



University
of
Nebraska-
Lincoln
Center on
Children,
Families,
and the
Law

Case Progression and Court Improvement Data Report for 2010



THROUGH THE EYES
OF THE
CHILD INITIATIVE

District 5 Team

Columbus:

Boone, Colfax, Hamilton,
Merrick, Nance, and Platte Counties

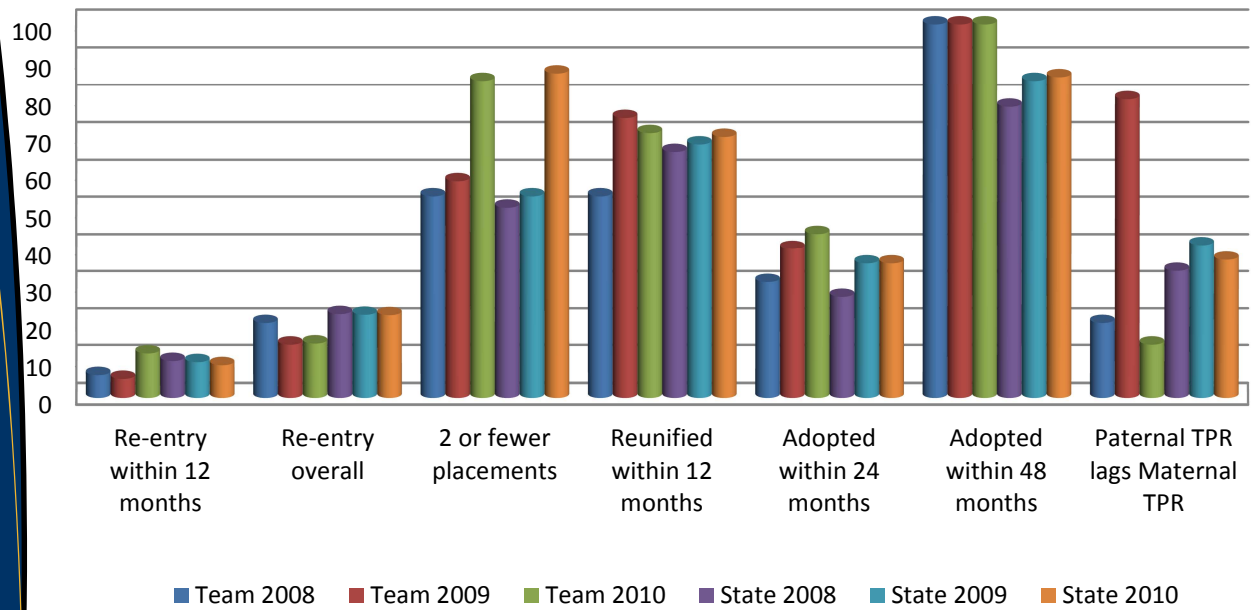


Information provided in this document is designed to help your team improve case progression, as this is one area the courts can control. Timeliness of hearings has a significant impact on time to case closure, which means that courts can make a difference in the lives of children in the system. Data on pages 1 and 2 come from Fostering Court Improvement (fosteringcourtimprovement.org/ne) and data on pages 3-8 were collected through JUSTICE to track case progression timelines for all abuse/neglect cases that closed in 2008, 2009, and 2010.

