

Minutes

Child Welfare Improvement Committee Indiana Court Improvement Program January 26, 2023 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Remote via Zoom

Members Present:

- ☒ Tatiana Alvarez, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Mag. Pauline Beeson, Marion Superior Court
- ☒ Mag. Elizabeth Bellin, Elkhart Circuit Court
- ☒ Mag. Sally Berish, Boone Circuit Court
- ☐ Topacio Boyd, Parent Advisor
- ☐ Mag. Ashley Colborn, St. Joseph Probate Court
- ☐ Mag. Eleanor Finnell, Marion Circuit Court
- ☒ Harmony Gist, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Mag. Valorie Hahn, Hamilton Circuit and Superior Courts
- ☒ Hon. Christine Haseman, Monroe Circuit Court
- ☒ Hon. Jennifer Hubartt, Marion Superior Court
- ☒ Rachael Hudgins, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Haley Inman, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Stephaney Knight, Youth Advisor
- ☒ Ashely Krumbach, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Teresa Lyles, Indiana Office of GAL/CASA, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Derrick Mason, Indiana Public Defender Commission
- ☐ Joel McGormley, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Mag. Tara Melton, Marion Superior Court
- ☒ Karen Mikosz, Department of Social Services, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
- ☒ Michael Moore, Indiana Public Defender Council
- ☐ Hon. Lynn Murray, Howard Circuit Court
- ☐ Paul Okoli, Youth Advisor
- ☒ Kris Rhodes, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Lauren Virgen, Parent Advisor

Staff Present:

- ☐ Jeffrey Bercovitz, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Senior Judge Nancy Gettinger
- ☒ Senior Judge Heather Mollo
- ☒ Lindsey Petitt, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services

Guests Present:

Julia Stevens, Indiana Public Defender Council

1. Welcome

Magistrate Hubartt welcomed attendees and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from November 17, 2023 were approved.

3. CFSR Update

Lindsey Petitt, CIP Administrator, shared an update on the Child and Family Service Review Results.

- a. Lindsey shared an update on CFSR final report and asked for judicial feedback on what they are seeing, and feel may be impacting these outcomes.
- b. She shared CIP will be rolling out a Quality Permanency Hearing project soon as well. CIP FFY 2023 data shows median time to permanency for all permanency outcomes combined has increased, however median time to adoption has continued to decline.
- c. Members asked about the availability of the reports, and it was shared the CFSR Round 4 report was posted publicly by Children's Bureau and that link was provided in the chat. The link for a CFSR quick reference was also provided by DCS.

4. Judicial Feedback on CFSR results and Barriers to Permanency

- a. Case stagnation was identified as one area that contributes to the lag in time to permanency. The court does not feel comfortable returning the child home; services are being provided but not enough progress is happening yet there is some progress, so TPR is not the route wanted. Can't change permanency plan if parents are kind of on track so it does take longer. Parents are kind of putting in effort, not enough to move to adoption and even if you do move to TPR that takes longer and may not motivate the family. TPR is a much different burden of proof. Maybe need to encourage the department to start looking at alternatives to adoption and TPR; third party guardianship by utilizing a mediation. Much more palatable option if the guardianship is a kinship or relative. DCS has become more agreeable to kinship and guardianship and third-party custody but still hesitance especially on younger youth.
- b. Stagnation – family member comes in late and then there is hesitancy of DCS to accept this person as a viable option. Early identification of all potential individuals for consideration but understanding that sometimes the family fails to recall or can't locate the address for all family members. Engagement piece for FCM with parents and see them as collaborator. PD identifies potential placement and refer to FCM and get no response. Child may already be in a placement and FCM sees no reason to move. PD's are doing more training on submitting their own information to court on potential placements.
- c. Bill heard (HB1310) yesterday on this issue. Is concurrent planning being used? Some, but they may not be **actively** working on both plans. The judge may set the next hearing as a permanency hearing and instruct the family they need to make significant progress on reunification or that part will be dropped. Use permanency facilitation frequently and talk about every possibility for permanency and invite caregivers and potential caregivers. Permanency facilitation in combination with concurrent plans broadens the thought process.
- d. Lindsey shared that courts could apply for grants to start facilitation/mediations in their jurisdictions.
- e. Members shared turnover with everyone involved in the case has been a huge barrier. DCS attorney, PD, FCM, Service Providers, - burnout is real.
- f. Seldom if ever see a TPR 6 months into case when appropriate. Get kids into the system and hold them to a higher standard than they would other families. They wouldn't do a THV with a family living in a hotel but agreed they would not remove if they got a 310 on that case if that

was the only issue. This is something the court can push. If the court sets the first review timely at 6 months from the removal the court can inquire about if the TPR is imminent if it appears likely. Plan from day one and watch timeframes.

