

# **Through the Eyes of the Child Team Member Perceptions of Child Welfare Privatization**

Nebraska Court Improvement Project  
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August 25, 2011

## **Background**

Senator Kathy Campbell requested information regarding perceptions of the impact of Nebraska's recent privatization activities by Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative Team members to assist her committee in its work required by LR 37. Senator Campbell and her staff worked with the Court Improvement Project to develop the questions. Team members, excluding judges, were surveyed in late July and early August, 2011 through an internet based survey process. Judges were surveyed separately. One hundred forty-four individuals responded to the survey. The response rate cannot be calculated because team membership is fluid and the entire number of team members is unknown.

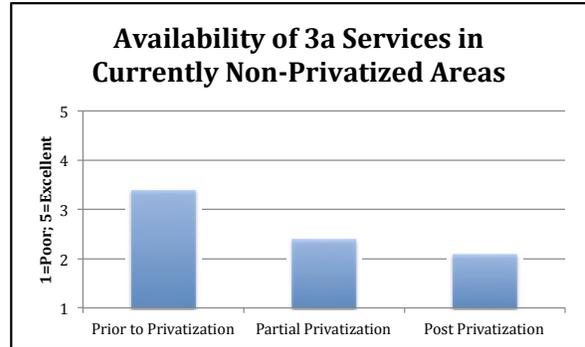
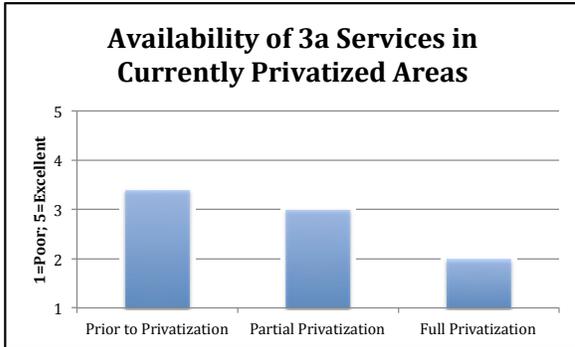
Responses were received from county attorneys, parents' attorneys, guardians ad litem, DHHS employees, private agency employees, Foster Care Review Board staff, CASA, foster parents, service providers, and court personnel.

Respondents were divided into two groups: those whose jurisdictions were in the Eastern and Southeastern service areas that had fully privatized case management (except for a third of the Douglas County cases) and those in the Central, Northern, and Western service areas that had gone back to HHS case management and service coordination following the failure of the single contractor in that part of the state.

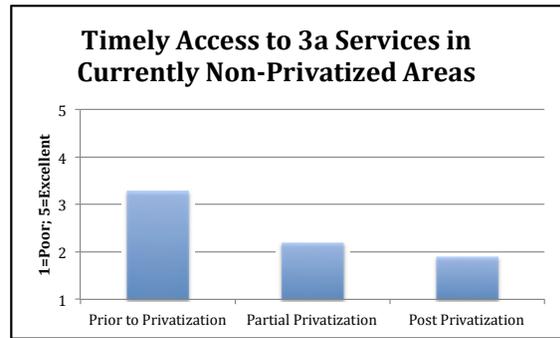
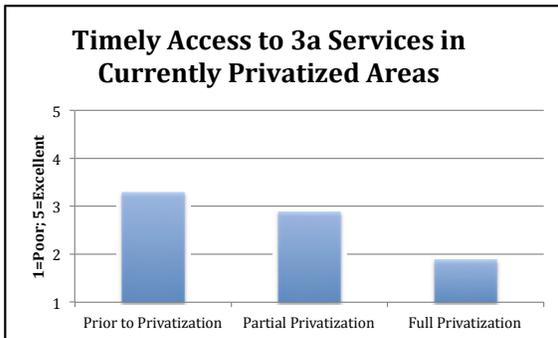
## **Services and Placements**

Respondents were asked to compare a variety of factors related to services and placements at three points in time: prior to the first major privatization effort involving lead agencies, during the first effort of partial privatization, and during the current time with full privatization in the Eastern and Southeastern areas and no privatization in the rest of the state. Respondents were asked to rate factors relating to services using a five-point scale (1=poor, 2= below average, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent.) The following tables show the averages (means) of respondents' ratings.

