



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

# Case Progression and Court Improvement Data Report for 2010



## District 7: Antelope, Cuming, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Stanton, And Wayne Counties

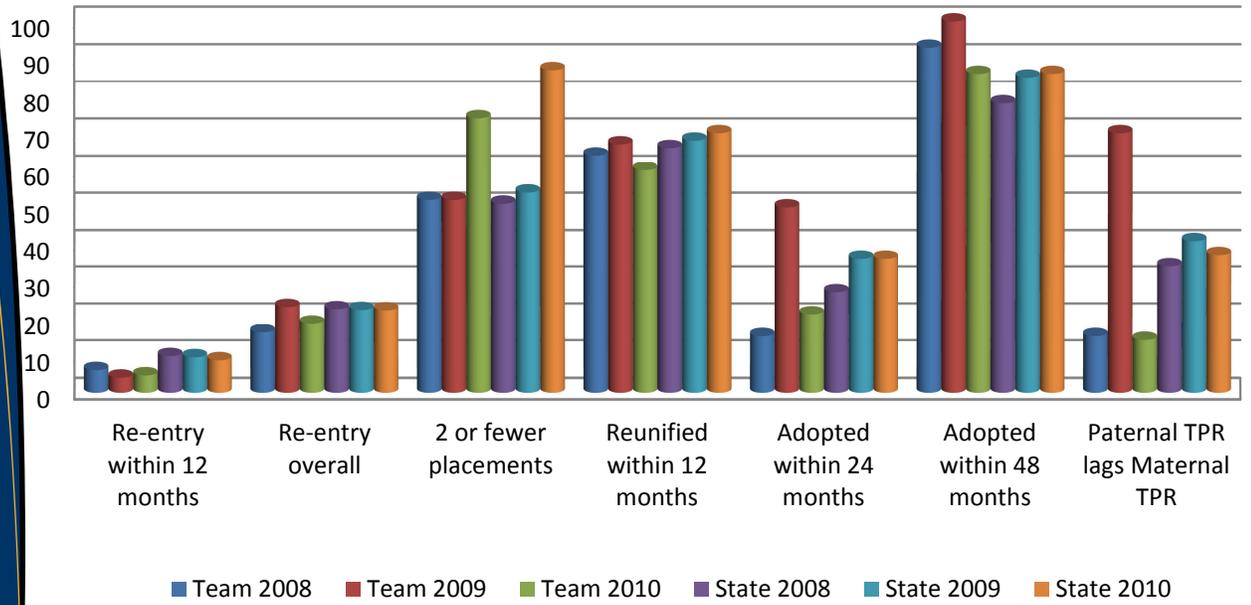


Information provided in this document is designed to help your team improve case progression, as this is one area the courts can control. Timeliness of hearings has a significant impact on time to case closure, which means that courts can make a difference in the lives of children in the system. Data on pages 1 and 2 come from Fostering Court Improvement ([fosteringcourtimprovement.org/ne](http://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.

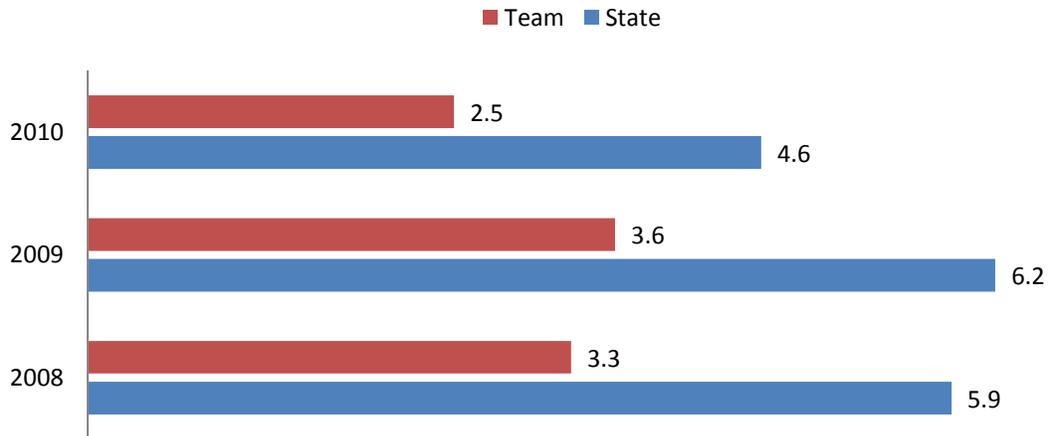
	2008	Team 2009	2010	2008	State 2009	2010	National 2009
<b>Poverty rate*</b>	14.9%	16.3%	n/a	13.7%	15.3%	n/a	20%
<b>Median length of stay</b>	13 months	12 months	17 months	13 months	12 months	14 months	14 months
<b>Median months to reunification</b>	8 months	11 months	15 months	7 months	7 months	11 months	n/a
<b>Median months to adoption</b>	32 months	23 months	26 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.

