



# Case Progression and Court Improvement Data Report for 2009



## District 11 Team 4:

Frontier, Hooker, Lincoln, Logan,  
McPherson, and Thomas Counties

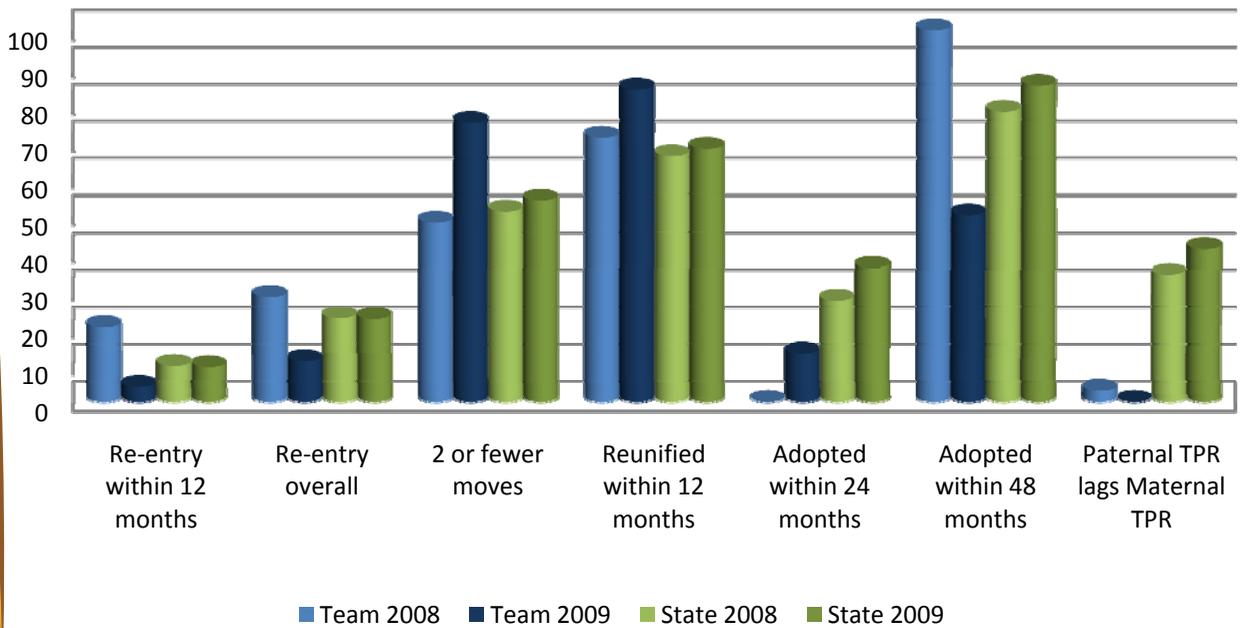


Information provided in this document is designed to help your team improve case progression, as this is one area the courts can control. Timeliness of hearings has a significant impact on time to case closure, which means that courts can make a difference in the lives of children in the system. Data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

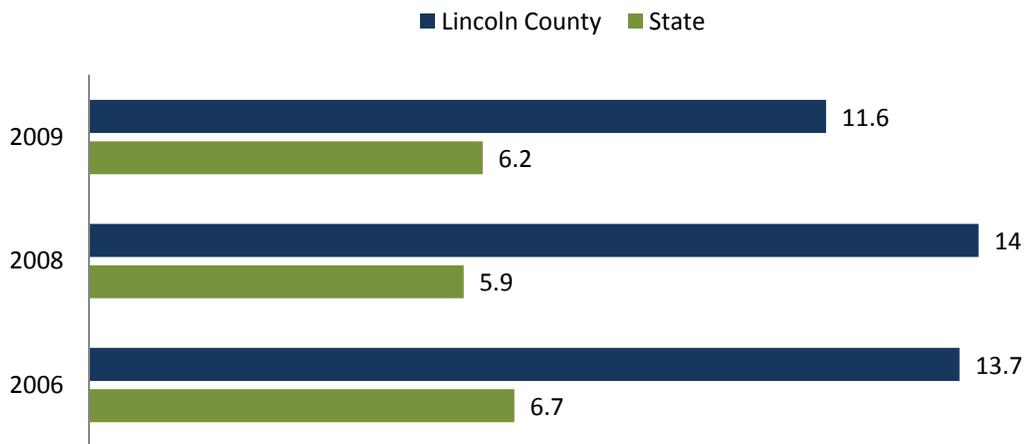
	District 11-4		Nebraska		Missouri	National
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2009	2008-2009
<b>Poverty rate*</b>	17.4%	Not available	13.4%	14%	20%	18%
<b>Median length of stay</b>	11 months	35 months	13 months	12 months	13 months	16 months
<b>Median months to reunification</b>	7 months	14 months	7 months	7 months	8 months	7 months
<b>Median months to adoption</b>	30 months	46 months	34 months	29 months	27 months	29 months

