

Child Welfare System Performance Measures

Statistical Tables

TABLE 1

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE (A Ten-Year and One-Year Comparison)

Who are the Children?

A Comparison of the Number of Children in Foster Care on December 31st

<u>Dec. 31, 1996</u>	<u>Dec. 31, 2005</u>	<u>Dec. 31, 2006</u>
4,382 children	6,204 children	5,186 children

The 2006 figure is a 16.4% decrease from 2005, and an 18% increase from 1996.

Age of Children in Foster Care on December 31st

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		
1,045	23.8%	1,388	22.4%	1,333	25.7%	Infants & Preschoolers (0-5)
1,172	26.7%	1,456	23.5%	1,181	22.8%	Elementary School (6-12)
973	22.2%	1,315	21.2%	1,031	19.9%	Young Teens (13-15)
1,146	26.2%	2,040	32.9%	1,630	31.4%	Older Teens (16+)
<u>46</u>	<u>0.1%</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>>0.1%</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>>0.1%</u>	Age not reported
4,382	100.0%	6,204	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Total

The percentage of young children in foster care in Nebraska is increasing. This mirrors what is being reported on a national level.

Gender of Children in Foster Care on December 31st

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		
2,347	53.6%	3,375	54.4%	2,835	54.7%	Male
2,000	45.6%	2,801	45.1%	2,346	45.2%	Female
<u>35</u>	<u>0.8%</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>0.5%</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>> 0.1%</u>	Gender not reported
4,382	100.0%	6,204	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Total

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Explanation of Table—This table compares some characteristics of children in foster care from 1996, 2005, and 2006. Some percentages in this table may not equal 100% due to rounding. All statistics on this table are from the Foster Care Review Board Tracking System.

TABLE 1 (continued)

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
(A Ten-Year and One-Year Comparison)

Race of Children in Foster Care on December 31st

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		<u>Racial Designation</u>
2,643	60.3%	4,084	65.8%	3,212	61.9%	White
867	19.8%	1,026	16.5%	946	18.2%	Black
249	5.7%	447	7.2%	334	6.4%	Native American ⁷⁸
64	1.5%	28	0.5%	23	0.4%	Asian
Not applicable		Not applicable		87	1.7%	Multiple designations ⁷⁹
243	5.5%	Not applicable		Not Applicable		Hispanic as race
<u>316</u>	<u>7.2%</u>	<u>619</u>	<u>10.0%</u>	<u>584</u>	<u>11.3%</u>	Other or Race Not Reported
4,382	100.0%	6,204	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Total
Not applicable		686	11.0%	502	9.7%	Hispanic as ethnicity ⁸⁰

18.2% of the Nebraska children are minority according to Census data reported in the 2006 Kids Count report. On December 31, 2006, 38.1% of the children in out-of-home care were minority.

Lifetime Number of Placements of Children in Foster Care on December 31st

Respite Care and brief hospitalizations are not included in the counts below. For children who had experienced multiple removals from the home, the figures below includes all placements from earlier removals as well as from the current removal from the home.

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006⁸¹</u>		
2,271	51.8%	3,355	54.1%	2,330	44.9%	1-3 foster homes/placements
803	18.3%	934	15.1%	975	18.8%	4-5 foster homes/placements
860	19.6%	1,119	18.0%	1,067	20.6%	6-10 foster home/placements
373	8.5%	614	9.9%	629	12.1%	11-20 foster home/placements
<u>75</u>	<u>1.7%</u>	<u>182</u>	<u>2.9%</u>	<u>185</u>	<u>3.6%</u>	21 or more foster home/placements
4,382	100.0%	6,204	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Total

From 2005 to 2006 and from 1996 to 2006 there was a significant increase in the number of children experiencing multiple moves while in foster care.

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⁷⁸ 29 of the 87 children with multiple designations had Native American heritage as one of their racial designations.

⁷⁹ Beginning in 2006 there is a separate category for multiple racial designations.

⁸⁰ Beginning in 2003, Hispanic was counted as an ethnicity, not as a separate race. Hispanic children's race could be identified as White, Black, Native American, Asian or "other" race, and thus are distributed in the racial categories above. Prior to 2003, it was considered a separate race.

⁸¹ Additional details on the number of placements can be found in Table 9 on page 128.

TABLE 1 (continued)

Number of Local Foster Care Review Boards on December 31st

<u>1996</u> 50 local boards	<u>2005</u> 52 local boards	<u>2006</u> 48 local boards ⁸²
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Children Reviewed by the Foster Care Review Board and Total Reviews

<u>1996</u> ⁸³ 2,732 children reviewed 3,871 reviews conducted	<u>2005</u> 3,309 children reviewed 4,984 reviews conducted	<u>2006</u> 3,728 children reviewed 5,473 reviews conducted ⁸⁴
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Reviewed Children by Lifetime Length of Time in Foster Care

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		
1,325	48.5%	1,288	38.9%	2,675	71.8%	In care less than 2 years
1,041	38.1%	1,115	33.7%	994	26.7%	In care from 2-4 years
<u>366</u>	<u>13.4%</u>	<u>906</u>	<u>27.4%</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>1.6%</u>	In care at least 5 years in lifetime
2,732	100.0%	3,309	100.0%	3,728	100.0%	Individual children reviewed

Where are the Children?

Children in Foster Care on December 31st By Proximity to Home

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		<u>Proximity</u>
2,203	50.3%	3,247	52.3%	2,522	48.6%	In same county
558	12.7%	953	15.4%	711	13.7%	In neighboring county
570	13.0%	1,422	22.9%	862	16.6%	In non-neighboring county
51	1.2%	203	3.3%	165	3.2%	Child in other state
267	6.1%	166	2.7%	65	1.3%	Parent moved to other state
<u>733</u>	<u>16.7%</u>	<u>213</u>	<u>3.4%</u>	<u>861</u>	<u>16.6%</u>	Proximity not reported or recorded ⁸⁵
4,382	100.0%	6,204	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Total

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⁸² During the period of economic downturn in the early 2000's, the Boards budget was cut by over 16%. This necessitated staffing cuts, which required eliminating support for some local boards.

⁸³ LB 642 increased the scope and funding for the FCRB, effective July 1, 1996.

⁸⁴ Children are typically re-reviewed every six months for as long as in out-of-home care, therefore some children will be reviewed more than once during a calendar year.

⁸⁵ Due to the mandatory change of the Foster Care Review Board's tracking system to a new computer system during 2006, this field needed to be re-entered for each child. Re-entry was incomplete on December 31, 2006, thus the higher number in the "not reported or recorded" category.

TABLE 1 (continued)

Children in Foster Care on December 31st By Type of Placement

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		<u>Placement Type</u> ⁸⁶
1,802	41.1%	2,767	44.6%	2,204	42.5%	Foster home & fos/adopt homes (at various levels)
536	12.2%	1,104	17.8%	1,101	21.2%	Relatives
531	12.1%	1,005	16.2%	934	18.0%	Group homes, residential treatment facilities, or center for developmentally disabled
461	10.5%	566	9.1%	411	7.9%	Jail/Youth Development Center
336	7.7%	362	5.8%	222	4.3%	Emergency Shelter
42	1.0%	159	2.6%	165	3.2%	Runaway, whereabouts unknown
Not available		13	0.2%	2	>0.1%	Adoptive home, not final (private)
18	0.4%	81	1.3%	23	0.4%	Medical facility
12	0.3%	93	1.5%	74	1.4%	Independent living
185	4.2%	54	0.9%	23	0.4%	Psychiatric Treatment or inpatient substance abuse facility
<u>459</u>	<u>10.5%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>0.5%</u>	Other or type not reported
4,382	100.0%	6,204	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Children in care December 31st

Have the Children Been In Foster Care Before?

Children in Foster Care on December 31st

1996 figures were not available for this category.

<u>2000</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		
3,693	58.7%	4,126	66.5%	3,225	62.2%	Initial removal
<u>2,593</u>	<u>41.3%</u>	<u>2,078</u>	<u>33.5%</u>	<u>1,961</u>	<u>37.8%</u>	<u>Had prior removal</u>
6,286	100.0%	4,724	100.0%	5,186	100.0%	Total entered care

Children Who Entered Care During the Calendar Year

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		
2,861	62.7%	3,328	70.4%	2,891	60.6%	Initial removal
<u>1,702</u>	<u>37.3%</u>	<u>1,396</u>	<u>29.6%</u>	<u>1,877</u>	<u>39.4%</u>	<u>Had prior removal</u>
4,563	100.0%	4,724	100.0%	4,768	100.0%	Total entered care ⁸⁷

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⁸⁶ Additional details on placement types can be found in Table 2.

⁸⁷ This is an unduplicated number. Some children entered care more than once in a year. In their cases, they would be in the "had prior removal" category.

TABLE 1 (continued)

What Happened to the Children?

Reason For Leaving Foster Care

<u>1996</u>		<u>2005</u>		<u>2006</u>		<u>Reason for Leaving</u>
3,281	65.9%	2,412	63.8%	2,693	59.7%	Returned to parents
0	0.0	1	>0.1%	455	10.1%	Released from corrections (presumably to parents, although no further information was given or found in research ⁸⁸)
353	7.1%	347 ¹	9.2%	463	10.3%	Adopted ⁸⁹
324	6.5%	655	17.3%	443	9.8%	Reached Age of Majority (19 th birthday or judicial emancipation)
100	2.0%	189	5.0%	232	5.1%	Guardianship
35	0.7%	107	2.8%	82	1.8%	Court terminated (no specific reason given)
100	2.0%	0	0.0%	35	0.8%	Custody transferred
15	0.3%	1	>0.1%	4	>0.1%	Marriage or Military
<u>770</u>	<u>15.5%</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>1.7%</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>2.4%</u>	Other/reason not reported
4,978	100.0%	3,778	100.0%	4,514	100.0%	Total left care during year ⁹

⁸⁸ Due to computer conversion activities staff were unable to research as many of these instances as in the past.

⁸⁹ The number of adoptions completed may be somewhat understated due to the number of reports from DHHS indicating children left care, but not indicating the reason for leaving care.

⁹⁰ This is an unduplicated number of children. Some children leave care more than once in a year. In their cases, the last reason for leaving care is used.

TABLE 2

MINIMUM COST OF FOSTER CARE ROOM AND BOARD

Explanation— The costs below reflect only the basic board rate for the 5,186 children in foster care on 12-31-2006 – medical expenses, counseling fees, special needs amounts, school tuition, transportation provided by contractors, case worker/supervisor salaries, judicial system costs, and other non-room and board costs are not included in the above minimum monthly costs, with the exception of children in assisted living nursing facilities and hospitals where nursing care is part of the daily rates. Costs are calculated to be representative of the number of children, ages, and mix of placements on any given day. **The estimates below likely under represent the true costs.**

Placement Type	Children	Monthly Cost or Range ⁹¹	Monthly
Foster Home – level unspecified	1,494	\$226 - \$1,224, \$1,913, or \$3,021	\$2,818,182 ⁹²
Agency Based Foster Home	667	\$1,913	1,275,971
Continuity Care Foster Home	23	\$1,224	28,152
Treatment Foster Care Home	20	\$3,021	60,420
Relative Placement	1,101	\$226 - \$1,224, \$1,913, or \$3,021	798,225 ⁹³
Group Home – level unspecified	544	\$1,974, \$2,723, \$4,799, \$6,083	2,118,744 ⁹⁴
Group Home level “A”	40	\$2,723	108,920
Treatment level G.H.	39	\$4,799	187,161
Enhanced treatment level G.H.	27	\$6,083	164,241
Residential treatment center level	234	\$8,734	2,043,756
Jail/Youth Development Center	411	\$4,350 - \$6,675	1,787,850 ⁹⁵
Emergency Shelter	222	\$855, \$1,820, or \$3,290	441,410 ⁹⁶
Runaway/Whereabouts Unknown	165	not applicable	n/a
Independent & Semi-Ind. Living	74	\$359	26,566
Center for Development Disabled	50	\$2,400 (est.)	120,000
Psychiatric Treatment Facility	23	\$14,630	336,490
Assisted Living Facility	13	\$8,234-\$18,009	107,042 ⁹⁷
Medical Facility	10	\$15,000	150,000
Special School	7	\$3,000 (est.)	21,000
Private Institution	1	\$3,000 (est.)	3,000
Adoptive Home Not Final - Private	2	---	n/a
Other	19	\$359 (est.)	6,821
Children in Care on Dec. 31, 2006	5,186	Minimum monthly total	\$12,603,951

Minimum Annual Cost for Room and Board Only \$151,485,560

⁹¹ See the explanation of rates on the following page for more details.

⁹² 498 children x \$725 per month (average of standard foster payment range) + 498 children x \$1,913 per month + 498 children x \$3,021 per month (\$361,050 + \$952,674 + \$1,504,458).

⁹³ 1,101 children x \$725 per month (average of standard foster payment range).

⁹⁴ 136 children x \$1,974 + 136 children x \$2,723 + 136 children x \$4,799 + 136 children x \$6,083.

⁹⁵ 411 children x \$4,350 per month.

⁹⁶ 74 children x \$855 per month + 74 children x \$1,820 per month + 74 children x \$3,290 per month.

⁹⁷ 13 children x \$8,234 per month.

Table 2 (continued) Details Regarding Payment Rates

Foster Home/Relative Foster Care rates: DHHS determines the maintenance payment for a child in foster family home or in relative care by the age of the child and the child's needs as scored on the FCPAY Checklist, which is completed by the foster parents. Rates for state fiscal year 2006 are as follows:

- Foster home payments for children from age 0-5 ranged from \$226.44 - \$1,091.40 per month.
- Foster home payments for children age 6-11 ranged from \$359.04-\$1,186.06 per month.
- Foster home payments for children age 12-18 ranged from \$359.04-\$1,224.00 per month
- Agency based foster care began reimbursement at \$63.75 per day (about \$1,913 per month), with continuity care at \$40.80 per day (about \$1,224 per month).
- Treatment foster care is paid the minimum foster home payment for the child's age plus \$100.71 per day (about \$3,021.30 per month)

DHHS Group Home rates: are determined by the group home level. Rates for state fiscal year 2006:

- Basic group homes are paid \$65.79 per day (about \$1,973.70 per month),
- Group Home A's are paid \$90.78 per day (about \$2,723.40 per month),
- Treatment Group Homes are paid \$159.95 per day (\$4798.50 per month
- Enhanced Treatment Group Homes are paid \$202.76 per day (\$6,082.80 per month).

Residential Treatment Centers: according to the Medicaid managed care facility rates effective July 1, 2006, days 1-90 are reimbursed at \$291.14 per day; days 271+ are reimbursed at \$259.95 per day (about \$8,734 per month during the first three months of care).

Rehabilitation Centers/Youth Jails:

- Kearney Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - \$123.63 (\$3,709 per month).
- Geneva Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center - \$141.51 (\$4,245 per month).
- Douglas County Youth Center - \$123.60 for Douglas County wards, \$170.00 for state wards (about \$5,100 per month).
- Lancaster County Youth Service Center contract for state wards is \$222.50 (\$6,675 per month).
- Northeast Nebraska Juvenile Services in Madison ranges from \$110 to \$250 depending on the contract and the level. The contract for state wards is \$145.00 per day (\$4,350 per month)
- Western Nebraska Juvenile Services contract for state wards is \$170.00 per day (\$5,100 per month).

