

September 15, 2015

Patrick O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature
State Capitol, Room 2018
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509



Dear Mr. O'Donnell:

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. 43-4007, enclosed please find the annual report prepared by the Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers, comprised of the information provided by each of the seven Child Advocacy Centers.

Sincerely-

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ivy Svoboda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ivy Svoboda
Executive Director
Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers

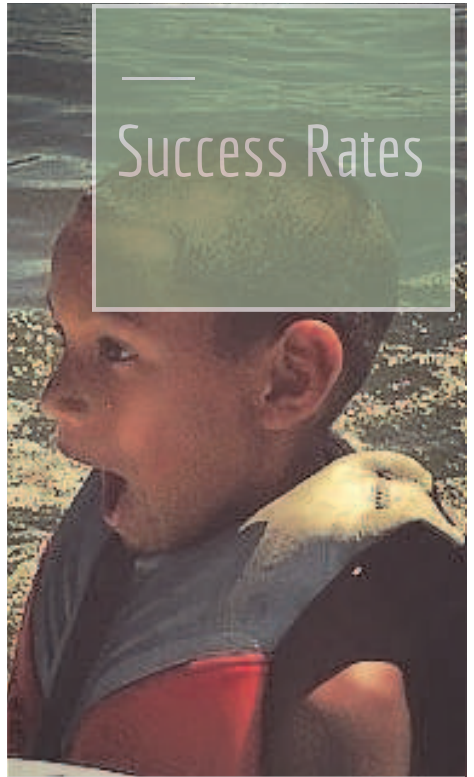
Child Welfare

Non-Court Involved Cases

Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers



Court Filings



Success Rates



September 2015

Appropriate Services

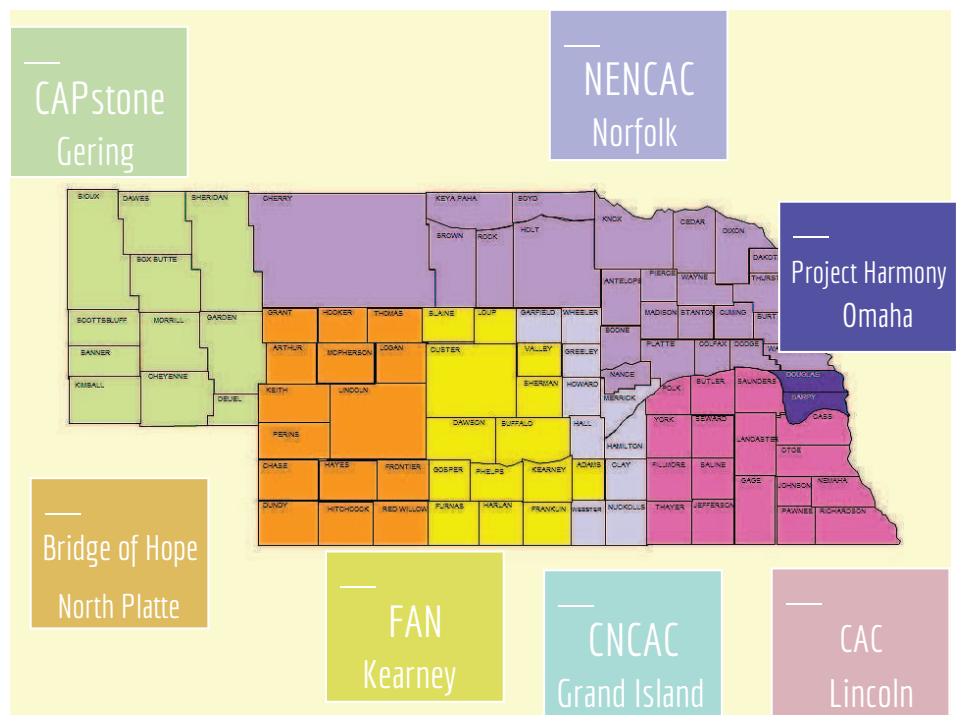
Overview

Legislative Bill 1160

"Each service area administrator and any lead agency or the pilot project shall provide monthly reports to the child advocacy center that corresponds with the geographic location of the child regarding the services provided through the department or a lead agency or the pilot when the child is identified as a voluntary or non-court involved child welfare case. The monthly report shall include the plan implemented by the department, lead agency, or the pilot project for the child and family and the status of compliance by the family with the plan."

The Nebraska Alliance

The Nebraska Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers is an accredited Chapter that provides statewide leadership in the fight against child abuse alongside its member centers, Nebraska's seven fully accredited Child Advocacy Centers (CACs). The Nebraska Alliance has been recognized for providing CACs and multidisciplinary teams with the resources they need to consistently offer unique and vital services to child victims of abuse and their families.



