

2017 Department of Child Services Legislative Agenda
Commission on Improving the Status of Children – December 7, 2016

1. Duty to Report Child Abuse & Neglect

- Amend statute to prohibit schools from setting internal policies that restrict or delay any employee's duty to immediately report suspected abuse/neglect to DCS
- Require mandatory child abuse/neglect training for school employees
- Add language clarifying that infants born drug-positive must be reported to DCS

2. Safe Haven Clarification

- Amend Indiana's Safe Haven law (IC 31-34-2.5) to explicitly state that surrenders of unwanted infants must be made to a person – not a place (ex. parking lot, doorstep, or "baby box")
- Amend IC 35-46-1-4(c)(1) (defense to criminal liability) to state that surrendering an infant in a "baby box" does not provide the person with Safe Haven immunity to child abandonment charges

3. Driver's Licenses for Foster Youth

- Amend statute to waive the fee for foster youth to obtain driver's licenses or learner's permits

4. Child in Need of Services (CHINS) Statute Regarding Drug-Positive Newborns

- Update statute to explicitly state that infants born with controlled substances in their bodies, including positive tests of the blood, meconium, and urine, are considered CHINS

5. Parental Drug Screens

- Amend statute to allow judges to compel parents of DCS-involved children to submit to drug tests

6. Fee for Fingerprint Checks for Prospective Adoptive Parents

- Amend IC 31-19-2-7.5 to allow DCS to pay the fingerprinting fee for adopting a child under DCS care

7. Restore CHINS 3 Statute (sexual/other offenses against children)

- Legislation was passed in the 2016 session that inadvertently removed language under the CHINS 3 statute (IC 31-34-1-3) that allowed DCS and the court to intervene in cases where a *child* is the perpetrator and other children are living in the home – this proposal would restore that language

8. Voluntary Termination of Parental Rights by a Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA)

- Amend statute so that when LCPAs file petitions to voluntarily terminate parental rights, they must do so in furtherance of an adoption or other appropriate permanency plan

9. Concurrent Permanency Planning

- Add statutory definition of "concurrent planning" to allow DCS to make diligent efforts in furtherance of two different permanency plans. This will align statute with current practice.

10. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)

- Amend statute to allow DCS to share information on missing children with NCMEC

11. Assessment Information for Children of Military Parents

- Amend language added in HEA 1271 (2016) to say that if a parent of a child who is the subject of a substantiated investigation of abuse or neglect is an active duty military member, DCS shall notify the U.S. Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program of the assessment *upon request*

12. Restricted Driver's License Statute (Child Support)

- Title 9 (the BMV statute) was amended in 2015 to replace "restricted licenses" with "court ordered specialized driving privileges." This proposal amends Title 31 (the DCS statute) to conform to these changes.