\* 2008 county data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau. NE, MO, and National data are from Kids Count. 2009 is considered October 2008 through September 2009

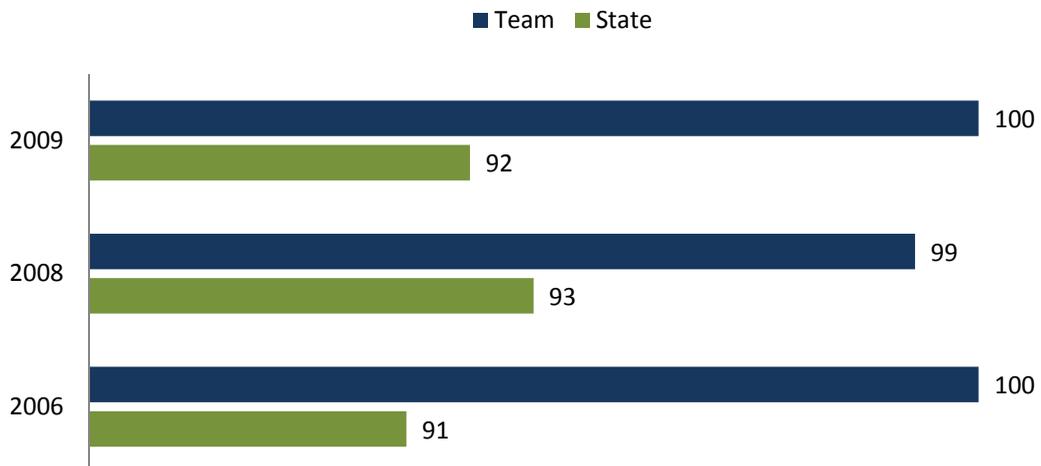
## Percentages for 2008 and 2009 Fiscal Years



## Rates of Removal per 10k Children



## Percent of Children over 12 in Group Home or Institutional Placements



In District 11-4, there were 75 abuse and neglect cases that closed between January 1 and December 31, 2008. In 2009, 61 abuse and neglect cases closed. The following analyses are based on that data.

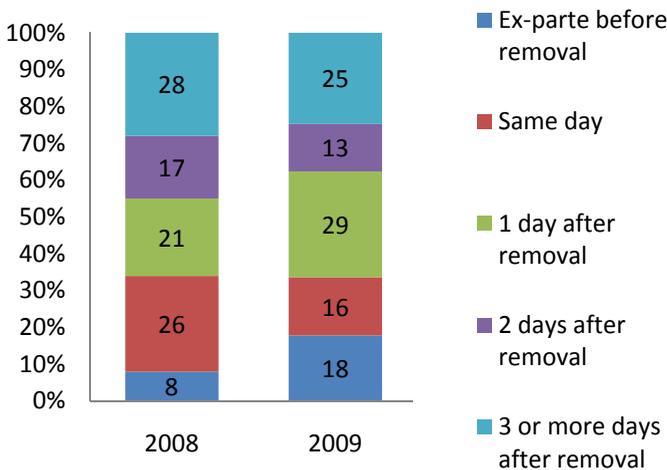
*As you look through the data provided below, keep in mind that medians represent the center-point for cases in your team. Half of your cases had time that was shorter than the median, and half of cases had time longer than the median. When medians are different from 2008 to 2009, you should also see differences in the bar charts. This will help you to identify where differences are occurring, and is meant as a visual aid to interpreting medians.*