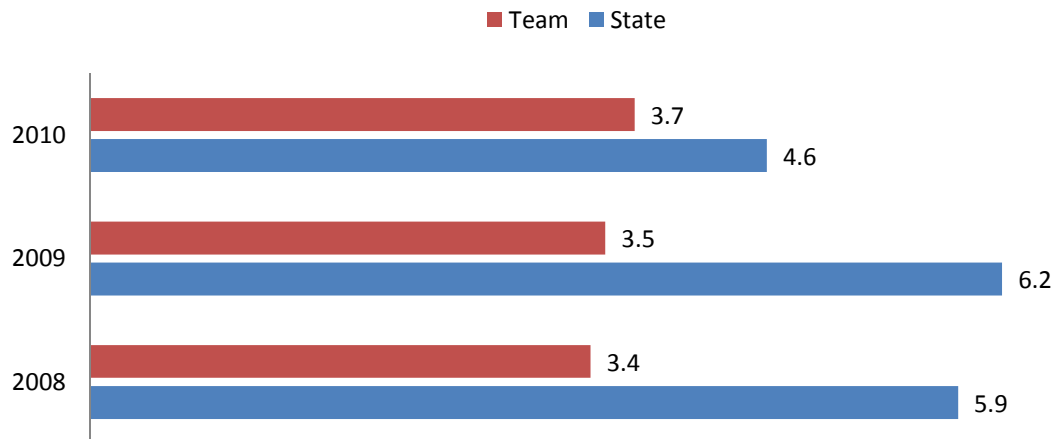
	2008	Team 2009	2010	2008	State 2009	2010	National 2009
Poverty rate*	13.4%	12.3%	n/a	13.7%	15.3%	n/a	20%
Median length of stay	20 months	15 months	11 months	13 months	12 months	14 months	14 months
Median months to reunification	7 months	9 months	8 months	7 months	7 months	11 months	n/a
Median months to adoption	34 months	29 months	32 months	34 months	29 months	29 months	n/a

* Poverty data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau. For the Fostering Court Improvement measures, 2010 refers to data from April 2010 through March 2011.

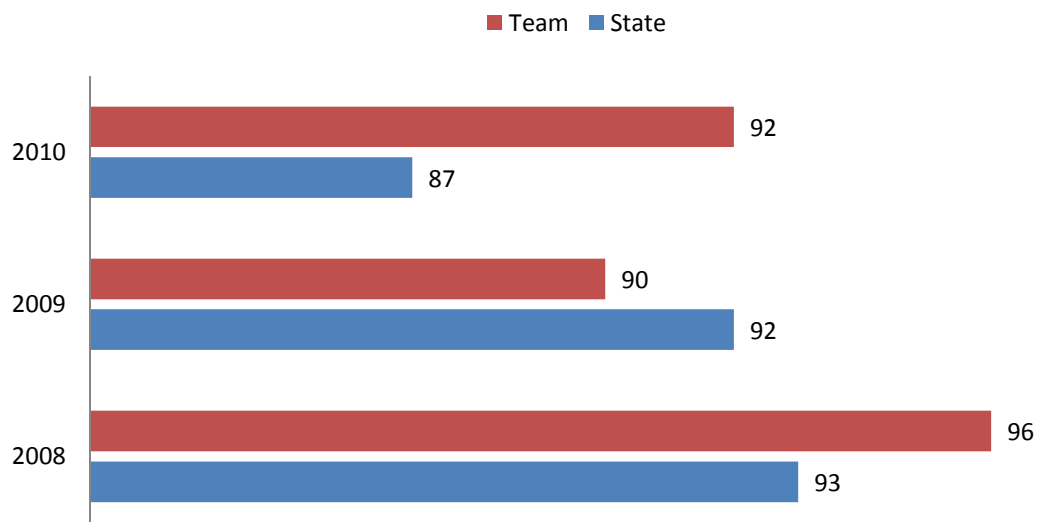
Percentages for 2008, 2009, and 2010



Rates of Removal per 10k Children



Percent of Children over 12 in Group Home



In District 5 Team Columbus, there were 42 abuse and neglect cases that closed between January 1 and December 31, 2008. In 2009, 47 such cases closed. In 2010, 31 abuse and neglect cases closed. The analyses below are based on that data.

