



Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

INDIANA JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM TASK FORCE

August 16, 2021

About the CSG Justice Center



Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

National nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership association of state government officials that engages members of all three branches of state government

Provides practical, nonpartisan research-driven strategies and tools to increase public safety and strengthen communities

Background

Earlier this year, The CSG Justice Center completed a preliminary assessment of IN's juvenile justice system.

Preliminary Assessment Goals

- Identify opportunities to leverage and build upon past and current juvenile justice reform efforts for development of the statewide plan.
- Evaluate Indiana's current capacity to collect, analyze, report, and use key juvenile justice data critical for developing a data-driven statewide plan and for positioning system stakeholders to measure system performance and progress and make data-driven decisions.
- Assess alignment of Indiana's legislative code and statewide funding approach with research and national best practice.
- Establish initial priorities for system improvement by conducting interviews and focus groups with critical stakeholders across the juvenile justice system.

We conducted interviews and focus groups with more than 100 stakeholders across the juvenile justice system.



The assessment identified key strengths of Indiana's juvenile justice system, including recent improvement efforts.

- 32 counties now participate in the Juvenile Detentions Alternative Initiative (JDAI) to create alternatives to detention in the community for low risk youth.
- Participating JDAI counties (and the state) developed processes for collecting, reviewing, and using JDAI data to understand aspects of the juvenile justice system.
- Indiana created a dual status statutory framework to support youth involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- Senate Bill 368, which addressed juvenile competency, record expungement, and removing youth from adult jails, was signed into law last month.

The assessment also identified key gaps/challenges compared to what research shows works to improve public safety and youth outcomes.

- Indiana lacks statewide policies and practices that ensure low-risk youth are diverted from formal system involvement.
- Despite detention declines, youth are often detained for non-public safety and/or punitive reasons, and disparities persist.
- Statewide dispositional and supervision decisions are varied and not always aligned to risk, need, responsivity principles.
- Indiana lacks policies and processes to ensure state and local resources are used efficiently or effectively for service delivery for the juvenile justice population.
- Indiana lacks a statewide commitment to employing a developmentally appropriate approach to supervision/services.
- Indiana has limited capacity to collect, track, and use juvenile justice data to evaluate and improve system performance and youth outcomes.

Phase Two Process and Timeline

The goal of this next phase of work is to identify and enact legislative and funding reforms that will improve public safety and youth outcomes.

- The role of this task force is to review assessment findings and identify concrete strategies and solutions, and ultimately, come to consensus on legislative reforms.
- All three branches of government are committed to this process and to improving youth outcomes and aligning Indiana's juvenile justice system with what the research says works.
- All stakeholders around this table are critical to the process. We need everyone's support and full participation, and we need you to demonstrate leadership with your peers and other stakeholders around the state in order to successfully enact policy change.

Task force members represent a diverse array of leaders across branches of government and communities who are committed to youth and families.

Representative Wendy McNamara, Co-chair
Indiana General Assembly

Senator Michael Crider, Co-chair
Indiana General Assembly

Stephen Balko
Indiana Department of Education

Rep. Brad Barrett
Indiana General Assembly

Sirrilla Blackmon
Deputy Director, Office of Youth Services
Department of Mental Health and Addiction

Billy Bollin
Chief
Evansville Police Department

Jeff Campos
Sheriff
LaGrange county

Rep. Tony Cook
Indiana General Assembly

Bernice Corley
Executive Director
Indiana Public Defender Council

Alison Cox
Director
Porter County Juvenile Detention

Hon. Steve David
Indiana Supreme Court

Rep. Michelle Davis
Indiana General Assembly

Terrie Decker
Director, Division of Youth Services
Indiana Department of Corrections

Senator Jon Ford
Indiana General Assembly

Hon. Faith Graham
Tippecanoe Superior Court
Chair, Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee

Hon. Dana Kenworthy
Grant Superior Court 2

Christine Kerl
Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Marion County Juvenile Probation

