



Case Progression and Court Improvement Data Report for 2009



District 12 Team 1:

Box Butte, Dawes, Sioux, Grant, & Sheridan Counties

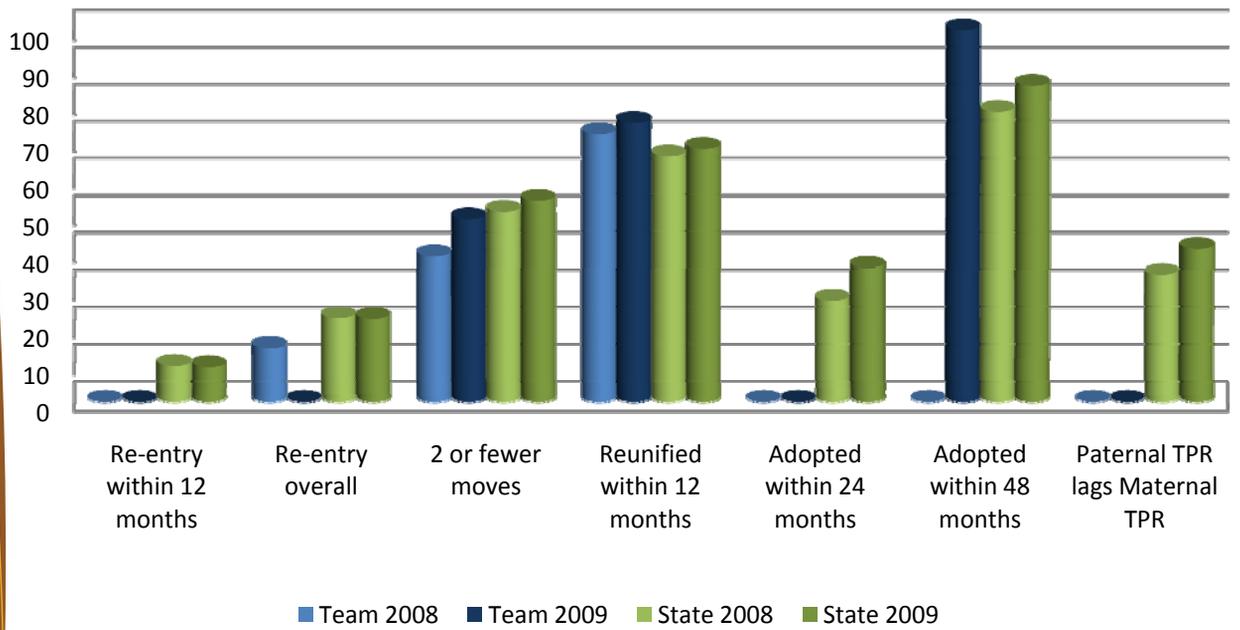


Information provided in this document is designed to help your team improve case progression, as this is one area the courts can control. Timeliness of hearings has a significant impact on time to case closure, which means that courts can make a difference in the lives of children in the system. Data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

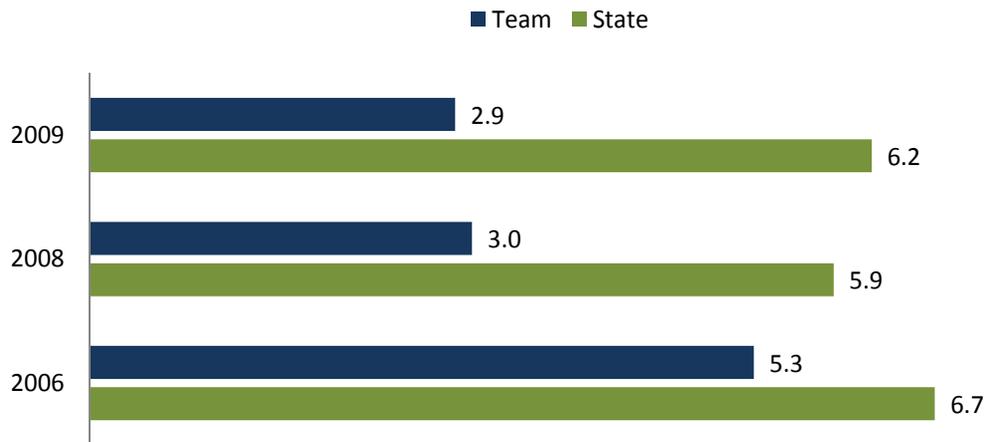
	Team 12-1		Nebraska		Missouri	National
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2009	2008-2009
Poverty rate*	20.6%	Not available	13.4%	14%	20%	18%
Median length of stay	5 months	10 months	13 months	12 months	13 months	16 months
Median months to reunification	2 months	8 months	7 months	7 months	8 months	7 months
Median months to adoption	N/A	38 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

