



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Committee/Task Force:	Child Services Oversight Committee		
Date of Meeting: (MM/DD/YYYY)	07/20/2020	Time:	11:00am
Minutes Prepared By:	Jon Brunner	Location:	Virtual, Zoom Call
1. Meeting Objective(s)			
Approval of Minutes from December meeting, DCS Update, DCS Ombudsman Update, IARCA Update, CASA Update.			
2. Standing Members			
Name	Organization	In Attendance (X indicates present)	
Rep. Edward Clere (Co-chair)	Indiana General Assembly	X	
Rep. Melanie Wright (Co-chair)	Indiana General Assembly	X	
Leslie Dunn	Indiana CASA/GAL	X	
Hon. Dana Kenworthy	Grant Superior Court	X	
Sean McCrindle	Bashor Children's Home	X	
Sen. Jon Ford	Indiana General Assembly	X	
Michael Moore	Indiana Public Defender Council	X	
Sen. Frank Mrvan	Indiana General Assembly	X	
Jim Oliver	Prosecuting Attorneys Council	X	
Jeff Whitman	Department of Education	X	
Director Stigdon	Department of Child Services	X	
3. Staff/Guests			
Name	Organization		
Terry Stigdon	DCS, Director		
Jessica Stier	DCS Ombudsman Bureau, Assistant Ombudsman		
Chris Daley	IARCA, Executive Director		
Leslie Dunn	CASA, Director		

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4. Updates/Old Business			
Topic	Main Points	Recommendations/Decisions	
Approval of minutes from previous meeting	n/a	Minutes unanimously approved	
5. New Business/Presentations			
Topic	Main Points	Recommendations/Decisions	
DCS Update from Director Stigdon	<p>DCS is reviewing their mission, values, and vision to better reflect the need for equity, and working to remove systemic racism. Throughout COVID, DCS has been working to ensure the quality of care is still high. Calls regarding child welfare fell, as educators are the biggest reporters. Without children attending school, reports dropped. To counter this, DCS has worked with community partners to provide assistance where able, and educated teachers on what questions to ask when checking in on students.</p> <p>DCS is also working to make adjustments and improvements based on the 2018 CWG DCS assessment. Various changes have been put in place, including the development of a practice model, salary re-adjustments, multi-disciplinary training for the DCS legal team, and changes to Family Case Manager – Supervisor ratios. Additionally, as a result of ongoing efforts, turnover has dropped from over 30% in 2017 to just above 20% last year.</p>		
DCS Ombudsman Update	<p>In 2019 the number of complaints for the DCS Ombudsman's office declined, but their calls and emails for "assists" increased quite a bit. Their office had 984 call information referrals, as well as 210 assists where the Ombudsman's office facilitated communication between DCS and constituents. The Ombudsman also reviewed 176 cases during that time. Most issues were in regards to case plan and placement, altogether about 38 were found to have some merit. As of now, 2020 is on track to be very similar to 2019. The DCS Ombudsman's office recently rolled out a new case management system, which has been a big help, and they are very happy with the results so far.</p>		

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IARCA Update	IARCA has been widely successful in managing their response to COVID-19. Throughout, they have had no facilities close, and have had no mass transfers of children from homes or residential facilities. The agency shifted resources where able, and as a result was able to transition to virtual services and a more digital environment very easily, without interrupting services. The changes in the past few months have prompted an accelerated look into technology and how to better leverage resources using digital modes, such as providing training for foster parents online. IARCA has felt a large amount of success from these programs, and is looking into how to expand and better utilize these features moving forward.
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CASA Update	GAL/CASA is working with two counties to establish programs, which will place them in all counties excepting four. Compared to this time last year, the CASA waiting list is down over 500 children, bringing the total for the waitlist under 3000. At one time, the list was as long as 6000. The pandemic has slowed their operations, as 40% of their volunteers are over 60. Since many of their volunteers are at risk, there are significantly less compared to this time last year. They feel that communication has been a key component to success over the past few months, and applauded the efforts of DCS, IARCA, and other parties in facilitating good communication through new, virtual channels.
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6. Action Items (Include recommendations/queries for Executive Committee)

Action	Responsibility	Due Date

7. Adjournment

Action	Time
Co-Chair Clere adjourned the meeting.	1:30pm

8. Next Meeting

Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)	12/18/2020	Time:	9:00am	Location:	Virtual, Zoom Call
Topics/Objective(s):					