Emergency Shelters: DHHS emergency shelter rates are determined by the level. Rates for state fiscal year 2006:

- Individual Emergency Shelter homes are paid \$28.51 per day (\$855.00 per month).
- Agency Based Emergency Shelter homes are paid \$60.69 per day (\$1,820.70 per month).
- Emergency Shelter Centers are paid \$109.65 per day (\$3,289.50).

In-Patient Psychiatric/Substance Abuse: according to the Medicaid managed care facility rates effective July 1, 2006, the per diem is based on which day of hospitalization, with the first two days being reimbursed at the highest rate, \$618.67 per day, and days 7+ reimbursed at \$519.89 per day (about \$14,629.71 per month).

Assisted Living Nursing Facilities: is based on the 2006 per diem rate that ranges from \$274.47-\$600.31 per day (\$8,234.10-\$18,009.30 per month) depending on level of care needed, which includes provision of skilled nursing care.

Hospitalization of Newborns: The Nebraska Hospital Association provided the following statistics: The average hospital charge for normal newborns was \$1,502 for CY 2005, while the average hospital charge for newborns with problems was \$6,102. Costs are figured based on a three-day stay for normal newborns. (\$1,502/3 or \$500 per day).

Basis for the Findings in Table 3

The Foster Care Review Board is required under state and federal law and regulations to make a number of findings regarding the children it reviews. The results of these findings, along with important trend data, are listed in the following table. Some pertinent statutes and regulations regarding the Board's findings include:

1. Each child in foster care shall have a case plan that is written and complete with services, timeframes, and tasks identified within 60 days of placement. [Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1308, §43-1312, Section 475 (1) of the Social Security Act (SSA) and 390 NAC 5-004.02A, 8-001.11]. A written plan will be developed following the assessment of family or child's needs. Case plan evaluation and revision will then occur at least every six months. [390 NAC 5-004.02] The plan shall contain at least the following:
 - a. The purpose for which the child has been placed in foster care.
 - b. The estimated length of time necessary to achieve the purposes of the foster care placement.
 - c. The person or persons who are directly responsible for the implementation of such plan, and
 - d. A complete record of the previous placements of the foster child. [Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1312].
 - e. If a child is 16 years of age or older, the plan shall include services designed to assist the youth in acquiring independent living skills. [Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-285(2) and 390 NAC 5-004.02A].
 - f. A visitation plan is to be developed for the child and parents to ensure continued contact when appropriate. [390 NAC 7-001.02A]
2. Per Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1308, the Board is to determine:
 - a. What efforts have been made to carry out the plan, including the progress or lack thereof towards meeting the case plan objective.
 - b. Whether reasonable efforts to accomplish permanency are being made.
 - c. Whether there is a continued need for foster placement.
 - d. Whether the child's current placement is safe and appropriate.
 - e. Whether reasonable efforts were made to prevent the removal (this is also a requirement for federal IV-E reviews).
 - f. Whether grounds for termination of parental rights appear to exist.
 - g. Whether the child is likely to be returned to their parent's care and if not, recommend an alternative plan.
 - h. Any other recommendations it chooses to makes regarding the child.
 - i. Each child's placement shall receive educational and health information at the time of placement. [Section 475 (5) of the Social Security Act (SSA)]
 - ii. The custodial agency, normally DHHS, is to evaluate the safety of the child and take the necessary measures in the plan to protect the child. [Adoption and Safe Families Act]
 - iii. Visits between siblings are to be arranged between siblings, when appropriate, if they cannot be placed together. [U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Child Welfare Information Gateway].

TABLE 3

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOSTER CARE REVIEW ACT
LOCAL BOARD FINDINGS
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006**

Is there a written permanency plan	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•There is a written plan with services, timeframes, and tasks	4,085	74.6%	52.4%
•There is no plan.....	493	9.0%	12.5%
•There is a plan, but it is incomplete.....	<u>895</u>	<u>16.4%</u>	25.8%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Board agreement with the child’s permanency plan	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•The Board agrees with the child’s permanency plan.....	3,177	58.0%	43.4%
•The Board disagrees with the plan.....	1,499	27.4%	21.7%
•There is no current plan.....	405	7.4%	11.9%
•The Board cannot agree or disagree due to [reason].....	<u>392</u>	<u>7.2%</u>	13.1%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Services in the permanency plan	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•All services in the plan are presently in motion.....	2,677	48.9%	38.9%
•Some services are in motion.....	948	17.3%	17.5%
•Services are offered, but not utilized.....	939	17.2%	16.8%
•Unclear what is being provided.....	367	6.7%	14.9%
•There is no plan, and no services being provided.....	<u>542</u>	<u>9.9%</u>	1.4%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

continued...

Explanation of Table—This table shows compliance with the Foster Care Review Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1301-1318) as determined by the local Foster Care Review Boards that reviewed the children’s cases during 2006. It also shows comparison percentages from 10 years ago (n/a indicates not available because the question was not asked or because there were differences in the available choices for answers).

There were 5,473 reviews conducted during 2006 on 3,728 children. Children are typically reviewed every six months while in out-of-home care; therefore, some children were reviewed twice during the year. A description of the basis for the findings precedes this table.

TABLE 3 (continued)

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOSTER CARE REVIEW ACT
LOCAL BOARD FINDINGS
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006**

Progress being made toward permanency plan objective	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Progress is being made towards the permanency objective	2,517	46.0%	56.8%
•No progress towards permanency.....	1,584	28.9%	18.0%
•Unclear.....	<u>1,372</u>	<u>25.1%</u>	24.7%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Continued need to be in the foster care system	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•There is a continued need.....	5,026	91.8%	n/a
•There is no longer a need for foster placement.....	<u>447</u>	<u>8.2%</u>	n/a
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Is the current foster placement safe and appropriate	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Current placement appears safe and appropriate.....	4,294	78.5%	61.2%
•Unsafe, thus inappropriate.....	99	1.8%	n/a
•Safe, but not appropriate.....	197	3.6%	3.5%
•No documentation or homestudy on which to base finding	<u>883</u>	<u>16.1%</u>	24.8%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Safety evaluation by department or custodial agency	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Custodial agency evaluated the safety of the child and taken the necessary measures in the plan to protect the child	4,648	84.9%	n/a
•Custodial agency evaluated the safety/taken action.....	163	3.0%	n/a
•The Board cannot make a finding due to a lack of written plan.....	<u>662</u>	<u>12.1%</u>	n/a
Total	5,473	100.0%	

continued...

TABLE 3 (continued)

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOSTER CARE REVIEW ACT
LOCAL BOARD FINDINGS
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006**

Reasonable efforts toward reunification	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Reasonable Efforts to reunify are being made.....	3,545	64.8%	39.3%
•Reasonable Efforts to reunify are not being made.....	183	3.3%	2.6%
•Reasonable Efforts are no longer being made because the plan is no longer reunification or reasonable efforts are otherwise not required.....	<u>1,745</u>	<u>31.9%</u>	44.5%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Parent-child visitation arrangements	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Parental visitation occurring as ordered.....	2,315	42.3%	n/a
•Parental visitation not occurring as ordered.....	1,003	18.3%	n/a
•Parental visitation is unclear.....	453	8.3%	12.2%
•Parental visitation was not ordered.....	407	7.4%	3.0%
•Parental visitation is not applicable due to [reason].....	<u>1,295</u>	<u>23.7%</u>	19.2%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Sibling visitation arrangements	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Sibling visitation occurring.....	1,822	33.3%	n/a
•Sibling visitation is not occurring.....	763	13.9%	n/a
•Sibling visitation information was not available.....	656	12.0%	30.3%
•Sibling visitation is not applicable (no siblings or placed together).....	<u>2,232</u>	<u>40.8%</u>	31.0%
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Additional Information on Contact with Siblings

For the 2,668 children reviewed in the last half of 2006:

- 227 children had no file documentation regarding contact with siblings who are not placed with them.
- 311 children had documentation that no sibling contact was taking place.
- 351 children had contact with some, but not all, siblings.
- 1,247 children had documented contact with siblings.
- 532 children were placed with all siblings, and thus had contact.

continued...

TABLE 3 (continued)

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOSTER CARE REVIEW ACT
LOCAL BOARD FINDINGS
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006**

Reasonable efforts to prevent the removal	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•Reasonable efforts were made to prevent the child’s removal from the home.....	5,087	92.9%	88.4%
•Reasonable efforts were not made to prevent the child’s removal from the home.....	106	1.9%	0.4%
•It was unclear what efforts were made to prevent removal	134	2.4%	9.7%
•Reasonable efforts to prevent removal were not necessary due to a judicial determination.....	<u>146</u>	<u>2.7%</u>	n/a
Total	5,473	100.0%	

Grounds for termination of parental rights per §43-1308(1)(b)	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•The Board finds that grounds for termination of parental rights appear to exist.....	1,326	24.2%	n/a
•The Board finds that grounds for termination of parental rights do not appear to exist.....	2,279	41.6%	n/a
•The Board finds that grounds for tpr rights appears to exist, but it would not be in the child’s best interests.....	758	13.8%	n/a
•A finding on grounds for termination is not applicable because the parents are deceased or the rights have already been relinquished or terminated.....	<u>1,110</u>	<u>20.3%</u>	n/a
Total	5,473	100.0%	

The Board’s recommended plan if return of the children to the parents is unlikely	2006 Reviews	2006 Percent	1996 Percent
•The Board finds that return is not likely and recommends referral for termination of parental rights and/or adoption	2,075	37.9%	n/a
•The Board finds that return is not likely and recommends referral for guardianship.....	691	12.6%	n/a
•The Board finds that return is not likely and recommends placement with a relative.....	139	2.5%	n/a
•The Board finds that return is not likely and recommends a planned, permanent living arrangement other than adoption, guardianship, or placement with a relative.....	489	8.9%	n/a
•The Board finds that return to the parents is likely.....	<u>2,079</u>	<u>38.0%</u>	n/a
Total	5,473	100.0%	

TABLE 4(a)

BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006

During each review, local boards identify barriers to children's case plans being implemented and children achieving safe, permanent homes. The barriers are reported to all the legal parties of the children's cases in the final recommendation reports issued after completion of each review.

There were 5,473 reviews conducted during 2006, with the following information gathered on 4,246 of those children. Categories appear in order of the number of barriers identified. The most frequently identified barriers are parental barriers.

<u>Parental Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Ability/willingness to parent	1733	40.8%
Parental substance abuse	1256	29.6%
History of abuse/violence/neglect	1119	26.4%
Resistant/uncooperative to services	806	19.0%
Lack of visitation	591	13.9%
Relationships between family members	425	10.0%
Inadequate housing	382	9.0%
Incarceration	370	8.7%
Noncompliance Court Order	310	7.3%
Economic stress	234	5.5%
Parent(s) whereabouts unknown	213	5.0%
Mental illness	192	4.5%
Lack of job training/skills	191	4.5%
Possible sexual abuse if returned	151	3.6%
Low functioning parent	127	3.0%
Inability to cope with child's disability	117	2.8%
Parental chronic health problems	62	1.5%
Number of times child in foster care	5	0.1%
Bonding problems	4	0.1%
Distance between family	3	0.1%
Illiteracy	1	0.0%
Other parental barriers	165	3.9%

continued...

Explanation of Table– This table compiles the barriers to permanency identified by the local boards for 4,246 of the 5,473 reviews conducted during 2006. There can be up to 10 barriers identified for each child reviewed. Barriers may be in any of the categories, and more than one barrier can be in the same category.

TABLE 4(a) (continued)

**BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006**

<u>Implementation Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Lack of independent living skills training	79	1.9%
Lack of adoptive homes for special needs children	50	1.2%
Lack specialized foster homes	47	1.1%
Support services not available	15	0.4%
Lack of adoptive resources	5	0.1%
Group homes not available	3	0.1%
Residential treatment facility not available	1	0.0%
Other resource barriers	60	1.4%
<u>Planning Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
No plan	333	7.8%
Plan inappropriate	234	5.5%
Inappropriate timeframes	128	3.0%
No timeframe	28	0.7%
No objectives	5	0.1%
No parent/agency agreement with mom	4	>0.1%
Plan unclear	3	>0.01%
Other plan barriers	73	1.7%
<u>Legal Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Parents rights override children's rights	334	7.9%
GAL not taking active role	211	5.0%
Lack of legal action to pursue permanency	172	4.1%
Court delays	75	1.8%
Need clarification of child's legal status	27	0.6%
No guardian ad litem	9	0.2%
Court orders conflict with agency plan	6	0.1%
Court does not enforce orders	3	0.1%
Conflict with ICWA	1	0.0%
No objectives in court order	1	0.0%
Other legal barriers	160	3.8%

continued...

Explanation of Table— This table compiles the barriers to permanency identified by the local boards for 4,246 of the 5,473 reviews conducted during 2006. There can be up to 10 barriers identified for each child reviewed. Barriers may be in any of the categories, and more than one barrier can be in the same category.

TABLE 4(a) (continued)
BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006

<u>Case Management Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Lack of documentation	370	8.7%
Case transfer interrupts service	39	0.9%
Caseload too large	23	0.5%
Poor monitoring of contracting agencies	20	0.5%
Inadequate supervision of caseworker	1	0.0%
Other management barriers	48	1.1%

Case Manager Contact with Children

During the review process Board staff members document whether or not the child’s case manager has visited the child within the 60 days prior to the most recent review.

The following data was collected during the 2,668 reviews conducted in the last half of calendar year 2006.

- ◆ 135 (5.1%) of the 2,668 reviews found documentation showing that no case manager contact had taken place within 60 days of the review.
- ◆ 163 (6.1%) of the 2,668 reviews found no documentation regarding case manager/child contacts and thus likely did not have any contact.
- ◆ 2,370 (88.8%) of the 2,668 reviews found documented case manager contact within 60 days prior to the review.

Local Boards have expressed concern that many case managers are not visiting the children and witnessing the interaction of the children with their caregivers. It is concerning that 135 children’s files had no documentation on this vital safety indicator.

continued...

Explanation of Table– This table compiles the barriers to permanency identified by the local boards for 4,246 of the 5,473 reviews conducted during 2006. There can be up to 10 barriers identified for each child reviewed. Barriers may be in any of the categories, and more than one barrier can be in the same category.

TABLE 4(a) (continued)
BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006

<u>Resource Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Lack of independent living skills training	79	1.9%
Lack of adoptive homes for special needs children	50	1.2%
Lack specialized foster homes	47	1.1%
Support services not available	15	0.4%
Lack of adoptive resources	5	0.1%
Group homes not available	3	0.1%
Residential treatment facility not available	1	0.0%
Other resource barriers	60	1.4%
<u>Placement Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Problems in foster home	89	2.1%
Placement not meet sp. needs	44	1.0%
Other placement barriers	173	4.1%
<u>Coordination Barriers to Permanency Category</u>	<u>Reviews</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Inadequate communication within agency	35	0.8%
Inadequate communication between parties	5	0.1%
Other coordination barriers	4	0.1%
 Other Barriers in Categories Not Listed Above	 909 children	 (21.4%)
 No Barriers Identified	 360 children	 (8.5%)

Explanation of Table– This table compiles the barriers to permanency identified by the local boards for 4,246 of the 5,473 reviews conducted during 2006. There can be up to 10 barriers identified for each child reviewed. Barriers may be in any of the categories, and more than one barrier can be in the same category.

