

## Defending Parental Rights in Indiana

**“Parents are best positioned to have primary authority to make decisions regarding their children’s education, healthcare, and overall upbringing.”**

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### Executive Summary

Parents are the first and most important authority in a child’s life. Strong families build strong communities, and strong communities build a strong Indiana. Government exists to support families — not replace them. Across the country, debates over education policy, healthcare decisions, privacy, and children’s wellbeing have made one principle abundantly clear: **parents deserve transparency, respect, and authority when it comes to their children.**

This policy asserts that Indiana must affirm and protect the fundamental right of parents to direct their children’s upbringing, education, medical decisions, moral guidance, and overall wellbeing, without being overridden, undermined, or excluded by government bureaucracies, activist institutions, or unaccountable systems.

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### Background: Indiana’s Family Reality

Indiana is a state built on faith, family, responsibility, and community values. Parents across District 22 and across our state overwhelmingly believe:

- Schools should educate — not parent
- Healthcare decisions for minors must involve families — not politics or institutions
- Government should never insert itself between parents and their children without compelling justification
- Transparency is essential in education and policy impacting children

Indiana families expect respect, not interference. They expect a partnership with their schools, healthcare providers, and public institutions — not secrecy or unilateral control.

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### Problem Statement

In recent years, parents nationwide — and in Indiana — have raised concerns about:

- Schools withholding information about students from parents
- Educational content that drifts away from academics into ideology

- Healthcare decisions being influenced without full parental knowledge
- Government or institutional policies that attempt to limit parental involvement or override family values

When systems begin to view parents as obstacles rather than partners, trust breaks, families are undermined, and children are placed at risk.

Indiana must never become a state where institutions believe they know better than families, or where policy replaces parenting.

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## **Policy Position**

**Indiana must affirm that parents hold primary authority over decisions involving their children's education, healthcare, moral development, and upbringing — and that institutions serve families, not the other way around.**

This position supports:

- Family sovereignty
  - Personal responsibility
  - Transparency
  - Trust between parents and institutions
  - Protection of children from government overreach
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## **Policy Pillars**

### **1. Parental Authority in Education**

Parents have the right to:

- Know what their children are being taught
- Access school materials and records
- Be notified about issues impacting their children
- Influence educational direction
- Expect schools to focus on academics, discipline, civics, and excellence
- Be partners in education, not sidelined observers

Transparency is not controversial — it is essential.

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### **2. Parental Role in Healthcare Decisions**

Parents must maintain primary authority in:

- Medical decisions involving minors
- Mental health considerations
- Consent for treatments and procedures
- Access to accurate information regarding their child's health

Healthcare involving children should never exclude or intentionally bypass parents without legitimate legal cause.

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### **3. Protection of Family Rights and Values**

Indiana must respect that:

- Families differ in beliefs, values, faith, and parenting approaches
- The state should not impose ideology or override deeply held family convictions
- Children belong to families — not institutions

Government must never function as a substitute parent.

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### **4. Transparency and Accountability**

Institutions must operate openly with families and communities. Policies impacting children must be clear, publicly accessible, and accountable to parents and taxpayers.

Secrecy undermines trust. Transparency builds it.

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## **Supporting Rationale**

### **Parents Know Their Children Best**

Parents live with the consequences of decisions affecting their child — emotionally, financially, and personally. They are invested in ways no institution ever can be.

### **Strong Families Make Strong Communities**

Where families are respected, communities thrive. School performance improves, behavior improves, trust grows, and civic life strengthens.

### **Government Accountability Requires Family Partnership**

Public institutions function best when they work with families, not around them.

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## Outcomes and Benefits

By firmly defending parental rights, Indiana will:

- Strengthen trust between schools, healthcare providers, and families
- Protect children from institutional overreach
- Support stable family structures
- Reinforce Indiana's commitment to family-centered leadership
- Promote transparency, accountability, and excellence in education and child-related services

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## Conclusion

Parents are not visitors in their children's lives — they are the foundation of their upbringing. Indiana must stand firm in ensuring that **parents remain the primary decision-makers for their children**, while institutions provide support, education, safety, and opportunity in partnership with families.

I will work to ensure Indiana continues to protect parental rights, honor family values, and place children's wellbeing firmly in the hands of those who love them most — their parents.

**Families deserve respect.**

**Parents deserve authority.**

**Children deserve leadership grounded in responsibility, transparency, and care.**