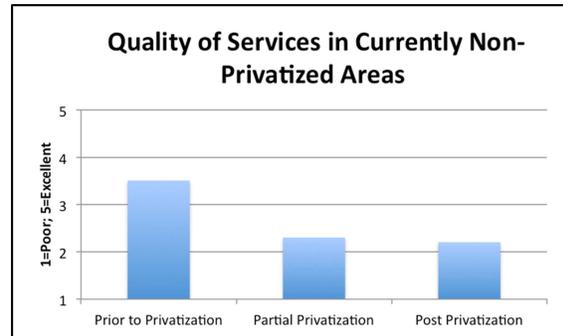
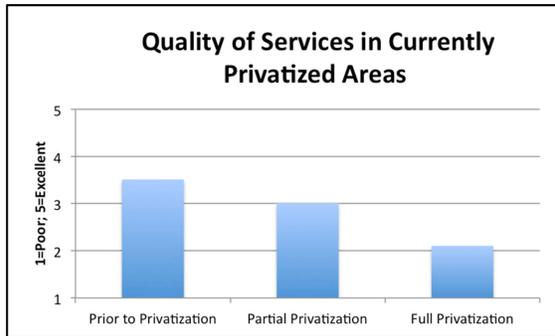
## Availability of Services in 3a (Child Welfare) Cases



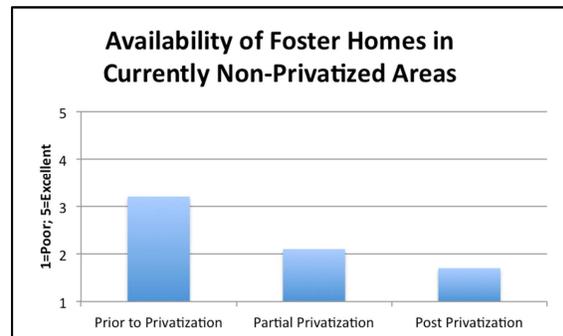
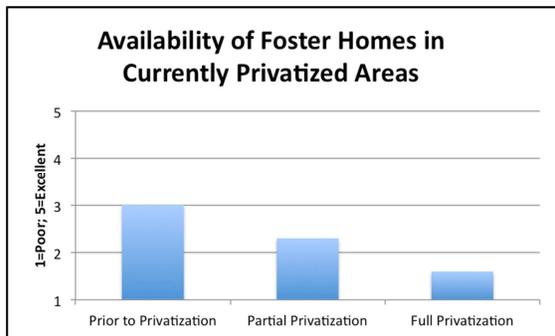
## Timely Access to Services in 3a Cases



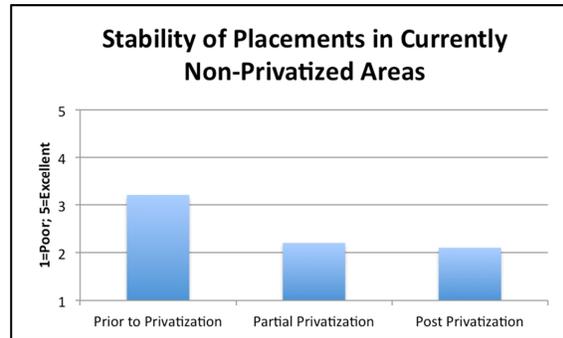
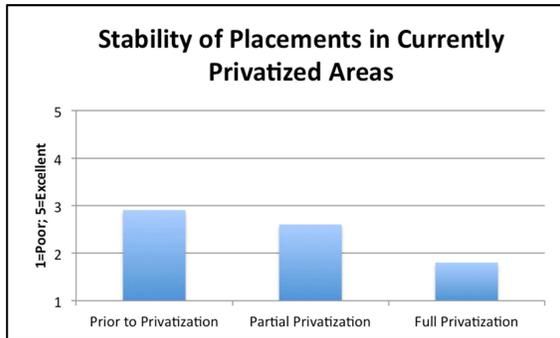
## Quality of Services



