

# NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Mission.

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Pete Ricketts, Governor

October 2, 2020

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

Dear Mr. O'Donnell,

Pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statute §43-4408 the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services (CFS), is submitting this report regarding the performance of the lead agency contractors PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries, for ongoing child welfare case management in the Eastern Service Area including Douglas and Sarpy counties during state fiscal year 2020.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie L. Beasley".

Stephanie L. Beasley  
Director  
Division of Children and Family Services

## Section I: Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Framework

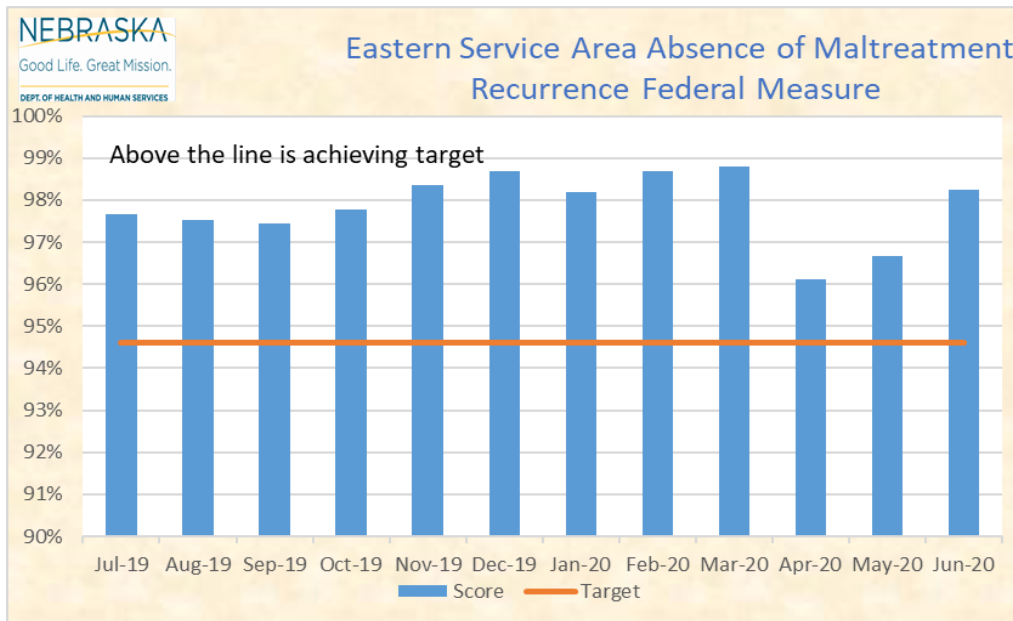
The Division of Children and Family Services (CFS) within the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) monitors and improves the performance and outcomes derived from the lead agency providing case management services in the Eastern Service Area (ESA) utilizing a continuous quality improvement (CQI) framework. Nebraska's CQI system utilizes a team approach to assess performance by continually measuring, analyzing, providing feedback, controlling, and ultimately improving outcomes for the children and families served in the ESA. The CFS quality assurance team works independently and collaboratively with the lead agency, Saint Francis Ministries. Saint Francis Ministries also has an internal team dedicated to CQI. All calculated performance and outcome data known by CFS is provided to Saint Francis Ministries. Extensive ESA case specific data is made available to Saint Francis Ministries via the CFS BI Portal to accommodate Saint Francis Ministries' internal data analysis efforts.

Below are various federal outcome measures of safety, permanency and well-being.