TABLE 4(b)

**PROVISION OF HEALTH AND EDUCATION RECORDS
TO THE CAREGIVERS
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED
DURING THE LAST HALF OF 2006**

Health Records Given to Foster Parent or Caregiver	Reviews		Ages	Ages	Ages	Age
			<u>0- 5</u>	<u>6-12</u>	<u>13-15</u>	<u>16+</u>
Yes	1,704	63.9%	663	548	240	253
No	228	8.5%	104	75	30	19
Unable to determine	671	25.1%	198	179	127	167
Not applicable	<u>65</u>	<u>2.4%</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>38</u>
Total	2,668	100.0%	972	812	407	477

For the chart on education records below, only reviewed children ages 6-15 are included, as all of these children should be of school age.

Education Records Given to Foster Parent or Caregiver	Reviews		Ages	Ages
			<u>6-12</u>	<u>13-15</u>
Yes	768	63.0%	528	240
No	106	8.7%	77	29
Unknown	313	25.7%	186	127
Not applicable	<u>32</u>	<u>2.6%</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>11</u>
Total	1,219	100.0%	812	407

Explanation of Table— The Foster Care Review Board is required under federal regulations to determine if health and educational records had been provided to the foster parents or other care providers at the time of the placement. This is done for all reviews and noted for the legal parties. Due to computer conversion, statistical data for the first half of 2006 was not available.

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF REASONS CHILDREN ENTERED FOSTER CARE FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING 2006

This table includes two charts. The first shows the reason(s) identified upon removal from the home for the 2,668 children and youth reviewed by the Foster Care Review Board during the last half of 2006. Each could have multiple reasons identified.

The chart on the next page shows conditions that were identified after the removal and gives the combined number of children significantly affected by the condition.

Reasons for Entering Foster Care Identified Upon Removal⁹⁸

Category	All Children Reviewed		Children By Number of Removals	
			Reviewed children who were in foster care for the first time	Reviewed children who had been in foster care at least once previously
Neglect ⁹⁹	1622	60.8%	1105	517
Parental Drug Abuse	916	34.3%	679	237
Parental Meth Abuse	243	9.1%	202	41
Parental Alcohol Abuse	428	16.0%	304	124
Housing substandard/unsafe	633	23.7%	405	228
Physical Abuse	600	22.5%	373	227
Parental Incarceration	288	10.8%	175	113
Abandonment	244	9.1%	155	89
Sexual Abuse ¹⁰⁰	217	8.1%	134	83
Parental Illness/Disability	206	7.7%	121	85
Death of Parent(s)	27	1.0%	11	16
Relinquishment	23	0.9%	3	20
Child's Behaviors ¹⁰¹	454	17.0%	201	253
Child's Mental Health	97	3.6%	40	57
Child's Disabilities	53	2.0%	27	26
Child's Drug Abuse	52	1.9%	21	31
Child's Meth Abuse	2	0.1%	2	0
Child's Alcohol Abuse	41	1.5%	15	26
Child's Illness	33	1.2%	20	13
Child's Suicide Attempt	14	0.5%	4	10

⁹⁸ Up to ten reasons for entering foster care could be identified for each child reviewed. See the next page for reasons discovered after removal from the home.

⁹⁹ Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic physical, medical, educational, and/or emotional needs.

¹⁰⁰ Children and youth often do not disclose sexual abuse until after removal from the home. The chart on this page includes only sexual abuse identified as an initial reason for removal and does not reflect later disclosures.

¹⁰¹ Many of the behaviors identified as a reason for children and youth to enter foster care are predictable responses to prior abuse or neglect. Also, due to budget cuts the Board is prioritizing the review of children age birth to five, and those that qualify for federal IV-E funding; thus many troubled adolescents are not being reviewed.

TABLE 5 (continued)

Each of the 2,668 children reviewed during the last half of 2006 could have multiple reasons identified for entering foster care throughout their lifetimes, and multiple conditions identified after removal(s).

Conditions Affecting Children Foster Care¹⁰²

Category	Children Significantly Affected by the Condition		Condition Identified at Removal	Condition Identified After Removal
Neglect ¹⁰³	1737	65.1%	1622	115
Parental Drug Abuse	1149	43.1%	916	233
Parental Meth Abuse	279	10.5%	243	36
Parental Alcohol Abuse	537	20.1%	428	109
Housing substandard/unsafe	750	28.1%	633	117
Physical Abuse	686	25.7%	600	86
Parental Incarceration	417	15.6%	288	129
Sexual Abuse	361	13.5%	217	144
Abandonment	343	12.9%	244	99
Parental Illness/Disability	285	10.7%	206	79
Relinquishment	57	2.1%	23	34
Death of Parent(s)	43	1.6%	27	16
Child's Behaviors ¹⁰⁴	555	20.8%	454	101
Child's Mental Health	207	7.8%	97	110
Child's Disabilities	86	3.2%	53	33
Child's Drug Abuse	86	3.2%	52	34
Child's Alcohol Abuse	63	2.4%	41	22
Child's Illness	45	1.7%	33	12
Child's Suicide Attempt	26	1.0%	14	12
Child's Meth Abuse	3	0.1%	2	1

¹⁰² Up to ten reasons for entering foster care could be identified for each of the children reviewed. Similarly, up to ten later identified conditions could be recorded for each of the children reviewed. The following are two common examples of later identified conditions: 1) a child is removed from the home due to neglect, and later parental drug abuse is identified, or 2) a child is removed from the home for physical abuse, and later the child discloses that sexual abuse also was occurring.

¹⁰³ Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic physical, medical, educational, and/or emotional needs.

¹⁰⁴ The percentage of children who enter foster care due to their behaviors is greater in the total foster care population than is true in reviewed population. Due to budget cuts that forced a reduction in staff, the Board is prioritizing reviews of children who are age birth to five, and children who qualify for federal IV-E funds. Therefore, older youth and youth who are in the Kearney or Geneva Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers are somewhat under-represented.

TABLE 6(a)**PERCENTAGE OF LIFE SPENT IN FOSTER CARE
FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED
DURING THE LAST HALF OF 2006**

Percent of Life In Care	Total Children Reviewed	<u>Ages 0-5</u>	<u>Ages 6-12</u>	<u>Ages 13-15</u>	<u>Ages 16-18</u>
1-24%	1,251	197	454	286	314
25-49%	715	260	252	89	114
50-74%	319	175	79	24	41
75-99%	171	131	24	8	8
100%	<u>212</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	2,668	972	812	407	477

- **702 (26.3%) of the reviewed children have spent more than half of their lives in foster care.** This includes
 - 515 preschool children (ages 0-5),
 - 106 elementary school aged children (ages 6-12),
 - 32 middle school/junior high aged children (ages 13-15), and
 - 49 youth over age 16 who have aged out or soon will be aging out of the system and creating families of their own.
- **383 children and youth have spent the majority (75%+) of their lives in foster care, including 212 reviewed children who have spent every day of their lives (100%) in foster care.**

Explanation of Table—This table shows the percentage of the child's life that has been spent in foster care. The percentage of life in care is determined by dividing the number of months the child has been in foster care at the time of the Board's review by the child's age, in months, at the time of the review. For example, a 24 month old child who has been in care 6 months would have been in care 25% of his life (6 divided by 24).

While 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, or more in foster care may not seem long from an adult perspective, from the child's perspective it is a long and significant period of time. Many children have experienced even longer periods in foster care (see next page).

TABLE 6(b)

**MONTHS IN FOSTER CARE FOR
CHILDREN REVIEWED
DURING THE LAST HALF OF 2006**

Months In Care	Children Reviewed	Ages <u>0-5</u>	Ages <u>6-12</u>	Ages <u>13-15</u>	Ages <u>16-18</u>
0-6 months	297	144	79	41	33
7-12 months	585	301	148	68	68
13-18 months	377	184	109	47	37
19-24 months	338	142	106	40	50
25-30 months	245	91	80	35	39
31-36 months	177	47	63	33	34
37-40 months	90	21	44	15	10
41-48 months	152	23	60	33	36
49+ months	<u>407</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>170</u>
Totals	2,668	972	812	407	477

- **1,409 (52.8%) of the 2,668 reviewed children have spent more than 18 months of their lives in foster care.** This includes:
 - 343 preschool children (birth- age 5),
 - 476 elementary school aged children (ages 6-12),
 - 251 middle school/junior high aged children (ages 13-15), and
 - 339 youth over age 16 who will soon be aging out of the system and creating families of their own.
- **649 (24.3%) of the reviewed children and youth have spent over 3 years of their lives in foster care.**
- **407 (15.3%) children and youth have spent over 4 years of their lives in foster care.**

Explanation of Table—This table shows the number of months of the child's life that has been spent in foster care.

TABLE 6(c)

PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT FOR CHILDREN REVIEWED DURING THE LAST HALF OF 2006

<u>Paternity Established</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Age 0-5</u>	<u>Age 6-12</u>	<u>Age 13-15</u>	<u>Age 16+</u>
Yes	1,954	664	651	308	331
No	514	256	105	66	87
Unclear	<u>200</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>59</u>
Total	2668	972	812	407	477

Details

<u>Paternity Established</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Age 0-5</u>	<u>Age 6-12</u>	<u>Age 13-15</u>	<u>Age 16+</u>
Yes, established	1,469	527	472	221	249
Yes & Rights Terminated	271	68	111	52	40
Yes & Rights Relinquished	140	59	48	20	13
Yes & Father deceased	74	10	20	15	29
No, Paternity Not Est.	356	180	81	42	53
No, Parental ID Unknown	158	76	24	24	34
Undocumented	134	36	35	20	43
Unable to determine	<u>66</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>16</u>
Total	2668	972	812	407	477

Paternity and Young Children (children under age 6)

- **30.5% (292 of the 956 young children) did not have paternity established**
 - 118 of the children had been in care between 12-23 months (1 year)
 - 40 of the children had been in care between 24-35 months (2 years)
 - 20 of the children had been in care for 36 months or more (3 years or more)
 - 11 of the 20 children had no purported father identified, and paternity had not been established by publication.

Of the 1,839 reviewed children who had been foster care for 12 months or more:

- 12.6% (232) did not have paternity established.
- 4.3% (80) had no file documentation about paternity establishment.
- 6.5% (119) had not yet had a father/purported father identified.

When considering children with no paternity established or whose paternity is undocumented, it is likely that paternity has not been established for over a fourth of the children reviewed (714 of 2,668 – 26.8 %)– this includes children where it was documented as yet to be determined and children who had no documentation of paternity.

Explanation of Table– Lack of paternity identification has been linked to excessive lengths of time in care for children. Often paternity is not addressed until after the mother’s rights are relinquished or terminated instead of addressing the suitability of the father as placement concurrently with the assessment of the mother’s ability to parent. This can cause serious delays in children achieving permanency.

TABLE 7
2006 REPORT FROM THE
TRACKING SYSTEM REGISTRY

Per Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1303(2)(d)(iv) the Board is to include in the annual report **the number of children supervised by the foster care programs in the state**. This is calculated as follows:

Children in out-of-home care on December 31, 2005	6,204
Children who entered or re-entered care during 2006	+ <u>4,768</u> ¹⁰⁵
Children whose case was active anytime during 2006	10,972

The number of children in care on December 31st can be calculated as follows:

Children whose case was active anytime during 2006	10,972
Children reported to have left foster care during 2006	- 4,514
Children who left care before 2006, but not disclosed until 2006	- <u>1,272</u> ¹⁰⁶
Children in out-of-home care on December 31, 2006	5,186

Agency with custody of children in out-of-home care on December 31, 2006:

The Department of Health and Human Services	5,052
This includes children under Child Protective Services, the Office of Juvenile Services (including Geneva and Kearney Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers and Juvenile Parole), and the Lincoln Regional Center.	
Correction, Detention, Probation, Parole or Courts	55
This excludes the Kearney and Geneva Youth Rehabilitation & Training Centers, and those children under the Office of Juvenile Services, all of which are under the Department of Health and Human Services	
Private Agencies (including pre-adoptive)	<u>79</u>
Total	5,186

¹⁰⁵ Some children entered and/or left foster care more than once in a year. Those children are not duplicated here.

¹⁰⁶ DHHS sometimes does not report when children leave out-of-home care or reports the case closure several weeks or months after the fact. In addition, due to computer conversion activities, some November and December 2005 exits from care were not recorded until 2006.

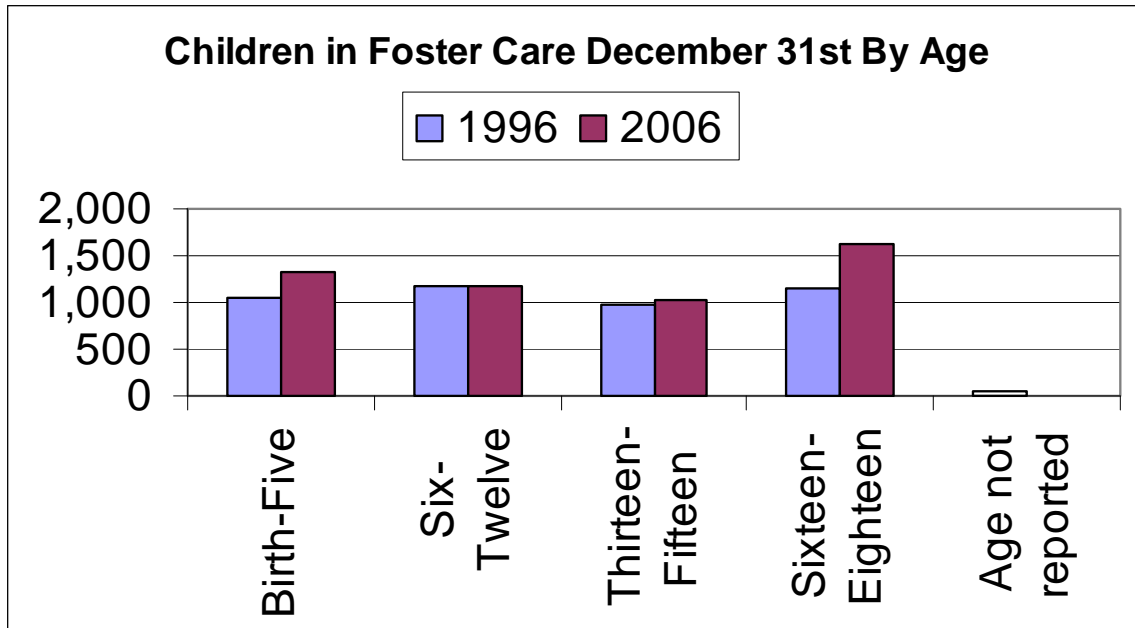


TABLE 8**CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE ON DECEMBER 31, 2006
BY AGE**

<u>Children's Age</u>	<u># of Children</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>Subtotal %</u>	
under 1 year	205			
1 year	258			
2 years	238			
3 years	218			
4 years	200			
5 years	214			
		1,333	25.7%	Ages birth - 5
6 years	196			
7 years	172			
8 years	180			
9 years	146			
10 years	138			
11 years	162			
12 years	187			
		1,181	22.8%	Ages 6-12
13 years	201			
14 years	343			
15 years	487			
		1,031	19.9%	Ages 13-15
16 years	600			
17 years	615			
18 years	415			
		1,630	31.4%	Ages 16-18
<u>Unreported Age</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>>0.1%</u>	Unreported Age
Total	5,186		100.0%	

Explanation of Table—This table shows the number of active children on December 31, 2006, by age. Generally, children up to approximately age 11 enter care due to their parent's inability to parent, neglect, abusive situations, or medical problems.¹⁰⁷ Youth age 12-18 may also enter foster care because of actions they have taken in addition to the previously stated reasons.

