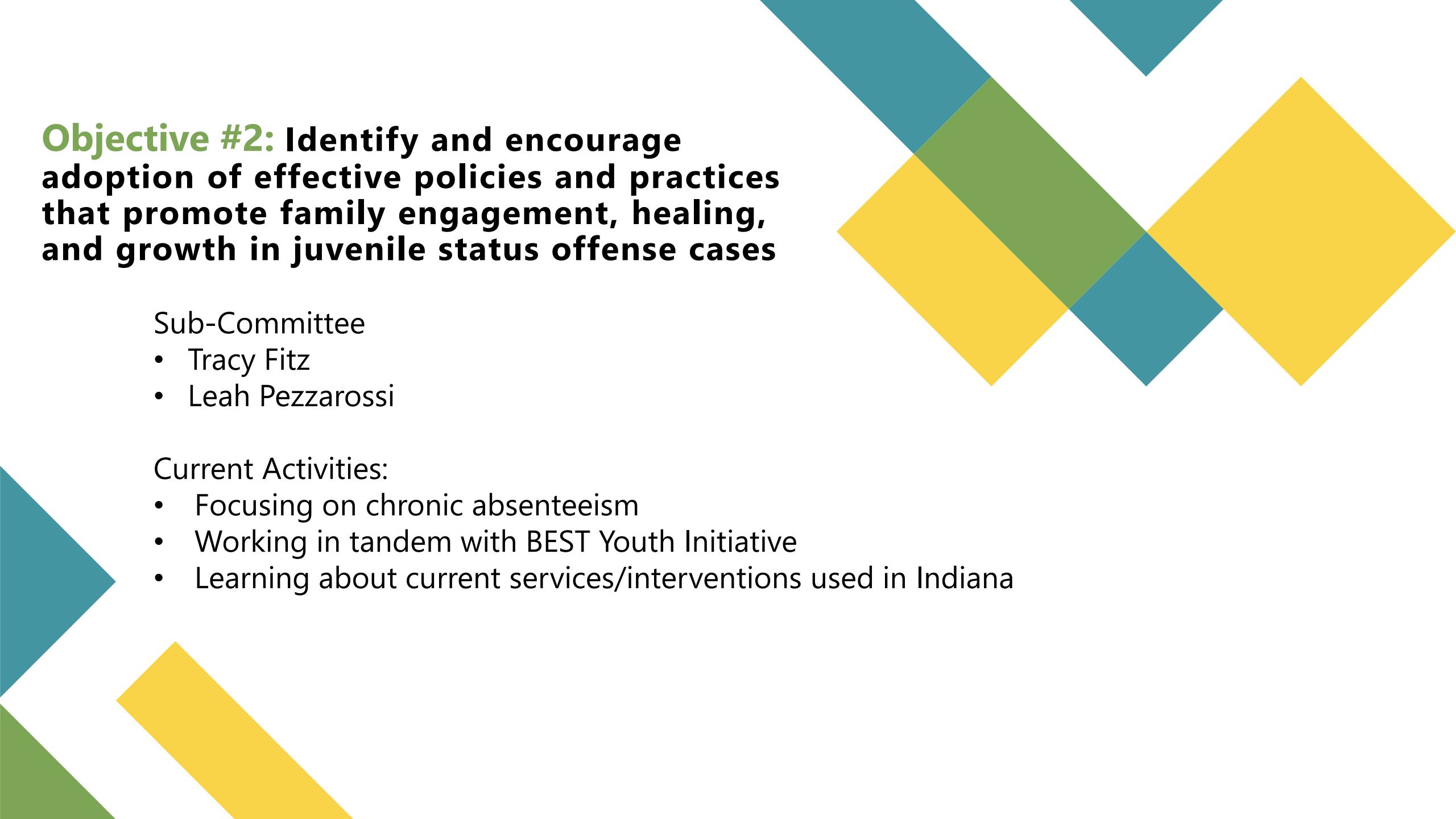
- Judge Kim Dowling
- Judge Holly Harvey

Current Focus:

- Statutory amendments to I. C. 31-34-1-3.5
- Add requirement for trauma-informed care, including CSEC, to annual training for nurses

On the horizon:

