



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF
CHILD
SERVICES



DCS

YEAR IN REVIEW

2019

A group of approximately eight children are lying on their backs in a circle on a grassy field, viewed from directly above. They are all smiling and making playful hand gestures near their faces. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. On the right side of the image, there is a vertical yellow bar with thin, parallel diagonal lines.

“Indiana children will live in
safe, healthy and supportive families
and communities.”

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2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The past year has been marked by incredibly positive changes for the Indiana Department of Child Services, and I'm honored to stand alongside all of you as we celebrate those successes. In every region across the state, our service to Hoosier families has improved: from that first call for help to the hotline to the ultimate placement of children in forever homes where they are safe and loved. We have addressed barriers to permanency, provided timely child support payments, improved agency processes and more. I can't begin to number the ways your dedication to our mission has positively impacted those we serve over the last year, but there are a few notable examples I want to highlight. Among our achievements in 2019:

- Decreased the number of children in out-of-home care
(15,105 in November 2018 to 13,155 in November 2019)
- Redesigned and relaunched the agency practice model
- Used virtual reality for lifelike training
- Reduced number of children still in care post TPR
- Improved process for child fatality reviews
- Developed and launched the Foster Care Portal
- Started transition to INvest child support system
- Decreased delays filing for TPR once cases qualify
- Decreased residential placements for youth in probation
(15.4% drop from November 2018 to November 2019)

With every step we bettered our service to those who need it most. I applaud your tireless dedication to the families we serve. Together we are capable of great things!



LOOKING TOWARD 2020



INDIANA DCS DIRECTOR

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CHIEF OF STAFF

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1 REDUCE AGENCY EMPLOYEE
TURNOVER

2 DECREASE TIME TO
PERMANENCY

3 IMPROVE STABILITY FOR
CHILDREN IN AND OUT OF
HOMES

4 IMPROVE FFY 2020 CHILD
SUPPORT COLLECTION

5 DECREASE TIME FROM TPR
TO ADOPTION



TOP TWEETS OF 2019



@IndianaDCS Aug 6

A wonderful surprise visit from [@GovHolcomb](#)! Thanks for taking the time to come talk and take selfies with our employees today!

Engagements: 311
Impressions: 9,774



@IndianaDCS May 1

Thank you, [@GovHolcomb](#). Are you up for the challenge? Put yourself [#InTheirShoes](#) for [#FosterCareMonth](#). Use \$10 to buy a complete outfit. Snap a photo of yourself in the outfit and let us know what you bought and what you had to go without. Share your experience using [#InTheirShoes](#)

Engagements: 184
Impressions: 9,565



@IndianaDCS June 13

Today, [@GovHolcomb](#) is signing SEA1 and HEA1006 to take Indiana child welfare to the [#NextLevel](#). To see how DCS is dedicated to providing the best possible care for Hoosier children and how we're continuing to improve since last year's CWG report, visit: <https://www.in.gov/dcs/3924.htm>

Engagements: 120 Impressions: 6,343



@IndianaDCS Dec 4

Thank you [@BSaundersIN](#) and [@LGSuzanneCrouch](#) for announcing today's 2019 Governor's Long-Term Employee Reception. Special thanks and congrats to our DCS employees who could attend the event, including Alfred Fisher, the longest employee there with 55 years!

Engagements: 97 Impressions: 1,349

TOP POSTS OF 2019



voicesofdcs Feb 22

"We wanted a family, and he needs one, so today means a lot because now, it's official."
—Foster family on the day of their son's adoption.



Likes: 187

Impressions: 1,403



voicesofdcs April 24

"Foster kids need homes because their parents can't take care of them. Foster kids are fun. They like to dance and play on the swings. Two of them are my sisters. Being a foster sister is important because you give them love." —7-year-old foster sister after she dressed up as a DCS case manager for career day at school and presented a book she wrote about the importance of fostering.



Likes: 165

Impressions: 1,512



voicesofdcs Oct 28

"We foster drug-addicted babies. She's number 35 — 35 babies. My body's got used to it. It's like when we don't have a baby, I hear babies in the night. We just enjoy taking care of them. We thought about adopting, so that's how it started. I focus on them, one on one, a lot." —Foster mom



Likes: 119

Impressions: 1,268



voicesofdcs Dec 12

"In the courtroom, National Adoption Day is the most joyful day of the year. As a judge, I see a lot of sad things, but this is the day that I know kids are going to their forever homes, and they're going to be happy and loved and safe." —Superior Court judge overseeing several DCS cases on National Adoption Day



Likes: 105

Impressions: 1,046

MEET THE TEAM



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WHAT HAPPENED IN SSAT?

1 Finalized DCS 5-Year Strategic Plan

The agency's five-year plan was completed in June 2019, outlining the agency's vision, goals and steps to achieve those goals.

2 Built a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team

CQI is a formal process that focuses on delivering the highest performance possible by standardizing processes, sustaining continuous improvements by following Lean and Six Sigma methodologies, providing new tools to subject-matter experts, and building leaders and empowering employees to create and implement process improvements.

3 Made Progress on the Program Improvement Plan

The PIP serves as a blueprint for addressing identified areas that need improvement to achieve substantial conformity across specific outcomes and systemic factors. The PIP allows the state to evaluate the child welfare system performance according to set factors and criteria. Indiana passed seven of nine indicators in the PIP.

4 Supported Six Sigma Green Belt Certifications

The team mentored DCS staff members who were working toward earning their Six Sigma certification. By the close of 2019, 24 employees had earned "green belt" status, showing they have mastered the Six Sigma tools used to improve processes in their work.

5 Piloted Safe System Improvement Tool

In 2019, Indiana was chosen as one of three jurisdictions to join the national collaborative for child safety. Indiana is one of a few jurisdictions that piloted the safe system improvement tool. In 2020, Indiana will expand its use to support a safe system culture.



LEAN THINKING

2019 was a year of agency transformation, and the strategic solutions and agency transformation division is proud to lead an important aspect of that change. Last year, the division challenged staff members to embrace Lean, a management style based on two key principles: respect for people and continuous improvement. To ensure the best support of these efforts, the division assigned the responsibilities of continuous quality improvement (CQI) to one team staffed by Lean experts.

The CQI team consists of two advanced Lean practitioners and eight Lean improvement facilitators. The CQI team facilitates projects that reveal ways to improve processes under the guidance of Lean principles. Their work is thorough and varied. It touches every division and region as DCS commits to a constant examination of our processes to ensure they foster the best service our agency can provide to Hoosier families and children as well as one another in the workplace.

In 2019, CQI team members completed several Lean Six Sigma projects, allowing most team members to achieve green belt certification. That signifies them as expert problem-solvers for the agency. The agency supported 24 additional green belt graduates in 2019.

The CQI team and the agency's executive leaders receive ongoing Lean coaching. With the tenets of Lean in mind, the team seeks to help every DCS employee become a problem-identifier and problem-solver who works toward the improvement of outcomes for Hoosier families.



SIX SIGMA-CERTIFIED



PERMANENCY & PRACTICE SUPPORT

MEET THE TEAM



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WHAT HAPPENED IN PPS?

1 Added New Nursing Positions

Three nursing positions were added, and an integrated care team was created to help support the family case managers with understanding the unique needs of each child.

2 Approved New Investigator Positions

The division added four investigator positions to help locate parents and kin for DCS children in need of permanency options.

