



Multi-System Youth Task Force

Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Meeting Minutes

The Multi-System Youth Task Force met on February 6, 2026, from 9:30-11:00 a.m. via Zoom. Minutes were prepared by Sierra Suozzi.

Members Present:

The following members of the Committee were present via Zoom:

- ☒ Judge Holly Harvey, **Co-Chair**, Monroe Circuit Court, Division 7
- ☒ Nancy Wever, **Co-Chair**, Indiana Office of Court Services (IOCS)
- ☒ Steve Balko, Indiana Department of Education (IDOE)
- ☒ Bradford, Lewis (Addison), Peace Learning Center
- ☒ Jenny Brown, IU Health – Riley Children’s Health
- ☒ Ann Davis, Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy (IARCA)
- ☐ Terrie Decker, Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC)
- ☐ Hon. Kimberly Dowling, Delaware Circuit Court #2
- ☐ Tracy Fitz, Indiana Prosecuting Attorney’s Council (IPAC)
- ☐ James (Mike) Goodwin, Indiana Department of Child Service (DCS) Sullivan County
- ☒ JauNae Hanger, Waples & Hanger
- ☐ Amber Holland, Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)
- ☒ Liz Houdek, Indiana Public Defender Council (IPDC)
- ☐ Waylon James, Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS)
- ☒ Jill Johnson, Marion County Public Defender Agency, Juvenile Division
- ☐ Josh Nichols, Indiana Juvenile Detention Association (IJDA)
- ☐ Kiarra Pearson, Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)
- ☒ Leah Pezzarossi, Open Door Youth Services
- ☐ Kaylee Price, Youth Representative
- ☒ Katherine Province, State Public Defender
- ☒ Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services (IOCS)
- ☒ Ellen Sheets, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI)
- ☐ Rachel Vilensky, Child Advocates
- ☐ Joel Wieneke, Child Advocates

Staff/Guests Present:

Audrianna Lingren, Commission on Improving the Status of Children
Alexis Hatchard, Child Advocates

Meeting Objectives:

- 23-25 Strategic Plan Wrap-Up
- Organizing the Work: Identifying Sub-Committee Co-Chairs and Members
- Executive Director update
- Announcements and updates from membership

Welcome and Introductions:

Judge Harvey convened the meeting at 9:33 a.m. Members and guests introduced themselves. Judge Harvey explained the structure of the task forces in relation to the Commission to new members and guests.

Review and Approve Minutes:

Motioned by Jill Johnson and seconded by Stephen Balko, the minutes from the December 2025 meeting were unanimously approved.

Action Items from Last Meeting:

1. Prepare and distribute December meeting minutes
Person/Group Responsible: Nancy Wever
Status: Completed
2. Objective #2 Sub-Committee (Status Offenses): Continue working on report, possible presentation to the Task Force in February
Person/Group Responsible: Tracy Fitz and Leah Pezzarossi
Status: In Progress
3. Presentation to CISC on 12/10/2025
Person/Group Responsible: Co-Chairs
Status: Completed
4. Complete membership interest form
Person/Group Responsible: All members
Status: Completed

23-25 Strategic Plan Wrap-Up:

Objective #2 – *Identifying and encourage adoption of effective policies and practices that promote family engagement, healing, and growth in juvenile status offense cases*: Leah

Pezzarossi reported that the report contains best practices regarding truancy. Leah reported she was waiting on Tracy to get back to her about the items she added to the report. Nancy shared her goal is to distribute the report out before the next meeting to give members a chance to read it. Judge Harvey shared that they want to get the report out because the Status Offense subcommittee is sunsetting with the adoption of the new strategic plan.

Objectives #3 and #4 – Nancy Wever reported that SB 111: Family access for youth in detention did not receive a hearing during the 2026 session. Nancy shared that the Commission plans to

reintroduce the bill in the next session. She reported that Mark explained the reason the bill didn't get a hearing was because the legislators reached out to DOC but hadn't heard back. JauNae Hanger shared that she felt like she was out of the loop on the status of the bill and stressed the importance of being kept in the know with information that could potentially impact the movement of the bill. JauNae requested to meet with Mark before the start of the next session to talk about ways to support the bill. Nancy explained Mark's role in engaging with the legislators and agreed to talk with Mark about the task force's role in engaging with legislation and how updates can be better communicated.

Organizing the Work: Identifying Sub-Committee Co-Chairs and Members

Objective #1 – Improving identification, referral, system responses, and appropriate services for victims of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC):

Judge Harvey reported that the sub-committee is working on revisions to their strategic plan. Nancy received an email from Judge Dowling and added that they are working on creating a method to track numbers of those who are trafficked in Indiana. She mentioned IU is working on a project regarding human trafficking as well, along with DCS, who has a staff member working directly on human trafficking. Judge Harvey mentioned that data has been a weak spot in human trafficking. She also mentioned training a group of people to give the human trafficking trainings. Judge Harvey reported that the screening tool is being used by probation departments.

