

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

AGENCY OVERVIEW (TRANSMITTAL LETTER)

From 1991 to January 2005, the responsibility for protecting Indiana's children from abuse and neglect and the responsibility for collecting and distributing child support for Indiana's children rested with the Bureau of Family Protection and Preservation and the Bureau of Child Support, respectively. These Bureaus were part of the Division of Family and Children, under the umbrella of the Family and Social Services Administration.

In January, 2005, Governor Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr. determined it was necessary to create an Agency that focused solely on providing protection and support to Indiana's abused, neglected and custodial children. As a result, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) was formed under Executive Order 05-14 and later that year codified in Indiana law. This new cabinet-level agency was charged with administering both child protection and child support functions. All efforts are consistent with the Governor's goal of improving services to Hoosier children for protection and support, areas that Hoosiers across the state had identified as failing to properly serve children and families.

On January 1, 2009, the DCS took another significant step to improve services for the children and families it serves as it assumed responsibility for the Family and Children's Fund. As a result, DCS began direct payment for the services to children and families previously administered and funded by the individual 92 counties. This county-level funding and administration of services proved to be inefficient and inconsistent. Consequently, in addition to coordinating and paying for the expenditures for services provided to abused and neglected children, the Department began reviewing expenditures for services offered to children determined to be juvenile delinquents.

DCS PROGRAMS

Child Welfare

DCS local offices serve Indiana's children who are at risk of abuse and/or neglect and also those families involved with the child welfare system. DCS also administers programs with the goals of developing, procuring and delivering an array of effective services and programs in a fiscally responsible manner to ensure the physical, mental and emotional well-being of children and families. The four areas of program delivery address Prevention, Preservation, Placement and Permanency.

Prevention programs include services geared toward preventing child maltreatment. Prevention programming includes early child home visits, referrals to mental health and substance abuse screening and outreach, supportive services that promote healthy parent/child interactions and community based programming that includes referrals to a broad array of state and federal services.

Preservation programs include services that provide support and involvement to help preserve families where child abuse or neglect has been substantiated. These services can include family assessments, casework and counseling, child and family team meetings, family visitation, and home visits. On some occasions, children will remain in the home; in other situations, children may be temporarily removed from the home and services provided to the family so that reunification can occur if child safety can be addressed.

Placement programs include those services provided to the child and family while the child is placed in out-of-home care, such as relative placement, foster care, and residential care. The goal of these services is family reunification.

Permanency programs focus on locating and developing a safe, stable and secure home for a child. Permanency is defined as reunification, adoption or legal guardianship. Every youth exiting foster care should have at a minimum a permanent connection with one caring, committed adult who will provide them guidance and support as they make their way into and during adulthood.

The services associated with child protection and the associated costs are expended from the following fund centers:

Family and Children Fund – Purchases child welfare services including institutional placements, foster care placements, preservation services, and miscellaneous cost of wards.

Local Office Administration – Field operations staff and operating costs.

Central Office Administration – Central Office staff and operating costs.

Adoption Assistance – Adoption assistance payments and subsidies.

ICWIS (Indiana Child Welfare Information System) – Child welfare information system and support staff.

Child Welfare Assistance (IV-B Parts I and II) – 100% federal and transferred funds. State match required. Funds some adoption, preservation services, time limited reunification, case management and administrative services.

Healthy Families – Currently 100% federal funds (TANF). Prevention program for at risk children and families.

Child Welfare Training – All DCS training programs.

Independent Living / Chafee – 100% federal funds. State match required (currently 20%). Independent living programs and services for wards soon to age out of system.

Community Based Family Resources/Support – Community Partners program for prevention services to families referred by DCS.

Emergency Assistance – 100% federal and transferred funds. Time and occurrence limited respite, non-medical counseling, and out-of-home placement costs.

Special Needs Adoption – Pre-placement and post-adoption services as well as some recruitment and retention training.

Assisted Guardianship – 100% transferred and federal funds (TANF). Per diem for permanent relative care.

SSBG Direct Services – Nearly 100% federal and transferred funds. Transferred to cover other DCS costs.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment – 100% federal funds. State match required. Supports a variety of child welfare prevention and intervention programs.

Children’s Trust Fund (Kids First) – Kids First license plate proceeds for prevention services. Controlled by Kids First Board.

Youth Service Bureau – After school programs and delinquency prevention.

Non-Recurring Adoption Expense – One-time costs (primarily attorney’s fees) to support and encourage adoptions.