## Availability of Foster Homes



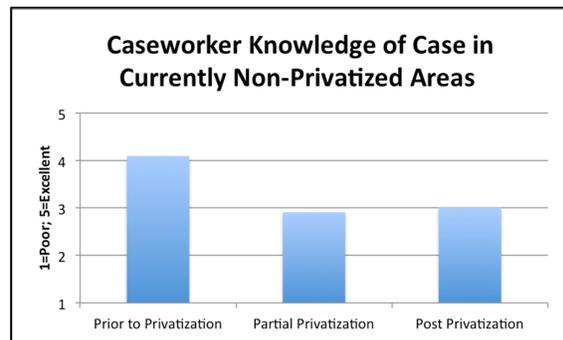
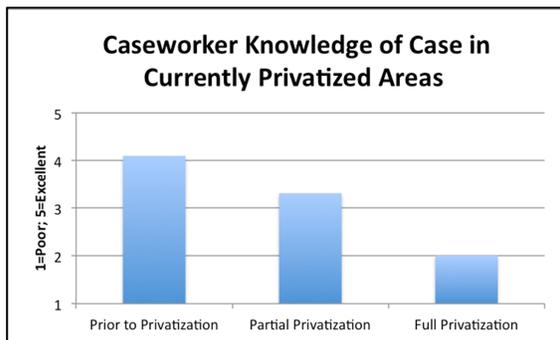
## Stability of Placements



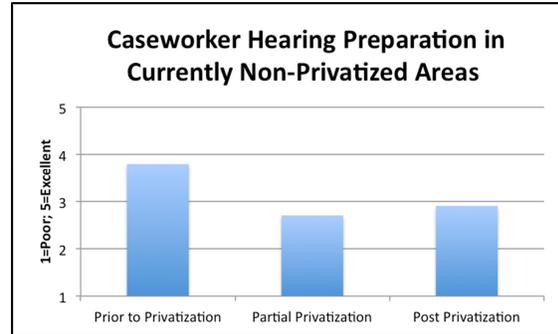
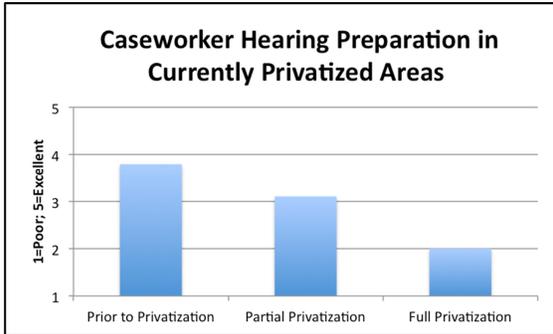
## Casework

Respondents were asked to compare factors about casework at the three same time periods as above. Again, they were asked to rate these factors using a five-point scale (1=poor, 2= below average, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent.) The following tables show the averages of their ratings.

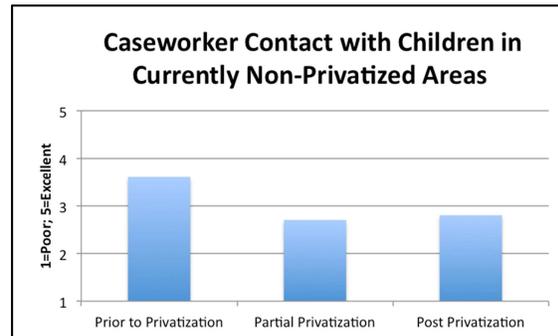
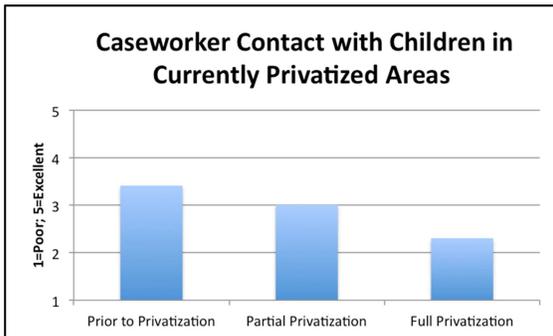
## Caseworker Knowledge