### Outcome 1: Safety

**Children are protected from abuse and neglect, in the safety of their homes.**

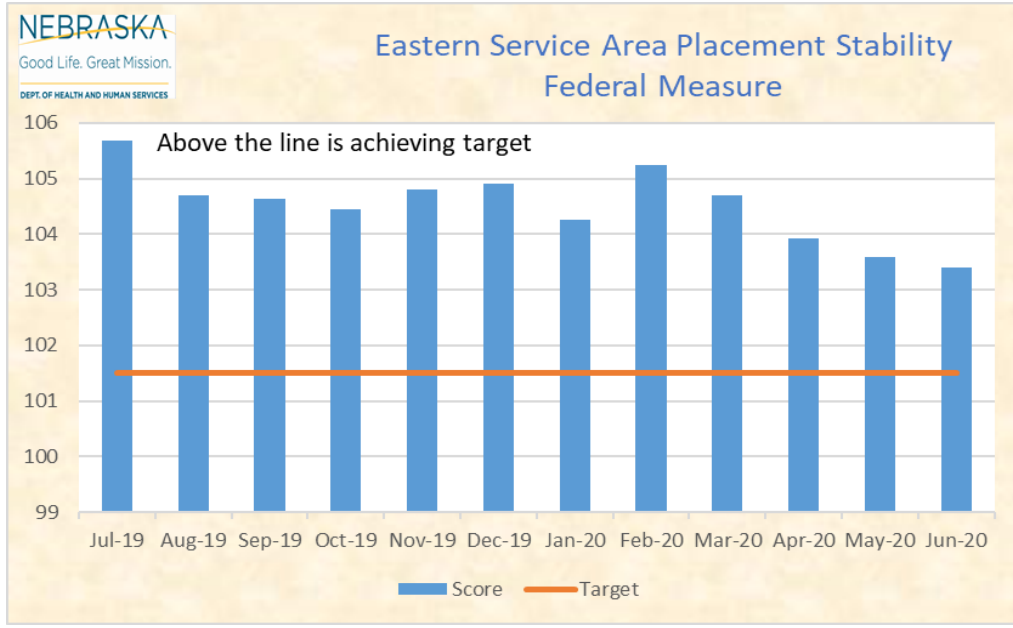
Indicator 1a: Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence – Both PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries will continue to maintain 94.6% absence of maltreatment recurrence during the state fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 (Federal Measure).



