



Youth Justice Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes from October 3, 2024

The Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) met on October 3, 2024, from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room C. Judge Dana Kenworthy chaired the meeting.

Members Present:

The following members of the Committee were present in person:

- ☒ Dana Kenworthy, Chair
- ☒ Dr. Matthew Aalsma, Indiana University School of Medicine
- ☒ Stephen Balko, Indiana Department of Education
- ☒ Sirrilla Blackmon, Division of Mental Health, FSSA
- ☒ Judge Marshelle Broadwell, Marion Superior Court 7
- ☐ Shannon Chambers, Johnson County Probation
- ☒ Terrie Decker, Indiana Department of Correction
- ☒ Judge Darrin Dolehanty, Senior Judge
- ☒ Tracy Fitz, Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council
- ☒ Magistrate Carolyn Foley, Allen Superior Court
- ☒ Judge Faith Graham, Tippecanoe Superior Court 3
- ☒ Judge Ryan King, Ripley Circuit Court
- ☒ Emily Krauser, Indiana Housing and Economic Development Authority
- ☐ Devon McDonald, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
- ☒ Jade Palin, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
- ☒ Nichole Phillips, Bartholomew County Probation
- ☒ Magistrate Amy Richison, Huntington Circuit and Superior Courts
- ☐ Sarah Sailors, Indiana Department of Child Services
- ☒ Nancy Wever, Indiana Office of Court Services, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative
- ☒ Joel Wieneke, Indiana Public Defender Council
- ☐ Kia Wright, Voices, Inc.

Members Attended Via Zoom:

None

Members Absent:

Shannon Chambers, Devon McDonald, Sarah Sailors, Kia Wright

Staff:

April Dubree, Payton Lester, Colleen Saylor, Lisa Thompson, Michelle Goodman, Nick Ackerman and Tyler Mason from the Office of Judicial Administration attended. Mark Fairchild and Blane Cook from the Commission on Improving the Status of Children (CISC), Ellen Sheets from Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI).

Welcome and Introductions:

Judge Kenworthy welcomed members.

Approval of Minutes from the August 1, 2024 Meeting:

Jade Palin made a motion to approve the August 2024 minutes as written; Magistrate Carolyn Foley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Department of Workforce Development on Youth Initiatives Presentation:

Bart Doan, Assistant Director of Youth Initiatives, JAG Indiana, did a PowerPoint presentation to the group on various youth initiatives offered by the Department of Workforce Development. Many people are not aware of the services they offer. They offer basic services such as internet access, resume and cover letter classes and skills classes. They also offer individualized services, which you sign up for and then meet with a youth case manager and can receive help with employment and mentoring services. They receive referrals from DYS facilities but not every youth on probation is referred. They offer follow-up for a year to make sure youth are successful. They assist youth and young adults ages 16-24. Youth are eligible to continue services if they enroll by age 24. They offer JAG Indiana-jobs for Indiana graduates-a program for youth in school to help youth the schools are concerned about. The JAG program can help youth with resume building, college visits, public speaking and career preparation. There are online resources available as well.

Commission on Improving the Status of Children (CISC) Update:

Mark Fairchild updated the members on the BEST Youth Initiative, a national initiative that will last for three years and examines truancy and chronic absenteeism. They just interviewed thirty key stakeholders. He will share the initial findings when they are available. He was proud of how engaged Indiana was on these issues. There are good programs actively engaged but they need help with funding, getting model programs started and technical assistance in some areas. They discussed the YJOC grants; the key issue of truancy intersects with our work, and they are looking at what to do to fund it and get services across the state. Later this month, they will conduct focus groups with people with lived experience. Parent and/or youth groups will be compensated; please reach out to CISC if members know any people who could participate.

CISC is also building an advisory board and still has a few openings for youth and parent voices. Mark will prepare a letter to legislators from CISC and YJOC stating that we are working on this together and will submit it to the interim committee on education which is looking at truancy issues. Indiana is a model practice for other states in this initiative; our starting point is way ahead of other states. An initial report may come out in January and could be presented to the YJOC in February. If anyone knows of any groups that should be involved, please let Mark know. Mark will also draft legislative language to improve the ability of localities to apply for the YJOC grants, and to add staffing to the CISC to continue building on efforts to ensure that state initiatives such as CISC and YJOC have youth and family voices represented.

Workgroup Updates:

Grants Workgroup:

Jade Palin presented on behalf of Devon McDonald. The group reviewed the recent grant applications; only a few were presented to the ICJI Board and were approved. The grant application RFP has been re-opened and is available until November 15, 2024. ICJI will offer a webinar for both planning and regular grants; the information is on the ICJI website. Their next meeting will be to review the next group of grants. Devon met with Youth Service Bureaus (YSB) about grant funds and participated in the YSB quarterly meeting to give examples of what can be funded. The YSB serves the youth justice population and should be applying for funds.