- g. One of the goals of CFSR/PIP is to come up with uniform definitions of Safety and Risk. Get away from the idea of safety being the absence of all risk. Need stability as well so there is a desire to want to leave the case open three months to ensure they can maintain before closing. Help set up the family with ways to access services should they need them after the case closes.
- h. DCS shared they heard from families they struggled to access services without the support of DCS as they would end up with a waiting list or just no availability. Cheer them on and help find a better mechanism to provide some support but not keep them reliant. There is free peer support across Indiana, lack of knowledge, awareness, or marketing of these resources.

5. Ideas to overcome barriers to permanency

HYBRID MODELS

- a. Arizona had a process with Prefiling mediation? Parents had a lawyer and felt safe. And Indiana had this at one point. Pre-petition involvement? There are programs that have met standard, and the federal government will fund. PD Commission has been looking at this. PD social workers are a great resource that is available in some areas. Would be great to see this widespread
- b. PD Commission would be open to funding a pre-petition mediation pilot. They are already funding several other pilots. Already shaving off time when the child is out of the home with system navigators. They have funds available.
- c. Marion County is doing hybrid hearings with some testimony remote. Reviews and pretrials are remote but contested are in person. Feel the families we work with are benefiting. Appearance rates are better. Real positive is that kids are being seen much more. Kids more willing to talk remotely than in person. Kids appear with a school representative who can give an update on progress in school as well.

Is there a way to offer services without over supervising? Appetite to talk about “should DCS be able to offer services without having a case open”?

6. Overview of Jurist in Residence Program from CIP

- a. Lindsey shared a summary of what the Jurist in Residence do with CIP; offer their services and ask for input moving forward. Resource to assist with projects and expertise in working with counties to reduce time to permanency. Intended to support projects by facilitating projects, meetings or covering the bench so the judicial officer could implement projects.
- b. Could coach/mentor new judicial officers. Court observations and provide feedback.

7. Other Matters

- a. Lindsey shared that CIP is working with Judge Morgan to work with Vermont in starting a Facilitation program.
- b. [2024 National Conference on Access to Justice](#) announcement ABA 4/9 and 4/10 and 4/11 and 4/12
 - a. CIP reminded CWIC of availability of CIP PD Scholarship and how to apply.
- c. February will be busy for Judicial Officers due to weighted caseload time study.
 - a. May consider changing/canceling the March meeting but will advise.
- d. Ask for topics for future meetings:
 - a. Haley suggested for May 24 to update on PIP since the final report is due April 1
 - b. At July meeting – legislation that passed having to do with Child Welfare

Next meetings:

2024 Meeting Dates

Table 5. 2024 Committee Meeting Dates Remaining

Date	Time	Format
March 22, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom
May 24, 2024	10:00 – 12:00 pm	In Person*
July 26, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom
September 27, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom
November 22, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom

*Will be held at Office of Court Services – Fuse West Conference Room
251 N Illinois Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204

Minutes

Child Welfare Improvement Committee

Indiana Court Improvement Program

03/22/2024 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 am

Remote via Zoom

Members Present:

- ☒ Tatiana Alvarez, Indiana Department of Child Services
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- ☒ Mag. Elizabeth Bellin, Elkhart Circuit Court
- ☒ Mag. Sally Berish, Boone Circuit Court
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- ☒ Ashely Krumbach, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Teresa Lyles, Indiana Office of GAL/CASA, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Derrick Mason, Indiana Public Defender Commission
- ☐ Joel McGormley, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Mag. Tara Melton, Marion Superior Court
- ☐ Karen Mikosz, Department of Social Services, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
- ☒ Michael Moore, Indiana Public Defender Council
- ☐ Hon. Lynn Murray, Howard Circuit Court
- ☐ Paul Okoli, Youth Advisor
- ☒ Kris Rhodes, Indiana Department of Child Services

☐ Lauren Virgen, Parent Advisor

Staff Present:

☐ Senior Judge Nancy Gettinger

☐ Senior Judge Heather Mollo

☒ Lindsey Pettit, Indiana Office of Court Services

☒ Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services

Guests Present:

Don Travis, Department of Child Services

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** Magistrate Hubartt welcomed attendees.