3 Rolled out Rapid Permanency Review to Pilot Counties

RPRs examine systemic barriers to permanency and initiate steps to address them. RPRs were piloted in Delaware and Vanderburgh counties in 2019.

4 Added Educational Liaisons to the Team

Two education liaisons joined the team to focus on improving the educational experience of children in foster care.

5 Formed Agency's First Birth Parent Advisory Group

Six former DCS involved parents were invited to join an advisory group to serve as a guiding board for birth parents. They will also seek to promote open lines of communications between foster parents and family case managers.

America's Kids BELONG



In 2019, DCS launched Indiana's Kids Belong, an initiative that aims to find forever homes for children who are available for adoption. Vanderburgh County had the honor of hosting the agency's first I Belong Project video shoot. The nine foster children selected ages ranging from 10 to 16. They were invited to introduce themselves, talk a little about their likes and dislikes and what they hope to find in a family. The children's stories and videos will be shared publicly in hopes of finding the perfect match for each child. In 2020, DCS will host more video shoots around the state to target those children who have been lingering in the system after having had their parents' rights terminated. The I Belong Project gives children in foster care a face and a voice, individualizing the adoption process for families considering opening their homes.





LEGAL SERVICES

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WHAT HAPPENED IN LEGAL SERVICES?

1

DECREASED ATTORNEY TURNOVER: In Federal Fiscal Year 2018, the legal division had a turnover rate of 30.2%. With the implementation of pay increases, development of new trainings and more over the past year, that number dropped to 17.2% in Federal Fiscal Year 2019 – an overall 43% improvement.

2

REDUCED CASELOADS: DCSs litigation division has added 50 new child services attorney E7 positions since Jan. 1, 2019. This number of attorneys allows each caseload-carrying attorney to maintain a caseload of 60-75 families with active cases. When all positions are filled, DCS will have a total of 209 caseload-carrying attorney E7's.

“Improved teamwork leads to better outcomes!”

3

CLERICAL HELP PROVIDED: DCS' litigation division has added 45 new clerical/administrative positions since Jan. 1, 2019. Having adequate support staff is important so attorneys can focus on the representation aspect of their job. Quality legal assistance frees up the attorneys to staff cases, research the law and prepare for hearings.

4

SALARY INCREASES: All DCS attorneys received salary adjustments on their Nov. 13 paycheck. Attorney E7s already employed by DCS all received a salary adjustment of 17.3 percent. The new minimum salary for child services attorney E7s was also increased from \$52,000 to \$61,022. Attorney E6s received a salary adjustment of 10%.

ENHANCED TRAINING LEADS TO BETTER OUTCOMES

The Indiana Department of Child Services invested more time and resources in the DCS legal division in 2019 to ensure the best outcomes for children.

In the past year, the training department increased staff by 50% with the goal of offering more support to attorneys and the children and families they serve. Additionally, a new assistant general counsel, an additional chief counsel and two new staff attorney positions were created to establish a more robust training program throughout the state.

Advanced and multi-disciplinary attorney trainings were added to the existing curriculum. This supports DCS attorneys' continuing education and professional development both in and out of the courtroom.

More excitement is ahead in 2020. The team recently received a \$75,000 Children's Justice Act (CJA) grant. These funds will help provide training to DCS attorneys.

The division will also kick off a new legal intern program to bolster recruitment efforts. The program will assist in bringing the best and brightest to join the legal division.

RIGHT: Participants learn from a presentation during multi-disciplinary training in Ft. Wayne.





LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

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WHAT HAPPENED IN LEGISLATIVE?

1 Celebrated the Passage of HB 1006

This legislation positioned DCS to implement recommendations from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group. The bill impacted the important everyday business of DCS. It successfully passed in the House with bipartisan support with a vote of 100-0 and the Senate with a vote of 48-0.

2 Celebrated the Passage of HB 1198

The DCS agency bill consisted of several proposals, including compliance with the transformative federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). It also provided DCS staff the option of removing their home address information from public databases.

3 Implemented DCS Director Email Inbox

This inbox funnels emails from constituents into a common inbox, where they can be sorted and distributed to the appropriate parties.

4 Responded to Approximately 956 Constituent and Legislative Inquiries

The legislative division remained committed to excellent customer service in 2019. It provided timely responses to inquiries from constituents, legislators and more, in addition to approximately 956 constituent and legislative inquiries.



LEGISLATION LEADS TO BETTER OUTCOMES

The legislative division worked alongside the Interim Study Committee on Courts and the Judiciary during the summer and fall of 2018 to draft House Bill 1006, which was based on recommendations outlined in the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWG) Report. The report proposed changes to policy, practice, procedure, culture and human resources at DCS. The committee provided invaluable feedback as DCS evaluated changes to provide better service to Hoosier families and children. The new legislation became effective July 1, 2019. It extended the age older foster youth can receive collaborative care services from age 20 to age 21; updated DCS caseload standards to align with Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) best practice standards; amended the one-hour response time to two hours; and amended the definition of neglect to exclude poverty as a sole justification for intervention. The passage of this bill has allowed DCS to take transformative steps for the benefit of Hoosier children and families.



FIELD OPERATIONS

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WHAT HAPPENED IN FIELD?

1 Expanded Rapid Safety Feedback (RSF) Program

In January of 2018, RSF went live statewide, and in June 2019, the RSF team experienced its first expansion. The original team of six grew to a 10-member team. In September, the RSF team completed its seventh quarterly site visit. Indiana's RSF team has been recognized by Eckerd Connects as having one of the highest review volumes of all Eckerd Rapid Safety Feedback jurisdictions across the nation. Since program inception, the RSF team has reviewed more than 1,300 assessments, completed more than 2,500 RSF survey tools, and served more than 3,700 children statewide, conducting reviews in 98% of all counties/jurisdictions and 100% of all regions. RSF has hosted three separate training/in-service sessions involving approximately 90 participants statewide. The program continues to receive positive feedback from the field staff.

2 Created Special Investigator Positions

In 2019, three special investigators were hired to complement the work of the family case manager. These individuals have extensive experience as law enforcement officers. With the use of special investigators, the division was able to utilize a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) approach to our most complex child abuse investigations, especially on infant assessments.

3 Piloted Reflective Practice Survey (RPS) Program

The RPS tool began in Regions 15 and 18. Training was provided for LODs, supervisors and some field mentors on this new tool in mid 2019. The first random pull of cases occurred in August. Five cases per supervisor were pulled, and surveys were completed by late September. The SSAT team attended meetings in both regions to receive feedback and discuss possible changes.

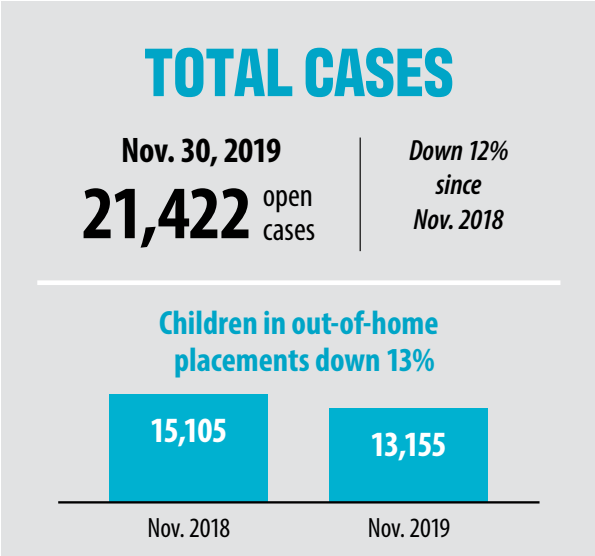
4 Changed Child Fatality Report Process

2019 marks the first year Indiana law required DCS to study child fatalities based on a calendar year. The fatality team completed 691 fatality reviews and produced three reports that reflect trends across the state of Indiana. The fatality team developed an in-service to help guide field staff on the statutory requirements for the completion of a fatality training. This training has become available in numerous regions.



