

**Child Welfare Improvement Committee
Indiana Court Improvement Program**

AGENDA

Friday, October 3, 2014

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.

1. Members Present. Heather Mollo (Chair), Leslie Dunn, Cathy Graham, Lisa Rich.
2. Staff Present. Mike Commons, Angela Reid-Brown.
3. Approval of minutes. The minutes from the August 1, 2014 meeting were approved.

Member Updates. Leslie Dunn provided an update on the Indiana State Office of GAL/CASA. The State GAL/CASA conference is October 9-11, 2014. Leslie distributed a factsheet about the Indiana State Office of GAL/CASA and about GAL/CASA volunteer programs across the state. Currently there are GAL/CASA volunteer programs in 78 counties. There are over 2,900 children across the state waiting for a GAL/CASA volunteer. The Indiana State Office of GAL/CASA distributes matching funds, as appropriated by the General Assembly to certified GAL/CASA programs. The current budget is \$2.9 million dollars. The program will be asking for a budget increase during the 2015 legislative session. Cathy Graham said IARCCA would help lobby for more funding. The Office is working on 1) implementing a statewide case management system, 2) a statewide volunteer survey, 3) training on volunteer retention, 4) solutions to address the volunteer waitlist, 5) training for new CASA directors, 6) Attorney GAL training.

4. Legal Orphans Project. The committee reviewed the definition for the legal orphan's project-children whose parental rights have been terminated and has no legal permanent connection to a family. Angela asked if there is a particular group we should begin focusing on (i.e., older children or children who have not achieved permanency within 12 months). Angela reported the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court legal orphans project focused on children 14 and older and the Texas project focused on children 12 and older who have been in foster care for one year. The Georgia Cold Case Project uses a predictive model based on the age of the child, type of placement and placement per diem. Angela distributed Indiana's Child Welfare Context Data Report from the Child Welfare Outcomes Report Data Site administered by the Children's Bureau, an office of the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (<http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview>).

Lisa Rich said DCS already has programs and services in place for older youth, such as the adoption picture book, heart gallery, AdoptUSKids website, permanency roundtables, and collaborative care. She asked what this project would do in addition to the efforts of DCS.

Lisa stated Bryan Samuels (former Commission of the Administration for Children Youth and Families) stated at a 2013 Leadership Summit that kids who come into care at age 14 tend to age out of the system without permanency. She wondered if this is the age group we should target. Lisa said more information is needed on what it is we are trying to solve with this project. She suggested doing an analysis of the courts data regarding children who remained in care until 18 to find out why they came into care and when they came into care. We could also look at kids that came into care at 14.

Cathy Graham suggested reviewing federal legislation passed in 2011 and 2014 and the Fostering Youth Caucus for possible guidance. Cathy said we could also look at factors reported in the IARCCA Outcomes report. Cathy inquired about the no reasonable efforts exception and stated the Adoption and Safe Families Act was intended to address how long a child is in care. She said a PhD doctoral student should be involved with this project.

5. Proposed 2015 Meeting Dates. The proposed meeting dates for 2015 were approved.

6. Assignments for the January 9, 2015 meeting. Heather agreed to research state and federal legislation regarding older youth; Leslie agreed to find out what outcome data the National GAL/CASA organization will be collecting; Lisa agreed to look into doing a data exchange between DCS and the Courts; Mike will provide an update on the Family Court Project.

Future Meeting Dates

January 9, 2015	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Indiana Judicial Center
March 6, 2015	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Indiana Judicial Center
May 1, 2015	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Indiana Judicial Center
August 7, 2015	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Indiana Judicial Center
October 2, 2015	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Indiana Judicial Center