

IJDA History

The Indiana Juvenile Detention Association (IJDA) is the sole organization in Indiana dedicated to addressing issues and concerns related to the secure detention of juveniles, including issues affecting the staff that serves these juveniles. The history of the IJDA began in 1991. A small but insightful group of individuals working in juvenile detention saw a need for this organization. The first president of the IJDA was Mr. Bob Gerard, who was at the time Director of Elkhart County's juvenile detention facility.

The early 1990s were a turbulent time in the juvenile justice system. Federal Court decisions mandated the separation of juvenile offenders from adult offenders. This situation created the need for the development of specific centers to serve these juvenile offenders. If you look at the cornerstones of many of our facilities you will note that a number of our programs were initiated in 1992 and 1993.

In 1993, the Association, under the leadership of President Jim Snook, Vice President Jim Higdon and Secretary-Treasurer Laurie Patton undertook its first official membership drive. Also in 1993 in the IJDA, with the assistance of Laurie Elliott, staff attorney at the Indiana Juvenile Justice Task Force, sought to update the Association's original by-laws. Since that time, the IJDA has had a long, productive and ongoing relationship with the Indiana juvenile Justice Task Force.

In the last few years, IJDA has undertaken a number of critical organizational endeavors. It has sought formal recognition as a not-for-profit corporation, established more formalized banking and accounting practices, and coordinated regional and statewide training opportunities for its members. In 2003, the IJDA conducted a comprehensive membership drive. In the past, membership fluctuated between 15 and 30 active members each year. Membership in 2003 exceeded 190 and has continued to grow with each passing year.

These are exciting times for the IJDA and all who believe it is important that issues relating to the detention of juveniles have an organized, directed, and united voice. If you are not currently a member of the IJDA, please consider our organization. The IJDA seeks to embrace the broadest possible base of individuals and organizations in its membership to best represent the concerns of juvenile detention. We look forward to welcoming any and all who are concerned about the issues facing youth in detention and those individuals charged with serving these youth.

The IJDA is an affiliate of the National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA). For more information please contact Angela Houston at adh@co.hamilton.in.us or at 317.776.9828.