



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Committee/Task Force:	Child Services Oversight Committee		
Date of Meeting: (MM/DD/YYYY)	12/17/2019	Time:	1:00pm
Minutes Prepared By:	Jon Brunner	Location:	Indiana Statehouse, Rm. 404

1. Meeting Objective(s)

Approval of minutes from May meeting, DCS Update from Director Stigdon; Report from DCS Ombudsman; CASA report.

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. Messmer	Indiana General Assembly	
Michael Moore	Indiana Public Defender Council	
Sen. Frank Mrvan	Indiana General Assembly	X
Jim Oliver	Prosecuting Attorneys Council	X
Jeff Whitman	Department of Education	X

3. Staff/Guests

Name	Organization
Terry Stigdon	DCS, Director
Alfreda Singleton-Smith	DCS Ombudsman Bureau, Director
William Young	DCS, Legislative Liason

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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>Director Stigdon began her update with a quick overview of the changes to DCS' mission statement last year to align with their new goals and updated values. Agency turnover was then addressed, with Director Stigdon citing Family Case Manager turnover decreasing by 22% overall. Adjustments were made elsewhere as well, such as an increase to salaries for attorneys, as well as bolstered clerical support. Moving to data, she provided that on average there are 10K assessments opened per month; the total tends to be higher at the beginning of the school year and during the holidays. Director Stigdon also provided that CHINS OOH placements with relatives have gone down, and the total has dropped as well. An update was then given on efforts to replace the existing Casebook and KidTracks systems with a Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). Director Stigdon explained DCS was recently advised by IDOA to begin contract negotiations. This will build on the system they currently have in place, but because of this will take a decent amount of time to develop.</p> <p>At the end of her presentation, Director Stigdon answered a number of questions. Sean McCrindle asked what she attributed to the lower turnover rate, to which Director Stigdon answered visiting the districts, listening to feedback, and asking for other to help solve the problems. She feels that by eliminating some of the older, "top down" leadership, DCS will be much more capable. Sean supported this notion, adding that he has heard from many people in different regions around the state that appreciated getting to hear from and speak to Director Stigdon. Rep. Wright inquired as to if the wage increase affected turnover, to which Director Stigdon answered that there was a downturn already, but after the wage increase you can see the turnover rate decrease at a greater rate.</p>	

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DCS Ombudsman Update	Director Singleton-Smith provided a brief history of the DCS Ombudsman Bureau, as well as their rules of engagement. Following this, a brief list of common complaint topics the Ombudsman Bureau typically encounters, including communication, DCS findings, placement, safety, removal, and visitation. Following this, statistics were provided for information and referral inquiries of the Bureau for the past 4 years. The number of information and referral inquiries has remained relatively similar for the last 4 years. Other activities were also discussed such as improvements to the Bureau's website. These improvements include an electronic complaint form, as well as updated reports and an electronic copy of the "Rules of Engagement" for complainants.
CASA Update	Since 2016, the state has added 7 new volunteer GAL/CASA programs, and now there are volunteer assisted programs in 86 counties. Due to additional funding from the General Assembly, the waiting list for children in need of a GAL/CASA has decreased from a peak of 6096 to under 3000. This funding allowed for a large improvement in case management systems, allowing for the implementation of the Optima system. This has allowed for a much more efficient case management, as well as allowing the data to be leveraged much more effectively. Over FY 2019, GAL/CASA programs served 25,188 children in CHINS and TPR Cases with over 4500 active volunteers.
Discussion on topics for next year	

6. Action Items (Include recommendations/queries for Executive Committee)

Action	Responsibility	Due Date

7. Adjournment

Action	Time
Co-Chair Clere adjourned the meeting.	3:25pm

8. Next Meeting

Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)		Time:		Location:	
Topics/Objective(s):					