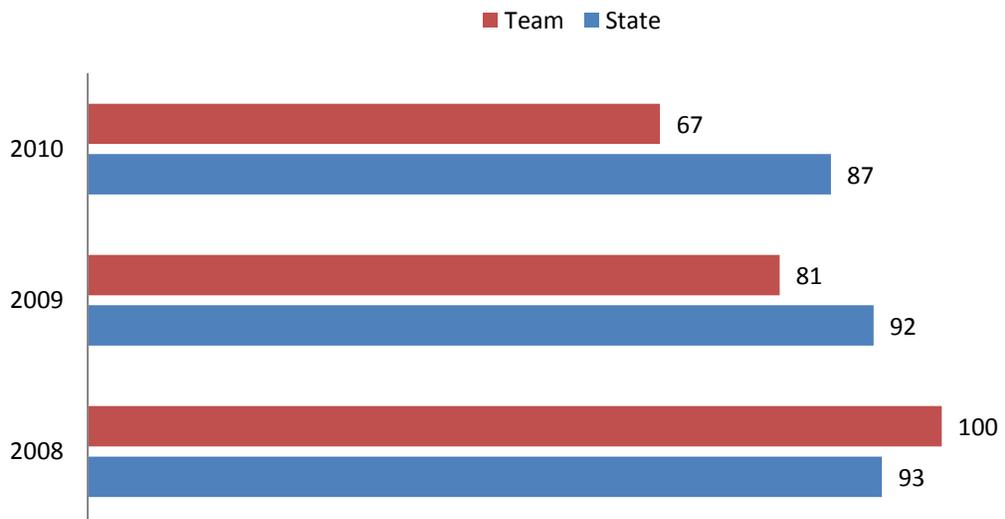
## Percentages for 2008, 2009, and 2010



## Rates of Removal per 10k Children



## Percent of Children over 12 in Group Home



In District 7 there were 51 abuse and neglect cases that closed between January and December 31, 2008. In 2009, 32 such cases closed. In 2010, 35 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. N/r means that values were "not reported." N/a means "not applicable" because the sample size was too small for analyses to be conducted.