- Updating workplan
- Shared Hope International survey of states



Objective #2: Identify and encourage adoption of effective policies and practices that promote family engagement, healing, and growth in juvenile status offense cases

Sub-Committee

- Tracy Fitz
- Leah Pezzarossi

Current Activities:

- Focusing on chronic absenteeism
- Working in tandem with BEST Youth Initiative
- Learning about current services/interventions used in Indiana

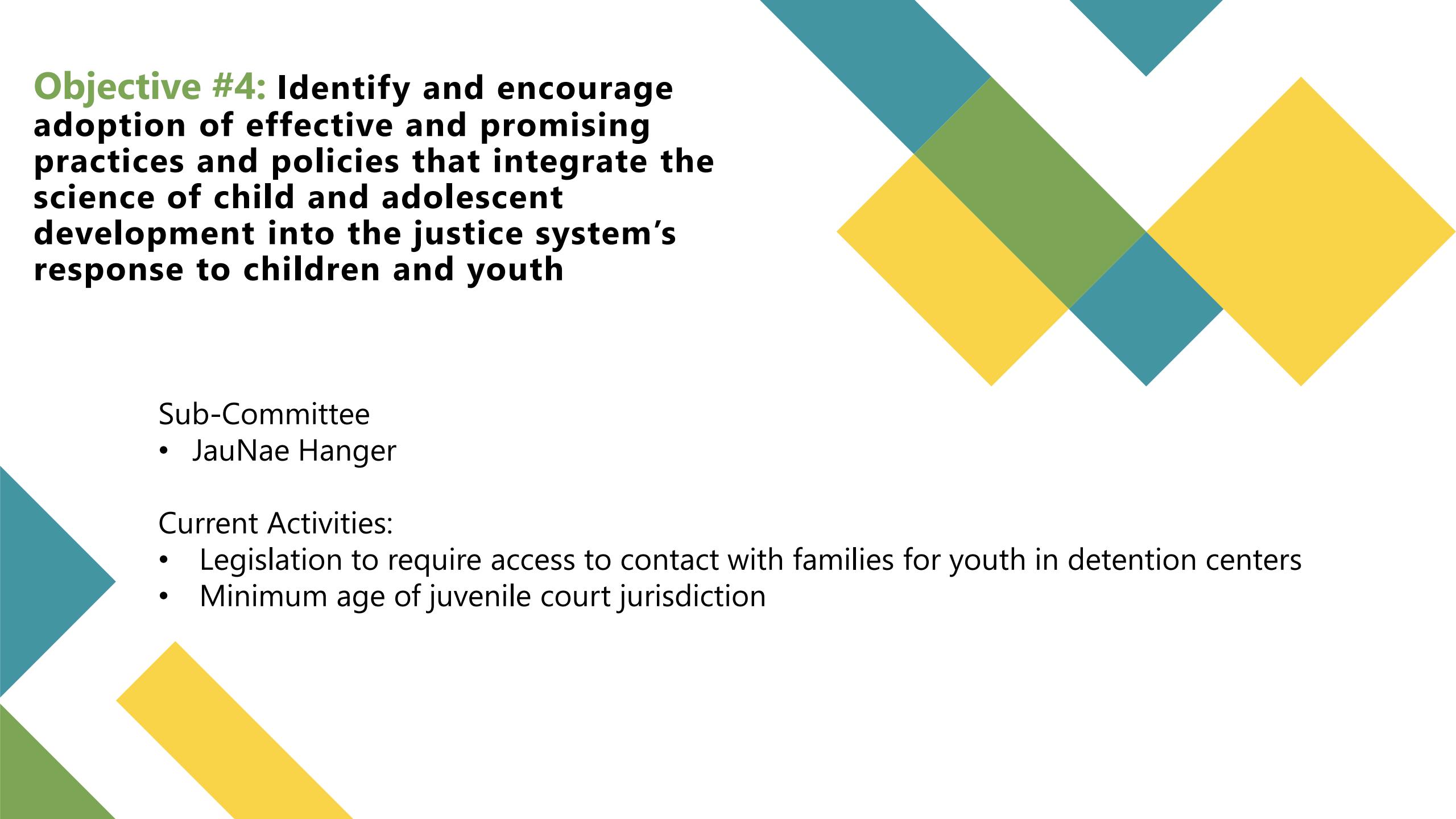
Objective #3: Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising programs and practices to support the healthy development of children with an incarcerated parent

Sub-Committee

- Steve Balko
- Joel Wieneke

Current Activities:

- Focus on jail population
- Aligning programs and services with DCS requirements



Objective #4: Identify and encourage adoption of effective and promising practices and policies that integrate the science of child and adolescent development into the justice system's response to children and youth

Sub-Committee

- JauNae Hanger

Current Activities:

- Legislation to require access to contact with families for youth in detention centers
- Minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction

Thank You for the opportunity to do this work!