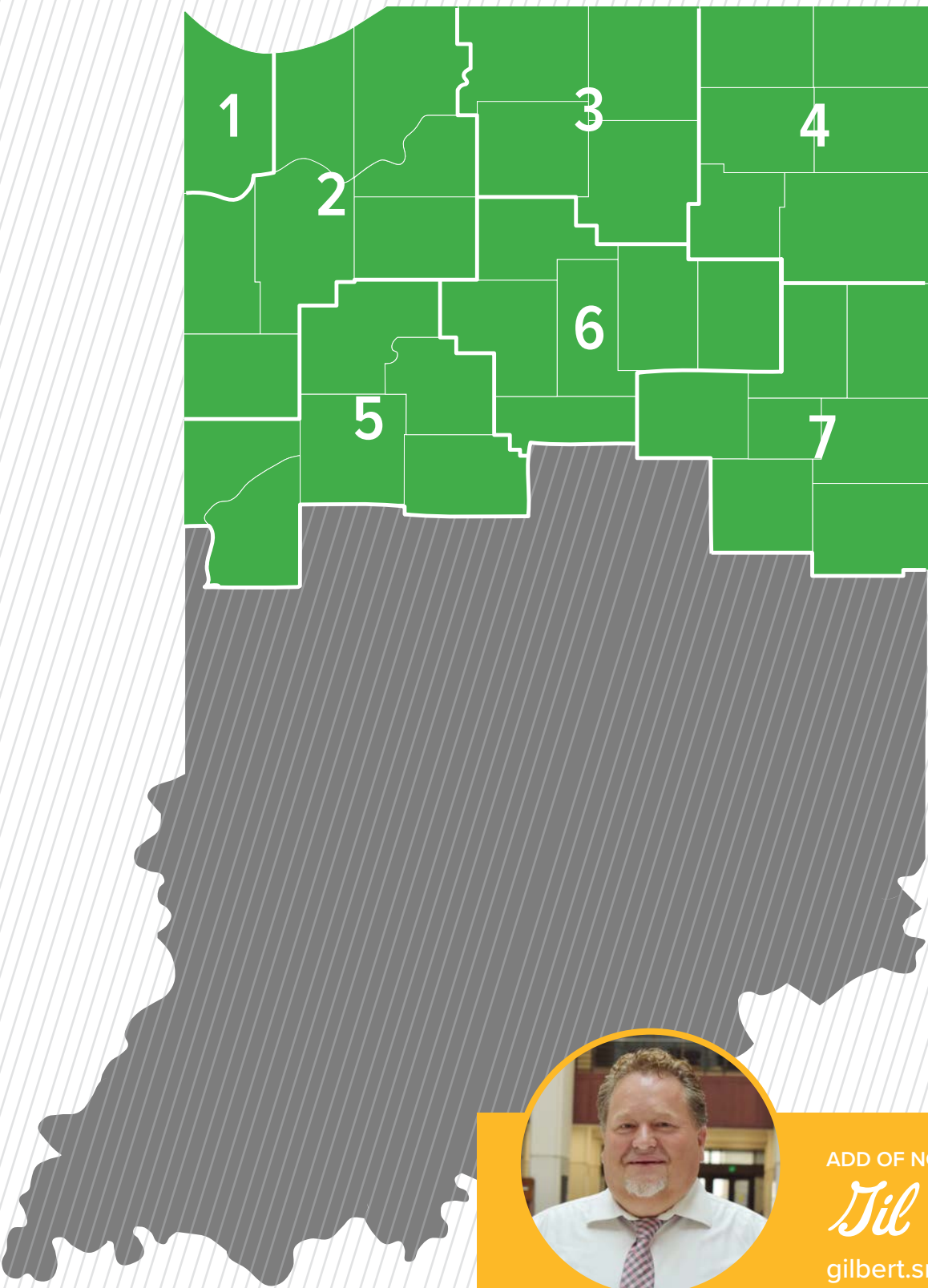
INVESTIGATORS STRENGTHEN FIELD STAFF

In 2019, field operations was expanded to provide specialized support to its front line. In April, DCS hired its first special investigator and added two additional positions in the fall. Every day, family case managers encounter cases where the investigation is nuanced and time-consuming. Instances like these are where the special investigators provide an invaluable service to the team. These positions are staffed by seasoned law enforcement officers who lend their criminal investigation experience to difficult cases of alleged child abuse and neglect. They bring a fresh set of eyes to the work and help to reinforce findings or course-correct if needed, which results in a thorough examination of each allegation. The investigators’ work targets some of Indiana’s most vulnerable children. Each week, the investigators review new assessments of children 5 and younger who have had a prior DCS assessment to ensure every resource DCS has at its disposal is used to protect Indiana’s children. As they review some of the most serious allegations of child abuse and neglect, the investigators also serve as liaisons to local prosecutors, law enforcement and medical professionals when joint investigations are warranted. Building relationships between the department and these stakeholders is a critical component of their responsibilities. The addition of the special investigators in 2019 has allowed its front line to provide better service to DCS families – and that is something to celebrate!



NORTHERN INDIANA

Regions · 1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5 · 6 · 7



ADD OF NORTHERN INDIANA

Jil Smith

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REGION 1: *Lake County*

There was a 10% decrease in caseloads and an increase in timely permanency.

Quarter 1: 5.5% cases attained permanency within 90 days

Quarter 2: 24% cases attained permanency within 90 days

Quarter 3: 35% cases attained permanency within 90 days

REGION 2: *Porter, La Porte, Newton, Jasper, Pulaski & Benton counties*

In 2019, there was an increase in parental engagement, a 21% increase for engaging mothers and a 53.9% increase for engaging fathers.

REGION 3: *St. Joseph, Elkhart, Marshall & Kosciusko counties*

As of October, 756 cases were open, and 837 were closed. This is an overall caseload reduction of 10% of those closed, 79% were within 24 months.

REGION 4: *La Grange, Steuben, Noble, Dekalb, Whitley & Allen counties*

The region's focus resulted in a decrease in residential placement. In Noble County, there was a 28% reduction in CHINS and a 50% reduction in residential CHINS placement.

REGION 5: *Warren, White, Carroll, Fountain, Tippecanoe & Clinton counties*

On average, 85% of children have been teamed at least every 90 days. In Tippecanoe County, 371 children out of 389 children were teamed, which is 95.37% of the caseload in that county.

