



Iowa Child Advocacy Board



Recommendations to the Iowa Judicial Branch

1. Child Welfare System Improvement: Continue the Children’s Justice Initiative and its state and district level efforts to implement the recommendations in the PEW Commission on Children in Foster Care report, “Fostering the Future: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care.”

2. Court Improvements:

- Continue district and state level efforts to identify and implement juvenile court administrative and procedural best practices.
- Align juvenile court practice and monitoring activities with DHS initiatives designed to meet process and outcome measures mandated by federal laws and the federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) requirements.
- Endorse and promote statewide consistency in having children present at their hearings and avoiding the use of informal juvenile court hearings whenever possible
- Continue to support the new *Parents and Children Together: A Drug Court Initiative* and the *In-Depth Technical Assistance Project with the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare*; through these initiatives, promote the development of new coordinated case planning, treatment delivery, service funding and case monitoring approaches that connect the child welfare and substance abuse service systems.

3. Attorneys in Juvenile Court:

- Ensure that efforts are underway through the Children’s Justice Initiative to identify and implement best practices for court-appointed attorneys/GALs representing abused and neglected children and other attorneys involved in child in need of assistance proceedings.
- Continue providing training to juvenile court-involved attorneys across the state.

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Last year, over 1,000 Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) & Citizen Foster Care Review Board volunteers spent over 55,000 hours working within Iowa’s child welfare system to assess the situations of thousands of abused and neglected children and to advocate for these children’s best interests. With input from these caring and committed people from across the state, the Iowa Child Advocacy Board offers the above recommendations to improve the welfare of children in Iowa.

The Iowa Child Advocacy Board (ICAB) is an independent board composed of nine members appointed by the Governor of Iowa and confirmed by the Iowa Senate. ICAB establishes policies and procedures for two volunteer child advocacy programs: the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program and the Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Boards programs. Along with establishing these programs to support the work of citizen volunteers helping abused and neglected children, Iowa Code Chapter 237, Division II also requires ICAB to report annually on issues affecting the best interests of children in Iowa’s child welfare system and to offer recommendations for improvements. This hand-out is one part of the ICAB’s 2007 annual reporting. Please contact ICAB (see below) to request a copy of “2007 Iowa Child Advocacy Board Findings” and hand-outs with ICAB’s 2007 recommendations to the Iowa General Assembly and the Iowa Department of Human Services.

ICAB is an attached unit within the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals and can be contacted at: Child Advocacy Board, 321 E. 12th St, Lucas Building, Des Moines, IA 50319; 1-866-448-4608; cab@dia.iowa.gov