## Timeline progression: All ages

### Removal to ex-parte

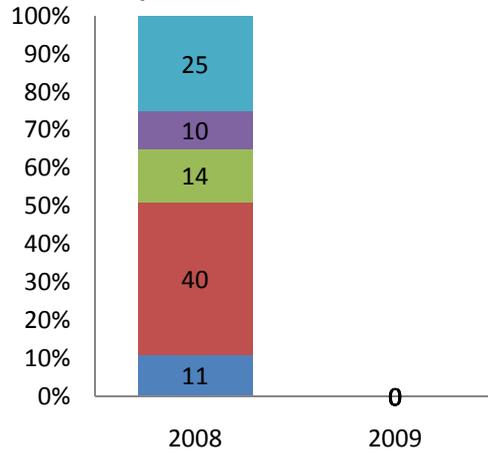
#### Nebraska

2008 Median = 1 day  
2009 Median = 1 day



#### District 11-4

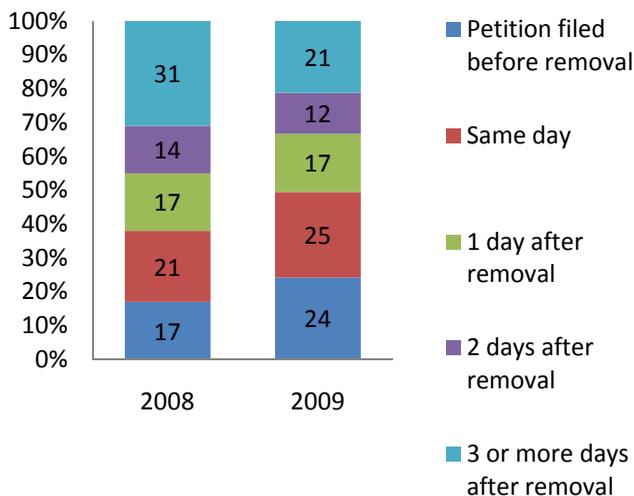
2008 Median = 0 days  
2009 ex parte not reported on JUSTICE



### Removal to Petition Filing

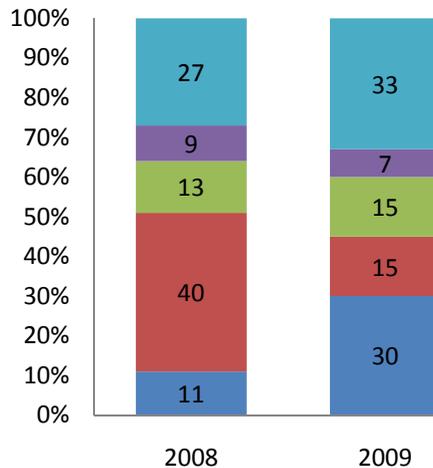
#### Nebraska

2008 Median = 1 day  
2009 Median = 1 day



#### District 11-4

2008 Median = 0 days  
2009 Median = 1 day



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

**Best practice recommendations**

**Removal to first hearing – 3 days**

18% of 2009 District 11-4 cases held the first hearing within 3 days of removal

**Removal to adjudication – 60 days**

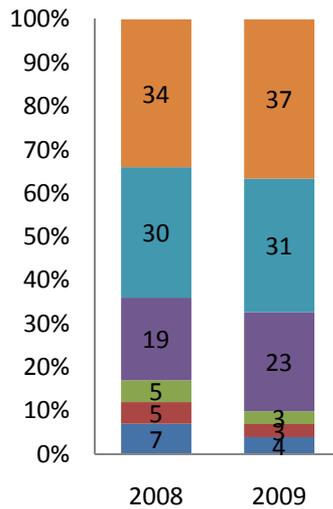
30% of 2009 District 11-4 cases held the adjudication within 60 days of removal

**Adjudication to disposition – 30 days**

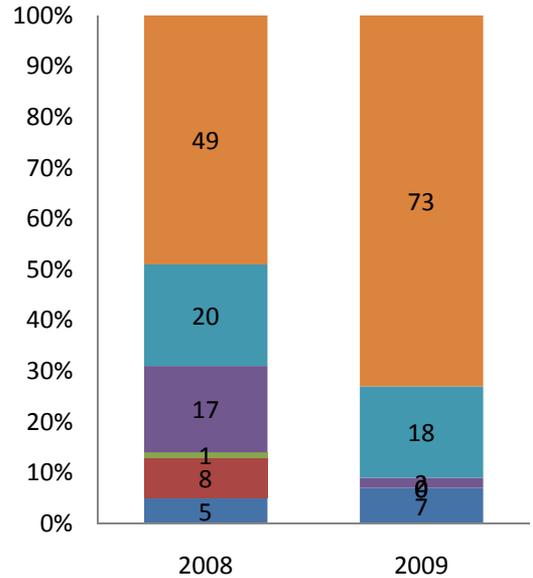
9% of 2009 District 11-4 cases held the disposition within 30 days of adjudication

