Children with High Acuity Needs Project

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The Indiana Governor has created a Children with High Acuity Needs Project which brings together The Family and Social Services Administration the Department of Correction, the Department of Child Services, and the Department of Education to provide more support to children with high acuity mental and behavioral health needs and keep youth in crisis in the least restrictive setting possible. The four goals of the project are:

- **Cross-agency navigators**: These will help coordinate care across various services, including education, mental health, child welfare, and juvenile justice, using schools as a hub to prevent institutionalization and help children transition back home from residential settings.
- **Support for foster parents and kinship caregivers**: Caregivers will receive extra support for caring for children with high needs, including access to respite care.
- **Gatekeeper process review**: A system to ensure children in the state's psychiatric hospital network remain in the least restrictive setting and can leave as soon as they are ready, preventing unnecessary extended stays.
- **Youth transitional homes and caregiver coaching**: Transitional homes will offer short-term support for children leaving residential care to help them reintegrate into their communities, while families receive caregiver coaching to assist with the transition. These homes are designed for short-term use, unlike traditional group homes.

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