EDUCATION OUTCOMES TASKFORCE

2024 Review

01/15/2025

Co-Chairs: Brianna Morse (DWD) and Michelle Clarke (DOE)



Membership

Representatives from:

- Dept. of Education
- Dept. of Workforce Development
- Commission for Higher Education
- Dept. of Correction
- Juvenile Probation
- Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction
- Dept. of Child Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Post-Secondary Education Institutions

2023-25 Goals

1. IMPROVE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
2. INCREASE USE OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE STATE
3. IDENTIFY AND ENCOURAGE ADOPTION OF EFFECTIVE AND PROMISING PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOLS
4. IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR YOUTH IN RESIDENTIAL, DETENTION, AND CORRECTIONS FACILITIES
5. IDENTIFY AND ENCOURAGE ADOPTION OF EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR YOUTH WHO HAVE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS AND ARE INVOLVED WITH ONE OF THE OTHER STATE SYSTEMS (DCS, FSSA, JUVENILE JUSTICE)
6. IDENTIFY AND ENCOURAGE ADOPTION OF EFFECTIVE AND PROMISING PRACTICES TO PROMOTE ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE READINESS FOR VULNERABLE YOUTH, INCLUDING BUILDING A PIPELINE TO FUTURE WORK IN YOUTH-SERVING PROFESSIONS.

01/15/2025

2024 Highlights

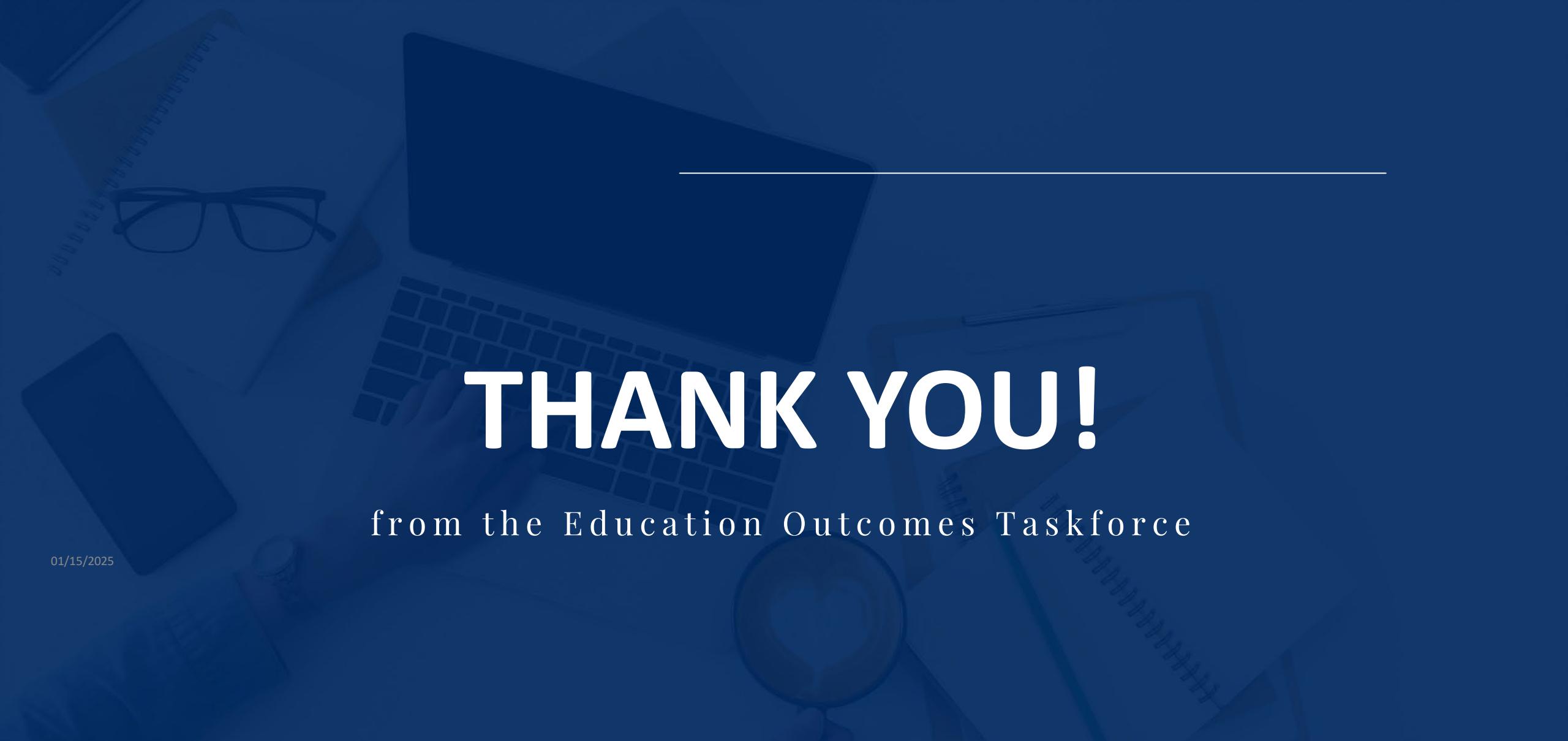
- 1 Review School Mental Health Framework w/ Dr. Brandie Oliver
- 2 DOC Education Outcomes Briefing & School Academic Updates
- 3 Request for Assistance w/ Expanding Jobs for America's Graduates and Foster Success Pathways Programs
- 4 High School Redesign: Indiana's New Diploma Requirements & BEST Youth Initiative: Chronic Absenteeism