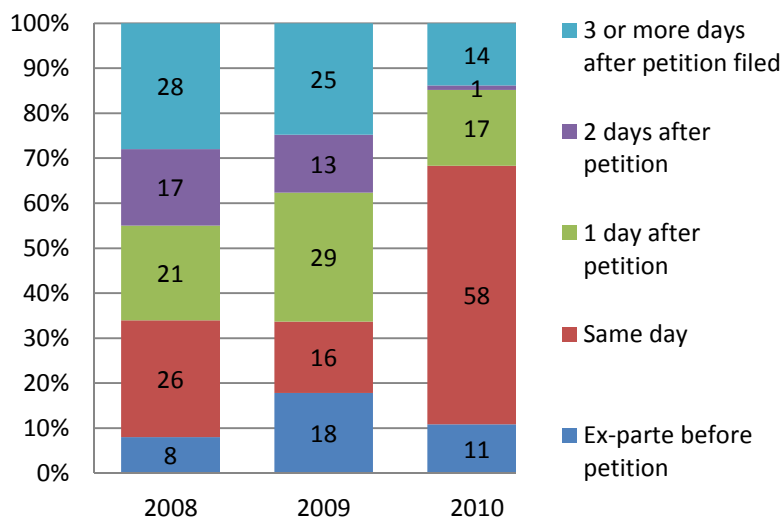
Medians represent the center-point for cases in your team. Half of your cases had time that was shorter than the median, and half of cases had time longer than the median.

Timeline progression: All ages

Nebraska

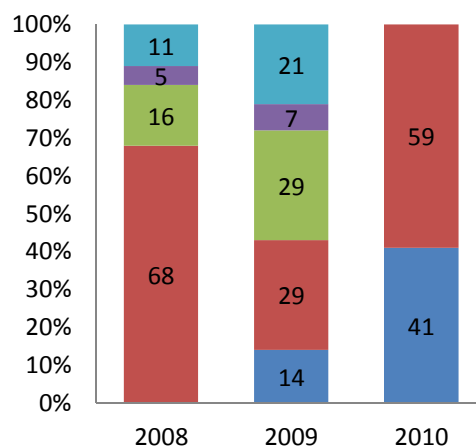
Petition to ex-parte

2008 Median = 1 day
2009 Median = 1 day
2010 Median = 0 days



District 5 Columbus

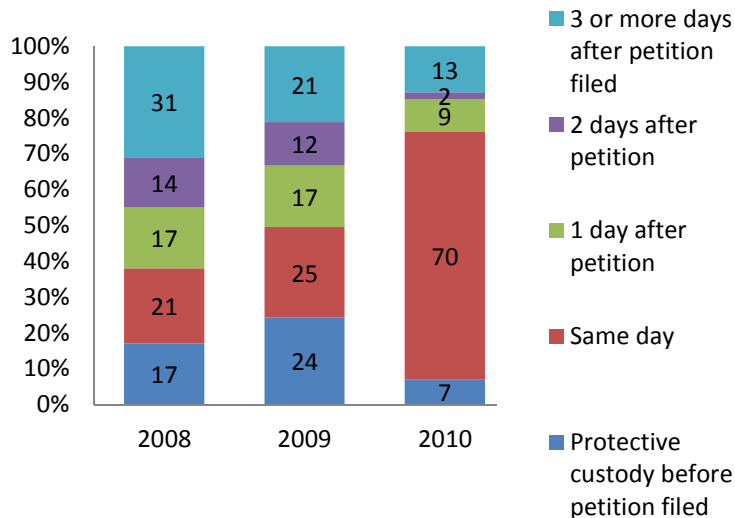
2008 Median = 0 days
2009 Median = 1 day
2010 Median = 0 days