REGION 6: *Fulton, Cass, Miami, Wabash, Huntington & Howard counties*

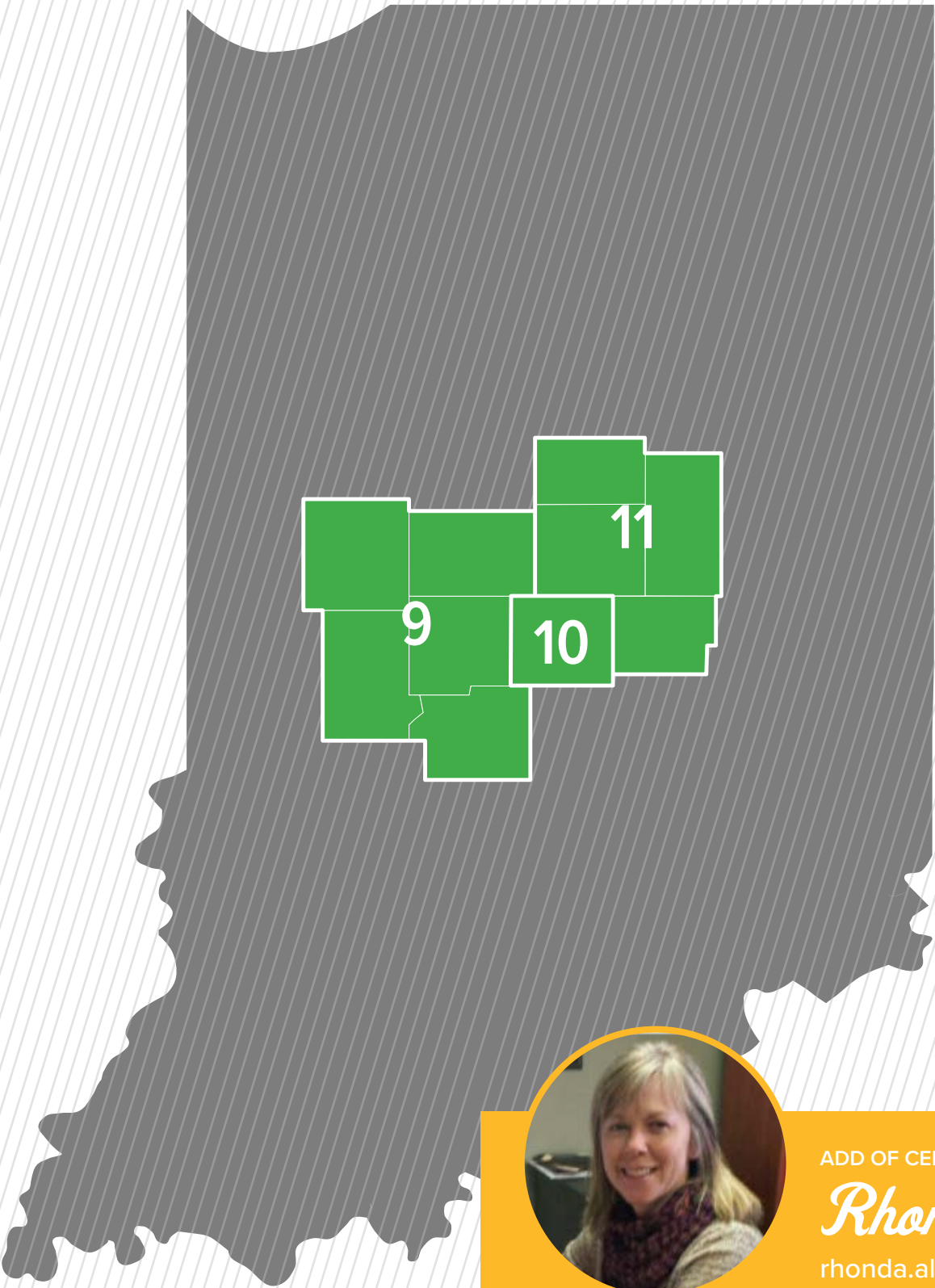
The region enhanced the permanency teams and clinical supervision processes to help move children to legal permanency that is safe and stable. DCS staff worked together to find permanency for 10 higher-needs children. By November 2019, the length of stay is the 6th lowest in the state, with an on average of 553 days in care.

REGION 7: *Wells, Adams, Grant, Blackford, Jay, Delaware & Randolph counties*

Region 7 was the leader in the state for the most child and family team meetings (CFTM). By October 2019, there were 4,049 CFTMs held in Region 7. This is a 10-month average of 404.9 CFTMs per month. Also, the region was successful in moving more children to permanency in a timely manner. In January 2019, there were 227 children who did not have a TPR filed in the 15/22 timeframe, and that number has been reduced to 41 children.

CENTRAL INDIANA

Regions • 9 • 10 • 11



ADD OF CENTRAL INDIANA

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REGION 9: *Montgomery, Boone, Putnam, Henricks & Morgan counties*

In October, the region was No. 1 in the state for timely initiations. Region 9 staff members pride themselves on being resilient and supportive of one another. In Morgan County, 2019 brought hardship. A staff member passed, there were several changes in leadership, but the office staff continued to care for the children in its care, with an average length of stay of 419.40 days in care.

REGION 10: *Marion County*

The region has maintained a significantly lower number of days from termination of parental rights (TPR) to adoption than most regions. The length of time is at 260 days, with a goal of 180 days. The region also averaged about 35 more adoptions in 2019 than in 2018.

REGION 11: *Tipton, Madison, Hamilton & Hancock counties*

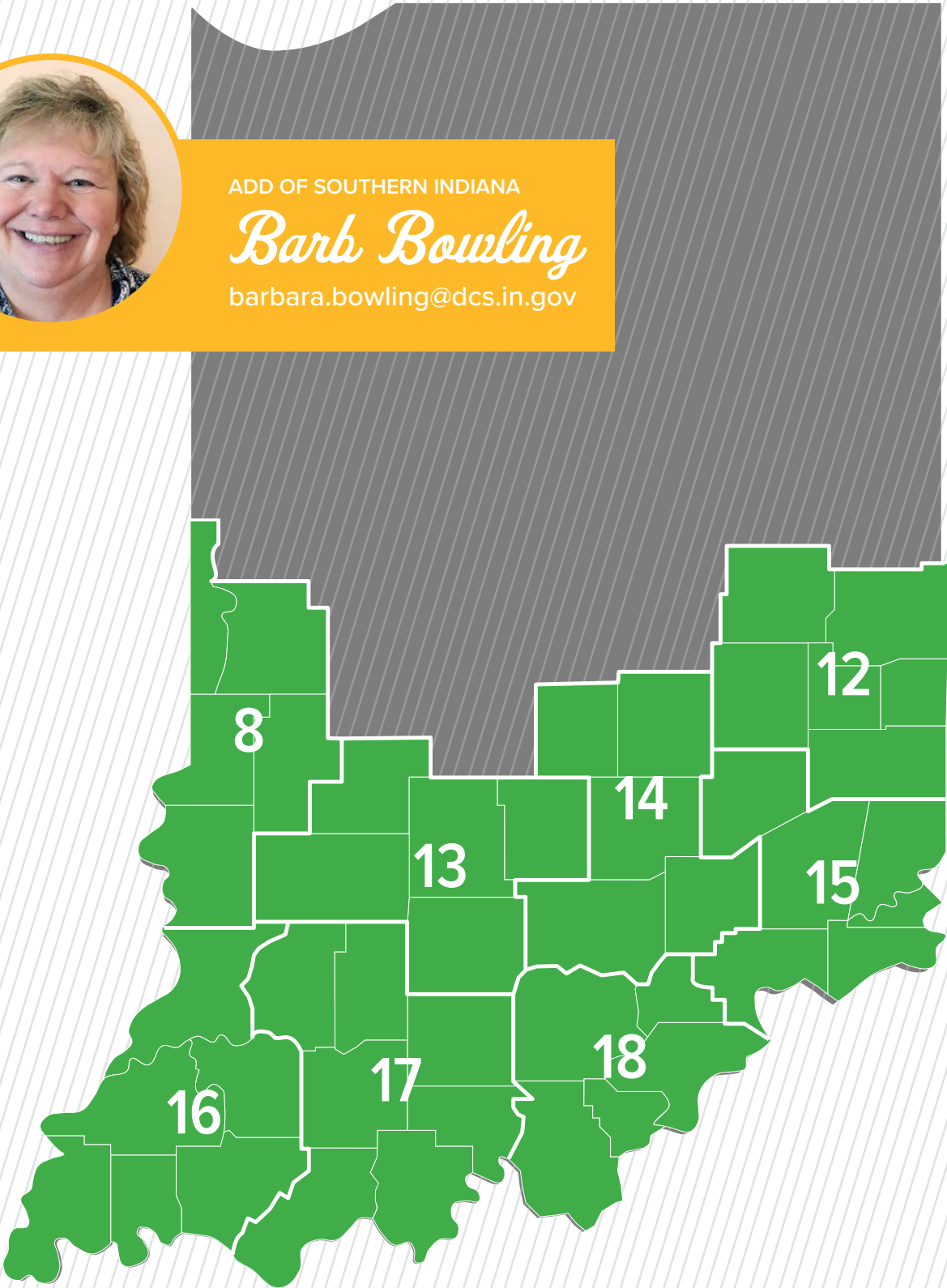
The region has improved permanency through adoption by filing the backlog of TPRs. For instance, in Madison County there were 82 adoptions in 2019 compared to the year prior, when there were only 29.