Hon. Kenton Kiracofe
Wells Circuit Court

Susan Lightfoot
Chief Probation Officer
Henry County

Chase Lyday
Chief of Police
Avon Community School Corporation

Senator Eddie Melton
Indiana General Assembly

Rudy Monterrosa
University of Notre Dame

Chris Naylor
Executive Director
Indiana Prosecuting Attorney's Council

Senator Faddy Qadourra
Indiana General Assembly

Rep. Robin Shackelford
Indiana General Assembly

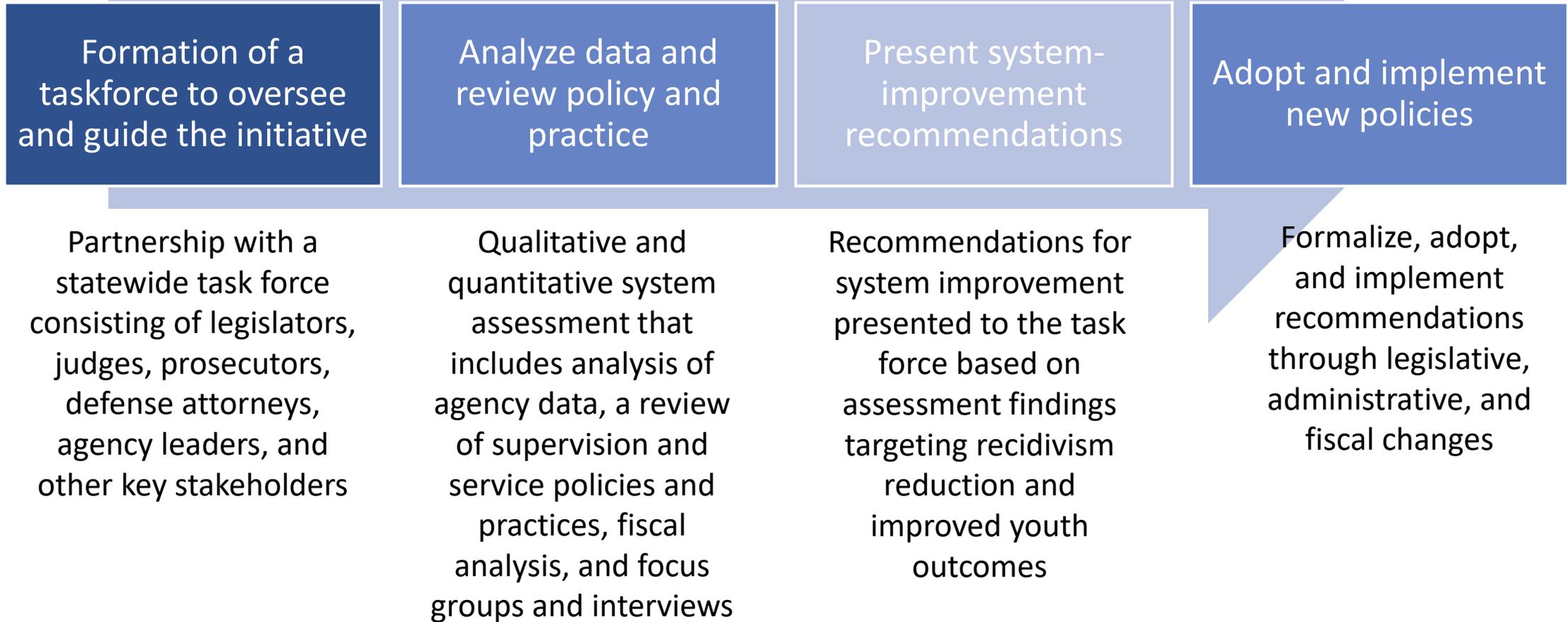
James Taylor
Director of Student & Social Services
MSD of Warren Township

Don Travis
Deputy Director of Juvenile Justice Initiatives &
Support
Indiana Department of Child Services

Kia Wells
Executive Director
VOICES Corporation

Nancy Wever
Director
Indiana JDAI

This next phase of work has four key activities:



Assessment findings will be based on detailed case-level data from multiple data sources.