## Timeline progression: All ages

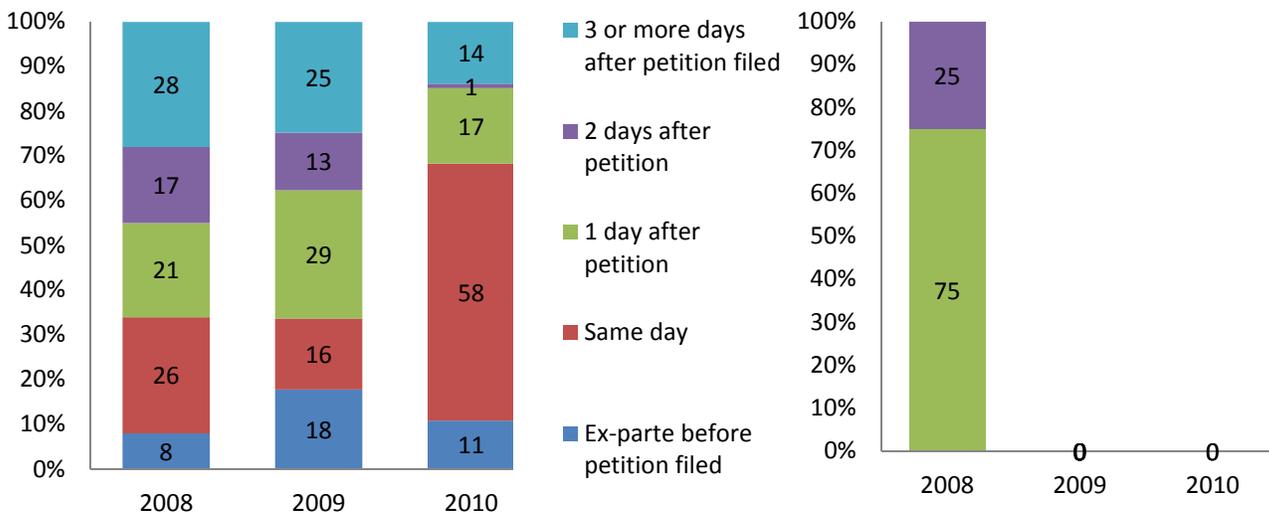
### Nebraska

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

### Petition to ex-parte

### District 7

2008 Median = 1 day  
2009 Median = n/r  
2010 Median = n/r



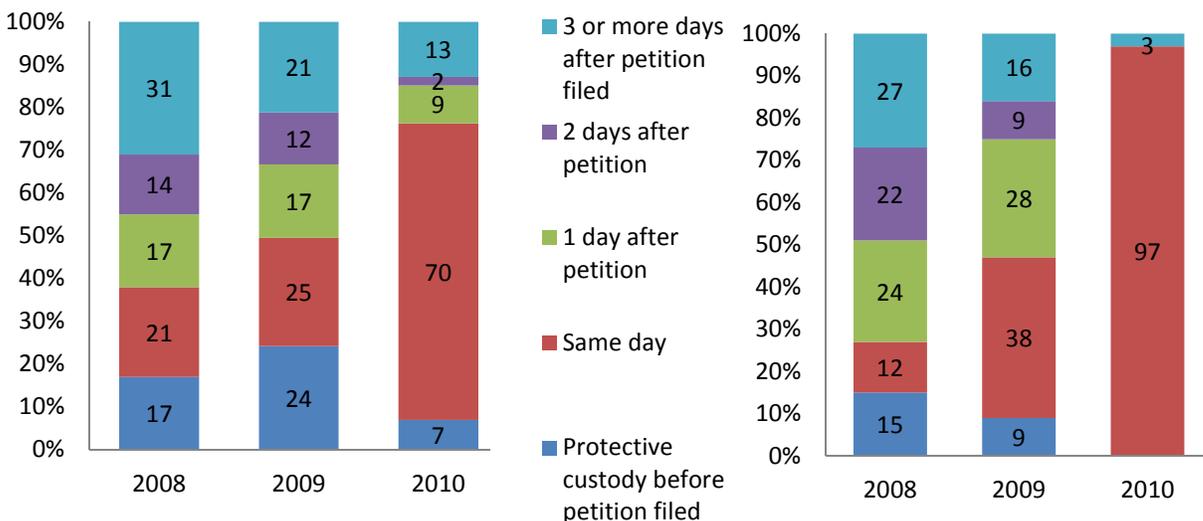
## Petition Filing to Protective Custody

### Nebraska

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

### District 7

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



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

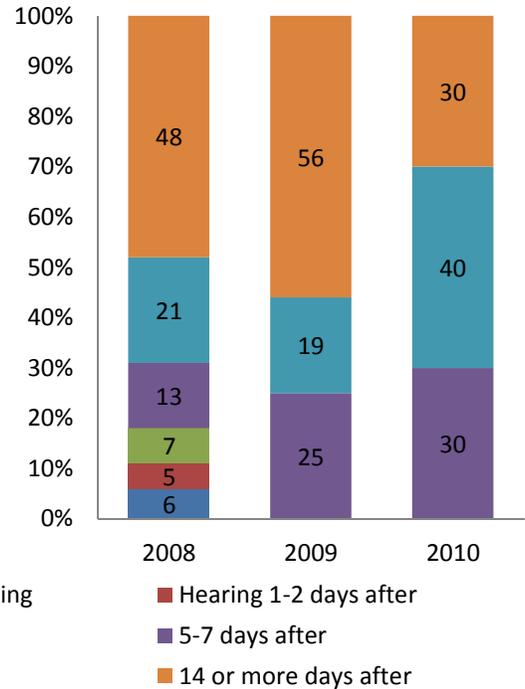
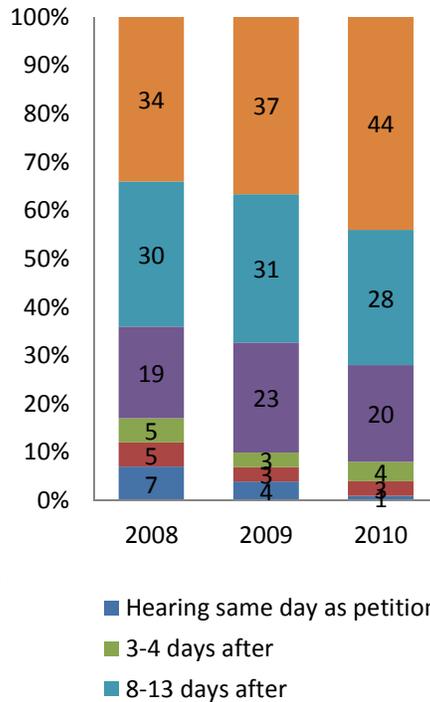
# Petition to First Appearance