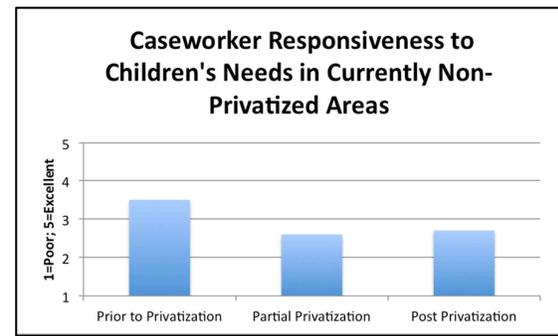
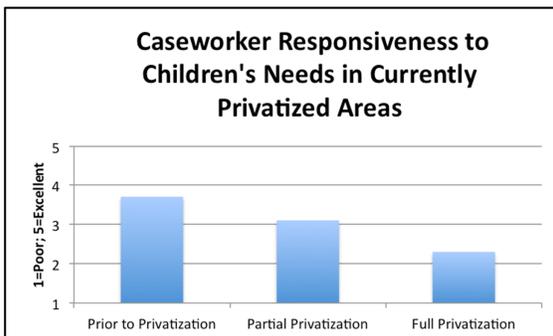
## Caseworker Preparation



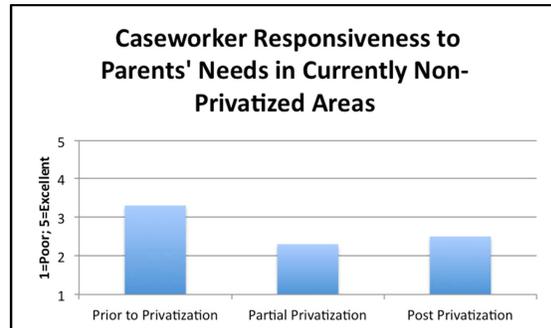
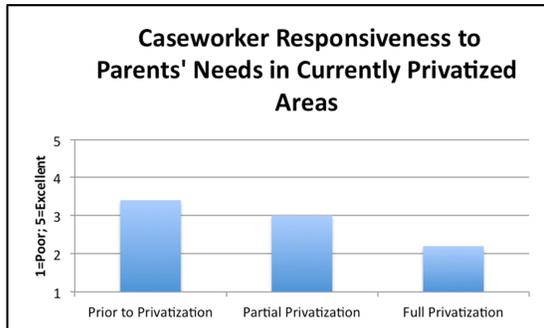
## Contact with Children



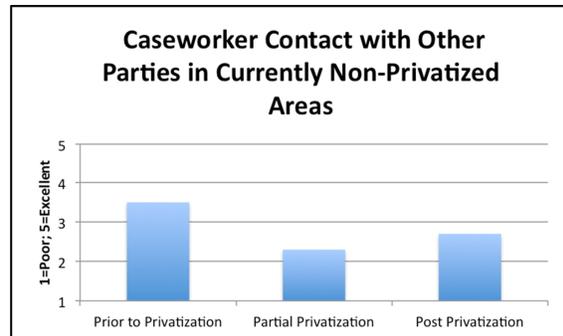
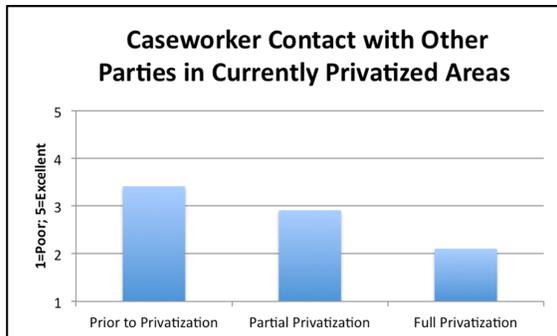
## Responsiveness to Children's Needs