¹⁰⁷ If a child has not been provided for physically, medically, and/or emotionally, it is considered neglect. Neglect can include the denial of critical care, failure to provide basic and necessary medical care and hygiene, failure to supervise children enough to keep them safe, engaging in criminal activity in front of the child, abandonment, and related inattention to the child's needs. Parental substance abuse and mental health issues often contribute to neglect.

TABLE 9(a)**TOTAL LIFETIME PLACEMENTS**
(individual foster homes, group homes, specialized facilities)**FOR CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE ON DECEMBER 31, 2006**
WHO ARE WARDS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS)¹⁰⁸

Number of Placements	Total	Ages 0 to 5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-15	Age 16+	Age Unk.
1	639	310	163	74	91	1
2	851	372	205	123	151	0
3	733	293	199	101	140	0
4	567	144	141	127	155	0
5	400	97	103	84	116	0
6	305	40	86	78	101	0
7	256	31	74	58	93	0
8	190	20	44	59	67	0
9	172	4	31	47	90	0
10	133	3	31	28	71	0
11-20	622	8	91	176	347	0
21-30	142	0	3	29	110	0
31-40	35	0	0	6	29	0
over 40	7	0	0	2	5	0
Total	5,052	1,322	1,171	992	1,566	1

Children of any age can be damaged by multiple caregiver changes, yet:

- 2829 (56.0%) of DHHS children had experienced 4 or more placements.
- 939 (18.6%) of DHHS children had experienced 10 or more placements.

The Board is especially concerned for the number of preschool children who have had multiple placements. Brain development experts have indicated that young children are permanently damaged by multiple broken attachments to care givers, yet an alarming number of young children have this experience.

- **640 (48.4%) of the 1,322 DHHS preschoolers have lived in 3 or more different homes**
- **106 (8.0%) of the 1,322 DHHS preschoolers have lived in 6 or more homes.**

Explanation of Table—Both parts of this table shows the number of lifetime placements the children and youth who were in out-of-home care as of December 31, 2006 have experienced, the difference between the tables is the type of agency with custody.

¹⁰⁸ Health and Human Services wards include children under Child Protective Services, the Office of Juvenile Services (including Geneva and Kearney Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Centers and Juvenile Parole), and the Lincoln Regional Center.

TABLE 9(b)**TOTAL LIFETIME PLACEMENTS****(individual foster homes, group homes, specialized facilities)****FOR CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE ON DECEMBER 31, 2006
AND ARE NOT WARDS OF DHHS ¹**

¹ These children include infants in pre-adoptive placements, children/youth placed with private agencies, children/youth in private mental health facilities, and youth sentenced to local detention/correctional facilities.

Number of Placements	Total	Ages 0 to 5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-15	Age 16+	Age Unknown
1	84	11	3	23	40	7
2	14	0	5	3	6	0
3	11	0	1	1	8	1
4	4	0	0	2	0	2
5	3	0	0	2	1	0
6	5	0	1	2	2	0
7	2	0	0	1	1	0
8	1	0	0	0	1	0
9	2	0	0	1	1	0
10	0	0	0	0	0	0
11-20	7	0	0	4	3	0
21-30	0	0	0	0	0	0
31-40	0	0	0	0	0	0
over 40	1	0	0	0	1	0
Total	134	11	10	39	64	10

Explanation of Table—Both parts of this table shows the number of lifetime placements the children and youth who were in out-of-home care as of December 31, 2006 have experienced, the difference is the type of agency with custody.

TABLE 10

CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Age Group						Race							Hispanic Ethnicity
		Birth-Five	6-8	9-12	13-15	16-18	Age Unk.	Black	White	Indian	Asian	Other	Undoc.	Multiple	
Adams	101	24	9	6	19	43	0	1	85	1	2	6	0	6	13
Antelope	6	1	0	0	1	4	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	1
Arthur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blaine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Box Butte	20	3	3	1	3	10	0	3	11	5	0	1	0	0	0
Boyd	4	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brown	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Buffalo	69	15	8	11	8	27	0	2	52	2	0	10	0	3	10
Burt	10	2	3	1	2	2	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Butler	30	13	2	6	4	5	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cass	37	6	8	6	6	11	0	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chase	6	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	1
Cherry	4	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Cheyenne	25	7	2	4	8	4	0	0	22	0	0	3	0	0	3
Clay	8	2	1	2	1	2	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colfax	10	2	0	1	3	4	0	0	5	2	0	3	0	0	2
Cuming	7	2	1	0	3	1	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0
Custer	16	1	2	4	4	5	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	1
Dakota	64	18	7	9	13	17	0	2	17	19	0	23	0	3	20
Dawes	8	1	0	0	2	5	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0
Dawson	59	23	3	1	13	19	0	1	31	5	0	22	0	0	19
Deuel	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1
Dixon	12	2	1	1	2	6	0	0	11	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dodge	106	20	10	18	21	37	0	3	86	5	1	11	0	0	13
Douglas	1926	546	219	231	353	576	1	705	908	91	5	181	6	30	148
Dundy	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fillmore	15	4	1	2	5	3	0	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
Franklin	8	0	0	1	1	6	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	1
Frontier	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Furnas	11	1	0	2	6	2	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Gender			Had 4 or more Caseworkers	In foster care for at least the last 24 months	Removals		# of Placements			
		Male	Female	Unk			Removed once	Removed more than once	1-3 Placements	4-6 Placements	7-9 Placements	10+ Placements
Adams	101	52	49	0	48	29	58	43	45	22	12	22
Antelope	6	4	2	0	3	2	2	4	1	3	0	2
Arthur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blaine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	5	2	3	0	0	2	2	3	1	4	0	0
Box Butte	20	11	9	0	11	9	9	11	10	5	2	3
Boyd	4	2	2	0	0	0	3	1	1	3	0	0
Brown	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Buffalo	69	38	31	0	30	16	36	33	27	21	8	13
Burt	10	5	5	0	2	4	6	4	6	3	1	0
Butler	30	16	14	0	7	6	23	7	20	5	2	3
Cass	37	21	16	0	6	4	14	23	11	6	7	13
Cedar	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Chase	6	4	2	0	1	0	4	2	4	1	1	0
Cherry	4	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	2	1	0	1
Cheyenne	25	14	11	0	8	6	19	6	14	5	0	6
Clay	8	7	1	0	2	0	6	2	6	2	0	0
Colfax	10	5	5	0	2	0	4	6	5	2	1	2
Cuming	7	4	3	0	4	0	5	2	4	2	1	0
Custer	16	9	7	0	14	10	8	8	4	6	1	5
Dakota	64	38	26	0	19	10	44	20	30	21	3	10
Dawes	8	8	0	0	4	2	3	5	3	1	2	2
Dawson	59	30	29	0	14	12	31	28	29	11	5	14
Deuel	3	2	1	0	2	1	1	2	0	1	2	0
Dixon	12	7	5	0	5	4	10	2	7	1	1	3
Dodge	106	53	53	0	44	29	52	54	41	20	12	33
Douglas	1926	1051	874	1	1057	567	1216	710	809	503	246	368
Dundy	2	1	1	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	1	0
Fillmore	15	7	8	0	1	5	12	3	8	4	3	0
Franklin	8	5	3	0	2	3	3	5	2	3	0	3
Frontier	3	1	2	0	2	2	2	1	2	0	0	1
Furnas	11	9	2	0	5	3	7	4	4	3	2	2

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Placement Proximity to Home					
		Same County	Neighbor County	Non-Neighbor County	Child Out of State	Parents Now Out of State	Unknown
Adams	101	40	27	22	1	1	10
Antelope	6	1	1	2	1	0	1
Arthur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blaine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	5	0	3	1	0	0	1
Box Butte	20	7	4	7	0	0	2
Boyd	4	1	1	2	0	0	0
Brown	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Buffalo	69	29	14	13	1	0	12
Burt	10	7	0	3	0	0	0
Butler	30	13	9	6	0	1	1
Cass	37	14	12	8	1	0	2
Cedar	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Chase	6	3	1	2	0	0	0
Cherry	4	0	1	2	0	1	0
Cheyenne	25	12	1	4	2	1	5
Clay	8	0	6	2	0	0	0
Colfax	10	2	4	2	0	1	1
Cuming	7	2	0	4	0	0	1
Custer	16	4	4	5	0	1	2
Dakota	64	29	5	12	1	6	11
Dawes	8	0	0	6	1	0	1
Dawson	59	19	17	10	1	2	10
Deuel	3	0	0	2	1	0	0
Dixon	12	2	2	6	0	1	1
Dodge	106	28	28	27	5	1	17
Douglas	1926	1222	193	167	58	12	274
Dundy	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Fillmore	15	5	7	1	1	0	1
Franklin	8	2	0	1	0	0	5
Frontier	3	0	2	1	0	0	0
Furnas	11	1	1	4	0	1	4

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Adjudication Status							
		Mis-demeanor (1)	Felony (2)	Abuse Neglect Dependency (3a)	Status Off. (3b)	Mental Health (3c)	More Than One Type	Other	Unreported
Adams	101	12	2	49	15	0	22	0	1
Antelope	6	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	0
Arthur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blaine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	5	2	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Box Butte	20	3	2	12	1	0	2	0	0
Boyd	4	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0
Brown	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Buffalo	69	14	3	36	7	0	9	0	0
Burt	10	2	1	7	0	0	0	0	0
Butler	30	1	2	25	1	1	0	0	0
Cass	37	5	0	26	3	0	3	0	0
Cedar	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Chase	6	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	0
Cherry	4	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0
Cheyenne	25	0	0	17	1	1	4	0	2
Clay	8	1	1	5	0	1	0	0	0
Colfax	10	2	0	5	1	0	2	0	0
Cuming	7	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0
Custer	16	0	0	9	2	0	4	0	1
Dakota	64	23	2	36	0	0	3	0	0
Dawes	8	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dawson	59	6	1	32	4	0	16	0	0
Deuel	3	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Dixon	12	2	1	7	0	0	2	0	0
Dodge	106	14	2	64	5	0	20	1	0
Douglas	1926	244	23	1357	93	1	205	1	2
Dundy	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Fillmore	15	0	0	14	1	0	0	0	0
Franklin	8	0	0	3	3	0	2	0	0
Frontier	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Furnas	11	0	0	4	4	0	3	0	0

TABLE 10 (continued)

CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Age Group						Race							
		Birth-Five	6-8	9-12	13-15	16-18	Age Unk.	Black	White	Indian	Asian	Other	Undoc.	Multiple	Hispanic Ethnicity
Gage	55	14	10	8	10	13	0	1	50	2	0	2	0	0	2
Garden	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Garfield	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gosper	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greeley	5	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hall	154	59	9	17	27	42	0	4	112	2	2	32	0	2	25
Hamilton	11	0	1	3	4	3	0	0	9	0	0	2	0	0	1
Harlan	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hayes	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hitchcock	5	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holt	14	0	0	2	5	7	0	1	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hooker	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Howard	7	0	1	2	2	2	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jefferson	21	3	2	1	8	7	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
Johnson	9	2	0	2	5	0	0	1	7	0	1	0	0	0	0
Kearney	8	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Keith	12	1	2	0	4	5	0	0	10	0	0	2	0	0	1
Keya Paha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kimball	19	6	2	3	4	4	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Knox	3	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lancaster	1057	295	124	136	197	304	1	160	679	66	10	111	3	28	83
Lincoln	170	28	17	28	45	52	0	6	135	8	0	20	0	1	24
Logan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	113	33	17	13	18	32	0	8	66	14	0	22	0	3	20
McPherson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merrick	16	3	2	1	4	6	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morrill	14	2	2	2	3	5	0	0	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Nance	6	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Gender			Had 4 or more Caseworkers	In foster care for at least the last 24 months	Removals		# of Placements			
		Male	Female	Unk			Removed once	Removed more than once	1-3 Placements	4-6 Placements	7-9 Placements	10+ Placements
Gage	55	31	24	0	14	6	37	18	25	19	6	5
Garden	2	2	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	1
Garfield	3	1	2	0	2	0	0	3	2	1	0	0
Gosper	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greeley	5	2	3	0	4	2	3	2	1	2	1	1
Hall	154	95	59	0	58	26	97	57	82	23	22	27
Hamilton	11	6	5	0	5	0	7	4	5	2	3	1
Harlan	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Hayes	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Hitchcock	5	2	3	0	4	0	1	4	1	2	0	2
Holt	14	7	7	0	5	6	8	6	5	3	1	5
Hooker	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Howard	7	3	4	0	3	0	3	4	4	2	0	1
Jefferson	21	10	11	0	9	5	13	8	11	6	2	2
Johnson	9	4	5	0	8	5	8	1	3	2	2	2
Kearney	8	4	4	0	3	1	5	3	5	0	1	2
Keith	12	8	4	0	1	0	5	7	3	5	2	2
Keya Paha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kimball	19	13	6	0	9	13	15	4	6	7	1	5
Knox	3	2	1	0	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	2
Lancaster	1057	573	484	0	616	242	668	389	478	270	141	168
Lincoln	170	88	82	0	78	32	99	71	79	29	17	45
Logan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	113	63	50	0	43	25	65	48	32	44	17	20
McPherson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merrick	16	6	10	0	6	1	9	7	8	4	1	3
Morrill	14	7	7	0	5	7	10	4	8	5	1	0
Nance	6	4	2	0	0	0	3	3	3	2	0	1

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Placement Proximity to Home					
		Same County	Neighbor County	Non-Neighbor County	Child Out of State	Parents Now Out of State	Unknown
Gage	55	20	10	12	4	0	9
Garden	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Garfield	3	0	1	1	0	0	1
Gosper	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greeley	5	1	1	3	0	0	0
Hall	154	64	30	35	2	4	19
Hamilton	11	2	5	2	0	0	2
Harlan	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hayes	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Hitchcock	5	1	1	3	0	0	0
Holt	14	5	1	4	2	0	2
Hooker	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Howard	7	3	2	2	0	0	0
Jefferson	21	4	8	3	0	3	3
Johnson	9	0	3	4	0	0	2
Kearney	8	0	5	0	0	1	2
Keith	12	1	1	7	0	0	3
Keya Paha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kimball	19	5	2	4	0	0	8
Knox	3	0	0	2	0	1	0
Lancaster	1057	589	63	178	39	4	184
Lincoln	170	79	19	40	4	3	25
Logan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	113	33	23	24	10	0	23
McPherson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merrick	16	4	11	0	0	0	1
Morrill	14	4	0	6	2	0	2
Nance	6	1	0	3	1	0	1