## Nebraska

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

## District 7

2008 Median = 14 days  
 2009 Median = 15 days  
 2010 Median = 10 days



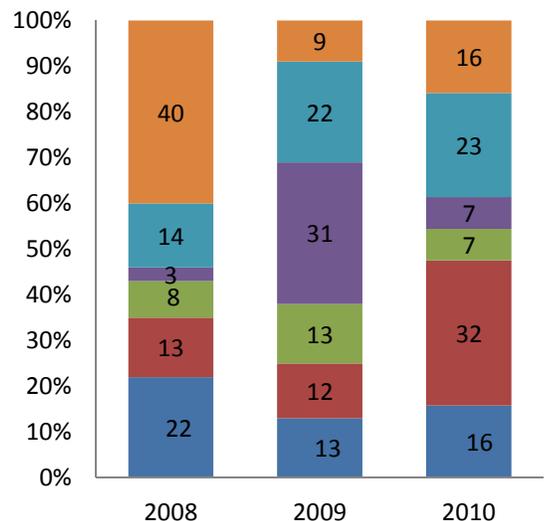
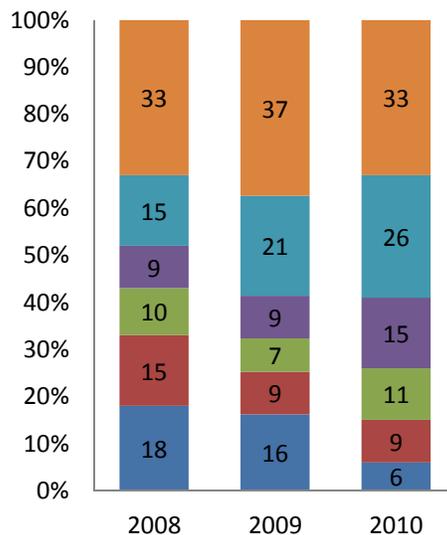
# Petition to Adjudication

## Nebraska

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

## District 7

2008 Median = 75 days  
 2009 Median = 47 days  
 2010 Median = 31 days



■ Adjudication within 15 days    ■ Within 30 days    ■ Within 45 days  
■ Within 60 days    ■ Within 90 days    ■ 91 or more days

**Best practice recommendations**

**Petition to Protective Custody – petition prior to or same day**

97% of 2010 District 7 cases had filed the petition the same day as protective custody order

**Petition to adjudication – 60 days**

62% of 2010 District 7 cases held the adjudication within 60 days of petition filing