SOUTHERN INDIANA

Regions • 8 • 12 • 13 • 14 • 15 • 16 • 17 • 18



ADD OF SOUTHERN INDIANA
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REGION 8: *Vermillion, Parke, Vigo, Clay & Sullivan counties*

The region established a regional fatality assessment unit, which offers representation and collaboration in each county. The team has successfully used the information gathered from fatalities to educate and inform the public.

REGION 12: *Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union & Franklin counties*

There was a 14% decrease in caseloads for the region, as well as a 19% reduction in expenses. Also, Wayne County is in the process of starting a family recovery court.

REGION 13: *Owen, Monroe, Brown, Greene & Lawrence counties*

The region has had an overall reduction of non-relative CHINS and residential placements. Children in foster care decreased by 11.25% in 2019, and residential placements were reduced by 22%.

REGION 14: *Johnson, Shelby, Bartholomew, Jackson & Jennings counties*

There were 40 residential placements in Region 14 in January and by September, that reduced to just 19. Thirteen of the placements were in Johnson County, and now there are only four residential placements in that county.

REGION 15: *Decatur, Ripley, Dearborn, Jefferson, Ohio & Switzerland counties*

Collaborating with peer coach consultants and local staff resulted in teaming cases from 180 days to within 90 days. The region is excited to be piloting the new Reflective Practice Survey.

REGION 16: *Knox, Gibson, Pike, Posey, Vanderburgh & Warrick counties*

Staff participated in evaluating CFTMs, engaging families and utilizing safety plans to achieve sustainable case closure. The evaluation resulted in changing protocols for writing and implementing case plans. The region is also focused on adopting the Lean principles of respect for people and continuous improvement.

REGION 17: *Daviess, Martin, Dubois, Crawford, Spencer & Perry counties*

The region met its goal of reducing the number of children being placed more than an hour away from local offices and decreasing residential placements. Also, the region participated in the case plan initiative with Region 16.

REGION 18: *Washington, Scott, Clark, Harrison & Floyd counties*

The region set the goal of serving the right child at the right time, and this has resulted in a 9% decrease in the total number of CHINS. The region facilitates a supportive and nurturing environment for team members. When two staff members were diagnosed with breast cancer, staff organized a yard sale. Five counties donated items, and the yard sale raised \$2,400. The funds were donated to the two staff members, and the leftover merchandise was given to a local rescue mission.

INDIANA CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT HOTLINE

1 Strengthened Supervisor Team

The hotline division increased its supervisor staff to 23 supervisors. This allows better support for front line staff and hotline operations.

2 Maintained Average Answer Speed

Despite handling more calls than last year by this time, the hotline has kept its average answer speed at 16 seconds.

3 Received Excellent Quality Assurance Reviews

During three quality assurance reviews, the hotline scored at 100% in multiple areas and scored 100% on at least two areas for each of the reviews. On these same reviews, the Hotline scored 99% on at least two areas for each of the reviews. Through three quality assurance reviews, the Hotline met or exceeded 94% of the time.

4 Increased Telework Options

The division has increased at-home staff with currently 91% of eligible staff teleworking. This has helped the hotline significantly reduce expenditures on leased space.



CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE DIRECTOR

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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CALLS & OUTCOMES

In 2019, the hotline division took steps to help intake specialists find closure after taking a call about alleged abuse or neglect of a child. Since the hotline's inception, intake specialists have often been left wondering about the outcome of a case that stuck with them. With the Intake to Outcome program, staff will have the opportunity to learn about the steps DCS took to intervene and protect children after receiving a call for help. The program seeks to bridge the gap between that initial report and the outcome of a case. Every quarter, staff are invited to submit requests for the outcome of two reports they have taken. The reports don't necessarily have to be from the last quarter. By filling out a simple form, intake specialists will receive an update on the case from the field division. These reports help intake specialists go home knowing that DCS did its best to assure the safety of Hoosier children and families.

FOSTER, COLLABORATIVE & KINSHIP CARE

1 Changed up Resource Fairs and Parenting Youth Conferences

Partnering with the Older Youth Initiatives team and contracting independent living providers, we held conferences in numerous regions across the state. Through this approach, we were able to service more youth, incorporate prevention opportunities, include community stakeholders and involve more of the collaborative care team in the planning and coordination of each event.

2 Celebrated Graduations

We celebrated 17 older youth through the Colts/Cargo Services Open House. Additionally, we had 10 other graduation celebrations across the state where numerous supervisors and 3CMs partnered with their local contracted OYS (Older Youth Services) providers to bring each event to fruition.

3 Launched Uniform Placement Process

We built a statewide placement process that is uniform and responsive to help staff access placement search and support quickly and effectively. It allows for more seamless searches across county and regional lines with focus on placement matching

4 Reached more than 7,000 Individuals in Indiana to Foster or Support Fostering

In the last year we have had more than 7,000 people receive information about how to foster and support the emotional and physical needs of those who foster.



ADD OF FOSTER, KINSHIP AND COLLABORATIVE CARE

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NEW PROGRAM BETTER

SUPPORTS FAMILIES

The past year saw many positive steps forward for the agency's new kinship navigator program. The agency has renewed efforts to place children with kinship caregivers whenever possible while supporting the ongoing needs of families that bring children into their homes. Recently, the team celebrated an especially memorable kinship placement of a child who had been living in residential facilities but had a relative willing to step in. The relative support specialist (RSS) stayed involved through the process, working with the boy's grandmother and the FCM overseeing the case. The RSS transported the grandmother to the residential facility and held a meeting with her and her grandson to not only discuss potential challenges to the placement but to also help identify solutions. They made plans for supervision, discipline, household rules, school needs and more. This allowed the team to prepare and helped the child assist in the planning of his own care. The child was successfully placed with his grandmother and continues to have the support of both the FCM and the RSS. This added layer of support allows the family to address challenges more easily and gives the RSS opportunities to help the family navigate appropriate services to avoid a placement disruption. Success stories like these become more common as the program continues to develop.



CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

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WHAT HAPPENED IN CHILD WELFARE?

1 Streamlined the Audit Process

DCS has frequently heard how cumbersome its review processes can be, which often involves multiple visits to providers each year. In 2019, DCS consolidated and streamlined the audit process to ensure it is less intrusive and allows providers to spend more time caring for their children and less time with DCS licensing and audit teams.

2 Extended Support of Former Foster Youth

DCS extended services to age 23 for former foster youth in February 2019. Prior to this, youth services ended at age 21. In addition, effective July 1, 2019, foster care was extended to young people up to age 21 on a voluntary basis (collaborative care). Both of these changes are critical in strengthening the safety net for these young people, many of whom have experienced hardships that disrupted their paths towards adulthood in significant ways.

3 Used Data Effectively

The division applied data more effectively to the use of Community Partners for Child Safety funding. In determining how to invest Community Partners for Child Safety funds, DCS reviewed regional rates of child abuse and neglect reports to identify areas where families most struggled to meet their basic needs. DCS then allocated more dollars to these communities. This has helped to bring down the number of out-of-home CHINS cases by 23.5% and total DCS cases by 26.6% since September 2017.

4 Celebrated Healthy Families Indiana 25th Anniversary

Healthy Families Indiana celebrated 25 years of service. Healthy Families Indiana (HFI) is a voluntary, evidence-based home visitation program designed to promote healthy families and healthy children through a variety of services including child development, access to health care and parent education. Indiana celebrated having this voluntary prevention program available across the state for 25 years in 2019. This speaks to the state's commitment to keeping children safe and supporting new families. The program has continued to grow over the years. It served 11,124 families in State Fiscal Year 2019, up from 10,490 in State Fiscal Year 2018.

MOM OF THREE FINDS HOPE AND SUPPORT

Healthy Families Indiana

celebrated another successful year of helping Hoosiers avoid formal involvement in the child-welfare system by providing resources when they needed them the most. A success story that encompasses the positive impact of this program starts with a client named Denise, a young mother who enrolled in the program three years ago when she was pregnant with her second child. Her firstborn was just 6 months old at the time, and Denise felt overwhelmed at the thought of caring for two children so close together in age.

Over the course of her pregnancy, and following the birth, DCS staff accompanied Denise to her doctor's appointments and visited her in her home to ensure she had what she needed to care for her children and feel confident in her parenting skills. At the start of her involvement in Healthy Families, Denise was living on her disability benefits. During her case, her situation was reevaluated, and her benefits were denied. DCS stood by Denise as she applied for, and got, a job for the first time in her life! Today, she is a busy mom of three and was recently in training for a management position. Truly this is a self-sufficiency success story.





JUVENILE JUSTICE INITIATIVES AND SUPPORT

MEET THE TEAM



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WHAT HAPPENED IN JUVENILE JUSTICE?

1 Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU) conducted the following evaluations:



70,304

Fingerprint transactions processed



780

Criminal and/or CPS waivers processed



94,072

Child protective service index checks completed



1,965

Out-of-state inquiries with assessments

2 Expanded Family Recovery Courts

Currently, there are 10 certified family recovery courts in Indiana, with an additional 12 in the planning stages. Family recovery courts allow those struggling with substance-use disorders to stay with their families while going through rehabilitation and treatment. Keeping families together during this critical time is believed to bolster the chances a patient has of successfully overcoming an addiction in the long run.

3 Reduced Residential Placements

There was a 15% reduction in the use of residential placement on probation youth from November 2018 to November 2019. Youth should be housed in residential facilities only if there are no other placement options that would allow for them to receive the treatment they need. The past year has seen a successful effort to reduce the number of youth in probation who were placed in residential facilities.

4 Probation Service Consultants

The probation service consultants reviewed more than 1,450 recommendations for comprehensive services and residential placement. The team consults with our partners in juvenile probation across the state. In 2019, the unit trained juvenile probation officers on title IV-EFC and the DCS practice model and how both can assist in our work with juvenile probation officers and the juvenile court.



ICPC FINDS A NEW HOME UNDER NEW LEADS

2019 was a big year for the interstate compact on the placement of children (ICPC), which establishes uniform legal and administrative procedures regarding the placement of children out of state. In October, the ICPC unit was assigned to the Juvenile Justice Initiatives and Support Division. The unit has new managers: Deputy Director Don Travis and Assistant Deputy Director Waylon James. The unit also welcomed new consultants Joseph Tonsing-Carter and Antoinette Boyles. Both consultants bring several years of DCS field experience to the unit and they can easily relate to field staff who are trying to navigate and manage ICPC cases. In the past few months, various staff members provided feedback on ways to improve the support and guidance delivered by the ICPC unit. That feedback is being used to help the unit set 2020 goals.



STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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WHAT HAPPENED IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT?

1 Developed and Implemented Clerical Training

Staff development designated mandatory online courses to complete through LinkedIn Learning. The division also developed instructor-led trainings that can be attended by all clerical/ support staff.

2 Developed Central Office Supervisor Onboarding Program

Staff Development developed a one-day training for new central office supervisors and managers. The training includes presentations by a human resources representative as well as a representative from the DCS payroll division.

3 Relaunched the Practice Model Agency-Wide and Beyond

Every DCS employee received training in 2019 on the principles of the practice model. This was followed by similar training for providers and resource parents.

4 Collaborated with Zero Abuse Project

In 2019, DCS partnered with the Zero Abuse Project, an organization committed to transforming institutions so they can more effectively prevent, recognize and respond to child sexual abuse.

5 Provided Leadership Development Trainings

The division implemented the director core series based on the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute leadership model.

DCS Practice Model

DCS PRACTICE MODEL REDESIGN

2019 welcomed a newly designed practice model and training for all DCS staff on its principles. The agency recommitted to a key component of the practice model as the foundation of our work: building trust-based relationships that help us provide the best service possible to both families and to each other. With the help of the practice team, all division leaders had a hand in relaunching the practice model with their team. By Nov. 1, after 188 training sessions statewide, every division had successfully completed the relaunch. The practice team worked with the communications division to distribute the new practice model design. Communications sent posters, magnets, and more to local offices to reinforce the trainings. In 2020, the division will share each division's practice model expectations, and these will be housed on SharePoint.





CHILD SUPPORT BUREAU

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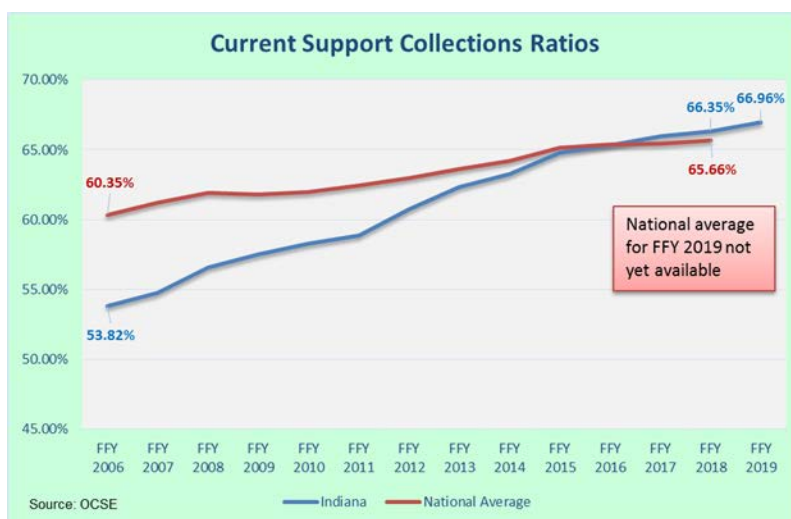
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WHAT HAPPENED IN CSB?