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Adjudication Status							
		Mis-demeanor (1)	Felony (2)	Abuse Neglect Dependency (3a)	Status Off. (3b)	Mental Health (3c)	More Than One Type	Other	Unreported
Gage	55	6	0	36	7	0	6	0	0
Garden	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Garfield	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Gosper	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greeley	5	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0
Hall	154	17	8	105	7	1	16	0	0
Hamilton	11	1	0	3	4	2	1	0	0
Harlan	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Hayes	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Hitchcock	5	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	0
Holt	14	2	1	8	3	0	0	0	0
Hooker	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Howard	7	0	1	4	0	2	0	0	0
Jefferson	21	7	1	8	0	0	5	0	0
Johnson	9	1	0	6	0	0	2	0	0
Kearney	8	0	0	6	1	0	1	0	0
Keith	12	1	1	6	1	0	3	0	0
Keya Paha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kimball	19	0	1	15	2	0	1	0	0
Knox	3	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Lancaster	1057	168	13	738	23	0	110	0	5
Lincoln	170	20	3	85	37	0	25	0	0
Logan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madison	113	15	1	71	4	0	21	1	0
McPherson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merrick	16	2	0	6	2	1	5	0	0
Morrill	14	0	2	11	0	0	1	0	0
Nance	6	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	0

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Age Group						Race							Hispanic Ethnicity	
		Birth-Five	6-8	9-12	13-15	16-18	Age Unk.	Black	White	Indian	Asian	Other	Undoc.	Multiple		
Nemaha	6	3	0	1	0	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nuckolls	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Otoe	15	2	1	1	5	6	0	0	12	1	0	2	0	0	0	1
Pawnee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perkins	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phelps	28	5	3	1	6	13	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pierce	11	3	1	0	2	5	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Platte	59	14	4	10	13	18	0	2	43	1	0	13	0	0	0	17
Polk	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Willow	31	4	2	2	10	13	0	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Richardson	13	1	0	2	3	7	0	0	9	3	0	0	0	0	1	0
Rock	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saline	28	8	2	2	7	9	0	1	20	0	0	6	0	1	0	6
Sarpy	227	45	18	24	46	93	1	24	173	4	0	22	3	1	0	16
Saunders	31	9	3	4	3	12	0	0	27	0	0	3	1	0	0	3
Scotts Bluff	187	43	23	33	40	48	0	0	99	50	0	34	0	4	0	57
Seward	30	3	3	4	5	15	0	1	27	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Sheridan	9	0	0	1	4	4	0	0	2	6	0	1	0	0	0	0
Sherman	5	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sioux	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stanton	5	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Thayer	11	1	0	0	4	6	0	0	9	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Thomas	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thurston	23	5	3	2	6	7	0	0	4	18	0	0	0	1	0	0
Valley	11	1	2	2	2	4	0	0	8	1	0	2	0	0	0	1
Washington	23	2	1	3	6	11	0	3	19	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Wayne	6	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Webster	5	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wheeler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
York	43	16	2	1	12	12	0	2	38	0	0	2	0	1	0	2
Unreported	83	10	5	3	20	37	8	9	32	17	2	4	19	0	0	4
GRAND TOTAL	5186	1333	548	633	1031	1630	11	946	3212	334	23	552	32	87	502	

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Gender			Had 4 or more Caseworkers	In foster care for at least the last 24 months	Removals		# of Placements			
		Male	Female	Unk			Removed once	Removed more than once	1-3 Placements	4-6 Placements	7-9 Placements	10+ Placements
Nemaha	6	1	5	0	2	0	5	1	3	3	0	0
Nuckolls	3	1	2	0	1	1	2	1	2	0	0	1
Otoe	15	11	4	0	5	1	7	8	5	4	2	4
Pawnee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perkins	2	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1
Phelps	28	15	13	0	13	1	13	15	14	2	4	8
Pierce	11	5	6	0	5	4	10	1	9	1	0	1
Platte	59	31	28	0	17	14	43	16	34	10	8	7
Polk	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
Red Willow	31	19	12	0	8	2	19	12	13	7	7	4
Richardson	13	5	8	0	6	2	3	10	4	7	0	2
Rock	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Saline	28	17	11	0	10	4	15	13	11	11	2	4
Sarpy	227	116	111	0	86	46	139	88	106	60	27	34
Saunders	31	19	12	0	12	9	14	17	15	8	4	4
Scotts Bluff	187	104	83	0	87	60	122	65	84	39	19	45
Seward	30	16	14	0	9	10	18	12	15	7	1	7
Sheridan	9	4	5	0	3	2	6	3	4	3	1	1
Sherman	5	1	4	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	0
Sioux	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stanton	5	4	1	0	0	2	3	2	2	2	1	0
Thayer	11	7	4	0	2	1	9	2	7	1	2	1
Thomas	3	2	1	0	1	0	3	0	2	1	0	0
Thurston	23	9	14	0	5	5	11	12	8	4	4	7
Valley	11	6	5	0	5	4	7	4	5	3	1	2
Washington	23	14	9	0	9	7	15	8	12	4	2	5
Wayne	6	2	4	0	1	1	6	0	5	1	0	0
Webster	5	2	3	0	1	0	3	2	4	1	0	0
Wheeler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
York	43	26	17	0	12	7	28	15	23	13	3	4
Unreported	83	52	27	4	8	12	69	14	76	3	1	3
GRAND TOTAL	5186	2835	2346	5	2484	1298	3225	1961	2330	1286	623	947

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Placement Proximity to Home					
		Same County	Neighbor County	Non-Neighbor County	Child Out of State	Parents Now Out of State	Unknown
Nemaha	6	1	3	1	0	1	0
Nuckolls	3	0	1	2	0	0	0
Otoe	15	6	6	1	0	0	2
Pawnee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perkins	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
Phelps	28	8	8	7	0	0	5
Pierce	11	3	6	1	0	1	0
Platte	59	10	19	21	2	0	7
Polk	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Red Willow	31	5	4	13	0	1	8
Richardson	13	5	0	5	0	1	2
Rock	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Saline	28	4	8	3	0	2	11
Sarpy	227	67	76	27	2	6	49
Saunders	31	11	12	4	0	1	3
Scotts Bluff	187	88	3	56	13	3	24
Seward	30	7	10	4	1	4	4
Sheridan	9	1	0	6	1	0	1
Sherman	5	4	1	0	0	0	0
Sioux	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stanton	5	0	1	3	0	0	1
Thayer	11	0	3	7	0	0	1
Thomas	3	2	0	1	0	0	0
Thurston	23	9	1	5	2	0	6
Valley	11	1	5	2	0	0	3
Washington	23	2	4	7	3	0	7
Wayne	6	5	0	1	0	0	0
Webster	5	2	1	1	0	0	1
Wheeler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
York	43	13	7	20	1	0	2
Unreported	83	6	2	3	0	0	72
GRAND TOTAL	5186	2522	711	862	165	65	861

TABLE 10 (continued)**CHILDREN BY COUNTY OF COURT COMMITMENT**

This table reads across pages and shows the number of children according to the county of the court that placed them in care.

County	Total Children	Adjudication Status							
		Mis-demeanor (1)	Felony (2)	Abuse Neglect Dependency (3a)	Status Off. (3b)	Mental Health (3c)	More Than One Type	Other	Unreported
Nemaha	6	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	0
Nuckolls	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Otoe	15	2	1	7	3	0	2	0	0
Pawnee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perkins	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Phelps	28	2	0	13	5	0	8	0	0
Pierce	11	0	0	9	1	0	1	0	0
Platte	59	10	0	36	5	1	7	0	0
Polk	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Red Willow	31	7	2	9	7	0	6	0	0
Richardson	13	0	1	8	1	0	3	0	0
Rock	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Saline	28	2	1	22	0	1	2	0	0
Sarpy	227	13	0	142	25	0	45	0	2
Saunders	31	3	1	21	3	0	3	0	0
Scotts Bluff	187	18	4	131	8	0	24	2	0
Seward	30	4	0	17	4	1	4	0	0
Sheridan	9	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	1
Sherman	5	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0
Sioux	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stanton	5	1	0	3	0	0	1	0	0
Thayer	11	5	0	5	0	0	1	0	0
Thomas	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0
Thurston	23	0	0	13	2	0	8	0	0
Valley	11	1	0	9	1	0	0	0	0
Washington	23	6	0	12	2	0	3	0	0
Wayne	6	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
Webster	5	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0
Wheeler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
York	43	6	3	26	1	0	7	0	0
Unreported	83	0	2	11	0	0	70	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	5186	665	97	3368	312	16	709	5	14

TABLE 11**NUMBER OF REVIEWED CHILDREN BY PLAN**

<u>Permanency Plan</u>	<u>Number of children with plan</u>	
Return to Parent	3,469	63.4%
Adoption	1,077	19.7%
Includes:		
Adoption (unspecified if relative or not)	929 children	
Relative Adoption	148 children	
Guardianship	402	7.3%
No Plan	271	5.0%
Independent Living	199	3.6%
Supervised Living	16	0.3%
Long Term Foster Care	8	0.1%
Live with Relative	3	>0.1%
Institution	1	>0.1%
Job Corp/Military	1	>0.1%
Other/Unknown	<u>26</u>	<u>0.5%</u>
Total	5,473	100.0%

Explanation of Table—This table shows the permanency plans for children reviewed during 2006.

TABLE 12
CHILDREN ENTERING OUT-OF-HOME CARE
DURING THE YEAR, BY AGE

Age of child as of December 31st	Entering Care in 2006			Prior Years	
	First Removal from home In 2006	Prior premature, failed reunifications	Total Children Entering Care In 2006	Children Entering Care In 2005	Children Entering Care In 2004
Under 1	242	14	256	343	315
1 year	192	26	218	278	243
2 years	139	43	182	218	200
3 years	123	42	165	201	219
4 years	118	38	156	220	195
5 years	121	37	158	132	172
6 years	99	41	140	156	183
7 years	78	43	121	168	142
8 years	97	33	130	139	149
9 years	78	40	118	117	144
10 years	78	34	112	129	151
11 years	96	42	138	136	145
12 years	86	57	143	148	172
13 years	99	78	177	222	230
14 years	159	133	292	321	322
15 years	252	207	459	451	439
16 years	338	306	644	495	574
17 years	264	355	619	563	523
18 years	173	241	414	238	285
19 + years	22	57	79	37	36
Unknown age	37	10	47	2	0
TOTAL	2,891	1,877	4,768	4,714	4,839

# removed more than once	1,877	1,386	1,631
recidivist rate*	39.4%	29.4%	35.2%

*Recidivism rate here is computed as the percent of children entering care in the year who had been removed from the home at least once before, as in $1,386/4,714 = 29.4\%$)

Explanation of Table—This table shows the number of children who entered out-of-home care through both public and private agencies, and includes past years for comparison. Most children who enter care when age newborn through pre-adolescence enter care due to the parent's inability to parent, an abusive situation, neglect, or medical problems. Some are infants placed for adoption whose adoption has not been finalized. Older children may also enter care because of their own actions. This chart is based on the child's December 31st age, so children in the 19+ age group would have entered care while age 18 (19 is the age of majority).

The Board is particularly concerned with the number of young children experiencing premature, failed reunifications, due to brain research indicating that there can be physical changes to brain physiology caused by abuse, neglect, and separations from parents/caregivers.

TABLE 13
CASES TERMINATED IN 2006 BY REASON

<u>Reason Left Care</u>	<u>Number of Children</u>	
Reunification or Presumed Reunification		
Custody Returned to Parent	3,801	64.0%
Released from Corrections with no other information given (presumably returned to parents)	712	12.0%
Age of Majority or Other Emancipation		
Reached Age of Majority	452	7.6%
Emancipated by Military Service or Marriage	4	> 0.1%
Adoption		
Adoption Finalized	464	7.8%
Guardianship		
Guardianship Established	252	4.2%
Other Reasons		
Court Terminated (with no specifics given)	91	1.5%
Custody Transferred to Another Agency/State/Tribe	37	0.6%
Death of Child	3	> 0.1%
No reason reported or other	<u>122</u>	<u>2.1%</u>
<u>Total cases terminated</u>	5,938 ¹⁰⁹	

Explanation of Table—This table shows the number of children whose cases were terminated (closed) for each reason during 2006. (This does not include children who left during 2005, but who weren't reported until 2006).

¹⁰⁹ There were 5,938 cases closed on 5,098 children during 2006. 840 children left foster care more than once during the calendar year.

TABLE 14

**LIFETIME CASEWORKER CHANGES EXPERIENCED
By DHHS AND DHHS-OJS WARDS
WHO WERE IN FOSTER CARE ON DECEMBER 31, 2006**

<u>Number of Caseworkers in Child's Lifetime</u>	<u># of Children</u>
1 caseworker	689
2 caseworkers	987
3 caseworkers	905
4 caseworkers	631
5 caseworkers	511
6 caseworkers	366
7 caseworkers	270
8 caseworkers	219
9 caseworkers	142
10 caseworkers	115
11 caseworkers	58
12 caseworkers	36
13 caseworkers	37
14 caseworkers	23
15 caseworkers	20
16 caseworkers	14
17 caseworkers	15
18 caseworkers	1
19 caseworkers	6
20 caseworkers	2
21 caseworkers	3
22 caseworkers	1
23 caseworkers	<u>1</u>
Total DHHS or DHHS/OJS wards	5,052

- 2,471 (48.9%) of the 5,052 children had experienced four or more different caseworkers handling their case at some time during their lifetime.
- 1,840 (36.4%) had experienced five or more different caseworkers.
- 570 of the 1,333 DHHS wards under age six had experienced four or more different caseworkers handling their case at some time during their lifetime.

Explanation of Table—This table shows the number of DHHS caseworkers who have been assigned to children over their lifetime.

TABLE 15

2006 FACTS ON CHILDREN IN NEBRASKA'S CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

Number of children in foster care

There were 5,186 children in foster care on December 31, 2006.

- This is a decrease of 1,108 children from the 6,204 in foster care on December 31, 2005.
- This was an increase of 804 children from the 4,382 children in foster care on December 31, 1996.

Number of reviews conducted

- Local boards conducted 9.8% more reviews in 2006 than in 2005 (5,473 in 2006, 4,984 in 2005).
- Local board conducted 41.4% more reviews in 2006 than in 1996 (5,473 in 2006, 3,871 in 1996).
 - Starting July 1, 2006, the Foster Care Review Board was made the official IV-E review agency for Nebraska, and funded to conduct more reviews.

Demographic information

Minorities

- On December 31, 2006, 38.1% of the children in out-of-home care were minority.
- 18.2% of the general population of Nebraska children are minority according to Census data reported in the 2006 Kids Count report.

Ratio of females/males

The ratio of males/females in out-of-home care has remained constant during the last 10 years (about 55% male, 45% female).

Children soon to become adults

There were 415 youth age 18 in out-of-home care on December 31, 2006. [There is a bill to change the age of majority currently in the Nebraska legislature.]

TABLE 15 (continued)**Census data percents compared to foster care percents**

- Statewide, there were 450,242 children under age 18 according to the 2000 census data found on <http://factfinder.census.gov>.
- The following compares the 2000 census data/percentages for the counties that are the most populous for foster children to the percent in foster care on December 31, 2006.