## Petition to First Hearing

**Nebraska**  
2008 Median = 9 days  
2009 Median = 10 days



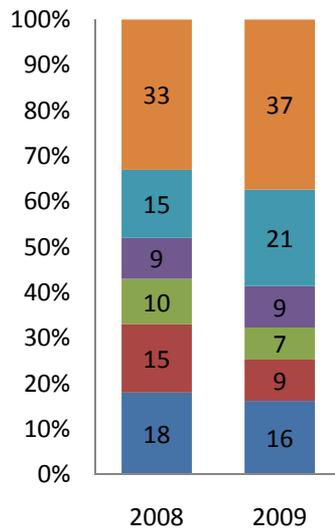
**District 11-4**  
2008 Median=19 days  
2009 Median=21 days



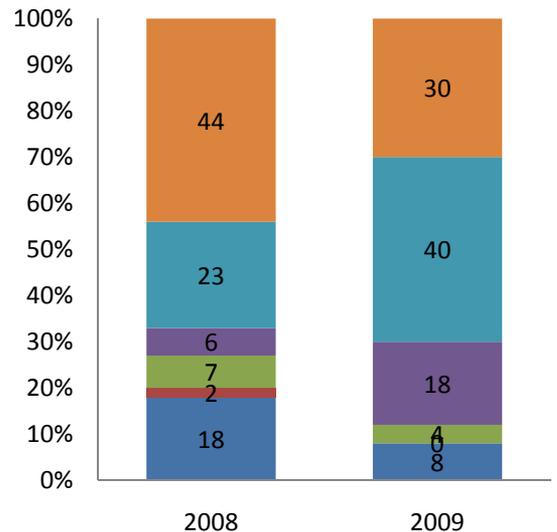
- Hearing same day as petition filing
- Hearing 1-2 days after
- 3-4 days after
- 5-7 days after
- 8-13 days after
- 14 or more days after

## Removal to Adjudication

**Nebraska**  
2008 Median = 57 days  
2009 Median = 72 days



**District 11-4**  
2008 Median = 96 days  
2009 Median = 69 days



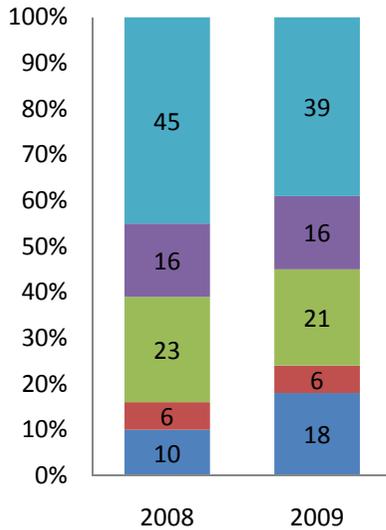
- Adjudication within 15 days
- Within 30 days
- Within 45 days
- Within 60 days
- Within 90 days
- 91 or more days