2. **Approval of Minutes.**

a. Minutes approved for January 26, 2024 meeting with attendance change.

3. **Interagency Agreements DCS and Probation.-**

Don Travis, DCS

The committee reviewed the draft interagency agreement, which was shared with members ahead of the meeting. The agreement will be signed by each county's juvenile probation chief, local Judicial officer and the Director of DCS. The goal of the interagency agreement is to promote a better understanding of roles and responsibilities between the agencies. The prior agreements are expired but the new agreements will be good for 2 years. Specific areas of highlight were the federal responsibilities DCS has after a child is placed and being supported by Title IV-E funds, probation is doing the 30-day assessments for QRTP, and updated requirements for reporting runaway youth to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Youth. QRTP placements will also have both an Indiana Youth Assessment System (IYAS) and a case plan completed in INCITE.

4. **Concurrent Planning Legislation Discussion**

a. The committee discussed recent legislation regarding concurrent planning. Committee members discussed how they were handling adding concurrent plans to existing cases. Some judges shared they did not add concurrent plans at recent review hearings because they felt that parents were not adequately put on notice of the coming change. They instead set the matter for a permanency hearing to give DCS and PDs time to discuss with their clients.

The committee discussed the implications of new legislation for the courts. Some questions discussed were:

- How is DCS going to implement this?
- Is DCS going to pursue TPR filings once the concurrent plan is added?
- Will this cause more adoption petitions to be filed?
- Will concurrent planning just be used as a motivator for parents?
- How will DCS handle CEU and concurrent plannings?

Other topics discussed were the impact concurrent planning will have on staffing issues for attorney's, focus on reunification and adoption rather than on guardianships or third-party custody, pressure from foster parents to change the plan earlier, and implications for GALs/CASA.

- b. DCS staff present shared they are working on answering some of the committee's questions. They are also working on training staff on how to have those conversations with parents. DCS offered to share the training they develop with the committee members for review.

5. **CFSR PIP Update – Timeliness of Hearings**

- a. Lindsey Petitt (CIP Administrator) gave an update on the status of the PIP. Attention was drawn to one area that directly affects the judiciary, which is the timeliness of first review hearings. IC 31-34-21-2(b)(1)-(2) states that the first of these periodic reviews must occur at least 6 months after the dates of the child's removal or 6 months after the date of disposition WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.
- b. The committee discussed how the allowance of waivers causes the timelines to get away from them and it is mostly an oversight not an intentional choice to not have the first review timely. One strategy shared to overcome was setting the first review hearing at the initial detention hearing. It is common practice to set the first permanency hearing at that time so

that hearing is heard timely. Another suggestion was training DCS attorneys on the timelines and having them request a hearing if they notice that there is a need for a review (even if the case is still pre-disposition).

6. Other Matters.

- a. **LUNCH VOTE** - Catering will be provided by Café 251 for the May in-person meeting.
- b. **Sworn Testimony**
 - i. The committee discussed the use of sworn testimony at detention hearings. Jurisdictions using sworn testimony swear in all individuals who speak during the hearings. Parents are given the caveat to consult with their assigned public defenders and to not get into the facts of the case when giving a statement. Judges take the role to stop parents from going beyond the scope of the detention in their statement. Some judges use this time for parents to offer information about relatives or kinship as potential placements.
 - ii. The committee discussed using sworn testimony during the review hearing. Does the FCM give the update or does the DCS attorney? Jurisdictions using sworn testimony have the DCS attorney question the FCM, followed by the opportunity for cross examination.