<u>Region</u>	Census Data		Foster Children Dec. 31, 2006	Foster children as % of county census total
	# of children under 18	% of State population		
Adams County	7,616	1.7%	101	1.3%
Dodge County	8,922	2.0%	106	1.2%
Douglas County	123,221	27.4%	1,926	1.6%
Hall County	14,535	3.2%	154	1.1%
Lancaster County	58,828	13.1%	1,057	1.8%
Lincoln County	9,085	2.0%	170	1.9%
Madison County	9,450	2.1%	113	1.2%
Sarpy County	37,367	8.3%	227	0.6%
Scotts Bluff County	9,588	2.1%	187	2.0%

Time in foster care**Average days in foster care**

Children who were in out-of-home care on December 31, 2006, had been in foster care an average of 561 days since their most recent removal from the home. For children who have had more than one removal, this does not include previous episodes in foster care. The average is over one year in out-of-home care for all age groups, except for the age unreported who have recently entered foster care.

Age birth to five	412 days
Age 6-12	509 days
Age 13-15	562 days
Age 16-18	643 days
Age unreported	41 days
Age 0-18	561 days on average

Percent of lifetime in foster care

The average lifetime percent of life in foster care for children reviewed during the last half of 2006 is 36%.

TABLE 15 (continued)**Placement issues****Multiple placements**

- Over half – 55.0% (2,856 children) of the children ages birth-18 in foster care on December 31, 2006, had experienced four or more placement changes during their lifetime.
- 36.3% (1,881 children) had experienced six or more placements during their lifetime.
- 642 (48.2%) of the 1,333 children age birth-five in foster care on December 31, 2006, had experienced three or more placement changes in their lifetime.
- 349 (26.2%) of the 1,333 children age birth-five in foster care on December 31, 2006, had experienced four or more placement changes in their lifetime.

Safety in placement

- Local boards found that the child's placement was unsafe for 1.8% of the cases reviewed, and that the placement was inappropriate for another 3.6% of cases reviewed.
- Documentation or home studies needed to make the finding were lacking for 16.1% of the cases reviewed.

Relative or kinship care

- 1,101 (21.2%) of the 5,186 children in out-of-home care on December 31, 2006, were placed with relatives, as compared to 17.8% of the children in out-of-home care on December 31, 2005.

Contact with siblings

For the 2,668 children reviewed in the last half of 2006:

- 1,247 children had documented contact with siblings.
- 532 children were placed with all siblings, and thus had contact.
- 351 children had contact with some, but not all, siblings.
- 311 children had documented that no sibling contact was taking place.
- 227 children had no file documentation regarding contact with siblings not placed with them.

TABLE 15 (continued)

Permanency issues

Progress towards permanency

Local boards found that there was no progress being made to permanency in 28.9% of the cases reviewed.

Multiple removals

- 2,368 (45.7%) of the 5,186 children in foster care on December 31, 2006, had prior removals from the home.
 - 1,192 (23.0%) had been removed twice from home.
 - 453 (8.7%) had been removed three times.
 - 723 (13.9%) had experienced four or more removals from the home.
- 203 (15.2%) of the 1,333 children age birth-five in foster care on December 31, 2006, had been removed from the home at least once before.

Paternity establishment

For 2,602 children reviewed in the last half of 2006:

- 1,469 had file documentation that paternity had been established.
- 356 had documentation that paternity was not established.
- 271 had documentation that paternity was severed by termination of parental rights.
- 158 had documentation that no purported father had been identified.
- 140 had documentation that paternity was severed by a voluntary relinquishment of parental rights.
- 134 had no file documentation of whether paternity had been established.
- 74 had documentation that the father was deceased.

Parental drug abuse

The following statistics are from children reviewed during the last half of 2006.

- 54.0% of the children age birth through eight have parental drug abuse as a factor in their case.
 - 58.1% of the children under age two (151 of 260) had parental drug use as a factor in their case.
 - 52.1% of the children age two through three (177 of 340) had parental drug use as a factor in their case.
 - 52.0% of the children age four through five (155 of 298) had parental drug abuse as a factor in their case.
 - 54.6% of the children age six through eight (206 of 377) had parental drug use as a factor in their case.

Appendices

Appendix A

The Juvenile Court Process For Abuse or Neglect Cases

Note: The Foster Care Review Board has the authority to review children's cases any time after the removal from the home. Typically the Board schedules reviews so that information gathered from the review can be shared with all legal parties just prior to a Court hearing, so that the Court can address the Board's concerns.

Report of abuse or neglect (also called a complaint)– is made by medical personnel, educators, neighbors, foster parents, social workers, policy, and/or others. State law requires anyone with reason to believe abuse or neglect is occurring to report this to authorities. This may be reported to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS-CPS) or a local law enforcement agency. Each of these agencies is to cross report to the other.

Report accepted or screened out – after CPS receives a report, it assesses the nature of the complaint and assigns a prioritization for investigation. Serious flaws in this system exist. (See the section on CPS response to child abuse reports for additional details.)

Investigation– law enforcement and/or CPS (child protective services division of DHHS) investigates the allegations or concerns in the report. The investigation provides the evidence for the County Attorney to file a petition. The child may be removed from the home if an emergency situation exists.

County Attorney files a petition – detailing all of the abuse or neglect allegations. This is done within 48 hours of an emergency removal; if not an emergency removal, the County Attorney files a petition requesting removal from the home or requesting DHHS supervision of the home. Nothing is determined, found, or ordered at this point, that is done at the hearings described below. Parents who abuse their children can be tried in adult courts for the criminal part of their actions as well as being involved in a juvenile court action about the child and the child's future.

Petition definitions – petitions must contain specific allegations related to specific statutes in the Nebraska Juvenile Code. These are:

- §43-247 (3a) – children who are neglected, abused, or abandoned.
- §43-247 (3b) – children who have exhibited behaviors problems such as being disobedient, truant, or runaways
- §43-247 (3c) – juveniles who are mentally ill and dangerous as defined in §83-1009.
- §43-247 (1) – juveniles who have committed a misdemeanor other than a traffic offense.
- §43-247 (2) – juveniles who have committed a felony.

Detention hearing is held – legal rights are explained to the parents, a Guardian ad litem (special attorney) is appointed to represent the child’s best interests, counsel may be appointed for the parents. This hearing determines if probable cause exists to warrant the continuance of Court action or the child remaining in out-of-home care. The Court can only rule on the allegations in the petition. Affidavits and testimony can also be used.

If an emergency removal did not occur, the child may be removed from the home or may remain in the home under the supervision of DHHS. Services may be offered to the child and/or the parents after the detention hearing. Parents are frequently advised by their counsel not to accept services, as this may be an admission of guilt for the adjudication hearing to come.

DHHS is given custody at the detention hearing – and is then responsible for the child’s placement, plan, and services, if the court finds grounds for adjudication. DHHS is responsible for developing the child’s case plan, submitting the plan to the court, and updating the plan at least every six months while the child remains in care. The Court must adopt the DHHS case plan unless other legal parties present evidence that the plan is not in the child’s best interest or the Court amends the case plan based on its own motion.

DHHS makes a placement – the child’s needs are to be evaluated and the child is to be placed in the most home-like setting possible that meets the child’s needs, whether through direct foster parents, relatives, or agency-based care. This may occur either before or after the detention hearing, depending on circumstances.

Plea-bargaining – because allegations can be hard to prove, many serious allegations are sometimes removed from the petition in an agreement between the County Attorney and the parents so that parents or youth will admit to lesser charges.

Adjudication hearing is held – facts are presented to prove the allegations in the petition. The burden of proof is on the state, through the County Attorney. If the parents deny the allegations, then a fact-finding hearing like a trial is held, where the parents have a right to counsel.

At this hearing the finding of fact occurs, the allegations in the petition are found to be true or false, and the child is either made a state ward or not. The Court cannot order the parents to services prior to completion of the adjudication hearing. By law this must occur within 90 days of the child entering out-of-home care. In practice the 90-day rule is not always followed.

Dispositional hearing is held – the Court sets the adjudication status for the case, if the parent admits the allegations or is adjudicated, the Court adopts the DHHS rehabilitation plan for the parents (case plan) and orders services based on this plan. There is a statutory presumption that the DHHS plan is in the best interests of the child. The onus is put on any other party to the proceedings to prove that a plan is not in the child’s best interests.

Dispositional review hearings – these court hearings occur at least once every six month to determine whether any progress is being made towards permanency for the child. The child’s plan should be updated to reflect the current situation. The State Foster Care Review Board has legal standing to file as a party to any pleading or motion to be heard by the court at these hearings. The Review Board attempts to schedule its reviews in advance of this court hearing so that the Court can act on the Board’s concerns.

Permanency hearing – after the child has spent 12 months in foster care, the Court is to hold a special dispositional hearing to determine the most appropriate permanency plan for the child.

When a child has been in care for 15 of the last 22 months – the County Attorney is required to file a motion for a hearing either for a termination of parental rights, or to explain why termination is not in the best interest of the child.

Permanency – is obtained through any of the following: 1) a safe return to the parent’s home, 2) adoption, 3) guardianship, 4) a long-term foster care agreement, or 5) by reaching adulthood. Adoption or guardianship can occur following either a relinquishment of parental rights or by a Court-ordered termination of parental rights.

Termination of parental rights hearings – if the state through a county attorney proceeds to a termination of parental rights action, the parents have the right to counsel. In such a trial the burden of proof is greater than the level of proof needed in juvenile court proceedings. Many county attorneys have equated the time to establish grounds and proceed to trial as being equal to involvement in a murder trial. The role of the defense counsel is adversarial—that is the parental attorney has an obligation to defend the client against the allegations in the petition. There is a right to appeal, and many parental attorneys automatically appeal any decision to terminate parental rights.

Relinquishments – relinquishments are actions of the parents to give DHHS the rights to the child. DHHS will only accept relinquishments if both parents sign, or the other parent’s parental rights have been terminated, or the other parent is deceased. This is sometimes done to facilitate an open adoption.

Open adoption – a legally enforceable exchange of information contract between biological parents who have relinquished rights and adoptive parents, that is agreed to by both parties. This is only applicable for children who are state wards.

**Local Foster Care Review Board members
come from a variety of backgrounds.
If you would be interested in serving on a local board,
please complete the form found in Appendix B.**

Appendix B

**STATE OF NEBRASKA
FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD**

521 S. 14th Street, Suite 401
Lincoln, NE 68508-2707
(402) 471-4420

Applications for volunteers to serve on a local Foster Care Review Board as set in Nebraska Statute, Section 43-1301 to 43-1319, R.R.S. Employees of the State Foster Care Review Board or child caring and placing agencies or the Courts are ineligible to serve on local boards.

Name

Address City ZIP Phone No.

Occupation Address ZIP Phone No.

I am available for <u>training</u> on the following (check all that apply)				I am available to <u>serve on a Board</u> that meets on the following (check all that apply)			
Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Mon.				Mon.			
Tues.				Tues.			
Wed.				Wed.			
Thurs.				Thurs.			
Fri.				Fri.			
Sat.			NA	Sat.			NA

Regular exceptions to the above schedule: _____

Nebraska Statute 43-1304 states: “The members of the Board shall reasonably represent the various social, economic, racial, and ethnic groups of the county or counties from which its members may be appointed.” In order to comply with the Act, please answer the following:

Your age: 19-30 _____ Family income: \$ 4,000-10,000 _____
 31-45 _____ \$11,000-20,000 _____
 46 & older _____ \$21,000-39,000 _____
 \$40,000 - above _____

Race: Caucasian ____ Black ____ Hispanic ____ Indian ____ Asian ____ Other ____

Marital status: _____ Number of children _____

I am presently a foster parent [this is not a requirement]: yes ____ no ____

continued →

Please list current and past activities (you can use an additional sheet if more room is needed).

Please list the name, address, and phone number of three references.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please write a short paragraph of why you would like to serve on a local Foster Care Review Board.

<p>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:</p> <p>Date application received _____</p> <p>Part I Training _____ Part II Training _____</p> <p>Date appointed to Board _____ Appointed to Board _____</p>

NEBRASKA STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD
521 S. 14th Street, Suite 401
Lincoln, NE 68508-2707
(402) 471-4420

Child Abuse/Neglect Central Register Release of Information

I hereby apply to serve on the Foster Care Review Board. I hereby give my permission and authorize any law enforcement agency, child protective service agency, governmental agency, or court to release to the State Foster Care Review Board, its agents or representatives, any documents, records, or other information pertaining to me.

I understand my name will be checked against the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Adult/Child Protective Services Central Registers. The purpose of this check will be to determine if my name is being maintained on either register as a result of previous abuse/neglect allegations that have been investigated and have not been determined to be unfounded. To the best of my knowledge, I do not have a conviction or prior history of adult or child abuse/neglect or maltreatment perpetration, neither have I been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude.

I understand that my refusal to authorize the release of the above-mentioned information may adversely affect my application to serve as a member of the Foster Care Review Board.

I hereby authorize the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to release specific and detailed information contained on the Adult or Child Protective Services Central Register including the information that a record has been found to:

The State Foster Care Review Board
521 S. 14th, Suite 401
Lincoln NE 68508

Signature _____ Date

Current Address _____ City _____ State _____ How Long? _____

Current Employer _____ How Long? _____

Printed Name _____ Birth Date _____ Social Security Number

Other Names Used in Past Twenty (20) Years →
(Please Print or Type)
Use back of sheet if necessary

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Other Addresses Used in Past Twenty (20) Years
(Please Print or Type)
Use back of sheet if necessary

Names of Children Who Have Lived With You →
in Past Twenty (20) Years (Please Print or Type)
Use back of sheet if necessary

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Other addresses, other names, other children residing with you (continued from front page of the form, if necessary):

Appendix C

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – 2006

The State Foster Care Review Board would like to acknowledge and thank the following churches, schools, hospitals, libraries, businesses, and community centers for allowing the local Foster Care Review Boards to use their facilities for monthly board meetings, prospective board member training programs, and on-going continuing education programs:

Alliance Library, Alliance
Beatrice Community Hospital, Beatrice
Bergan Mercy Hospital, Omaha
Brooke Valley School, Omaha
Carol Yokum Resource Center, Lincoln
Christ United Methodist Church, Lincoln
Columbus Police Department, Columbus
Dundee Elementary School, Omaha
Educational Service Unit #16, Ogallala
First Lutheran Church, South Sioux City
Fremont Presbyterian Church, Fremont
Grand Generation Center, Lexington
Granton Township Library, O’Neill
Hastings Police Department, Hastings
Immanuel Alegent, Omaha
Independent Living Center, Grand Island
Landmark Center, Hastings
LaVista Community Center, LaVista
Law Enforcement Center, Kearney
Lexington Public Library
Lutheran Church of the Master, Omaha

Madonna Rehabilitation Center, Lincoln
Make-A-Wish Offices, Omaha
Midtown Business Center, Kearney
Morning Star Lutheran Church, Omaha
Nebraska State Bar Association, Lincoln
New Life Baptist Church, Bellevue
North Platte Community College, North
Platte
Pacific Hills Lutheran Church, Omaha
Presbyterian Church of the Cross, Omaha
Regional West Medical Center, Scottsbluff
St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Omaha
St. John’s Lutheran Church, Tecumseh
St. Paul’s United Methodist Church,
Lincoln
St. Stevens Building, Grand Island
St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church, Omaha
State Office Building, Omaha
Sump Memorial Library, Papillion
Trinity Lutheran Church, Auburn
United Lutheran Church, Lincoln
United Methodist Church, Norfolk
University of Nebraska Medical Center,
Omaha
York General Hospital, York

Appendix D

PROJECT PERMANENCY QUESTIONS

BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS FOR FOSTER PARENTS

FCRB Home Visit of the _____ home

Child's Name _____ Age _____

Board members _____ & _____

Date _____ Time _____ AM PM

[Be sure that the opening statement has been read]

Key Information About The Child

1. What date was _____ placed in your home? _____

2. When he/she was placed with you, did you receive adequate information regarding:

the child's development	Yes	No
the child's educational needs	Yes	No
the child's medical needs	Yes	No
if the child has allergies	Yes	No
any diet considerations		
such as which formula	Yes	No

3. What do you understand is the current plan for the child?
 (*on sheet in the pocket of the binder*)

01-Reunification	02-Kinship Care
03-Adoption	04-Long Term Foster Care
11-Guardianship	00-Unreported/unknown
Other: _____	

4. Can you tell me about the child's temperament, personality, and response to stress?

Grief

Research clearly shows that in foster children ages birth through five, most of their behaviors are a result of the grief they experienced because they have been separated from their parents or from a trusted caregiver. Research shows this grief can last for many years.