Petition Filing to Protective Custody

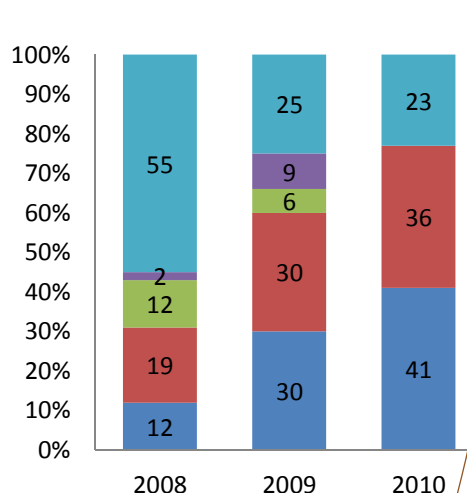
Nebraska

2008 Median = 1 day
2009 Median = 1 day
2010 Median = 0 days



District 5 Columbus

2008 Median = 4 days
2009 Median = 0 days
2010 Median = 0 days



** Note:
All data
presented
uses initial
petition date
to court closure
date and may
not match HHS
reports*

Petition to First Appearance

Best practice recommendations

Petition to Protective Custody – petition prior to or same day

36% of 2010 District 5-Columbus cases had filed the petition the same day as protective

Petition to adjudication – 60 days

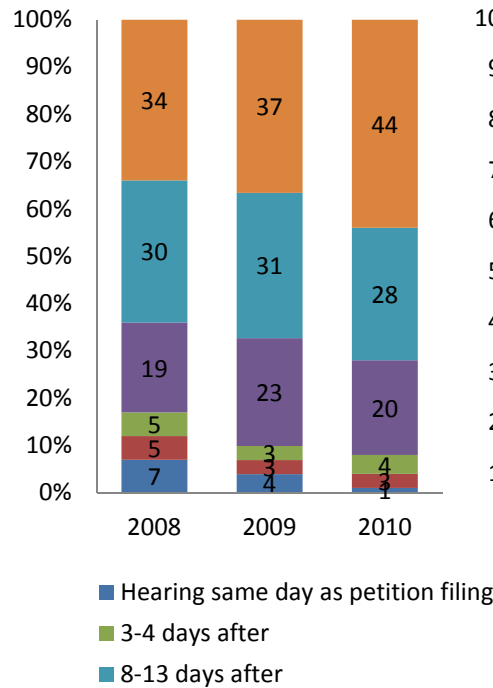
68% of 2010 District 5-Columbus cases held the adjudication within 60 days of