2024 Meeting Dates

Table 5. 2024 Committee Meeting Dates Remaining

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July 26, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom
September 27, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom
November 22, 2024	9:00 – 11:00 am	Zoom

*Will be held at Office of Court Services – Fuse West Conference Room (**South Tower of the Indiana Office of Judicial Administration (OJA) located at 201 N. Illinois Street (northeast corner of Ohio and Illinois Streets), 2nd Floor Conference Center, Indianapolis, IN.**

Minutes

**Child Welfare Improvement Committee
Indiana Court Improvement Program
May 17, 2024 10:00 a.m. – noon
IOCS Office**

Members Present:

- ☐ Tatiana Alvarez, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Mag. Pauline Beeson, Marion Superior Court
- ☐ Mag. Elizabeth Bellin, Elkhart Circuit Court
- ☐ Mag. Sally Berish, Boone Circuit Court
- ☐ Topacio Boyd, Parent Advisor

- ☐ Mag. Ashley Colborn, St. Joseph Probate Court
- ☐ Mag. Eleanor Finnell, Marion Circuit Court
- ☒ Harmony Gist, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Mag. Valorie Hahn, Hamilton Circuit and Supreme Courts
- ☒ Hon. Christine Haseman, Monroe Circuit Court
- ☒ Mag. Jennifer Hubartt, Marion Superior Court
- ☐ Rachael Hudgins, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Haley Inman, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Stephaney Knight, Youth Advisor
- ☐ Ashely Krumbach, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Teresa Lyles, Indiana Office of GAL/CASA, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Derrick Mason, Indiana Public Defender Commission
- ☒ Joel McGormley, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Mag. Tara Melton, Marion Circuit Court
- ☐ Karen Mikosz, Department of Social Services, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
- ☒ Michael Moore, Indiana Public Defender Council
- ☐ Hon. Lynn Murray, Howard Circuit Court
- ☐ Paul Okoli, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Lauren Virgen, Parent Advisor

Staff Present:

- ☒ Lindsey Petitt, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services

Guests Present:

Julia Stevens Indiana Public Defender Council
Leslie Dunn, Indiana Office of Court Services
Kaylee Crites, Indiana Department of Child Services

Proceedings:

Welcome and Introductions

Magistrate Hubartt welcomed attendees.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the March 22, 2024 meeting were approved.

Juvenile and Family Court Judicial Officer Joint Conference

June 12 to 14, 2024 at Embassy Suites Plainfield Indianapolis Airport, Plainfield
Conversation was held among committee members and topics included the following:

- Balance between permanency, recidivism, and long-term permanency.
- Judges look for sustainable permanency.
- Suggested language is “safe and sustainable case closure”
- Struggle with timelines and substance abuse and mental health.

5 Strategies to Improve Time to Permanency

Committee discussion cumulated in the following recommendations.

1. Early Permanency Planning
 - a. Assignment of counsel at the earliest stages possible to ensure proper due process for parents.
 - b. Engage parents and youth early in the permanency plan.
 - c. Transparency about timelines and possibility of alternative permanency options besides reunification after certain deadlines pass (i.e. 15/22).
 - d. Sustainability of permanency – connecting families with community-based services
 - e. Completing background checks and waivers of relatives and kinship providers early
 - f. Set review hearing at the initial hearing when setting the initial permanency hearing
2. Quality Content of Permanency Hearing
 - a. Distinguishing permanency hearing from review hearings
 - b. Language in order that identifies hearing as permanency and why it is different from a review
 - c. Have children at court (suggested age was 12 and older could attend)
 - d. Hybrid court options to promote attendance
 - e. Know the statute and prep for the hearing. Read the reports and know what you need to ask at the hearing from the parties
 - f. Know the standard of what happens at the permanency hearing
3. Data Sharing
 - a. Examine local data such as CIP, DCS, and National data.
 - b. Explore data for local cases – such as 6-months in home or repeated maltreatment lists.
 - c. Explore different data available to each agency: DCS, CIP, Courts
 - d. Explore how the data can help guide local practices and policies
 - e. Court Tech Technology – can they create a dashboard or alert for judges that pops up in a new case to let them know about timelines or necessary hearings coming up
4. Collaboration
 - a. Assemble a local multidisciplinary team of stakeholders
 - b. Discuss data and what it means for time to permanency
 - c. Come up with ideas and plans to improve local collaboration and handling of cases
 - d. Explore community sustainability options
 - e. Share what processes look like such as adoption process
 - i. What does DCS process look like?
 - ii. Who is involved in the process?
 - iii. How are negotiations completed?
 - iv. How does the CANS process work and how do they impact the negotiations?
 - v. What can trial courts do to move adoption cases along?
5. Innovation
 - a. Take the recommendations of the multidisciplinary team and create plan to implement them
 - b. Hold mediations or facilitations at various points in the case
 - c. Apply for CIP grant funds to help implement programs or pilots
 - d. Explore how to use existing tools
 - i. Legal CFTMs
 - ii. Permanency Facilitations