1. What information, if any, have you been given about childhood grief? What questions do you have about how children respond to separation from parents or from trusted caregivers?
(Refer to section _____)

2. Next I'll be asking you about some behaviors that are typical of grief. This will help us, on the Board, to better understand what the child's needs are and will help us make better recommendations. Is the child showing...

- Regressive behaviors (soiling self when formerly toilet trained, return to baby talk, use of pacifier when previously weaned, etc.).....Yes No
- Not listening or spacey behaviorsYes No
- Sleep Disturbances.....Yes No
- Food issues (hoarding, refusal to eat).....Yes No
- Rhythmic behavior (rocking self excessively.).....Yes No
- Rages beyond normal tantrums.....Yes No
- Bothered by nothing – flat emotions.....Yes No
- Impulse control weak for their ageYes No
- Lack of energyYes No
- Over active, without a physical cause.....Yes No

- Overly clingingYes No
- Too affectionate with strangers.....Yes No
- Intense control battlesYes No
- Significant learning delays.....Yes No
- Destructive to selfYes No
- Destructive to othersYes No
- Refuses touch or comforting.....Yes No

3. How do you decide which of the child’s behaviors need to be responded to, and how do you to respond to those behaviors?

Services to the Child

- 1. What is the child’s daily routine?
- 2. Is the child in daycare or an early childhood program?

Day Care	Yes	No
Program	Yes	No
- 3. Has the child received a comprehensive health assessment since being placed in your home?

Yes	No
-----	----
- 4. Are the child’s immunizations up to date? Yes No Partial
- 5. When was the child’s last visit to the doctor? _____
 - 1. Who was present at the appointment? _____
 - 2. What was the reason for the appointment? _____

2. Are there any other children in the home? Who are they?

1. _____ Age _____
Foster child? Yes No If yes, when Placed _____

2. _____ Age _____
Foster child? Yes No If yes, when Placed _____

3. _____ Age _____
Foster child? Yes No If yes, when Placed _____

4. _____ Age _____
Foster child? Yes No If yes, when Placed _____

5. _____ Age _____
Foster child? Yes No If yes, when Placed _____

3. Are you a daycare provider? Yes No
If so, for how many children? _____

4. Are there any disabled adults in the home? Yes No
If so, how many? _____

5. Do you have respite care available? Is the quality of the respite care acceptable?

Training, Experience

1. How many years have you been a foster placement? _____

2. Has anyone talked to you about basic child development and what is to be expected as “normal” at each stage of growth? Yes No
(refer to page ____)

Contact with Legal Parties

1. When was the last time the case manager was at your home? _____
How much contact does the child have with the case manager?

2. When was the last time the child's guardian ad litem was at your home?
How much contact do you or the child have with the guardian ad litem?
(refer to page _____ for GAL definition, to contact page for name)

Other Questions or Comments

Do you have any other concerns that you want the board to be aware of?

Thank you

“Thank you for assisting the Board. At the end of the binder is an envelope containing some coupons that local sponsors have given us to say “thank you” for your service.

If you think of anything you would like to add or have any other questions, please feel free to contact us. The Board's information is on the contact sheet in the inside pocket of the binder.”

Form revised 8-14-2003

Appendix E

Group Home Information Visit Questions

Youth Detention, Group Home, or other facility questions:

Facility

- What is the Capacity of your facility? How full is it usually?
- What age range of youth are commingled?
- What is the percentage of minority youth?
- How young a child will be admitted here?
 - What is the age limit?
- Please describe what will occur when a youth is admitted?
 - How long is the youth allowed to stay?
- Describe contact with family, friends, etc.
- Will the youth be given a copy of rules, consequences for certain behaviors, etc.
- What programs and services are available to the youth?
- How is discipline be handled?
 - Will there be a time out room and what criteria will there be for placing a youth there.
 - Is there a policy limiting the amount of time a youth can be there?
 - Is the main focus of the facility on control or on positive guidance?
 - Are handcuffs or shackles used for discipline?
 - What is the most common method of discipline?
- How are serious incidents (suicide, assaults) handled?
 - How often do they occur?
 - Is law enforcement contacted?
- Does a citizen advisory board exist to monitor the facility, educate the public, recommended appropriate changes?
- Do you report to the Foster Care Review Board?
- Are children assessed before being accepted to the respite care program?

Staff

- What are the qualifications of the staff?
- What type of training do they receive?
- What is the staff to youth ratio?

- Are social workers, psychologists, certified teachers on staff and available to individual youth at convenient hours?
- Is medical care available at all times? Weekends? Who supervises medications?
- Who supervises the children who are here for respite care?
How long do they usually stay?
- What opportunity kids have for interaction with staff? Is there any counseling, one on one consultation, etc.

Education

- What is a typical day's schedule?
Are waking hours filled with productive activities?
- Is the school accredited? By whom?
How many hours are spent in class work?
Are School Materials forwarded from children's schools?
- During the education hours when are they in the classroom, and when in recreation?
How much pure education time do they get per day or week?
Where will the teachers come from?
- Is there a library? When will they go the the library?
- Exactly where will they be when they're not in classrooms or lunch? Locked in their room? TV room? Any other activities?. Will they go outside? Where?
- What will they do on weekends? Any organized activity? When in rooms?

APPENDIX F

STAFF WHO SERVED DURING SOME OR ALL OF 2006

Carolyn K. Stitt, Executive Director

Kathleen Stolz, Program Coordinator

Lincoln Area Supervisor

Kari Pitt

Omaha Supervisor

Tammy Peterson

Rural-West Supervisor

Tami Gangwish

***Lincoln Area
Review Staff***

Terra Bentley

Jodi Borer

Michele Harp Blodgett

Amy Lauritsen

Tony Menard

Sarah Schwartz

Lynda Todd

Jessie Zuniga

***Omaha
Review Staff***

Rachael Andrews

Erin Bader

Benjamin Gray

Jelina Linyonga

Anna Nelson

Tammy Oswald

Sarah Schwartz

Stacey Sothman

Michelle Wehenkel

Pauline Williams

***Rural-West
Review Staff***

Jackie Lucas

Karen Olsen

Dawn Paulsen

Sarah Schwartz

Ramona Tarin

Evelyn York

Heidi Ore, Administrative Coordinator Linda Cox, Special Projects Coordinator

Lincoln Office Staff

Christina Baker

Lydia Daniel

Rachel Francis

Pat Kuhns

Dora May

Holly Powell

Abby Webben

Jessie Zuniga

Student Interns

Abby Dethlefs Webben

Brooke Spath

Angela Vasa

CONSULTANTS DURING 2006

Dr. Ann Coyne, Bonding & Attachment Advisor

Karen Kilgarin, Communication Advisor

Nancy Thompson, LMHP, Bonding & Attachment Advisor

APPENDIX G

**The following is a reprint of the
Foster Care Review Board's report to
Governor Heineman
on the results of a special study
conducted in the fall of 2006
on 948 children in foster care
age birth to five.**

**Report to Governor Dave Heineman
on the Special Research Project
on Young Foster Children
Conducted by the Foster Care Review Board
August 2006 – January 2007**

The Foster Care Review Board conducted a special review of the cases of 948 children age birth through five. The Board's review specialists conducted the reviews and collected the data. A further explanation of the methodology appears at the end of this report.

The following are the key findings from this special project.

Demographics

This special study involved 948 children (464 female, 484 males) who were born on or after Jan. 1, 2001.

The majority (563) of these children came from the Eastern DHHS Service Area, which incorporates the Omaha metro area. The next largest group of children (282) came from the Southeast area, which includes Lincoln and towns within Southeast Nebraska, such as Beatrice and Falls City. The remainder included 20 children from the Northern service area, 57 children from the Central service area, and 26 children from the Western service area.

The racial background of these children included: 589 Caucasian, 181 African American, 49 Native American, 7 Asian, 5 Pacific Islander, 31 multiple races, and 86 other or unknown backgrounds.

There were 108 children (11.4%) in this group who had recognized disabilities.

DHHS Action Plan

You had directed DHHS to develop special action plans for young children and children who have been in foster care for 15 months or more. After the Board had entered information about DHHS action plans onto the computer system, it appeared that 66% of the young children had no action plans. The Board provided DHHS a list of these children.

In a follow-up meeting between the Board's Director and Todd Reckling and Sherri Haber, it was explained that DHHS started with children in this age group who had already been in foster care for 15 months, and were working on completing the remaining plans. DHHS subsequently provided 104 children's additional plans. These plans are included in the following statistics.

There were 364 children age birth to five who had been in care for 15 months or more, and 310 of them (85.2%) at the time of our review had action plans. For the 310 children with action plans:

- 177 (57.1%) had plans that addressed the major barriers to permanency.
- 137 (44.2%) had plans that contained goals and timeframes.
- Regarding progress towards the DHHS action plan goals:
 - For 199 children (64.2%) progress was being made towards the DHHS plan goals.
 - For 99 children (32.0%) no progress was being made.
 - For 12 children (3.8%) it was unable to determined if progress was being.

For the 54 young children who had been in foster care for 15 months, and who did not have an action plan:

- 23 children (42.6%) have had between 4-7 caseworkers.
- 12 children (22.2%) have been removed from the home more than once.

The Board examined a number of conditions that could impact permanency for children. An explanation of these follows.

Children Who Could Go Home or Maintain a Relative Placement

The Board examined each of the 948 children's cases to determine if any of these children could go home, or maintain a relative placement, with services.

- **68 (7.2%) of the children could go home with services.**

A list of these children was shared with DHHS, and has been the point of discussion in meetings between FCRB and DHHS top management.

Primary Barriers to Permanency

Reviewers identified the primary barriers to permanency based on the permanency objective in the plan for each child. Multiple barriers could be identified for each child. It should be noted that 631 (66.6%) of the 948 children have a current, written plan. The remaining children have incomplete plans, outdated plans, or no plans. The majority of children have plans of reunification.

Barriers to Reunification

The following are the barriers to permanency identified for children with a plan of reunification:

<u>Number of Children Affected</u>	<u>Barrier</u>
351 children	Parental substance abuse
346 children	Parents need more time to complete services (this included 250 children in care less than 15 months, and 96 children in care 15 months or more)
208 children	Lack of parental willingness to parent
202 children	Economic-housing issues
150 children	Parental lack of visitation
136 children	History/Chronic nature of family abuse/violence
140 children	Parental economic-employment issues
85 children	Parent incarcerated
77 children	Parental mental illness
65 children	Paternity not established
57 children	DHHS lacks documentation regarding progress
46 children	Parental whereabouts unknown
40 children	Parents are low-functioning
31 children	Public assistance needed before child goes home
25 children	Severity/chronic nature of past abuse
17 children	Services have not been provided to the parents

Barriers to Guardianship

Due to the young age of children in this study, few (7) have a plan of guardianship.

- For children under age 13, an exception is required for a guardianship. 4 of the 7 exceptions have been finalized.
- 1 of the 7 children's guardianship paperwork has been completed.

Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) Needed

- Reviewers found that for 302 of the 948 children (31.9%) a termination of parental rights was in the child's best interests.
- The legal filings had not been completed for 202 of these 302 children, (66.9% of those needing a TPR filing).
 - 70 (34.7%) of the 202 children had four or more caseworkers.
 - 123 (60.9%) of the 202 children had been in foster care for 12 months or more at the time of the review.
 - 59 of the 123 children were from the Eastern Service Area.
 - 51 of the 123 children were from the Southeast Service Area.

The following are the barriers to TPR that were identified for the 302 children. Children could have more than one barrier identified.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Barrier</u>
101 children	Request to file not sent to County Attorney
39 children	Request given to County Attorney, but not filed
25 children	Paternity not addressed
23 children	Petition filed, awaiting hearing
19 children	County attorney lacks evidence to TPR
17 children	DHHS lacks documentation regarding parental progress
11 children	Court did not terminate parental rights
10 children	Parental whereabouts unknown
6 children	DHHS policy
5 children	Issues regarding splitting siblings apart
5 children	Child not in placement willing to adopt
4 children	Number of court continuances
1 child	Mental health professional unwilling to testify

Barriers to Adoption

Adoption is the plan for 216 of the 948 children (22.8%).

- 88 (40.7%) of the 216 have not had their adoptive home studies completed.
- 53 (24.5%) of the 216 children have been free for adoption for over six months.
- 35 (16.2%) of the 216 children are not in placements willing to adopt.
- 15 (6.9%) of the 216 children need to complete services prior to an adoption.
- 11 of the 216 children's termination of parental rights are currently on appeal.
- 70 (73.7%) of the 95 children to have subsidized adoptions have not had the paperwork completed.
- 24 (27.3%) of the 88 children in the Omaha adoption unit have been in the unit for over 6 months.

Adoption is the concurrent plan for 412 (43.4%) of the 948 children.

Contracting for Monitoring Parental Visitation and/or Transportation

DHHS has entered into contracts with many different private organizations for the transportation of some children to and from visitation with the parents, and into contracts for the monitoring of some children's visitation. Contractors also transport some children to and from school and/or therapy appointments.

Monitoring the appropriateness and consistency of parental reactions to the children during visitations is at the core of casework, yet in some cases it is being delivered by persons with very little training or understanding of the dynamics involved. The person who monitors parental reactions and keeps children safe during visitation must understand the case dynamics and have regular communication with the caseworker so that concerns can be accurately described in a timely manner. Observations must be documented effectively for the Courts to use when determining whether reunification with the parents remains a viable plan for the child.

In some instances, the same contractor provides both transportation and visitation monitoring, in other cases there are separate contractors involved. In cases where visitation is not monitored, contracted transportation workers may be the only ones who know whether the parents attended the visitation or not, since they are the ones who take the children to and from the arranged contact with the parents. The Board is concerned that some contracted providers change drivers or monitors on every visit; therefore, the caseworker does not get accurate information on which to base case decisions.