Adjudication to disposition – 30 days

21% of 2010 District 5-Columbus cases held the disposition within 30 days

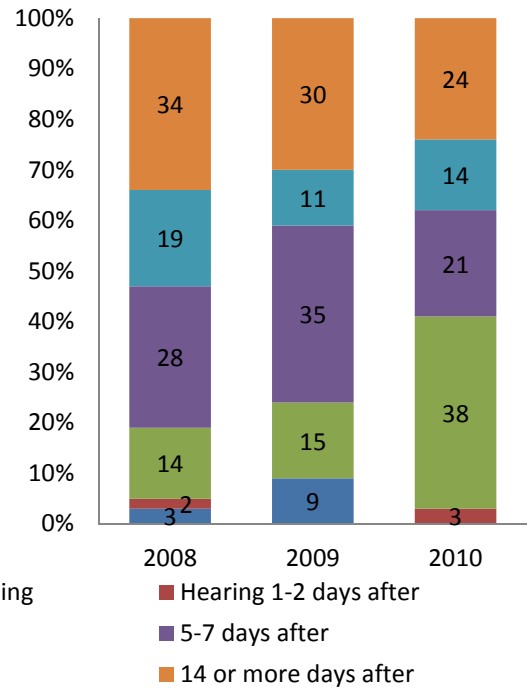
Nebraska

2008 Median = 9 days
2009 Median = 10 days
2010 Median = 12 days



District 5 Columbus

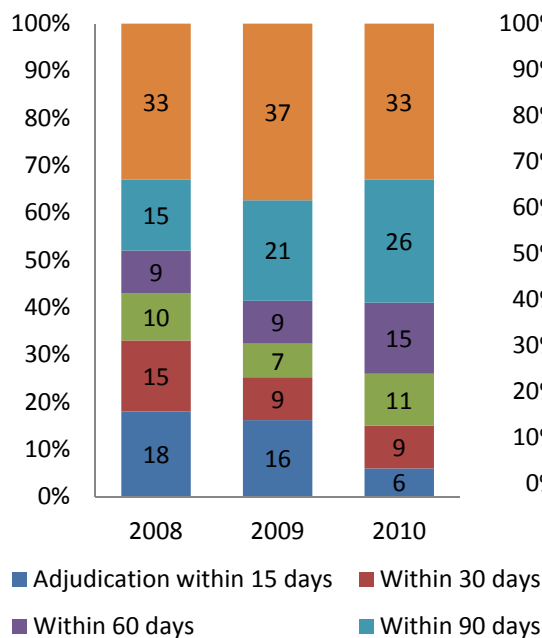
2008 Median = 5 days
2009 Median = 7 days
2010 Median = 5 days



Petition to Adjudication

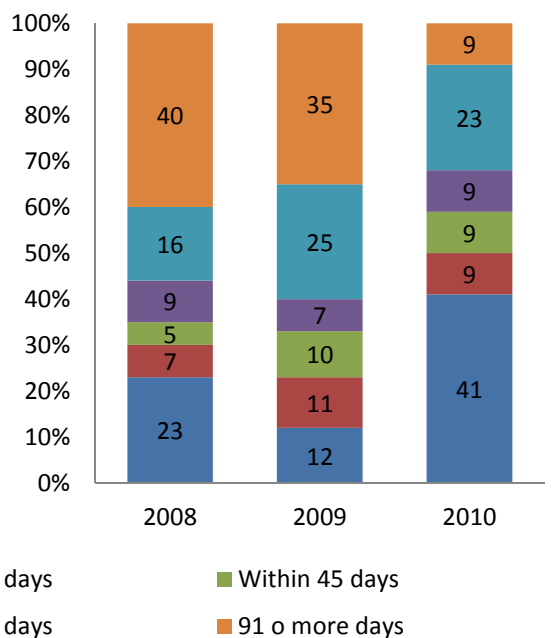
Nebraska

2008 Median = 57 days
2009 Median = 72 days
2010 Median = 73 days



District 5 Columbus

2008 Median = 64 days
2009 Median = 64 days
2010 Median = 33 days



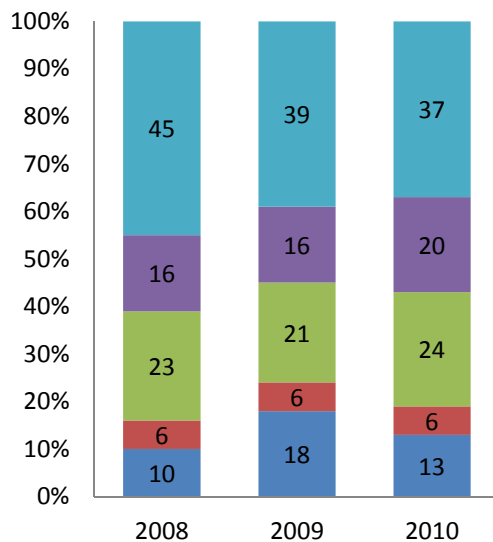
Adjudication to Disposition

Nebraska

2008 Median = 56 days

2009 Median = 49 days

2010 Median = 50 days



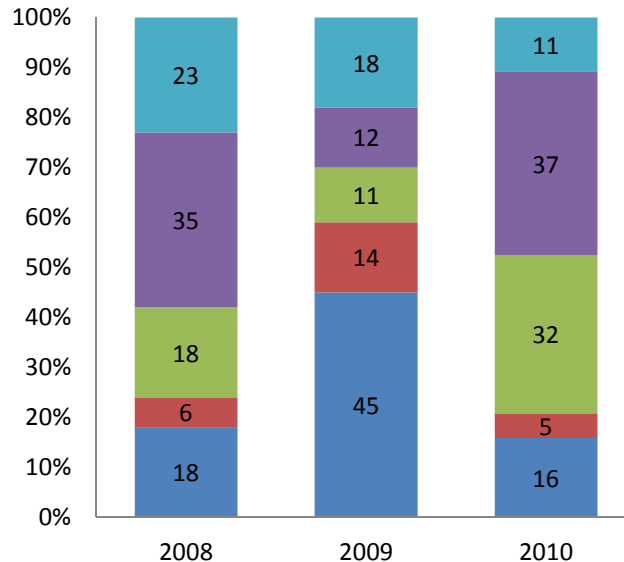
■ Disposition within 15 days ■ Within 30 days ■ Within 45 days
 ■ Within 60 days ■ 61 or more days

