What is the 12/17 caseload standard?

- The 12/17 caseload standard refers to the number of monthly cases that assessment workers (those investigating allegations of abuse and neglect) and ongoing workers (those carrying ongoing protective services cases) should carry on their caseloads. The 12 refers to active investigations of cases involving child abuse and/or neglect, and the 17 refers to the number of children being monitored in ongoing protective services cases.

Where did the 12/17 standard come from?

- The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) published caseload "standards for excellence" for child welfare workers. CWLA recommends that assessment workers (those investigating allegations of abuse and neglect) carry an average of 12 cases per month, and ongoing workers (those carrying ongoing protective services cases) carry no more than 17 families. In Indiana, the Department of Child Services (DCS) counts one child (instead of one family) as one ongoing case. Indiana adopted standards based on CWLA’s recommendations in 2007.

Are there national caseload standards that all states use?

- No national caseload standard is used by all states, and most states do not have caseload standards codified in statute like Indiana. Many states weigh cases differently in calculating caseloads, which means that case counts are not a function of just volume, but also complexity.

Why did DCS conduct a caseload and workload analysis?

- DCS is currently not meeting the statutory 12/17 caseload standard. In order to better understand the duties of Family Case Managers (FCMs) and the time needed to provide appropriate care to Hoosier children and families, DCS contracted with Deloitte Consulting to conduct a field workload analysis to assess the time demands of all duties that FCMs must complete during the course of handling a case. Deloitte studied FCM tasks directly related to casework, as well as time spent on required meetings, training, and other activities not directly related to handling specific cases. Deloitte was also tasked with identifying process and practice improvements to support best practices in child welfare. The analysis explored what duties might be shifted from FCMs and ways that DCS can better leverage technology to most effectively support FCM job duties.

How have FCM duties evolved over the years?

- Since 2007, the work performed by FCMs has changed substantially. Over the last few years, DCS has created several specialist FCM roles, such as relative care specialists, foster care specialists, and Hotline intake specialists. Field FCMs are expected to spend more time with families and have access to enhanced information about children and families from DCS investigators, nurses, and clinicians.

Who conducted the caseload analysis?

- DCS contracted with Deloitte to analyze Indiana’s caseload and workload concerns. Deloitte was chosen because it is well positioned to conduct an analysis of the challenges Indiana is experiencing in meeting its caseload standards and develop recommendations to help achieve compliance. Deloitte is one of the world’s
leading management consulting and professional services firms, and Deloitte has worked with the State of Indiana to achieve a number of strategic goals and objectives over the last 20 years. Specifically, Deloitte’s Child Welfare practice has worked on similar issues for 13 states besides Indiana.

**What was the timeline for the study?**
- The field workload study began in early January, and recommendations were completed on March 16th.

**What did the study recommend?**
- Deloitte presented a final report to DCS, which included a list of 10 strategic and tactical improvements that would help DCS increase worker efficiency and make progress towards meeting the current 12/17 caseload standard. The full report is available publicly on the DCS website ([http://www.in.gov/dcs](http://www.in.gov/dcs)).

**How does DCS plan to address the findings/recommendations made in the report?**
- DCS Director Mary Beth Bonaventura is committed to ensuring that field staff have manageable caseloads so they can provide quality service to children and families across the state. DCS will work with the legislature and Governor Pence to implement the recommendations made in the study.

**Does DCS need to hire more Family Case Managers (FCMs)?**
- Based on February 2015 staffing and caseload data, DCS would need 142 additional positions for compliance with the 12/17 standard:
  - 100 new FCM positions (in addition to filling the existing 77 vacant FCM positions),
  - 17 new FCM supervisors (1:6 ratio of supervisors to FCMs),
  - 8 attorneys to support the new FCMs and help move children to permanency, and
  - 17 new administrative positions to support office operations, as Deloitte identified that administrative tasks consume roughly 30% of an FCM's time.
- Adding new positions will drive the need to expand current field staff training in both capacity and programming. Adding field staff to local offices will require statewide discussion on space needs, as many offices are at or nearing maximum capacity even with reconfiguration efforts being made to accommodate previous staffing increases.

**What is the anticipated cost of hiring these new workers?**
- The estimated annual fiscal impact is $7.5 million, which covers the salary and benefit costs of 100 new FCM positions and 17 FCM supervisor positions. Funding for attorney salaries, administrative staff salaries, training, and office space will be achieved through agency efficiencies and maximizing existing resources.

**How does DCS plan to address staff turnover?**
- In January 2015, DCS enhanced the new worker training curriculum to ensure that new workers are equipped with the skills necessary to promote best practices in child welfare. As part of these changes, workers will spend more time in local offices and will have hands-on experience with a small caseload and the support of a mentor and supervisor.
- DCS has begun to refine its supervisor leadership training to promote high-quality leadership at all levels of the Department. Starting in March 2015, DCS trains new supervisors in cohorts (similar to the new FCM training), where newly-hired supervisors will start their new positions at the same time and undergo special training and mentorship opportunities together.
- DCS was selected by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute as one of 10 child welfare jurisdictions to participate in a five-year grant opportunity. DCS has partnered with the IU School of Social Work to offer
Bachelor of Social Work scholarships and has selected workforce recruitment and retention as its change initiative.

- DCS is actively recruiting qualified candidates for FCM positions through social media, online job websites, newspapers, and local job fairs across the state.
- DCS is working with the State Personnel Department to reduce staff vacancies and increase recruitment efforts statewide.

**What is the starting salary for a Family Case Manager?**

- In State Fiscal Year 2013, DCS increased the salary of FCMs who complete all necessary training. An FCM “trainee” starts at $33,748. After new worker training is completed, the salary increases to $35,776.

**How many open cases does DCS has?**

- At the end of January 2015, there were 17,051 children with open CHINS cases statewide. There were also 2,443 Informal Adjustments (IAs) and 656 Collaborative Care cases.