CAC Role

CACs have worked with the Department of Health and Human Services to obtain data on cases that are non-court involved. The CACs run reports from NFOCUS on a monthly basis and the Coordinators at each CAC take it to Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings for review following guidelines set forth by Nebraska Revised Statutes 28-728 to 28-729. The areas of focus are: case discussion/review, current case plan establishment, and at the time of case closing-the overall parental compliance, appropriateness of services, and overall success of the case.

Definitions

Case Plan

The case plan identifies goals and services families must achieve.

Case Closings

At closing, non-court cases are reviewed at team meetings coordinated by each CAC. These teams are comprised of county attorneys, initial assessment workers, ongoing caseworkers, and professionals from the community.

Non-Court Involved Cases

Non-court cases include families who are offered ongoing services provided by DHHS (or a contracted agency like NFC), but do not have juvenile court involvement. These services are voluntary and may include family support, case management, and referrals to community agencies for mental health, substance abuse, or other resource assistance.

Court Filing

At times, it may be necessary to file an affidavit in court on a non-court involved family who needs more intensive supervision.

Criteria Examined At Case Closure

Overall Success of the Case

Completely: Family met all case plan goals

Somewhat: Family met some case plan goals

Not at all: Family did not meet any case plan goals or refused voluntary services

Parental Compliance

Good: Parents are consistently working toward completion of case plan

Fair: Parents are inconsistently working toward completion of case plan (e.g. they need multiple reminders to complete tasks, make appointments, etc.)

Poor: Parents are not working towards completion of case plan and/or they refused voluntary services

Appropriateness of Services Offered to the Family

All appropriate: Caseworker referred family to all services that could help them

Some appropriate: Caseworker referred family to some services, but may have missed others (e.g. referred for substance abuse services but not domestic violence services in a family with clear domestic violence issues)

None appropriate: Caseworker did not refer family to any services that could help them

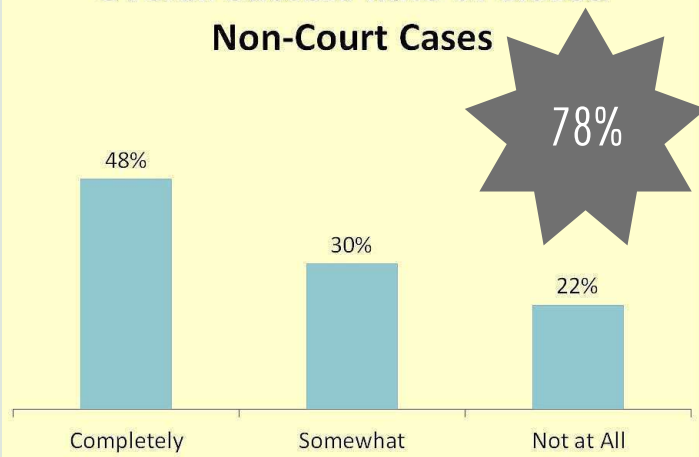
No services offered: Caseworker did not have a chance to refer to services (e.g. family refused voluntary services)

Case Results

Non-Court Involved Cases

July 2014 - June 2015

Overall Success Rate of Closed Non-Court Cases



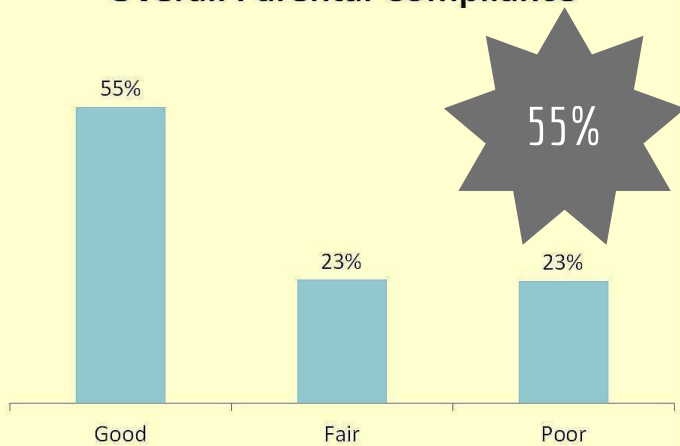
78% of closed cases were either "completely successful" or "somewhat successful." (82% prior year)

1175

New Cases

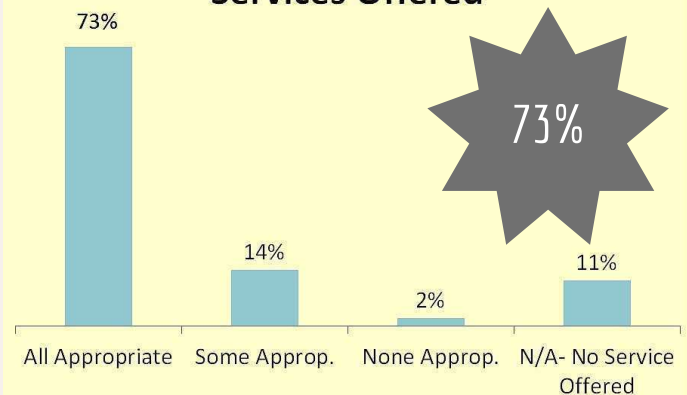
(1120 New Cases prior year)