**Adjudication to disposition – 30 days**

20% of 2010 District 7 cases held the disposition within 30 days of adjudication

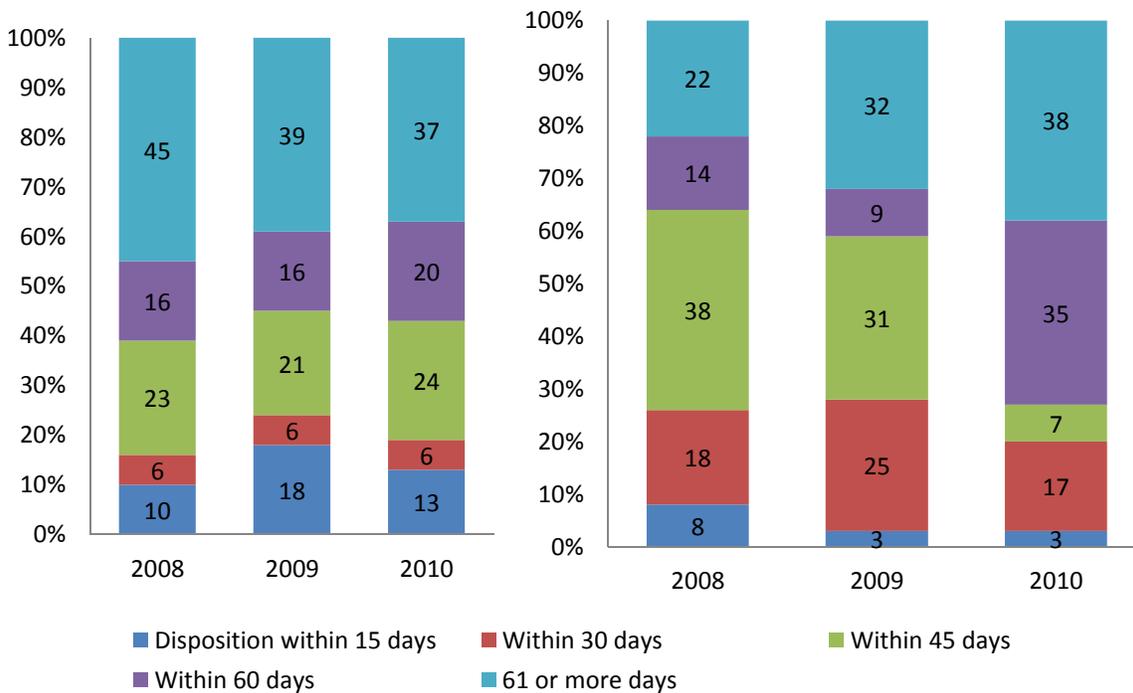
# Adjudication to Disposition

## Nebraska

2008 Median = 56 days  
 2009 Median = 49 days  
 2010 Median = 50 days

