



# Suicide Prevention, Bullying, and Online Safety Task Force

Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

## Meeting Minutes from January 14, 2026

The Suicide Prevention, Bullying, and Online Safety Task Force met on January 14, 2026, from 2:00 p.m.-4:05 p.m. via Zoom. Minutes were prepared by Sierra Suozzi.

### Members Present:

The following members of the Task Force were present via Zoom:

- Kelsey Aaron, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Muna Abraham, Youth Representative
- Jodi Alexander, One Community One Family
- Brandy Anderson Willis, Essential Virtual Solutions
- Charity Black, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA)
- Karin Gilbert, Bring Change 2 Mind
- Jayma Girdler, Youth Representative
- Jeremy Greenlee, Indiana Youth Services Association
- Olivia Hesler, Indiana Department of Health (IDOH)
- Sarah Iwinski Wallace, Indiana Department of Health (IDOH)
- Esther Lewis, Holistic Evolution
- Brigitt Nasby, Indiana Youth Services Association
- Myeshia Price, Indiana University
- Melanie Roberts, Indiana Department of Health (IDOH)
- Caitlyn Short, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA)
- Crystal Sisson, Holly's House
- Larry Smith, Males with a Plan
- Bethany Stewart, Sagamore Institute
- Nikki Sullivan, LifeSmart Youth
- Brooke Lawson, Carmel Clay Schools
- Sophia Schadewald, Indiana Department of Health (IDOH)

## Staff/Guests Present:

Mark Fairchild, Blane Cook, and Sierra Suozzi, Commission on Improving the Status of Children (CISC).

## Meeting Objectives:

- Legislative Engagement Process and Items
- Subcommittee Updates
- CISC Updates and Strategic Plan Objectives

## Welcome and Introductions:

Blane asked members to introduce themselves and their role.

## Updates/Old Business:

- Approval of November 12, 2025, meeting minutes. Motioned by Brigitt Nasby, seconded by Esther Lewis, and approved unanimously.
- Blane reported the new strategic plan was passed last Commission meeting and is live. He recommended using the strategic plan to help guide work group objectives.

## New Business/Presentations:

### *Legislative matters*

- Mark Fairchild introduced [SB 78: Wireless communication device policy](#), which bans students from using wireless communication devices during the school day, requires teachers' use of wireless communication devices to be for educational purposes only and via school-issued devices, and mandates a no device policy. Esther Lewis brought up a concern about SB 78 regarding students' access to their phones in case of a school shooting. Mark explained that this concern was brought up during the session and the response indicated students' cell phone use in situations of school shootings can have a negative impact to the situation, for example, cell phones jamming cellular networks causing emergency responders difficulty in getting through. Mark explained the legislators' response to this concern being working to improve schools' communication with parents. Esther mentioned another concern about funding schools to provide school-issued cell phones. Mark explained that there has been some discussion of changing the language in the bill to loosen restrictions on teachers. Brooke Lawson echoed Esther's thoughts and mentioned how parents sometimes prefer being able to access their children via mobile phone at school. Myeshia Price shared her experience of being in a school shooting while in high school and agreed that having cell phones during that situation would have made things worse, despite understanding the sentiment of parents wanting to know if their child is safe. Mark mentioned another conversation being had around this topic of technology and social media literacy being taught in schools.
- Mark explained [SB 129: Age verification for access to social media](#), which would require social media operators to restrict minors, under 16 years old, viewing of social media, unless parental consent is given.
- Mark described [SB 140: Doxxing](#), which addresses posting personal information of a person as a threat or in retaliation and classifies doxxing as a misdemeanor, a level 6 felony if the doxxing results in the individual suffering serious bodily injury, and a level 5 felony if the doxxing results in the individual suffering a catastrophic injury or death. Esther commented

on the bill's lack of addressing young people within the bill. Mark agreed with Esther and described how common this behavior is among young people. Crystal Sission asked if "personal information" has been defined. Mark read the list of items that counted as "personal information". Myeshia expressed her concern between holding youth accountable for their actions and letting behaviors, like doxxing, go without consequence. Esther made a point about clarifying instances of doxxing in the cases of exposing people/businesses for racism. Karin Gilbert asked if schools are teaching digital literacy and mentioned how teaching digital literacy can help prevent instances of doxxing. Brooke Lawson explained how some districts, like Carmel, teach digital citizenship and expressed the importance of teaching this information. Blane asked if there has been any discussion about youthful offenders of doxxing and if there is any space for the task force to think about remedial options for the youthful offenders. Mark said there was no testimony in committee regarding young people and was solely based on instance of doxxing that occurred during Redistricting.

- Mark described [SB 199: Various education matters](#), which restricts youth on social media and goes into detail on the restrictions and consequences for social media platforms if they do not enforce the restrictions. Esther reported a concern about civil action being brought against the parent of the child using a social media platform without proper permission. Mark clarified that the parents would be the ones bringing civil action against the social media platforms.
- Mark introduced [HB 1034: Student cellular telephone use](#), the "companion bill" to SB 78.
- Mark explained [HB 1093: Student bullying and abusive behavior](#), which requires schools to document and track instances of bullying, create interventions that prevent bullying, and submit a report that includes this information. Esther asked if there would be any funding going to schools to be used for tracking the bullying behaviors described in HB 1093. Mark replied there wouldn't be dedicated funding for a new position and that there are a variety of people that would be responsible for tracking the behaviors.
- Lastly, Mark mentioned [HB 1107: Bullying oversight committees and ombudsman](#), which would create an ombudsman for the department of education, create bullying oversight committees at each school corporation, and allows any parent of a targeted student or parent of an alleged perpetrator to view any video evidence of the specific bullying incident. Mark encouraged the task force to look closely at these bullying bills and come up with potential policies in preparation for the next session.
- Karin Gilbert mentioned she has been tracking SB 269: Youth peer support program and asked Mark if he thought it would be heard this session. Mark told Karin he thinks it is a great bill and recommended messaging committee members urging them to put the bill on the agenda.

### **Workgroup updates**

- Jayma Girdler reported that the Suicide Prevention workgroup held a youth listening panel to help build the group's objectives for the year.
- Sophia Schadewald reported that the Bullying Prevention workgroup met, divided tasks among members, and analyzed gaps in data and survey questions.
- Esther reported she moved to Florida and had to step back from her Online Safety leadership responsibilities but will continue to participate in the larger task force. They discussed what kind of information they would like to collect via focus group/survey and drafted questions.

### **Action Items**

- Blane to send out Legislative Tracker to members

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05PM.

### **Next Meeting:**

March 11th 2-4pm eastern time via Zoom.