Child Welfare Services State Grant – Remaining balance from old welfare fund. Used to cover one-time costs and some ongoing operating costs.

Project Safe Place – Safe havens for runaways.

Child Support

Title IV-D of the Federal Social Security Act, enacted in 1975, requires that a child support program be established in every state that chose to participate in the IV-A programs concerning public support. Under the provisions of IC-12-17-2, Indiana's child support program became effective on October 1, 1976, and was administered by the Child Support Bureau. Since the mid-1970s, the mandate of the child support enforcement program has been expanded to families who are not receiving public assistance: in fact, the latter are now by far the largest segment of Indiana’s Title IV-D caseload.

In 2005, the Child Support Bureau (CSB) was incorporated into the newly created Department of Child Services with the belief that children have the right to the care and support of both parents whether or not the parents are married and both in the home. The child support program enforces parental responsibility through the establishment of paternity, the setting of child support and medical support orders, and the collection and disbursement of court-ordered support payments from non-custodial parents. A full range of child support services is provided.

In Indiana, the CSB has entered into cooperative agreements with local county prosecutors to provide funding for child support enforcement services in all 92 counties. The Bureau also has cooperative agreements with the Clerks of Circuit Courts established magistrates, or special hearing officers, specifically to adjudicate Title IV-D child support cases.

Parents who receive TANF or Medicaid for their children are required to pursue Title IV-D child support services through the local county Prosecutor's office and receive those services free of charge. Other parents who need child support services pay a one-time application fee of \$25.00. Persons interested in receiving those services may apply at their local county prosecutor's office.

It is estimated the CSB will process approximately \$1.0 billion in child support payments this year (both Title IV-D and non IV-D cases) for the benefit of Indiana's children.

The services associated with child support enforcement and the associated costs are expended from the following fund centers:

Child Support (IV-D) Administration – Central Office and field child support staff and operating costs.

ISETS (Indiana Support Enforcement Tracking System) – Child support collection and enforcement system and support staff.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In January of 2009, DCS completed implementation of 2008's HEA 1001 which transferred the oversight and funding of the services provided to children previously administered and funded through the Family and Children's Fund in each of the 92 counties of the State. The new system allows DCS to be more responsive and to deliver programs and services to children and families more consistently across the State.

Over the past two years, DCS has pursued a significant relative placement initiative. Relative placements are up 20.0% at FY 2010 year-end compared to one year ago and 46.5% versus two years ago. At FY 2010 year-end, relative placements represented 24.9% of CHINS cases vs. 21.6% one year prior and 18.0% two years earlier. This initiative has provided a safer and more familiar environment for the children DCS serves.

DCS is required to submit data to the federal Administration of Children and Families (ACF). For example, the Adoption and Foster Care Reporting and Analysis System (AFCARS) collects case level information on all children in foster care for whom Indiana has responsibility for placement, care or supervision, and on children who are adopted under the auspices of the Department of Child Services. States are required to submit AFCARS data semi-annually to ACF. Indiana now exceeds the national standards on three out of six composite scores. On the fourth score, DCS has shown steady improvement over the past four years and is now within 1% of meeting the national standard. At this point, no state has met the federal standards on all six composite scores.

In January 2010, DCS established the Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (Hotline) to ensure consistent handling of calls alleging child abuse and neglect. The Hotline serves as the reporting center for all allegations of child abuse or neglect in Indiana. The Hotline is staffed with 62 Family Case Managers, also known as Intake Specialists, who are professionally trained to take reports of abuse and neglect. These Intake Specialists gather information from callers; determine whether the information provided meets statutory criteria for DCS to conduct an assessment; and route reports meeting those criteria directly to DCS local offices for response and assessment. The centralized Hotline was developed to bring consistency to the way abuse and neglect calls were managed across the state. The Hotline streamlines the agency's approach to taking reports,

improves its ability to gather information from callers, and expedites the process of preparing comprehensive reports and disseminating those reports to local offices for assessment. As of August 30, 2010, the Hotline rollout was complete and the Hotline was taking reports in all 92 counties.

DCS is on the verge of completing the statewide roll-out of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment tool (CANS). The CANS assessment is a child-appropriate instrument for the assessment of child functional impairment and is a nationally recognized instrument in the child welfare and behavioral health communities. It was developed by John Lyons, PhD, University of Ottawa, and many stakeholders across multiple states. Different versions of the CANS are used in nearly every state, and in nearly every continent. In the U.S., statewide applications exist for use of the CANS in Alabama, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Virginia, Oregon, and Nevada.