# Adjudication to Disposition

## Nebraska

2008 Median = 56 days

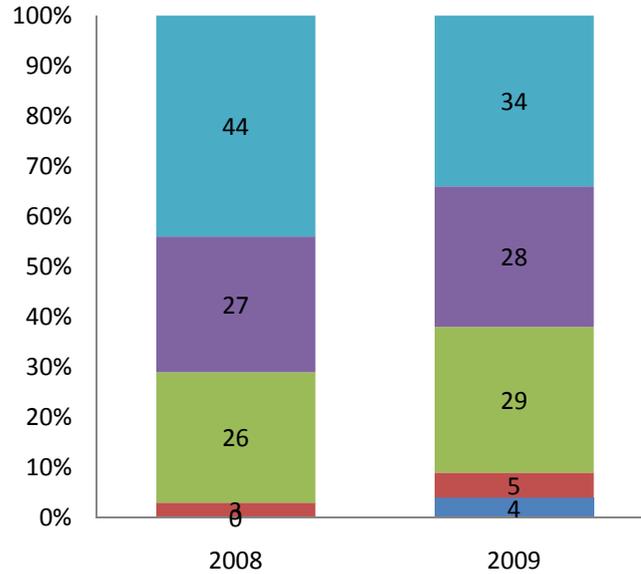
2009 Median = 49 days



## District 11-4

2008 Median = 56 days

2009 Median = 50 days



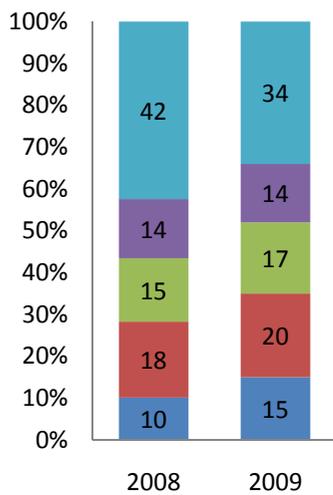
- Disposition within 15 days
- Within 30 days
- Within 45 days
- Within 60 days
- 61 or more days