## District 7

2008 Median = 39 days  
 2009 Median = 41 days  
 2010 Median = 53 days



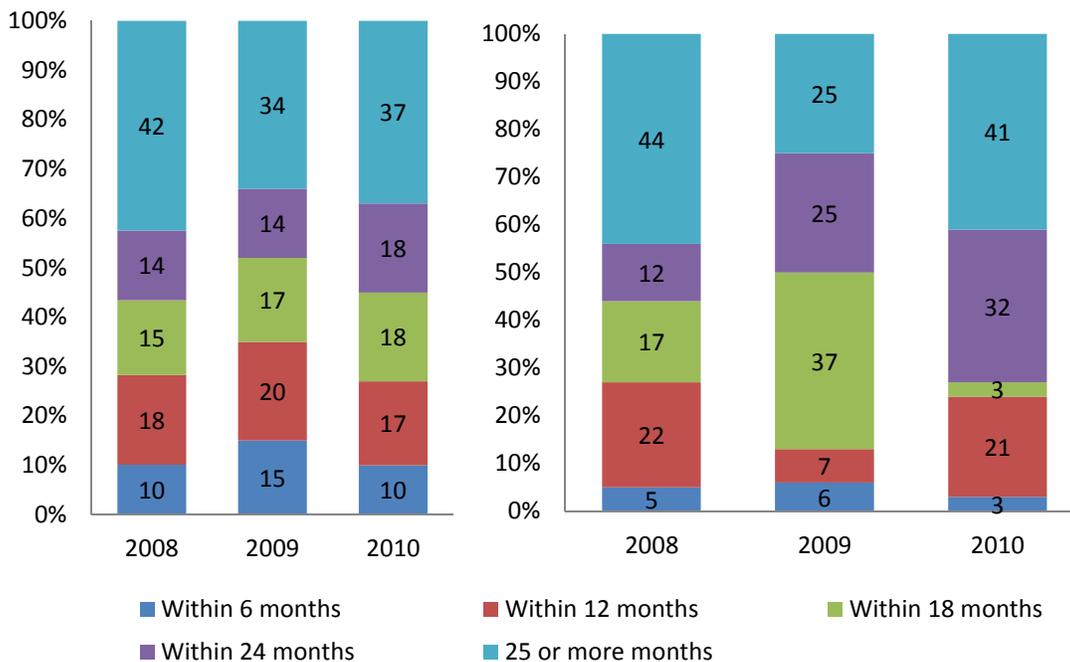
# Petition to Case Closure

## Nebraska

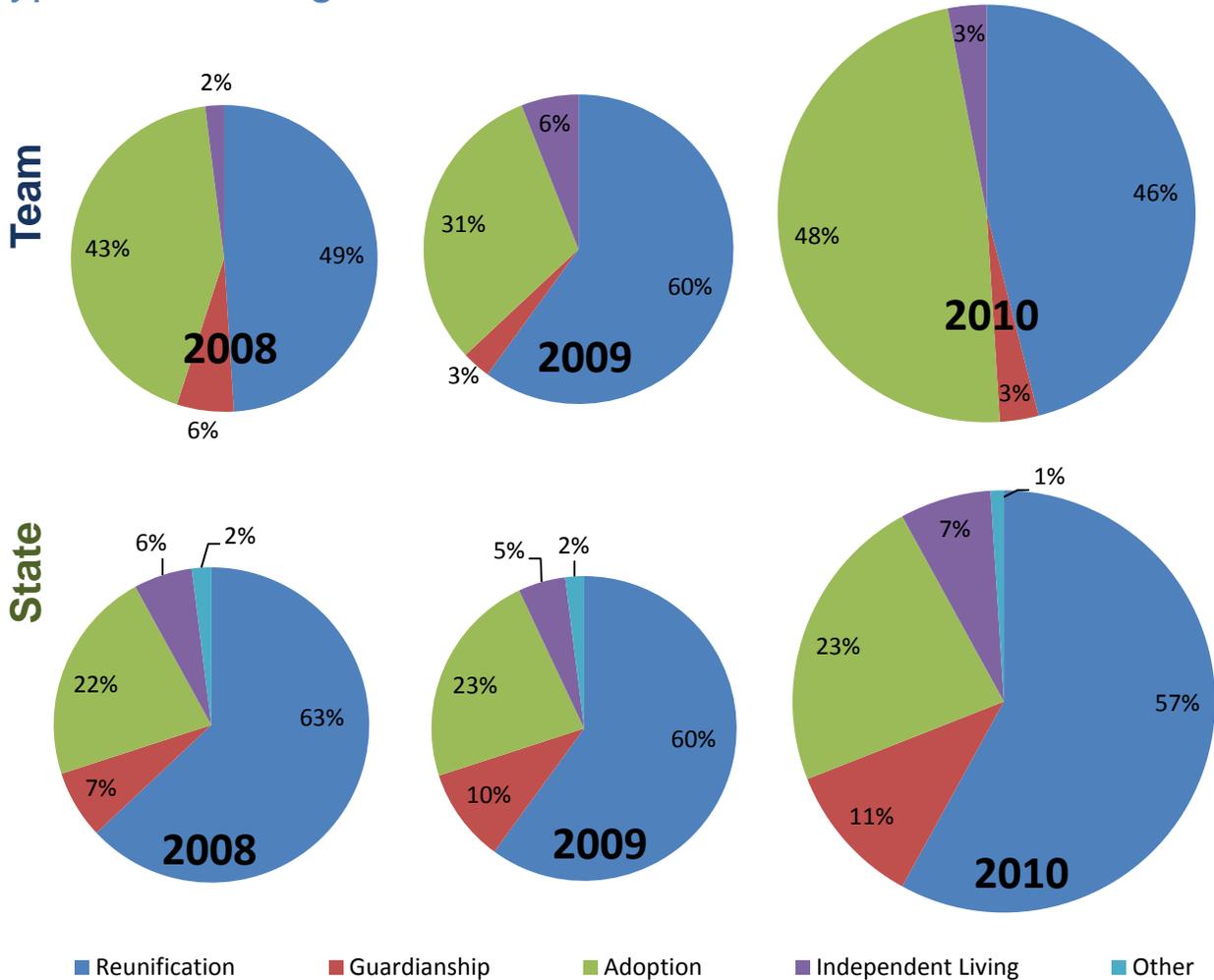
2008 Median = 23 months  
 2009 Median = 18 months  
 2010 Median = 19 months