Overall Parental Compliance



55% of non-court involved caretakers had "good" parental compliance. (49% prior year)

Overall Appropriateness of Services Offered



73% of cases closed with an agreement that all services provided to the family were appropriate. (68% prior year)



★ 1029 or 88% of non-court cases closed with NO court intervention (86% prior year)

★ On average, cases stayed open 128.7 days, slightly over 4 months (156.8 days prior year)

Case Results

Non-Court Involved Cases

July 2014 - June 2015

Team Success

- One CAC has vastly improved the case staffing process by incorporating a method called “mapping” for their team case review. Mapping provides for a facilitator to use a white board to identify barriers, family strengths and next-steps to help focus each case discussion on a unified purpose.
- While maintaining a commitment to team protocol, several CACs have reported that the addition of community and mental health partners to the team has proven successful to meet the families’ needs.

Areas Needing Focus

Data Documentation

- Several CACs continue to report that some of the non-court cases do not appear on the DHHS monthly reports. This results in little or no team intervention because the case has already closed before the team is aware of its existence. In turn, some cases have new intakes filed.
- CACs identified continued concern about active case plan information not being documented in NFOCUS. The goal of non-court cases is to connect the family with community resources to ensure safety. The case plan outlines the process to attain this goal.

Case Success and Family Participation

- 22% (18% prior year) of cases were closed as not at all successful. Once families learn they can decline services and the case will close, they decline to participate in a Non-Court Case and the risk factors remain “very high or high” but no interventions are put in place leaving children at risk.

Service Identification and Accessibility

- The teams work diligently to ensure that the correct services are in place, such as access to evidenced based therapies. The teams have recognized a lack of accessibility to services for children and families available in the outer reaching counties, such as behavioral counseling, appropriate treatment centers, and resources.

Percent of New Cases with a Case Plan Upon Closing

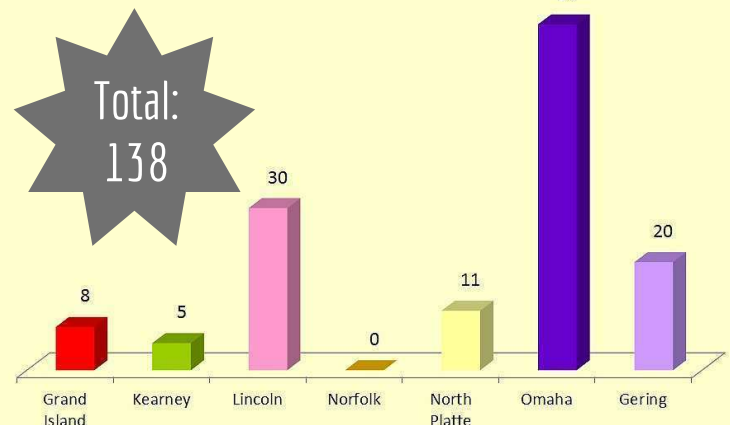


Overall, 75% of cases had an active case plan that identified goals and services that families must achieve. (82% prior year)

At times, filing an affidavit in court may be necessary for a family who needs more intensive supervision.

138 cases (12%) resulted in a court filing. (14% prior yr)

Total # of Court Filings per CAC



Success



Case Example



A non-court case involving a family with a four year old child was opened due to unsanitary living conditions with numerous animals residing in the home. The home was in a state of disrepair. Fortunately, the parents quickly made progress and were able to maintain a clean and orderly home on a consistent basis. It was discovered that the mother had suffered from depression after the loss of a child. Now, she is engaged in therapy on a regular basis. Both parents have continued to build their relationship and have gained new skills to communicate more effectively. They have obtained full time jobs and have reached financial independence. Their four year old is attending preschool and marked improvements in his speech have been noted. The family worked well with family support services, mental health providers, speech therapists, and the public school system in order to reach all of their case plan goals. No subsequent cases have been reported for this family since the closing of this case last year.

Successes

Across the state, CACs recognize that successful cases result in successful team processes.

The most successful teams have:

- consistent team participation from an array of professionals
- thorough case discussion
- members who are open to feedback outside their agency
- County Attorneys who are vigilant about taking an active role in cases, and
- members who are willing to collaborate with their professional partners to improve a child's situation.

Contact Information



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Mission: To enhance Nebraska's response to child abuse.