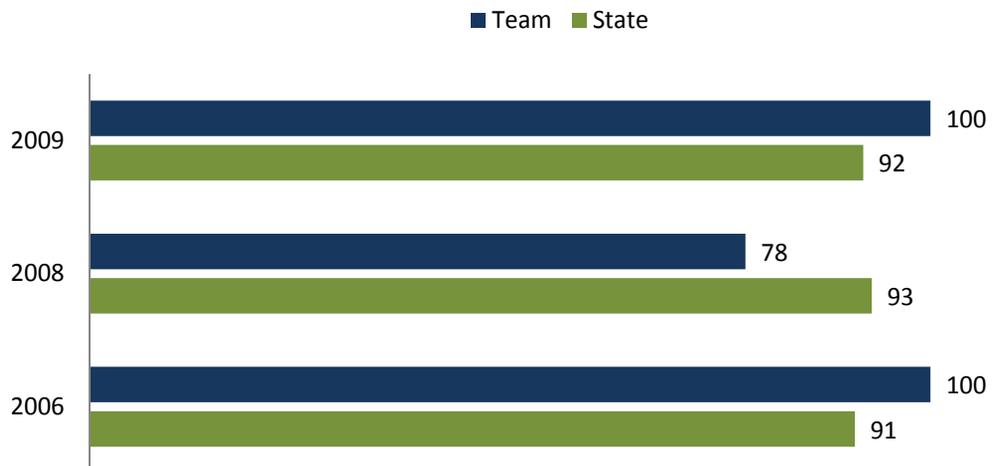
Percentages for 2008 and 2009 Fiscal Years



Rates of Removal per 10k Children



Percent of Children over 12 in Group Home or Institutional Placements



In District 12, Team 1, there were 8 abuse and neglect cases that closed between January 1 and December 31, 2008. In 2009, 1 abuse and neglect case closed. The following summary is 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.

	District 12-1		Nebraska		Recommended guidelines
	2008	2009	2008	2009	
Removal to Ex Parte	2 days	n/a	1 day	1 day	
Removal to Petition filing	2 days	0 days	1 day	1 day	
Removal to first hearing	1 day	1 day	9 days	10 days	3 days
Removal to adjudication	208 days	21 days	57 days	72 days	60 days
Adjudication to disposition	32 days	25 days	56 days	49 days	30 days
Removal to case closure	7 months	2 months	23 months	18 months	
Case outcome	66% reunification	100% guardianship	63% reunify	60% reunify	

Trends

With only 1 abuse/neglect case closing in 2009, most of the data will not be meaningful in regards to reaching general conclusions; however, it will give you an overview.

The case reached guardianship in 2 months, with disposition happening 46 days after removal.

Removal rates in your area continue to be much lower than the state average, although when children over 12 are removed under 3a they are typically placed in group homes instead of family-based care. The poverty rate in your region is also higher than state average (21% vs. 13%), so poverty-related factors may be playing a more central role in your cases.





Improving Outcomes for Youth in Care

Zero to Three

Infants and toddlers make up approximately one-third of children in foster care in Nebraska. This early stage of the child's life is 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.

Example: Ensure that a Part C evaluation under CAPTA is completed for children 0-3
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

Older Youth

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.

As a team, brainstorm action steps 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.jimcaseyouth.org/>

Example: 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.

Specific Item: Develop a protocol with local mediation center to provide FGCs for youth.