## District 7

2008 Median = 21 months  
 2009 Median = 16 months  
 2010 Median = 21 months



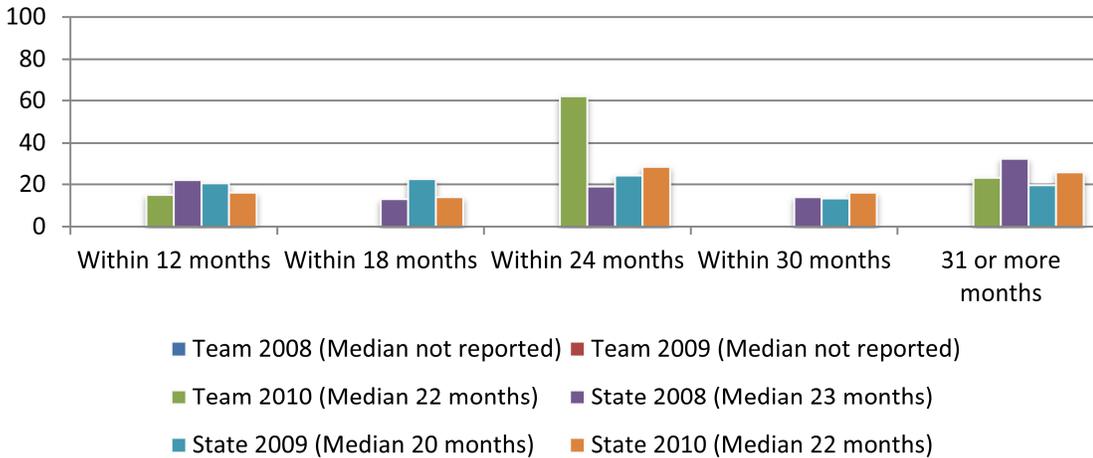
## Type of Discharge



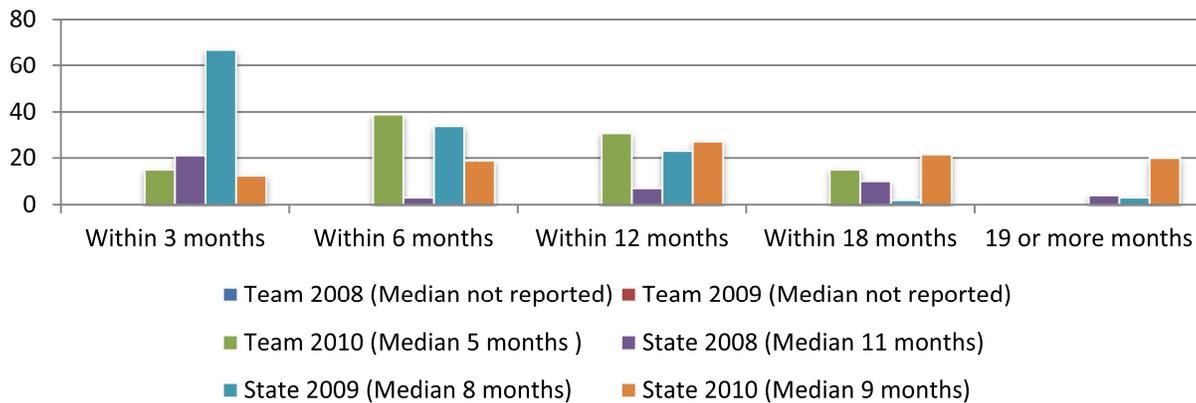
## Case Progression for Zero to Three

Median Times	Team			State		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
<b>Early Stages</b>						
Petition to Ex-parte	not reported	not reported	not reported	1 day	1 day	0 days
Petition to Protective custody	not reported	not reported	0 days	1 day	0 days	0 days
Petition to First Appearance	not reported	not reported	12 days	9 days	10 days	13 days
Petition to Adjudication	not reported	not reported	26 days	62 days	70 days	70 days
<b>Permanency Stages</b>						
Adjudication to Disposition	not reported	not reported	71 days	58 days	49 days	50 days
Petition to Case Closure	not reported	not reported	26 months	21 months	19 months	20 months
<b>TPR Stages</b>						
Petition to TPR	n/r	n/r	n/a	23 months	19 months	21 months
TPR to Adoption	n/r	n/r	n/a	9 months	7 months	8 months

## Petition to TPR - All Ages



## TPR to Adoption - All Ages



## Trends

Your team's data shows that the percentage of adoptions increased significantly. That may account for the increase in the length of stay for children in care and the increased time until case closure. It would not account for a longer time to reunification for reunified families. Of concern is that the time from adjudication to disposition is considerably longer (71 days) for the youngest children in care as compared to the entire foster care population. Given the need for the highest level of urgency for infants and toddlers, your team may want to take a look at what might be causing excessive delays to disposition for their cases and how you might address the barriers to timely dispositions.





## Adolescents Case Progression and Outcomes

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.