1 Recognized as 6th in the Nation

The Indiana Child Support Program was ranked 6th in the nation for overall performance.

2 Collection Support Rose



The DCS rate of current child support collections continues to rise. As of Federal Fiscal Year 2019, the CSB rate of current support collections was 66.96%. This indicates that 66.96% of all current child support owed is being collected. As of Federal Fiscal Year 2018, the national average of current support collections was 65.66%. The average for 2019 is not yet available.

3 Federal Grant Awarded

CSB was awarded a federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) 1115 demonstration research grant for a total value of \$500,000. This grant will support efforts to improve collections and process paperwork when cases cross Indiana lines.

4 INvest Awarded to Vendor

The INvest project was awarded to a vendor (Deloitte), and DCS is finally ready to begin designing CSB's new statewide child support computer system!

5 Updated IV-D Child Support Application

The IV-D child support application was reduced from six to two pages, and its wording and structure were clarified and improved. This helps to remove barriers that prevent the public from accessing child support services in Indiana. This revised IV-D application is becoming a national model for other states and their IV-D applications.



PRACTICE MODEL IN ACTION-

A SUCCESS STORY

The child support bureau works tirelessly to ensure children across Indiana have the financial support of both parents, regardless of whether they live together or apart. CSB staff members often go above and beyond to connect caregivers with the funds owed to them. 2019 brought one such memorable case. A grandmother caring for her twin granddaughters accessed more than \$18,000 in payments. CSB had issued a debit card to the woman and reached out to her after reports showed the card had not been activated. When CSB staff spoke with the grandmother, she began to cry and said she didn't realize child support payments were being made for the girls. Unable to believe the amount she was about to receive, she called CSB several times to confirm and thanked the staff members profusely for taking those extra steps to find her. She told CSB the money would go toward the girls' college expenses.



IT

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WHAT HAPPENED IN IT?

1 Utilized Virtual Reality

DCS implemented the use of VR headsets to give all FCM candidates the opportunity to experience a real-life scenario of entering a home during an assessment. DCS will also use this in training to provide situational awareness to seasoned FCMs. It will help with caseloads and assignments as well as continuous improvement of the DCS training curriculum.

2 OCM Organizational Design & MaGIK Redesign

DCS awarded the first OCM organizational design RFP. DCS will go through a complete organizational process change. The new system, Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS), will utilize artificial intelligence and provide business intelligence to all aspects of DCS operations.

3 Redesigned INvest

The design, development and implementation (DDI) of a replacement for the aged ISETS mainframe child support system began. DCS redesigned the original plans to award the INvest system DDI at \$42 million with 2-1/2 years to deliver. The system will have 100% more functionality and continuous improvement that will allow the child support system to stay updated and current with technology throughout its entire life cycle.

4 Launched Foster Care & Adoption Portal

DCS implemented Foster Care Portal community that enables real-time engagement and communication between the foster parent and adoption community and FCMs. DCS is currently engaging more than 2,600 members of the foster care community with real-time data about the children in our care. In addition, DCS received more than 460 leads to become potential foster parents.

5 Implemented Employee Engagement System

DCS implemented an employee-engagement system. It provides employee-related data, including reasons for staff turnover; strategic continuous improvement data for executive leadership; and more.



VIRTUAL REALITY OFFERS IMPROVED TRAINING & ONBOARDING

In 2019, the IT division piloted the use of virtual reality technology for recruitment and training, providing both potential and current employees with the chance to practice their skills in life-like simulations. Through immersive storytelling, the VR scenarios mimic situations caseworkers encounter in the field when working with families and allow staff members to think their actions through in a safe, controlled environment. The division piloted the VR program in the DCS Marion and Lake county offices, which found different ways to implement the technology. In Marion County, staff members used VR during the interview process, while Lake County employees invited seasoned employees to try their hand at the interactive software. The division hopes to roll the program out statewide in 2020.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

MEET THE TEAM



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WHAT HAPPENED IN ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES?

1 Improved Invoice Processes

The invoice submittal process has been improved. Now, there is a clearly defined placement in KidTraks for all supporting documentation from vendors.

2 Redefined PRTF Process

Administrative services refined the process for wards entering a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF). Wards have access to medically necessary services that are covered by Medicaid.

3 Reduced Returned Applications

In 2019, the IV-E eligibility unit reduced the returned applications backlog by 96.7% (adoption).

4 Improved Processes

Through collaboration and research, the administrative services division identified a more efficient process to determine initial and ongoing redetermination of eligibility for children in out-of-home care in a 12-month span.



‘GOOD AS NEW’ BIKES BRING JOY TO FOSTER KIDS

In 2019, 27 Hoosier foster children received gently used bicycles and new helmets, thanks to a generous donation by the state’s LaRue Carter Memorial Hospital and some quick work by DCS employees to put the gift to good use. The children and their foster families were invited to a public park to receive the bikes and a T-shirt. This was an event that came together as the result of a team effort. Region 7 leadership worked with the finance team to coordinate purchases for the event. Finance also took the lead on having some minor repairs made to the bikes so all were ready to use when the kids arrived. The children, who were being cared for by a relative or family friend, were part of the new Kinship of Indiana Support Services pilot program. The kinship pilot program was created in 2019 to help understand and address the unique needs of kinship and relative caregivers across the state and ensure they are connected to necessary resources. The giveaway offered a chance for the program’s coordinators to connect with the families and show their appreciation.



HUMAN RESOURCES

MEET THE TEAM



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WHAT HAPPENED IN HR?



2018

4,314



2019

4,812

New Hires/Rehires In 2019: 1,274



**485
Positions
Created**

65 attorneys
106 FCM supervisors
85 field clerical staff
63 legal clerical staff
166 other positions



**1,089
FCMs
HIRED**



333

EMPLOYEES APPROVED FOR THE
BSW/MSW INCENTIVE PROGRAM



368

PROMOTIONS

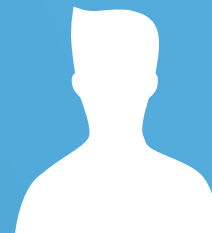
USING TECH TOOLS LEADS TO SUCCESSFUL HIRES

In 2019, DCS human resources partnered with Marion County leadership and supervisors to host two job fairs to recruit family case managers for Region 10. Staff members interviewed more than 120 candidates and recommended more than 60 of them for hire. So far, 31 of those candidates have joined the DCS staff, and another 35 will start in January.

To ensure a good turnout for the events, HR utilized the Talent Community in SAP SuccessFactors to find candidates who had already expressed interest in positions with state government. Additionally, HR searched Marion County and the surrounding counties to find candidates with qualifying degrees.

HR collaborated with the State Personnel Department and the DCS communications team to advertise the event with custom graphics on social media, including the DCS LinkedIn and Twitter pages and the WorkForIndiana Facebook page. This increased visibility allowed for a larger reach among candidates.