# Removal to Case Closure

## Nebraska

2008 Median = 23 months

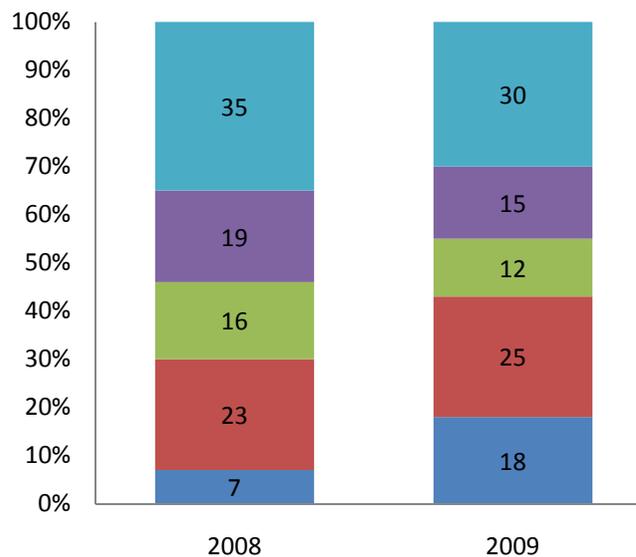
2009 Median = 18 months



## District 11-4

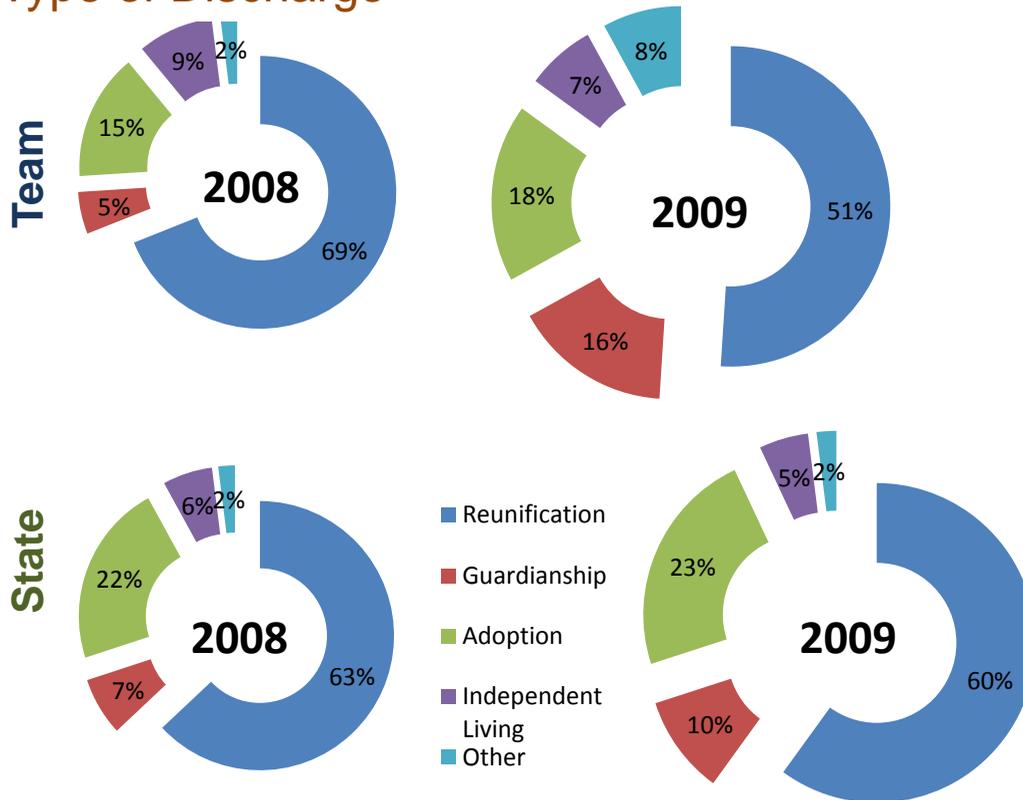
2008 Median = 18 months

2009 Median = 18 months



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

## Type of Discharge



## Trends



The median length of stay substantially increased to 35 months; however, that was driven by the high rates of Frotier (42.7 months) and Hooker (87.6 months) Counties. In JUSTICE, time to case closure remained the same at 18 months, which is also the state average for 2009. For infants and toddlers, time to case closure decreased to 13 months. Overall time to adjudication decreased from 96 days in 2008 to 69 days in 2009.

Children experienced fewer moves in 2009, with approximately 80% having 2 or fewer moves. However, 100% of children over 12 removed under 3a were placed in group homes instead of family-based care. Children in Lincoln County also continue to be removed at high rates, 11.6 per 10K in 2009 compared to a state rate of 6.2 per 10K (which is still twice the national average). You may want to discuss reasons for the high group home placement and removal rate and whether there may be a relation to lack of appropriate, effective services. You may also want to consider adding Action Plan items relating to adolescents in care.



## Case Progression for Zero to Three

Median Times	Team		State	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
<b>Early Stages</b>				
Removal to Ex-parte	0 days	n/a	1 day	1 day
Removal to Petition	0 days	1 day	1 day	0 days
Petition to first hearing	18 days	22 days	9 days	10 days
Removal to Adjudication	77 days	82 days	62 days	70 days
<b>Permanency Stages</b>				
Adjudication to Disposition	63 days	49 days	58 days	49 days
Removal to Case Closure	18 months	13 months	21 months	19 months
<b>TPR Stages</b>				
Removal to TPR	31 months	51 months	23 months	19 months
TPR to adoption	5 months	6 months	9 months	7 months

Infants and toddlers make up approximately one-third of children in foster care in Nebraska. This early stage of the child's life is also the most crucial to his/her development. A child is anything but a 'blank slate' at this age, and his/her surroundings greatly impact his/her future. Therefore, the court system must do everything it can to ensure timely and safe permanency for them.

The Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative has been co-hosting Helping Babies from the Bench trainings for the past few years. More recently, trainings have focused on the local community developing action steps specific to infants and toddlers.

Examples include ensuring CAPTA Part C evaluations occur, following the Supreme Court Guidelines on parenting time, better assessing delays in the child's social-emotional development and finding a permanent home for child starting on Day 1.

As a team, brainstorm action steps to work on in the upcoming year that relate to infants and toddlers. A sample action plan step is listed below. For more information on infants and toddlers and maltreatment, go to [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org).

**Example:** Ensure that a Part C evaluation under CAPTA is completed for children under 3

**Specific Item:** Referrals are made to EDN Service Coord. once a case is substantiated, CFS worker ensures eval is occurring, eval results are timely submitted to parties, re-referrals are made in 6 mos. if necessary.



## Improving Outcomes for Adolescents

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

In the space below, your team should brainstorm action steps that it wants to work on in the upcoming year that relate to older youth in care. A sample action plan step is listed below. For more information on older youth and permanency see <http://www.jimcaseyyouth.org/>

Action Plan	Specific Items	Lead Person	Timeline
<p><b>Example:</b> Obtain full family group conference(FGC) for all youth who are not likely to be living with a permanent family in the near future. Purpose of FGC is to either find a permanent family living situation or to plan and develop a network of relationships that will be in place after foster care.</p>	<p>Develop a protocol with local mediation center to provide FGCs for youth.</p>	<p>Tom Smith</p>	<p>Protocols will be completed by November 1, 2010, Information about protocols will be distributed to all court stakeholders by December 1, 2010, Team will assess roll-out at January 2011 meeting</p>
<p>2.</p>			
<p>3.</p>			

Sample