District 5 Columbus

2008 Median = 49 days

2009 Median = 28 days

2010 Median = 42 days



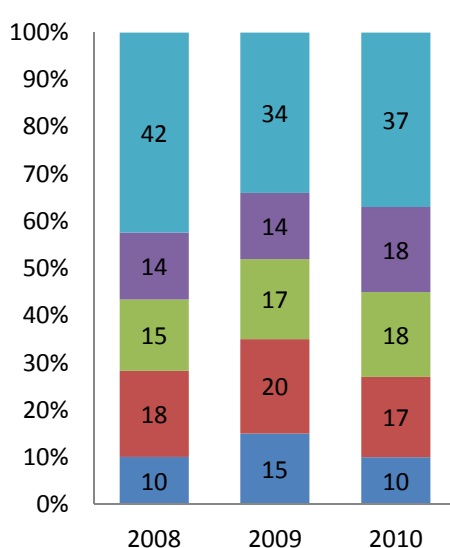
Petition to Case Closure

Nebraska

2008 Median = 23 months

2009 Median = 18 months

2010 Median = 19 months



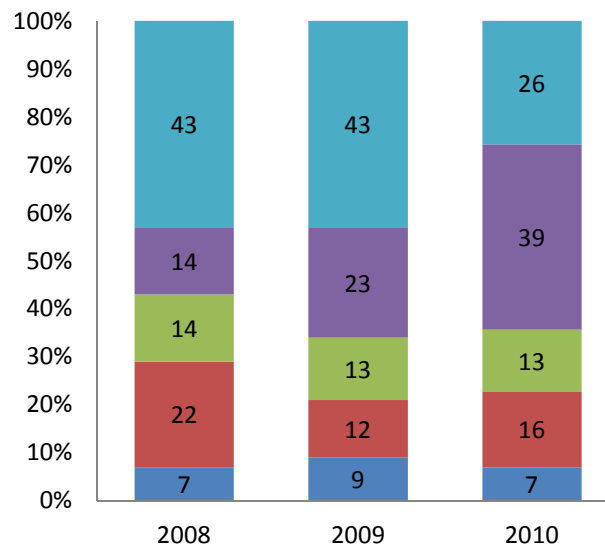
■ Within 6 months ■ Within 12 months ■ Within 18 months
 ■ Within 24 months ■ 25 or more months

District 5 Columbus

2008 Median = 19 months

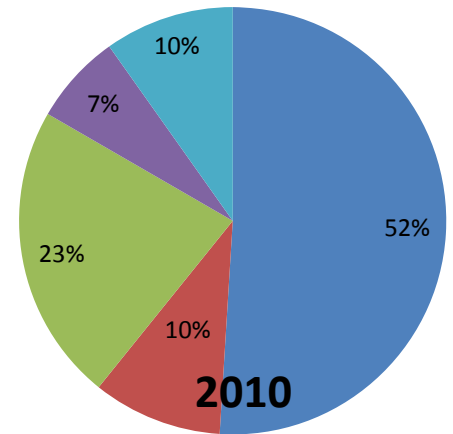
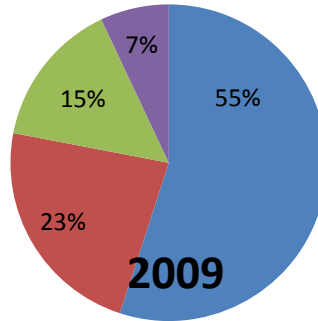
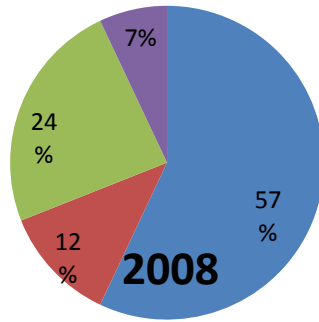
2009 Median = 23 months

