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New Research Identifies Challenges and Opportunities for Indiana's Boys and Men

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From the classroom to the workforce, Indiana's boys and men are struggling at rates that should alarm policymakers and community leaders alike, according to new research from the Sagamore Institute, an Indianapolis-based think tank. In its new report, "Failure to Launch: Improving the Education, Employment and Wellbeing of Indiana's Boys and Men. Sagamore Institute experts unpack the mounting evidence that Hoosier boys and men are falling behind, weaving together data on academic achievement, economic outcomes, and mental and physical wellbeing to offer a new, holistic understanding of the challenges facing young men in Indiana and recommendations for course correction.

The report was produced in partnership with the **American Institute for Boys and Men** (AIBM) and its founder and president, **Richard V. Reeves**, who utilized Sagamore Institute's analysis to inform his address earlier today at the Economic Club of Indiana. Reflecting on the importance of this issue, Reeves notes:

"The challenges of boys and men are real and urgent, in Indiana as in other states. Tackling them doesn't mean doing any less for women and girls; in fact, it's vital that everyone has a chance to flourish and rise. It's not a zero-sum game. This report signals a seriousness of intent to act positively for all Indiana's boys and men".

A key finding from the report is that for boys in Indiana, the end of high school fails to be a launchpad for their future. Dr. Carol D'Amico, principal investigator of the study, emphasizes:

"Our research shows that many boys stay on track for most of their time in school, but fall off a cliff later in high school—when authentic relationships, access to mentors and a lack of clear career pathways are absent. Rebuilding those supports is essential to helping young men launch into adulthood and meaningful lives."

The findings from the report echo national trends identified by AIMB and other experts, including higher rates of suicide among boys and men, their growing gap in educational attainment compared to female peers and decreasing opportunities for social connection and mentorship. In response, the report offers actionable recommendations for Indiana leaders, such as public education campaigns on social media, developing deeper connections between education and career opportunities, and working with Indiana's vibrant professional sports and philanthropic communities to revive neighborhood athletics, among others.

Reporting for the project drew on publicly available state and national data and Indiana student surveys, as well as insights from a diverse Advisory Group comprised of state and local elected officials, religious leaders, law enforcement, academia, and community advocates.

Sagamore Institute President Teresa Lubbers says the release of this report is only the beginning:

"Sagamore is committed to taking the next step after releasing Failure to Launch by identifying strategies to actually improve the well-being of Indiana boys and men. It's important to identify causes — but it's even more important to promote solutions that reverse the downward trends."

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