Other Matters:

- a. Last meeting with Chair Magistrate Hubartt. New Chair will be selected soon.
- b. CIP Quality Hearing Project

- a. CIP will be conducting a Hearing Quality Project to examine permanency hearings in 4 counties to see if statutory elements are present.
- b. After a period of observation, CIP will develop a checklist for judges to utilize during future permanency hearings.

2024 Meeting Dates

Table 1. 2024 Committee Meeting Dates Remaining

Date	Time	Format
July 26, 2024	9-11	Zoom
September 27, 2024	9-11	Zoom
November 22, 2024	9-11	Zoom

Minutes
Child Welfare Improvement Committee
Indiana Court Improvement Program
September 27, 2024 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Remote via Zoom

Members Present:

- ☐ Tatiana Alvarez, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Mag. Pauline Beeson, Marion Superior Court
- ☐ Mag. Sally Berish, Boone Circuit Court
- ☐ Topacio Boyd, Parent Advisor
- ☒ Mag. Ashley Colborn, St. Joseph Probate Court
- ☐ Mag. Eleanor Finnell, Marion Circuit Court
- ☒ Harmony Gist, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Hon. Kurt Grimm, DeKalb Circuit Court
- ☐ Mag. Valorie Hahn, Hamilton Circuit and Superior Courts
- ☒ Hon. Christine Haseman, Monroe Circuit Court, CHAIR
- ☒ Rachael Hudgins, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Haley Inman, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Stephaney Knight, Youth Advisor
- ☐ Ashely Krumbach, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Teresa Lyles, Indiana Office of GAL/CASA, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Joel McGormley, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Mag. Tara Melton, Marion Circuit Court
- ☐ Karen Mikosz, Department of Social Services, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
- ☒ Michael Moore, Indiana Public Defender Council
- ☐ Hon. Lynn Murray, Howard Circuit Court
- ☐ Paul Okoli, Youth Advisor
- ☐ Kris Rhodes, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☐ Lauren Virgen, Parent Advisor

Staff Present:

- ☒ Jamie Devine, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Mindy Pickett, Indiana Office of Court Services

Guests Present:

- Kimberly Nightingale, Indiana Department of Child Services
Julia Stevens, Indiana Public Defender Council
Don Travis, Indiana Department of Child Services

1. Welcome and Introduction

Judge Haseman

Judge Haseman welcomed attendees and introduced herself and her background.
Jamie Devine—CIP administrator

2. Approval of Minutes

Judge Haseman

The minutes of the May 17, 2024 meeting were approved.

3. Program Improvement Plan Update

Harmony Gist

- a. The CFSR Round 4 is in progress.
- b. It is anticipated that the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) will be approved on either November 1, 2024 or December 1, 2024.
- c. The PIP will focus on 3 domains:
 - i. Safety
 - ii. Permanency
 - iii. Well-being
- d. Cross-collaboration with DCS and IOCS—PIP goals
 - i. DCS and IOCS will collaborate to enhance available reports and improve data quality for decision-making and improving child welfare outcomes through additional practice enhancements.
 - ii. DCS and IOCS will partner to improve Family Case Manager and Probation Officer collaboration, practice, and documentation when youth are involved in both systems (dually identified, dually involved, or dually adjudicated).
 - iii. DCS and IOCS will improve the timely achievement of permanency by establishing continuous improvement processes that provide an ongoing monitoring of interventions, data, and practice changes.
- e. PIP oversight and leadership
 - i. PIP Task Force
 1. Meets quarterly
 2. Macro-level
 - ii. PIP Core Team
 1. Meets monthly
 2. Workgroups will oversee the details of implementation
- f. Measuring Performance
 - i. Baseline measurement period (January and February 2025)
 - ii. Activities run quarterly—report up to PIP task force
 - iii. Review data along with activities to determine if they are effective
 - iv. Once the PIP is approved, Indiana will have 8 quarters to implement and complete all items in the PIP.