2010 Median = 20 months

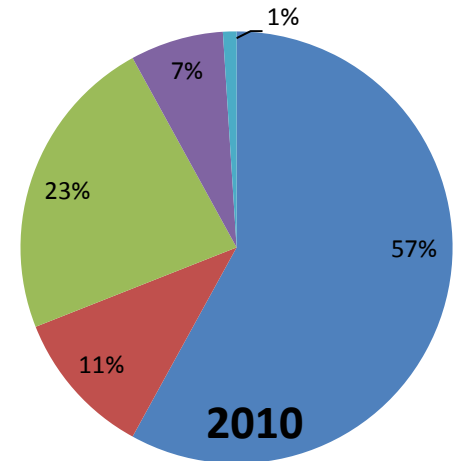
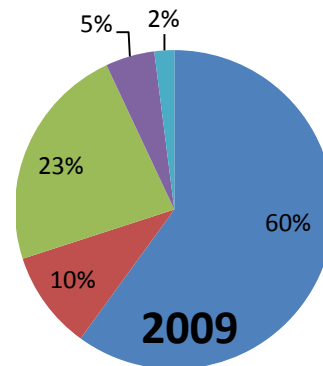
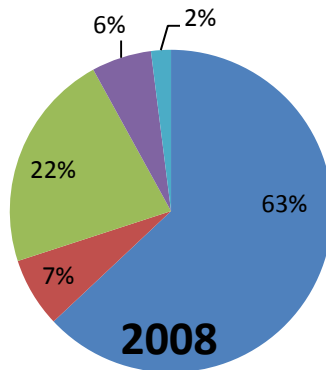


Type of Discharge

Team



State



■ Reunification

■ Guardianship

■ Adoption

■ Independent Living

■ Other

Trends



Your team's data shows good progress in reducing the time to adjudication of cases. It also shows reductions in time to reunification and length of stay in foster care.

Unfortunately, there also appears to be an increase in re-entry into foster care within 12 months. The team may want to explore whether cases are closed prematurely or whether rehabilitative services for parents are effectively addressing the problems contributing to the maltreatment.

The section on Type of Discharge indicates that 10% of the cases were "other." Your team may want to discuss this and determine whether this is a data entry issue, or whether there is a good explanation for this and whether it reflects a good permanency outcome for the involved children.



Case Progression for Zero to Three

Infants and toddlers make up approximately one-third of children in foster care in Nebraska. This early stage of the child's life is crucial to his/her development. Therefore, the court system must do everything it can to ensure timely and safe permanency for them. Additionally, the courts need to assure that the health, mental health, and educational (school readiness) needs of these young children are met.

Your team might work on one or all of the following:

- Reducing time to permanency for infants and toddlers
- Ensuring that parenting time recommendations are followed
- Increasing the use of high quality and stable child care
- Ensuring CAPTA Part C evaluations are occurring and young children are getting services they need
- Ensuring that infants and toddlers with mental health needs get evidence based interventions



Improving Outcomes for Adolescents

Almost 40% of Nebraska youth in out-of-home placement are between 16 and 19 years old. Exiting foster care through "aging out" without a permanent family relationship is associated with a variety of serious negative outcomes including lack of a high school degree, unemployment, and homelessness.

The federal Fostering Connections Act and recent Nebraska legislation require a detailed written independent living transition plan for all youth age 16 and over. This plan is to be prepared by DHHS in conjunction with the youth and is to be reviewed at each review or permanency hearing by the court.

Your team might review the new state law and develop a plan to make the transition planning and review process meaningful and effective in preparing older youth for the challenges of adulthood.