What's Next and How You Can Help

- Appoint New Co-Chair in 2025
- Support Student-focused Legislative Priorities
- Add Youth Member to Taskforce
- Contribute to the BEST Youth Initiative as we drive to improve student outcomes in regard to chronic absenteeism.



THANK YOU!

from the Education Outcomes Taskforce

01/15/2025

Data Sharing and Mapping Committee

Josie Fasoldt, Central Indiana Corporate Partnership

Nikki Ford, Department of Child Services

Suicide Prevention, Bullying & Online Safety Task Force

Sarah Allison, Project AWARE II Specialist, IDOE

Michelle Fox, LCSW, State Suicide Prevention Director, FSSA DMHA

Co-Chair Introductions



Sarah Allison

Project AWARE II Specialist

Indiana Department of Education

Student, School and Family Engagement Team



Michelle Fox, LCSW

State Suicide Prevention Director

Division of Mental Health and Addiction

Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

Overview of SPBOS Task Force

- Michelle Fox, Bethany Goetz, & Lucia Mercado presented to CISC on [April 17, 2024](#) regarding the topic of youth suicide prevention & online wellness
- CISC assigned new task force with the issue of addressing online safety and digital well-being
- Launched Suicide Prevention, Bullying & Online Safety Task Force on September 4, 2024

Overview of SPBOS Task Force

- Task Force met in September, October and November 2024
 - Task force co-chairs: Sarah Allison & Michelle Fox
 - 3 subcommittees:
 - Suicide Prevention: Caitlyn Short, Youth Suicide Grant Project Coordinator, DMHA
 - Bullying Prevention: Olivia Hesler, Adolescent Fatality Prevention Coordinator, IDOH
 - Online Safety: Esther Lewis, CEO, Holistic Evolution Inc.
 - Subcommittee all include youth representative co-chairs
 - Youth representatives applied and interviewed

2025 Goals

- Focus on building task force & subcommittee membership
- Establish objectives to align with CISC 2023-2025 strategic plan
- Anticipate task force will focus on researching topics and discovering current initiatives throughout the state focused on online safety regarding suicide & bullying prevention

Agenda

6. Commission Member Announcements, Adjournment, and Reception

2025 Meeting Dates

- February 12
- April 9
- June 18
- August 20
- October 15
- December 10 with reception