Data	Source
Probation Department Records	12 Counties Using Quest Case Management System
Racial and Ethnic Disparities	Indiana Courts
Detentions	Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
Services	Indiana Department of Child Services
Out-of-Home Placements	Indiana Department of Child Services
Commitments	Indiana Department of Corrections

CSG Justice Center staff will conduct additional focus groups with system leaders, agency staff, and youth and families.

Juvenile Probation
Officers

Judges and
Magistrates

Prosecutors

Education

School Resource
Officers and
Community Law
Enforcement

Public Defenders

Behavioral Health

Detention Directors
and Line Staff

Assessment activities will continue to focus on alignment of existing policies and practices with research/best practice.

1.

Base supervision, service, and resource allocation decisions on the results of **validated risk and needs assessments**

2.

Adopt and effectively implement **programs and services demonstrated to reduce recidivism and improve other youth outcomes**, and use data to evaluate the results and direct system improvements

3.

Employ a **coordinated approach across service systems** to address youth's needs and promote positive youth development

4.

Tailor system policies, programs, and supervision to reflect the distinct **developmental needs of adolescents**

Smaller working groups will dive deeper into assessment findings and identify recommendations for the Task Force to consider.

- Working group topics based on findings and priorities from the preliminary assessment
 - Front-End
 - Out-of-Home Placement
 - Services
 - Data
- Working groups have two co-chairs, and include members from across the state and diverse perspectives
- Working groups will meet multiple times to review data analysis and qualitative information, along with research and example best practices from other states
- Working groups will identify policy recommendations to present to the larger task force in November

”Front-End” Working Group

- Co-chaired by Rep. Tony Cook and Judge Geoffrey Gaither, Marion County
- Key Issues
 - Who is being referred to the juvenile justice system?
 - How are youth with status offenses and other low-risk youth addressed in Indiana?
 - Who is diverted from the juvenile justice system and what are their outcomes, and what does supervision and services look like for youth on diversion?

”Out-of-Home Placement” Working Group

- Co-chaired by Magistrate Robert Vann, Lake County Superior Court and Susan Lightfoot, Henry County Juvenile Probation
- Key Issues
 - Who is detained and how long are youth in secure detention?
 - How are alternatives to detention being used across the state?
 - Who is referred to out-of-home placement post-adjudication, including residential treatment and DOC custody, and what are the outcomes for youth in placement?

”Services” Working Group

- Co-chaired by Rep. Michelle Davis and Christine Kerl, Marion County Juvenile Probation
- Key Issues
 - How accessible and effective are services for youth across the state?
 - How are resources being allocated to prioritize the highest risk youth in the juvenile justice system?
 - What quality assurance mechanisms are in place to support continuous improvement and accountability?

Timeline of activities and deliverables:

August 2021	September 2021	October 2021	November 2021	December 2021 - January 2022
<p>1st Task Force Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data analysis• Focus groups on referrals, diversion, disposition, and supervision• Establish working groups	<p>2nd Task Force Meeting (Sept. 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of findings on referrals through supervision• Continue data analysis and focus groups on out of home placement and services• Working groups meet	<p>3rd Task Force Meeting (Oct. 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of findings on out of home placement and services• Working groups meet	<p>4th Task Force Meeting (TBD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and discuss working group recommendations• Build consensus• Formalize improvement strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bill drafting• Getting feedback

Through this process, Nevada, Colorado, North Dakota, Connecticut, and others have transformed their juvenile justice systems.

- Requiring the adoption of statewide validated risk screening/assessment tools and mental health screening tools
- Requiring that state funding is used for evidence-based services and prioritizing funding for the highest risk youth
- Establishing performance measures and reporting requirements and strengthening state/local agency data capacity.
- Expanding effective diversion opportunities and keeping low risk youth, including youth with status offenses, out of the juvenile justice system
- Limiting the use of detention for public safety reasons and creating alternatives in the community

Discussion