The CANS tool is used by DCS to assist in assessing a child's needs and strengths in determining an appropriate level of care and placement. Use of this tool statewide will result in more consistent and accurate assessments of the needs of Indiana's abused and neglected children.

RECENT CHALLENGES

The litigation involving 2010 residential, licensed child placing agency, foster care, and adoption rates has created a huge distraction for the Agency. The temporary injunction which rolled back rates to 2009 levels has created an enormous amount of work in updating accounting systems and coordinating invoice validation by local office staff. The preliminary injunction has significantly reduced DCS's financial and operating flexibility and has precluded DCS from pursuing Medicaid initiatives, such as the unbundling of rates, for residential and foster home placements.

Over the past year and a half, DCS has experienced an increase in caseloads. Over the last six months of FY 2010, the average number of open abuse and neglect cases was up 3.9% compared to the last six months of FY 2009 and 9.0% compared to the last six months of FY 2008. Some of this increase may be a reflection of the recent national economic crisis.

OBJECTIVES FOR NEXT BIENNIUM

Over the next three years, DCS will complete the full statewide roll-out of its foster care reorganization. This will include full deployment of and training on CANS assessment tool; introduction of foster care specialists in every DCS region to provide better support to DCS foster homes; and the recruitment and licensing of DCS foster homes for children with special physical and/or mental health needs (special needs and therapeutic foster homes).

DCS will roll-out its Community Mental Health Center/Medicaid initiatives to all residential and foster care placements. This will allow DCS to, where appropriate, draw down federal Medicaid funds to support behavioral health services to children in out-of-home placements. Many of these expenditures are currently funded with 100% state dollars. This initiative began in July, 2010 with community and home-based behavioral health services.

DCS will also complete the redesign of its child welfare information system. Through collaboration with the Anne E. Casey Foundation, DCS will jointly develop a state-of-the-art information system to support its operations and meet federal reporting requirements in a manner consistent and supportive of the department's practice model.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The changes that have been implemented in the last five years are already reflected in the steadily improving DCS agency-wide metrics. These metrics measure progress toward meeting the agency's overarching mission and objectives, such as protecting children from abuse and neglect and maximizing the amount of adjudicated child support collected and disbursed to the children of the State. Below are the most recent measures of those achievements compared to the earliest data collected.

Child Support

1. Percent of current child support collected
 - > June 2010 = 58.2%
 - > December 2004 = 50.7%

Amount of money collected for current support in IV-D cases divided by the total amount owed for current support in IV-D cases during the year ended each quarter.

Stretch Goal = 62.0%
Target Goal = 58.0%

2. % of child Support paying toward arrears
 - > June 2010 = 63.6%
 - > December 2004 = 55.7%

of IV-D cases paying towards arrears divided by the total number of cases with arrears due during the year ended each quarter.

Stretch Goal = 62.0%
Target Goal = 60.0%

Child Welfare Field Operations

1. % of counties meeting the required caseload ratio (12/17)
 - > June 2010 = 88.9%
 - > September 2006 = 13.0%

counties/92 who meet 12/17 target at average need over the 12 months ended in the current quarter.

Stretch Goal = 100.0%
Target Goal = 75.0%

2. % Time to Reunification < 12 months
> June 2010 = 66.8%
> September 2005 = 70.0%

of children who were reunited within 12 months with parents or primary caregivers AND were released within the last quarter as a percentage of the total children who were reunited during that same period.

Stretch Goal = 72.2%
Target Goal = 65.1%

3. % Absence of Repeat Maltreatment
> June 2010 = 92.2%
> September 2005 = 87.3%

Children who had substantiated allegations of maltreatment and had no prior substantiated allegation of maltreatment in the prior twelve months as a percentage of total children in the last quarter who have substantiated allegations of maltreatment.

Stretch Goal = 90.0%
Target Goal = 85.2%

4. % Foster Care Reentry not within 12 months
> June 2010 = 96.7%
> March 2005 = 92.8%

Percent of children entering foster care in the last quarter that have not been in foster care in the last twelve months.

Stretch Goal = 95.0%
Target Goal = 92.9%

ORGANIZATION CHART

See Attachment.

PROGRAMS TO BE REDUCED, ELIMINATED, OR REPLACED

None at this time.

REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

None at this time.