



Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana

Committee/Task Force:	Juvenile Justice & Cross System Youth Task Force		
Date of Meeting:	11/1/2024	Time:	9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. EDT
Minutes Prepared By:	Nancy Wever	Location:	Held Virtually via Zoom

1. Meeting Objective(s)

Learn about activities of sub-committees and needs for support from the Task Force.

2. Standing Members

Name	Organization	In Attendance (X indicates present)
Steve Balko	Indiana Department of Education (IDOE)	X
Amber Becker	Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)	X
Honorable Vicki Carmichael (Co-Chair)	Clark Circuit Court #4	X
Kate Collins	Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS)	X
Ann Davis	Indiana Association of Resources and Child Advocacy (IARCA)	
Chris Dixon	Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC)	
Hon. Kimberly Dowling	Delaware Circuit Court #2	
Suzanne Draper	Vanderburgh County CASA, Inc.	
Tracy Fitz	Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council (IPAC)	X
James (Mike) Goodwin	Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS), Sullivan County	
JauNae Hanger	Children's Policy and Law Initiative	X
Rebecca Humphrey	Tippecanoe County Government	
Jill Johnson	Marion County Public Defender Agency, Juvenile Division	X
Samantha Lewis	Wayne County Probation	
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	X
Kaylee Price	Youth Representative	X
Colleen Saylor	Indiana Office of Court Services (IOCS)	X
Don Travis	Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS)	X
Nancy Wever (Co-Chair)	Indiana Office of Court Services (IOCS)	
Renee White	Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (CJI)	
Joel Wieneke	Indiana Public Defender Council (IPDC)	X

3. Staff/Guests

Name	Organization
Blane Cook	Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana (CISC)
Payton Bowling	Intern, Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana (CISC)

Dr. Ann Lagges	IU School of Medicine, Riley Outpatient Clinic
Dina Corduana-Ridge	Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)
Calvin Roberson	Indiana University

4. Introduction and Check-In

Result: attendees learn names and roles of those present.

5. Review and Approve Minutes

Minutes from 9/6/2024 were not available for review and approval.

6. Action Items from Last Meeting

Action	Person/Group Responsible	Status
Prepare and distribute meeting minutes	Nancy Wever	Incomplete
Invite Josh Nichols (IJDA President) to join as replacement for Alison Cox	Nancy Wever	Complete
Connect with ICJI regarding replacement for Renee White	Nancy Wever	Incomplete
Share recording of MCCOY webinar about SB 282	Nancy Wever	Incomplete
Connect JauNae with IOCS staff regarding data	Nancy Wever	Incomplete

7. Sub-Committee Presentation – Objective #4

JauNae introduced Dr. Ann Lagges.

Dr. Lagges presented about adolescent and cognitive development and how these relate to minimum age of jurisdiction. In general, there are differences in children (ages 6-12) and adolescents (ages 12-18). While there are differences within these groups, the research supports these groupings. Differences are in the areas of cognition, communication (receptive and expressive language), social development, and emotional regulation. Children under 12 are at high risk of not being found competent due to developmental immaturity.

JauNae advised that the sub-committee has been working on establishing an age floor for juvenile court jurisdiction. The sub-committee is seeking consensus from the task force to determine if it can be lifted up to the CISC for legislative action.

Judge Carmichael asked for comments. Kaylee shared that she was required to appear in court multiple times as a child and was conflicted and felt like she could be easily manipulated. She agreed that she struggled with feeling like she had to please the adults and was conflicted in how she answered questions because of this.

Joel shared survey results from his presentation at the JDAI Conference. The highest number of respondents identified 12 as the youngest age that should be considered.

Tracy shared that the competency issue is not separate from chronological age. She raises concerns about establishing a definitive age without allowing for exceptions – there is no magic age.

Amber asked if other states have minimum ages established. JauNae advised yes. She suggests that there be conversations to understand where there is agreement, including judicial officers in the discussion.

Don suggested that one approach is to consider upstream strategies – what can we do to prevent young children from coming into the legal system.

Leah added that she has had children as young as nine in the shelter and felt the frustration of probation officers who did not think they should be involved, but did not have another option.

Jill provided an example of a seven-year-old who was taken into custody for having a gun in their backpack. While charges were not filed, the experience of being handcuffed, transported by law enforcement and processed through intake was traumatic.

Joel reminded that the competency statute leaves it up to the defense attorney to request a competency evaluation.

Calvin suggested listening sessions be conducted around the state to gauge public opinion on the issue.

Nancy suggested potential of trying to get consensus around a minimum age of jurisdiction for lower-level offenses and a presumption of lack of competency for children under a certain age for the higher-level offenses. Joel stated that was part of the initial legislation and it was removed during the legislative process. Don advised that 23 youth have been referred for competency attainment services since the statute went into effect, average age is 16. This does not include children who are referred for competency evaluations and not referred for services, potentially because they were determined not to be able to attain competency.

Payton shared concern that adultification, particularly as it impacts black, male youth, will likely still result in young children being brought into the system.

JauNae requested that we work with Judge Carmichael's suggestion of meeting with IPAC, PDC, and JJIC to gauge where there is or could be consensus. She asked that the task force lead this process. Judge Carmichael agreed and stated that she and Nancy would discuss a plan to do this.

8. Sub-Committee Reports

Topic	Main Points	Recommendations/Decisions
Objective #1- CSEC	Sub-Committee co-chairs not present and no report received.	N/A

Objective #2- Status Offense	Tracy reported that the sub-committee met in September and had a presentation from Cathy Danyluk from IDOE about their approach to address chronic absenteeism and truancy. The sub-committee met in October and had a presentation from Porter County Probation about Project Attend.				
	The WG plans to meet next later in November.				
Objective #3- Children with an Incarcerated Parent	Joel Wieneke reported the sub-committee is getting back together after not having met for a while. He reported concern that in-person visitation in county jails is not occurring. Virtual visitation is an expense to the inmates. DOC is holding in-person visitation.				
Objective #4- Child and Adolescent Development into the Justice System	JauNae Hanger reported that the sub-committee has made progress in legislative language requiring detention centers to provide in-person visitation. They have met with IJDA. Judge Carmichael asked that JauNae forward finalized language and the task force may be able to send it to the CISC.				
9. Executive Director Update					
Topic	Main Points				Recommendations/Decisions
Update	Blane reported that the CISC held three focus groups related to chronic absenteeism and truancy, one with parents and two with young adults. Any legislative asks of the CISC will need to be sent to Mark in advance of the CISC meeting on 12/11.				
10. Action Items					
Action		Person/Group Responsible		Due Date	
Prepare and distribute minutes		Nancy Wever		Before February meeting	
Send meeting invitations for 2025		Nancy Wever		December 2024	
Send information to TF re: reauthorization of JJDPA; request for sign-on by CISC		Nancy Wever		November 8, 2024	
11. Adjournment					
Action				Time	
Meeting Adjourned				11:00 a.m.	
12. Next Meeting					
Date:	2/7/2025	Time:	9:30-11:00 EDT	Location:	Online via Zoom
Topics/Objective(s):	Sub-committee activities				