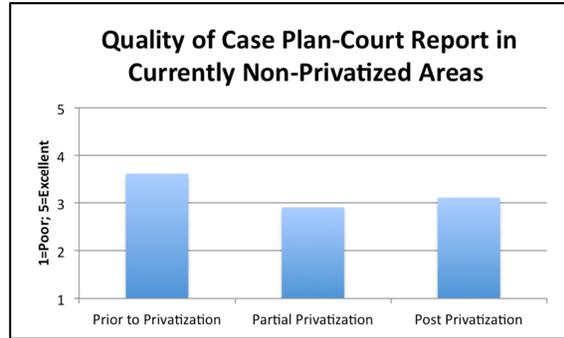
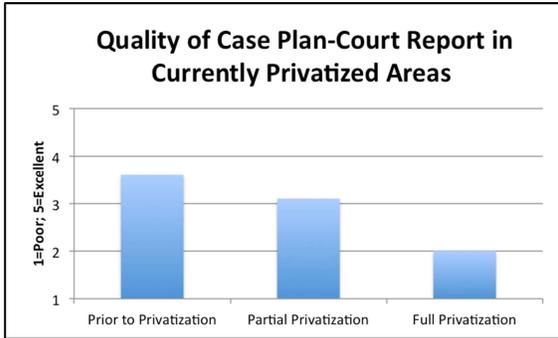
## Responsiveness to Parents' Needs



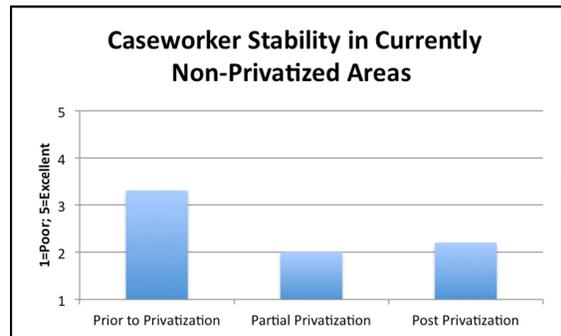
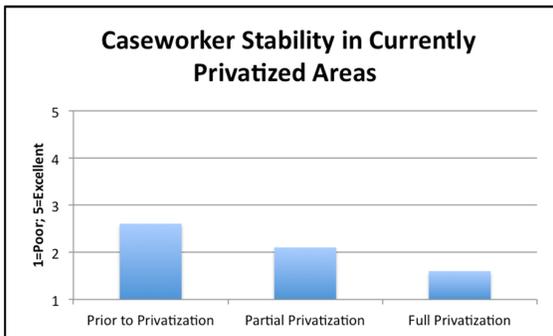
## Contact with Other Parties



## Quality of Case Plan Court Report



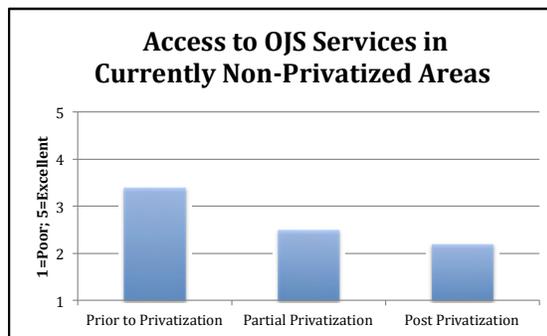
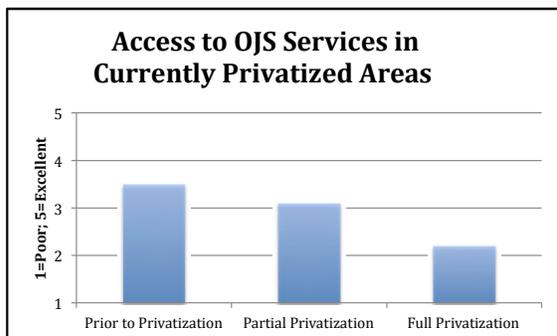
## Stability of Caseworkers (low turnover)