As part of the pilot testing, 32 candidates used a virtual reality headset to demonstrate how they would interact with families in the field if hired as a case manager. The software program was met with rave reviews. A third job fair is in the works for March in Marion County, and it will become a quarterly staple for the Region 10 hiring process.





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WHAT HAPPENED IN COMMS?

1 Launched #TrashTalk & #InTheirShoes

Children who have been removed from their home by DCS often take little with them as they transition into foster care. Sometimes, they take just a few things they can fit in a trash bag. In 2019, the communications division launched “Trash Talk” and “In Their Shoes,” two campaigns that educated the public on the challenges facing the foster care system. They invited supporters to give back with donations of duffel bags for kids.

2 Took the Family First Act on the Road

Next year, DCS will implement the principles of the federal Family First Act, which helps fund programs aimed at preventing abuse and neglect so families can stay together. In November, the communications team took this message across the state, meeting with staff, providers and other stakeholders to spread the word about this transformative legislation and what to expect next year.

3 Launched the Foster Care Portal & Newsletter

In 2019, the communications team made it a priority to improve the agency’s connection to foster families with the rollout of the Foster Care Portal and a newsletter dedicated to the needs of these special families. The portal provides foster parents with 24/7 access to information about the children in their care, and the newsletter provides helpful information on caring for children who have experienced trauma.

4 Launched Internal Podcast “Stories of DCS”

Every day, DCS staff members are called to aid families and children in crisis. They come away from those situations with incredible examples of the difference DCS can make in Hoosiers’ lives. Last year, DCS launched “Stories of DCS,” inviting DCS employees to share the stories they’ll never forget and what they learned along the way.

5 Rolled out Redesigned Staff Newsletter

The DCS newsletter got a makeover and lots of fun new features last year. The communications division first surveyed staff members to better understand what employees value in a company-wide newsletter, then tailored The 92 to meet those expectations.



FLAT-OUT FUN

Director Stigdon travels the state year 'round, but last February, it seemed DCS' fearless leader was turning up everywhere – and no one can drive that fast.

The “Flat Terry” campaign was one of the communication division's most popular initiatives in 2019, bringing together employees for a spirited contest that also showcased some of the most beautiful parts of the Hoosier state.

Building on the popularity of “Flat Stanley,” each office received its own copy of DCS' 2D director. Flat Terry was encouraged to attend meetings, office gatherings and more, taking photos along the way and inviting others to guess where she'd been based on her snapshots.

Flat Terry dropped in on staff celebrations, took selfies at Hoosier landmarks and even – after a month of so much travel – took some time off to spend at the beach (making 3D Terry exceedingly jealous).

Each week, staff members received a new challenge and submitted their entries for inclusion in The 92. As a result, many faces from across the state made an appearance, many being featured in the newsletter for the first time.



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*“Together,
we are capable
of great things!”*

— DIRECTOR STIGDON

2019



Former Colts player Marlin Jackson takes part in a panel discussion about personal trauma and how it affects everyone differently. His story helped our case managers better comfort Hoosier children going through traumatic experiences.



Hancock County Sheriff Brad Burkhart donates \$500 to the #TrashTalk campaign with Borrowed Hearts to help give duffel bags to kids in foster care. He helped deliver around 100 duffel bags to the Hancock County DCS office!



TOP: DCS partnered with Borrowed Hearts for the state employee fundraising campaign this year. Their clothing closet makes a big difference to foster parents, and that makes a big difference to DCS!

BOTTOM LEFT: The Books for Youth program is committed to placing backpacks filled with books into the hands of foster children. For more info on how you can help make sure kids have books to call their own, visit <https://indianafostercare.org/s/article/Books-for-Youth>

BOTTOM RIGHT: 140 foster kids can now use duffel bags instead of trash bags when they're removed from unsafe situations. Thanks to the #TrashTalk campaign, Borrowed Hearts was able to raise \$785.47 for foster kids across the state. A big thank you to everyone who volunteered and donated!





“Today means everything, just everything. I’m going to cry. He’s my grandson, he’s my whole entire world. I don’t know where he would have been if it hadn’t been for me and for everyone else who’s helped us. I had a battle with cancer this summer; without the support of all of them, I don’t know if I would have made it or not. But I made it. I’m in complete remission now and looking forward to spending the rest of my life with my baby.” —Adoptive Mom on adoption day



Dozens of foster kids received bikes and helmets thanks to a generous donation by LaRue Carter Memorial. All of the kids, who are being cared for by a relative, are part of the new Kinship of Indiana Support Services program. DCS made sure the bikes were repaired and ready to go to a new home. For more information visit <http://Indianafostercare.org>.



TOP: “We knew we wanted to adopt (and) signed up through DCS. ...We matched with him, he came to our home when he was 8 days old. We met him when he was a little baby. My wife and I obviously believe this is how it was supposed to be.” —Foster parent on adopting a Safe Haven baby

BOTTOM LEFT: Ellis Dumas (Lake County LOD) showed up at 7 a.m. to do some cleaning (with a smile on his face)!

BOTTOM RIGHT: “I wasn’t planning to have an open house at all because I don’t have any family or a lot of friends. When kids are put into the foster care system, they think, ‘No one cares about me, I’m with this family that I don’t even know, and they don’t even know me,’ so it feels good when someone puts something like this together. You see that people really do support you and that people care about you.” —DCS Older Youth





TOP LEFT: “I love my job. I love getting out in the community and helping families and making a difference. When I’m talking to parents, I tell them my job is to make sure their kids are safe. I’m not there to just come in and take their children out of their homes. We’re just here to help.” —Family case manager



TOP RIGHT: St. Joseph County division manager Bill Horton was awarded a bicentennial medal from IU South Bend. Bill is a professor at IUSB and a great champion for the BSW and MSW scholars program in Region 3.

BOTTOM: The staff in Randolph County assisted local veterans on Veterans Day and over Thanksgiving. All of the DCS staff donated money and/or items to give to the veterans at The Journey Home (housing homeless veterans). The staff also made a Thanksgiving meal and invited the veterans, along with staff from the Journey Home, to share the meal with us.





Living in foster care is difficult for children and families, and DCS wants to take whatever steps possible to ease those burdens. The holidays bring a number of ways to support the children in our care as DCS employees and partners embrace the spirit of the season. In December, DCS partnered with the faith community in Indianapolis to take foster children on a shopping spree at The Caring Place Christmas Store. Volunteers walked children through aisles full of games, toys and stuffed animals, filling their sacks full of donated Christmas presents. Children also had a chance to visit with Santa. At central office, employees kept the joy going all month long through a partnership with One Simple Wish. One Simple Wish keeps a list year round of foster children's wishes, and support for those requests ramps up at the holidays. Central office employees chose ornaments from a tree in the lobby, each with a wish from a foster child. The tree had to be replenished with additional ornaments several times thanks to DCS staff's generosity!

thank you

Thank you to all our hardworking employees who remind us why we do the work we do. DCS is only as successful as our ability to come together in support of a common goal, and every day, you pour your hearts into that goal: assuring the safety of children and the stability of Hoosier families. Each of you has a hand in our success. It is our pleasure to lead such an incredible team!

-Your executive team





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eNough

Do you suspect a child is being abused or neglected?

DON'T WAIT—CALL NOW!



1-800-800-5556

Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline

"Indiana children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities."



www.in.gov/DCS