- v. Indiana must pass each benchmark 3 nonconsecutive times to successfully complete the PIP
- g. Link regarding data guides: <https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/resources/sfdp-case-review>
 - i. 13 states have completed the review, and no state has passed the full review

4. Publication on Unknown Fathers

Joel McGormley & Kim Nightingale

- a. DCS plans to review their legal department's performance through a Continuous Quality Improvement lens.
 - i. This includes identifying systemic issues to holistically drive change through attorneys and improve overall outcomes for children and families.
 - ii. The key is consistency on how legal issues are handled.
 - iii. DCS' in-house attorney model is an asset because it allows for assessment of consistency on key issues.
- b. A key issue is publication on unknown fathers.
 - i. DCS plans to continue publishing on unknown fathers in CHINS cases.
 - ii. DCS no longer requires publication on unknown fathers in TPR cases unless otherwise ordered by the court.
 - iii. DCS will permit publication on unknown fathers in TPR cases on a discretionary basis if the assigned TPR counsel is already publishing on another parent in the case.
 - iv. DCS consulted internally, with judicial officers, and with adoption attorneys and decided that publication on unknown fathers is unnecessary in TPR cases if publication service was properly handled in the underlying CHINS case, and because notice provisions are handled through the adoption case.
- c. DCS has not seen any negative outcomes or barriers since implementing this change but is open to revisiting in the future should issues arise.

5. Interagency Agreement/Probation Prevention Plan

Don Travis

- a. Interagency Agreement
 - i. First initiated in 2009, reinitiated in 2015/2016
 - ii. The PIP requires a 2-year cycle of updating the Interagency Agreement.
 - iii. Any time DCS uses federal money to spend on juvenile delinquents, federal law requires interagency agreements.
 - iv. Goal is to promote better understanding of each agency's roles and responsibilities.
 - v. Current updates to the Interagency Agreement:
 - 1. Probation officers to contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) anytime a youth for which DCS pays for services runs away from a facility or foster care placement.
 - 2. Probation Prevention Plan added
 - 3. Monthly visits of JD/JS youth in foster care (probation standard)
 - 4. 30-day assessment process/protocol
 - 5. Case plan requirements in accordance with Family First Prevention Services Act/Qualified Residential Treatment Program
 - vi. Implementation timeline
 - 1. Documents provided to Judges/Chief Probation Officers by November 2024
 - 2. Documents submitted to DCS by December 2024
 - 3. Copies returned to Judges/Chief Probation Officers by January 2025
- b. Probation Prevention Plan
 - i. Addresses services to prevent removal and includes certain requirements that the youth must meet for eligibility
 - 1. Must be specific to the needs of the youth
 - 2. The probation officer should work with the probation service consultant to identify the best service available to meet the needs of the youth

- ii. Up until 2019, Indiana received 3x the funds back from Title IV-E than it paid in placement costs.
- iii. This is an opportunity for Indiana to obtain \$0.50 on the dollar in funding for certain services which are in the clearinghouse for eligible youth.

6. Update on the Quality Hearing Project

Colleen Saylor

- a. The training for the Jurists in Residence (JIRs) is complete.
 - i. JIRs used hearings from Marion County to practice observing hearings and code the hearings using a tool comprised of research-based questions/observations.
 - ii. The tool is undergoing refinement based on JIR feedback.
- b. The letters asking pilot counties to participate went out this week.
- c. The observations are no longer only going to focus on permanency hearings/whether they meet statutory requirements.
 - i. It became apparent after meeting with the researcher from the ABA Capacity Building Center for Courts, and through the PIP process, that the statutory questions alone were insufficient.
 - ii. In other jurisdictions, widening the hearing types that were observed provided more useful data.
 - iii. JIRs will now focus observations on several different types of CHINS hearings and code more information than just statutory factors.
- d. Once the JIRs complete their observations and the data is analyzed, the JIRs will share the data and information gathered with the pilot counties.
- e. The long-term goals include looking at outcomes and correlations, determining whether those can be aggregated, and whether a benchcard for judicial officers can be created to help improve outcomes and decrease time to permanency.
- f. Hope to have results by summer 2025.