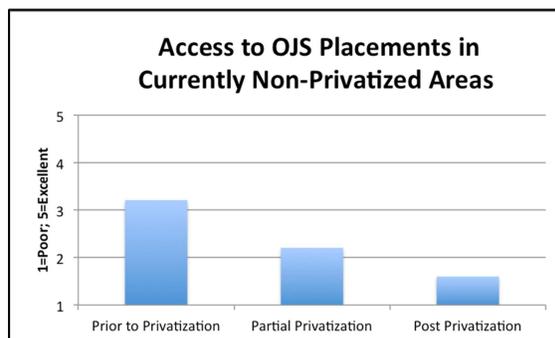
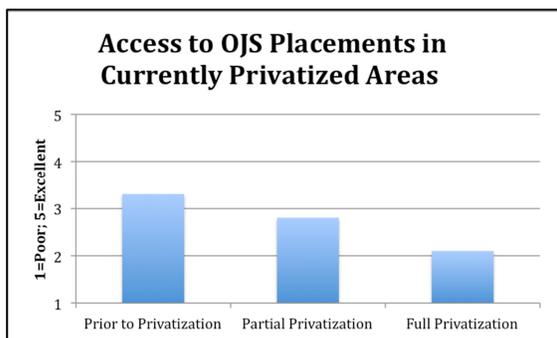
# Office of Juvenile Services Cases

Respondents were also asked to rate their perceptions of factors regarding OJS cases during the same time periods as above and using the same 5-point rating scale.

## Access to OJS Services

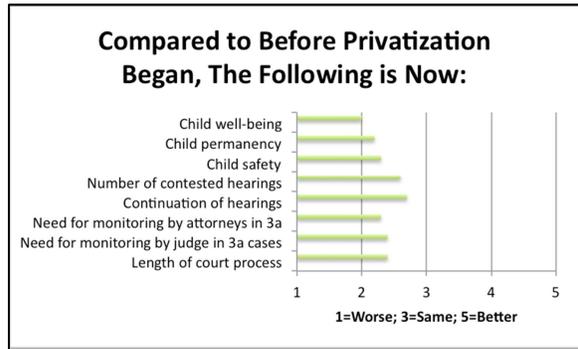
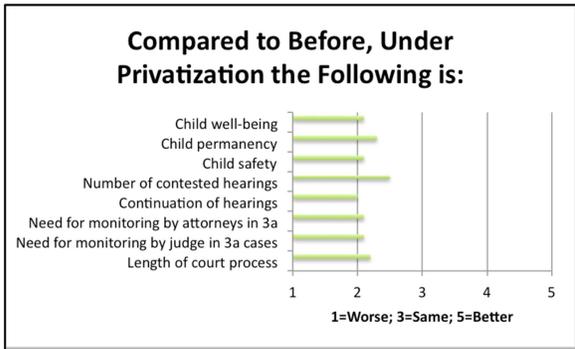


## Access to OJS Placements



# Impact of Privatization

Team members were also asked for their perceptions as to whether things have gotten better or worse since the beginning of the privatization effort. They were asked to use this sentence as a stem: "Compared to the way it was before, under privatization the following is....." A 5-point rating scale was used (1=worse; 2=somewhat worse; 3=same; 4=somewhat better; 5=better). The left chart below shows the averages (means) of respondents' ratings for the currently privatized areas. The right chart shows the ratings for the currently non-privatized areas.



## Team Member Optimism about Nebraska's Privatization

Finally, team member were asked to rate their agreement with the statement, "Privatization, as it is currently structured, will eventually be successful." A 5-point scale was used: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree.