Nancy reviewed and explained the process for meeting the objectives. Each objective is taken on by a sub-committee that decides how to focus the work. The sub-committees meet at the frequency and in the format they choose and update the Task Force at the bi-monthly meetings. Sub-committee co-chairs are asked to include Judge Harvey and Nancy in the meeting invitations so that they can join as they are able.

Objective #2 – Identifying gaps and potential solutions for dual status youth and those involved with multiple systems:

Colleen Saylor advised that she and Waylon James work closely together through the Program Improvement Plan to update resources and make the guidebook for Dual Status Youth accessible. She agreed that it makes sense for them to co-chair this sub-committee. They are planning to include Shannon Hickey (Supervisor for the Probation Service Consultants at DCS), probation officers, and DCS FCMs. Members suggested including youth with lived experience in both child welfare and youth justice systems, CASA.

Objective #3 – Integrating the science of child and adolescent development into system responses:

JauNae Hanger and Kate Province agreed to continue co-chair the sub-committee. JauNae advised that they plan to reach out to the previous/current members to see who is interested in remaining and who/what agency might be missing.

Objective #4 – Promoting family and caregiver engagement at all stages of system involvement:

Nancy advised that she reached out to Erica Sanders (You Yes You) as recommended by Joel Wieneke. Ann Davis reported she may be able to recruit some IARCA members to participate. Nancy suggested representation from the Division of Youth Services (DOC). Judge Harvey suggested a representative from DCS. Jenny Brown suggested someone who is a member of the Child Protection Team. Ann added that this could include a focus on families who have youth returning home from residential care. Discussion will continue after Judge Harvey and Nancy talk with Erica about her interest. Addison Bradford (Peace Learning Center)

volunteered to be a member. Audrianna Lingren volunteered to contact someone at Firefly. They have a Parent Action Committee that may have members interested in joining. Nancy added the DCS Birth Parent Advisory Board as a potential group from which to recruit members.

Objective #5 – Improving how systems transition children and youth, including both when they are transitioning between systems and when they are exiting systems: Judge Harvey suggested Terrie Decker as a potential co-chair. Nancy advised Terrie was involved when this work was under the YJOC and is likely ready for a break. She added that members of that workgroup might still be interested in remaining involved. Ann will ask some residential providers. JauNae suggested someone from DOE because of the challenges getting youth back into school as they return to the community. She added DMHA should be represented as well as pediatricians and will reach out to see if she can make a connection. Steve Balko (DOE) agreed to serve as a member. Jenny suggested someone from the Riley outpatient clinic and psychiatry clinic and will connect with JauNae to work on this. Discussion tabled until the next meeting. Nancy volunteered someone from the Youth Justice Team as a co-chair. Judge Harvey advised that the group needs to be mindful of duplication with the work related to Objective #2.

Executive Director Update:

Audrianna reported that Mark gave a legislative update at the last Commission meeting, detailing where the legislation the Commission is supporting and tracking is standing. Audrianna shouted out the upcoming Day of the Child event at the Statehouse and linked the flyer for the event in the chat.

2026 Meeting Schedule:

Friday, March 27, 2026 @ 9:30 am

Friday, June 5, 2026 @ 9:30 am

Friday, August 7, 2026 @ 9:30 am

Friday, October 2, 2026 @ 9:30 am

Friday, December 4, 2026 @ 9:30 am

Announcements:

Co-Chairs and members agreed to reschedule the next meeting for March 27, 2026, due to a state holiday conflict on April 3.

Action Items:

1. Prepare and distribute minutes.
2. Previous Objective #2: (Status Offenses) – Nancy to follow up with Tracy on status of the report and get the report sent out prior to next meeting in March.
3. SB 111: Family access for youth in detention – Nancy to talk to Mark about meeting with the task force about ways to engage with legislation.
4. Objective #2: (Dual Status Youth) – Colleen and Waylon will continue recruiting members and will send out calendar invitations for the meetings.
5. Objective #3: (Child & Adolescent Development) – JauNae and Kate will reach out to the previous/current members to determine interest in remaining active on the sub-committee. They will send out calendar invitations for the meetings.

6. Objective #4: (Family & Caregiver Engagement throughout system involvement) – Judge Harvey and Nancy to meet with Erica Sanders about potentially chairing the work group.
7. Objective #5: (Transitioning Youth) – Nancy to talk to her team member about co-chairing the work group.

Adjournment and Next Meeting:

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m. The next meeting will be on March 27, 2026.