7. Other Matters

Committee

- a. At the next meeting, CWIC to discuss narrowing the scope of the committee's purpose and priorities, as well as developing active projects the committee can engage in to increase well-being, safety, and permanency for children in the child welfare system.
- b. The next meeting date of 11/22/24 may not work due to Adoption Day. A proposed alternative meeting date of 11/15/24 may not work due to the GAL/CASA Advisory Commission. A Doodle poll will go out to determine the best date for the next meeting. If no consensus is reached, the meeting will remain on 11/22/24
- c. The meeting in May 2025 may be held in-person depending on members' availability.

2024 Meeting Dates

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Staff Present:

- ☒ Jamie Devine, Indiana Office of Court Services
- ☒ Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services

☒Mindy Pickett, Indiana Office of Court Services

☒Leslie Dunn, Indiana Office of Court Services

Guests Present:

Kimberly Nightingale, Indiana Department of Child Services

Julia Stevens, Indiana Public Defender Council

Joseph Sims, Indiana Department of Child Services

Senior Judge Nancy Gettinger

Senior Judge Heather Mollo

Heather Kestian, American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, Center for Legal and Judicial Innovation and Advancement

1. Welcome and Introductions

Judge Haseman

Judge Haseman welcomed and introduced attendees.

2. Approval of Minutes

Judge Haseman

The minutes of the September 27, 2024 meeting were approved.

3. Member Updates

CWIC Members

- a. The Indiana Public Defender Council is working on legislation that would require DCS to file a separate notice of the filing of an adoption case into the CHINS case(s) involving the same child(ren).
- b. The Indiana Public Defender Council formed a workgroup of child welfare stakeholders to develop and implement a Preventative Legal Advocacy pilot project. The pilot project's goal is to provide civil legal representation for families whose children are candidates for Title IV-E foster care to avoid the removal and placement of children in foster care. The workgroup has identified a pilot county and is seeking input from stakeholders on civil legal needs.
- c. The PIP has been approved with an effective date of January 1, 2025.

4. Historic Perspective, Work, and Accomplishments of the CWIC

Colleen Saylor

- a. Prior to 2018, CWIC's projects included working on Dual Status Implementation.
- b. In 2018, CWIC hosted a Permanency Collaborative Conference, which was attended by 365 stakeholders.
- c. In 2019, CWIC hosted a Permanency Roundtable Plus.
- d. In 2020, CWIC worked on an Upstream project designed to address child welfare issues pre-entry into the system.
- e. In 2021, CWIC conducted joint meetings with the Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee and focused on the practical implications of the Family First Prevention Services Act.
- f. In 2022, CWIC participated in the CFSR/PIP workgroups.
- g. In 2023, CWIC focused on barriers to timely permanency, including strategies to reduce time to permanency. CWIC created a one pager focused on permanency and hosted a permanency panel.
- h. In 2024, CWIC continued providing input and feedback regarding the CFSR/PIP, including the Interagency Agreement and Probation Prevention Plan.

5. Strategic Planning: Focus on Purpose to Practice

Heather Kestian

- a. The session focused on the “why” behind the committee’s work, with the goal of redefining CWIC’s purpose statement as the committee transitions from an advisory to a more action-oriented group.
 - i. Members were given the opportunity to brainstorm why child welfare work is important to them and the larger community.
 - ii. Members shared their thoughts in breakout sessions with one member taking notes per breakout group.
 - iii. Members return from breakout rooms and shared their “why.”
 - iv. Members entered breakout groups to discuss the following prompt: “The Purpose of the Child Welfare Improvement Committee is to: Action | Target | Outcome
 1. The current purpose statement is, “The Child Welfare Improvement Committee brings together stakeholders to examine ways to improve safety, timely permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families involved in the child welfare system.”
 - v. Members returned from the breakout groups and reported out their thoughts regarding the revised purpose statement.
 1. Key themes: collaboration and action; identifying and including key stakeholders; finding areas to eliminate system involvement and lift up community support.
 - vi. Members worked together to develop a proposed purpose statement.
 - vii. Members will consider the proposed statement and discuss further at the next CWIC meeting.
- b. At the next CWIC meeting, members will solidify the committee’s purpose and move to developing the practice.

2025 Meeting Dates

Table 1. 2025 Committee Meeting Dates

Date	Time	Format
January 24, 2025	9am-11am	Zoom
March 28, 2025	9am-11am	Zoom
May 23, 2025	9am-11am	Zoom v. In- Person TBD