Jade Palin shared the ICJI website and the YJOC youth funding dashboard. It shows grant funds awarded for planning, diversion, community alternatives and behavioral health grants as well as the population, and how much is left. It does not show who received the funds. The grants workgroup has two legislative items for follow up. One is to tweak the language about the administrative use of the grant funds so there is consistent language for all the grants. The second is to open up the funding that is not being utilized by changing the language from “shall establish” to “may establish” a formula for funding eligibility. The change will allow entities to apply for funds that were designated for counties that haven’t applied

Data Workgroup:

Dr. Aalsma presented. A subgroup went through the work plan and created a chart with a timeline for the next two years. They put out a request for counties to be pilot sites; 24 counties have volunteered. It is a good mix of rural, urban and suburban counties as well as different database systems (Odyssey and Quest). They plan to process data of these counties and then do a deeper dive into about five of the counties. They are looking at which elements of data are needed for evaluation. How do we understand the data to see how youth are moving through the system and how do we tie cases to outcomes? They do not want to place too much of a burden on the counties.

Screening and Assessment Workgroup:

Nicole Phillips presented. The workgroup met September 13 and are reviewing their work on current priorities. They are updating the standard juvenile reports which includes the Preliminary Inquiry, Pre-Dispositional Report and Modification Report. These proposed modifications were presented to the Probation Officers Advisory Board, Juvenile Benchbook Committee, Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee and the Judicial Conference Board of Directors for feedback. The workgroup will hold office hours to obtain feedback as well. The project team is meeting next week to review feedback and decide how to incorporate further changes. They are also working with the Education Division on how to best provide additional training.

Behavioral Health Workgroup:

Senior Judge Dolehanty presented. The workgroup has three goals: (1) to help counties look at practice and policies on the use of diagnostic assessments; (2) to explore how telehealth might help counties provide services to youth, including psychological evaluations and assessments; and (3) to establish a multidisciplinary team to meet and discuss high acuity youth. The workgroup is developing a two-sided guide/benchcard. The first side provides guidance for probation officers on what should be in place when requesting a diagnostic assessment. Side two provides information to help judges decide whether and when to order a diagnostic assessment.

They sent a copy of the guide to the Juvenile Justice Improvement Committee for feedback. Regarding their last goal relating to multidisciplinary approach for high acuity youth, the workgroup is considering the utility of the dual status protocol.

The Governor's Office announced a program for high acuity youth. It will focus on how to move system-involved youth through the system more effectively and efficiently. There are recommendations for intensive foster care and older youth planning across agencies. Currently, most of the youth being considered are DCS youth; they need a better mechanism for probation youth to be referred for further assessment and to make probation officers more aware of how to make referrals. It may be helpful to invite Dr. Finnell, David Reed and/or Sarah Sailors to discuss the process.

Diversion Workgroup:

Tracy Fitz presented. Tippecanoe County gave a presentation to the workgroup on how they are using YJOC funds. Tippecanoe County has a unique system. The Workgroup's Directory will explain how the Tippecanoe program is organized. A subgroup is working on the Directory and updating it. They are working on an information sheet to send to counties to collect information about diversion programs.

Transitional Services Workgroup:

Terrie Decker and Magistrate Foley presented. There are two active subgroups of the workgroup. One is working on best practices for transitional services, reaching out to other states and gathering information. The second subgroup focuses on state agency collaboration. A member of the workgroup is collaborating with DOC to create a Teams channel that will grant access to other state agencies. This access will be given to individuals within identified agencies allowing them to set up additional supports for youth prior to their release.

The workgroup also received a presentation on the IYAS re-entry tool. One-on-one conversations and the survey conducted at the juvenile judges' conference provided valuable insights into typical practices when a youth is released from DOC. Most judicial participants highlighted that they do not resume jurisdiction, and the majority did not have a documented policy outlining factors to consider when resuming jurisdiction. The findings revealed that practices vary from county to county. The goal is to develop a written document outlining best practices that probation and judicial officers can reference when deciding whether to resume jurisdiction.

Wrap-Up /Closing:

Members shared updates and concerns.

Next Meetings:

Thursday, December 5, 2024, Indiana Government Center, Conference Room C, 10:00 am-12:00

2025 MEETING DATES:

Thursday, February 13, 2025, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Thursday, April 10, 2025, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Thursday, June 12, 2025, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Thursday, August 14, 2025, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Thursday, October 9, 2025, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Thursday, December 11, 2025, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM
Meeting locations are TBD