The Board is recommending that DHHS be allowed to hire permanent drivers and monitors who would be assigned to particular workers and particular cases.

Regarding monitoring of parental visitation:

- **507 (53.5%) of the 948 children had parental visitation supervised by a contractor.** The Board is concerned that often caseworkers were not provided information from the contractor in a cohesive, timely manner.
 - It was undocumented how many different contractor staff persons monitored their visitation for 147 of the 507 children.
 - For the remaining 360 children, **174 had four or more different persons monitoring their visitation sessions.**
 - 133 had four to 10 different persons monitoring visitation,
 - 25 had 11 to 15 different monitors, and
 - 16 children had 16 to 35 different monitors.

The following chart, which continues on the next page, shows how many children have experienced multiple visitation monitors.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Number of Different Staff Monitoring Visitations</u>
147 children	Unknown Number
70 children	1 Monitor
82 children	2 Monitors
34 children	3 Monitors
38 children	4 Monitors
33 children	5 Monitors
26 children	6 Monitors
7 children	7 Monitors
3 children	8 Monitors
13 children	9 Monitors

5 children	10 Monitors
5 children	11 Monitors
10 children	12 Monitors
5 children	13 Monitors
2 children	14 Monitors
3 children	15 Monitors
1 child	16 Monitors
1 child	17 Monitors
1 child	19 Monitors
2 children	20 Monitors
2 children	21 Monitors
1 child	22 Monitors
4 children	23 Monitors
2 children	27 Monitors
1 child	29 Monitors
1 child	35 Monitors

The contractors that have had five or more persons monitoring children’s parental visitation include:

- Owens (64 children)
- Visinet (44 children)
- Cedars (13 children)
- Better Living (7 children)
- Pathfinder (6 children)
- OMNI (2 children)

Regarding children’s transportation:

- **360 (37.9%) of the 948 children in the study were transported by contractors during the six months prior to the study. Most of this involved parental visitation.**
 - This included 85 children with 4 to 10 different drivers, 21 children with 11-15 drivers, and 5 children with 16-35 different drivers.

The following chart shows how many children have experienced multiple drivers.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Number of Different Drivers</u>
111 children	Undocumented
61 children	1 Driver
56 children	2 Drivers
21 children	3 Drivers
24 children	4 Drivers
25 children	5 Drivers
15 children	6 Drivers
7 children	7 Drivers

2 children	8 Drivers
10 children	9 Drivers
2 children	10 Drivers
5 children	11 Drivers
7 children	12 Drivers
2 children	13 Drivers
4 children	14 Drivers
3 children	15 Drivers
1 child	16 Drivers
1 child	17 Drivers
2 children	23 Drivers
1 child	35 Drivers

The contractors that have had five or more persons transporting children include:

- Owens (38 children)
- Visinet (31 children)
- Cedars (6 children)
- Pathfinder (6 children)
- Better Living (3 children)
- OMNI (2 children)

Contracts for Placements

Agency-Based Foster Care contractors are private organizations that have a contract with DHHS to provide the recruiting, assessing, screening, training, supervising, and 24-hour support for agency-based foster homes, which are the next step up from standard foster homes, therapeutic foster homes, which are the next step up from agency-based foster homes, and higher level group homes. The placements they provide are to be well equipped to meet the needs of children with more difficult behavioral or physical challenges.

Under statute, DHHS retains the responsibility for proper care, custody, and control of state wards, regardless of whether a contractor provides the children's placements or the child is in a "standard" placement.

Costs

Contractors are paid significantly more for the higher levels of care they are to provide, as the following chart on foster homes shows.

1. Standard foster care is paid between \$226-\$1,224 per month per child, depending on the child's needs.
2. Agency based foster care is paid \$1,913 per month per child.
3. Treatment foster care is paid about \$3,021 per month per child, depending on the child's age.

- **206 of the 948 children were in placements obtained through contracts.**
 - These could be at different levels of care and payment.
 - 121 of these children were in agency based foster care placements
 - This would be a payment of \$231,473 per month for 121 children’s care.
 - 61 were in standard level foster care (where the payment level would vary)
 - 9 were in foster/adoptive homes
 - 8 were in emergency shelter care
 - 1 was in a medical facility
 - 1 was in a specialized group home with the child’s teen mother

Contractors for these placements included:

- Cedars – 28 children
- OMNI – 25 children
- NOVA – 24 children
- Sigma – 24 children
- Visinet – 24 children
- Child Saving Institute – 22 children
- Christian Heritage – 16 children
- Child Connect – 13 children
- Nebraska Children’s Home – 8 children
- Mid Plans – 3 children
- SCBS – 3 children
- Camelot – 2 children
- Lutheran Family Services – 2 children
- Ambassador – 1 child
- APEX – 1 child
- Building Blocks – 1 child
- Heritage ABFC – 1 child
- Salvation Army – 1 child
- Unclear – 1 child

A list with the estimated payments per month to each contractor will be provided at a later time.

Caseworker Changes

Caseworker changes effect evidence, as the new worker must take time to familiarize themselves with the cases, some of which have very complicated issues, and to establish the trust of the child and family. When the caseworker changes, the case in effect often “starts over,” causing children to spend more time in care. A stable DHHS workforce will stabilize children and their foster care placements.

- **146 of the 948 children have had only one caseworker.**
- **460 of the children have had 2-3 caseworkers.**
- **305 of the children have had 4-7 caseworkers.**
- **33 of the children have had 7-9 caseworkers.**
- **4 of the children have had 10-11 caseworkers.**

Due to contracting out the children's placements, transportation, and visitation monitoring, caseload sizes and worker changes, there are also often communication gaps that affect the ability to create a plan in the children's best interests. The Board is recommending that the State fund additional DHHS caseworkers and case aides, lower caseloads, and provide more support in order to stabilize the workforce and expedite cases. A pilot program could be evaluated to determine if there are better outcomes for children.

The following chart shows the number of case manager changes that these children have experienced.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Number of Case Managers</u>
146 children	1 case manager
239 children	2 case managers
221 children	3 case manager
149 children	4 case managers
90 children	5 case managers
66 children	6 case managers
18 children	7 case managers
10 children	8 case managers
5 children	9 case managers
2 children	10 case managers
2 children	11 case managers

Children with Multiple Case Managers Show Other Indicators of Case Instability

Many children experience multiple child welfare issues simultaneously. For example, regarding the 342 children who had four or more caseworkers:

- 136 children have had four or more caseworkers and did not have paternity documented. When fathers have not been identified, paternal relatives usually have not been considered as placements. Also, parental rights cannot be terminated; therefore, adoption cannot occur.
- 108 children had experienced four or more caseworkers and have been in care for 15 months or more.
- 76 children had experienced four or more caseworkers and four or more contractor staff monitoring parental visitation. With this number of changes communication and evidentiary gaps are often the result.
- 65 children had experienced four or more caseworkers and four or more placement changes while in foster. This is a lot of change for young children to absorb while trying to heal from the abuse or neglect that led to their removal from the home.
- 32 children with developmental disabilities had experienced four or more caseworkers. 5 of these children also had 4 or more persons monitoring their parental visitations. These are children with special vulnerabilities.

- 23 children had experienced four or more caseworkers, plus 4 or more placement changes, plus four or more changes in staff monitoring parental visitation.
- 14 children had experienced four or more caseworkers and had placement safety issues identified.

Foster Placement Changes

Research has also shown that when young children must cope with prolonged or multiple stressors, vital brain connections can fail to form properly, resulting in temporary or permanent changes in the children's ability to think, to develop positive inter-personal relationships, and to process future stressors. High levels of stress hormones occurring during the period of ages newborn through three have been found to create life-long problems with impulse control, anxiety, hyperactivity, and learning disorders.¹¹⁰

Broken attachments and prolonged grief can cause serious, possible irreparable, damage to children's brains, affecting normal growth and development. This compounds the significant cognitive, language, and developmental delays that occurs for many young children as a result of the abuse or neglect they experienced in the parental home.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has found that paramount in the lives of foster children is the children's need for continuity with their primary attachment figures and the sense of permanency that is enhanced when placement is stable.¹¹¹

Young children are at risk because the people who care for them change too often and because they are frequently placed where beds are available rather than where their needs can best be met. The placements frequently do not meet the needs of individual children, causing difficulties, conflict, and eventual removal from the placement. In addition, many placements are overcrowded, leading to further stress on children already stressed by the abuse and neglect they have endured.

The Board is recommending funding additional placements to eliminate overcrowding and to ensure more children are placed where their needs could best be met, and better monitoring of children's placements.

The following statistics illustrate the number of children impacted by placement moves and concerns:

- 182 (19.2%) of the 948 young children had experienced four or more placement changes while in foster care.
- 219 (23.1%) of the 948 children were in placements that were caring for four or more other children.

¹¹⁰ Sources include Karr-Morse, Robin, and Wiley, Meredith S. in *Ghosts From the Nursery*, c. 1997.

¹¹¹ Rosenfeld, Pilowsky, Fine, et al as quoted in the American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement on Developmental Issues for Young Children in Foster Care, November 2000.

- 40 children who have a recognized disability were placed in a foster home caring for at least three other children.
- 43 children (4.5%) had an issue identified with safety in the placement, including some children for whom multiple safety issues were identified. Safety issues were immediately reported to DHHS.
- 64 (6.8%) of the children had a placement quality issue identified, including some children for whom there were multiple issues.

The number of placement changes negatively affects many children, as the chart indicates.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Number of Placements</u>
262 children	1 placement
332 children	2 placement
172 children	3 placements
90 children	4 placements
50 children	5 placements
24 children	6 placements
13 children	7 placements
4 children	8 placements
None	9 placements
1 child	10 placements

Another factor affecting the safety and quality of care is the number of other children in the foster placement. As the chart below indicates, many children are placed with caregivers who provide 24/7 care to a number of children. The number of additional children in the home does not include children who receive daycare services from the foster parents.

<u>Number of Children</u>	<u>Number of Other Children in the Foster Home</u>
10 children	Unable to determine
168 children	No other children in the foster home
206 children	1 other child in the placement
215 children	2 other children in the placement
140 children	3 other children in the placement
111 children	4 other children in the placement
67 children	5 other children in the placement
22 children	6 other children in the placement
16 children	7 other children in the placement
3 children	8 other children in the placement

Children with disabilities in foster homes with many other children

Foster children with disabilities appear to be disproportionately placed in foster homes caring for many other children. This is especially concerning given these children’s vulnerability and needs for physical and emotional care.

- 40 children who have a recognized disability were placed in a foster home caring for at least 3 other children.
- 17 children who have a recognized disability were placed in a foster home caring for at least 5 other children.
- 5 children who have a recognized disability were placed in a foster home caring for at least 7 other children.

Court Information

Although the information below is not always under the control of DHHS, it affects the ability of everyone in the system to keep children safe and help children achieve a timely, appropriate permanency.

Aggravated Circumstances (defined in statute as including abandonment, torture, sexual abuse, chronic abuse, parent involved in murder/manslaughter/felonious assault of a sibling, or parent having rights to sibling terminated involuntarily)

If the Court rules that aggravating circumstances are present, it relieves DHHS of the necessity of attempting reunification. This clause was put in the federal and state Adoption and Safe Families Act as a means of expediting permanency for victims of extreme abuse or severe neglect.

- 49 (5.2%) of the 948 children had documentation of aggravated circumstances present when they entered foster care.
 - 15 (30.6%) of the 49 children had expedited permanency sought as allowed by statute.

Time in Foster Care/Permanency Hearings

Courts are to hold a permanency hearing when children have been in care for 12 months. At this hearing, it should be determined if reunification remains a viable plan for the children.

- 465 of the 948 children (49.1%) had been in foster care for 12 months or more.
 - 159 (34.2%) children's files had documentation in the DHHS file of a permanency hearing occurring.
 - 113 (24.3%) children's files had documentation that no permanency hearing was held.
 - 193 (41.5%) children's files had no documentation in the DHHS file regarding whether a permanency hearing had been held.

For the 159 children with documentation of a permanency hearing occurring:

- 122 (76.7%) children's permanency hearing occurred with a regular review hearing.

Results of the Most Recent Court Review

- 278 of the 465 children in care for 12 months or more had the case plan adopted.
- 91 of the 465 children had the case plan modified.

Parental Substance Abuse

The very nature of substance abuse victimizes not only the addicts, but also the children within their care.

- 103 (10.9%) of the 948 children were born substance affected.
- For children whose parents had a substance abuse issue the substance(s) of choice were identified, as indicated below.
 - 352 (37.1%) children were affected by parental “meth” abuse.
 - 218 (23.0%) children were affected by parental alcohol abuse.
 - 124 (13.1%), children were affected by parental cocaine abuse.
 - 60 (6.3%) children were affected by parental marijuana abuse.
 - 9 (0.9%) children were affected by parental heroin abuse.

Methodology

The following briefly describes the methodology used to obtain the statistics that follow. After you announced your reforms, the Foster Care Review Board's Director conferred with DHHS Administrator of Protection and Safety Todd Reckling and DHHS Deputy Administrator Sherri Haber to discuss which data to track regarding your directives. From this discussion the Board developed the statistical measures that would be collected.

The Board's Director conferred with Dr. Ann Coyne of the UNO School of Social Work to ensure that the questions on the data collection instrument were being asked in a statistically meaningful way. The questions centered on determining whether DHHS had developed the Action Plan as you had directed, identifying the fact-based primary barriers to permanency, and ensuring that the children were safe while in foster care.

The Board's highly trained Review Specialists, Supervisors, and Program Coordinator conducted the reviews after receiving training on how to correctly collect the data.

In the Lincoln and Omaha DHHS districts, the Board's supervisors coordinated the availability of the children's files with DHHS supervisors. This was done in order to complete the maximum number of special reviews possible in the least amount of time while providing minimum disruption to the DHHS staff. It was determined that the best schedule would be to devote a week to these special reviews.

The Board's supervisors re-arranged their staff schedules to allow staff to conduct the reviews. In Lincoln/Southeast Nebraska the special reviews occurred primarily during the week of Oct. 10, 2006, in Omaha and Papillion this occurred mainly during the week of Oct. 23, 2006, and in the rest of the state most occurred during December 2006.

All children age birth through five from Lincoln, Omaha, and Papillion were reviewed. Every child found to be in an unsafe living arrangement was immediately reported to DHHS and scheduled for a follow-up regular review by the Board.

In the rest of the state, the Board's staff participated with DHHS caseworkers and supervisors to develop the action plans for young children. Based on the results of this collaborative effort, Todd Reckling has asked the Board's staff to join in developing the DHHS action plans for children in the Lincoln area, and this is being coordinated.

APPENDIX H
STATE FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
Fiscal Year 2006-2007

Appropriations

General Fund	\$1,226,214
Cash Fund	\$8,940
Federal Funds	\$555,249
TOTAL	\$1,790,403

Expenditures

Staff Salaries & Benefits	\$1,357,775
Postage	\$37,364
Telephone and Communications	\$25,009
Data Processing Fees	\$8,201
Publications and Printing	\$35,198
Rent	\$56,205
Legal Fees	\$19,584
Office Supplies & Miscellaneous	\$29,732
Travel Expenses	\$62,361
Data Processing & Office Equipment	\$15,223
TOTAL	\$1,646,652

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