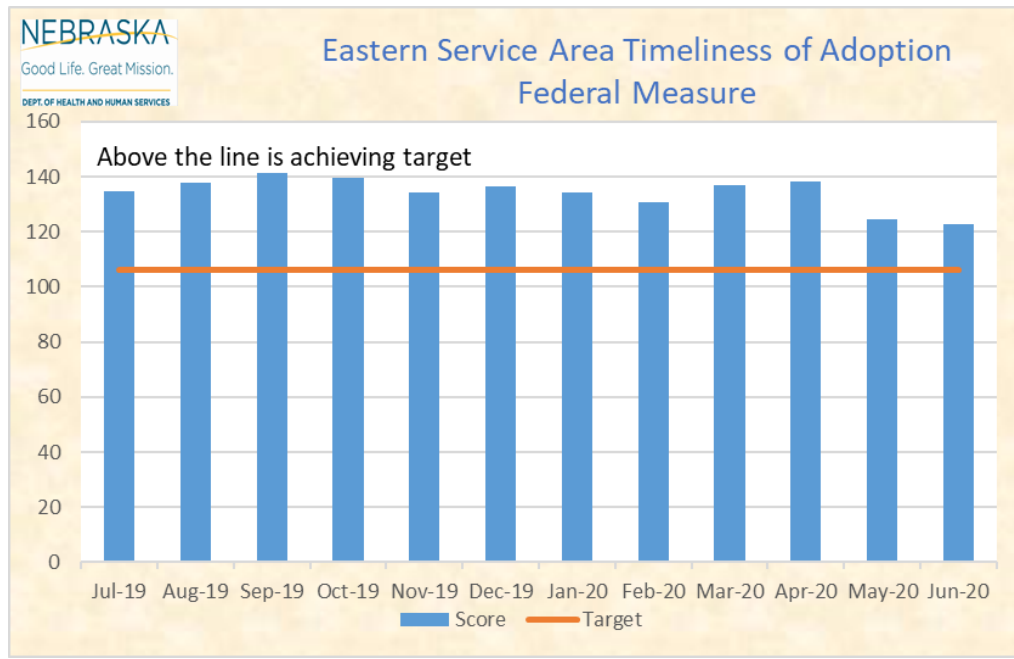
**Outcome 2: Permanency**

**Children will experience stability and permanency.**

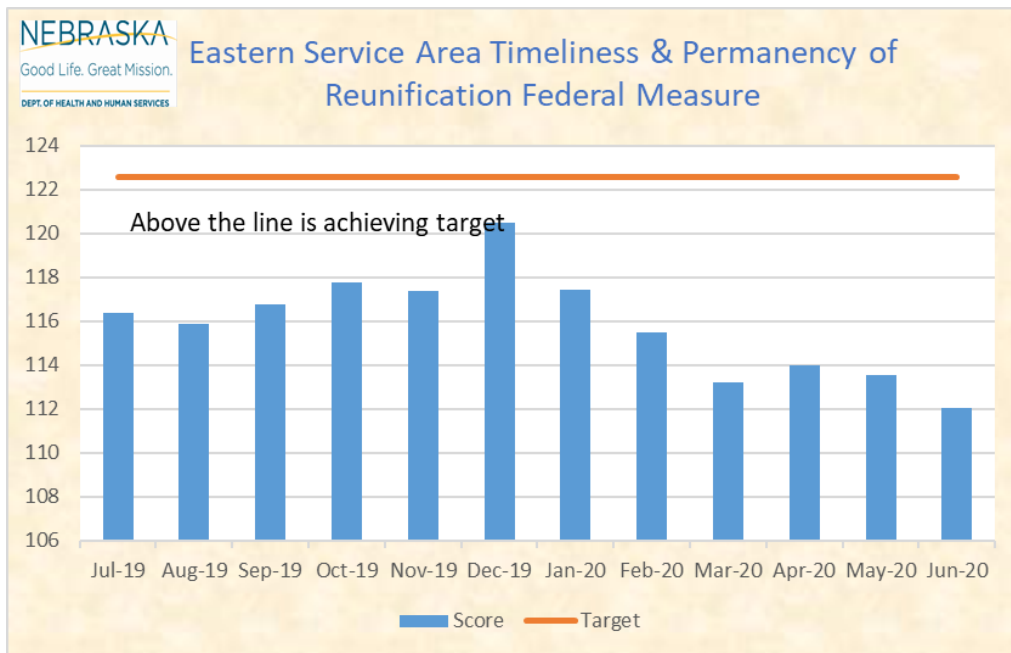
Indicator 2a: Placement Stability – Both PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries will continue to maintain a 101.5 placement stability composite score for children in care during the SFY ending June 30, 2020 (Federal Measure).



Indicator 2b: Timeliness of Adoption – Both PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries will continue to maintain a 106.4 composite score for timeliness of adoption for children in care during the SFY ending June 30, 2020 (Federal Measure).



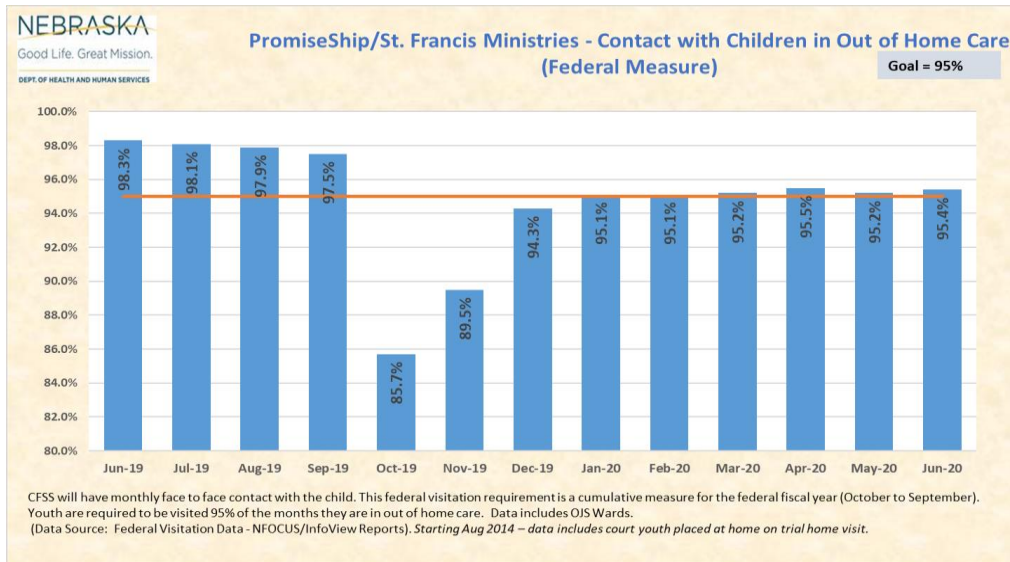
Indicator 2c: Timeliness of Reunification – Both PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries will achieve a 122.6 composite score for timeliness of reunification for children in care by June 30, 2020 (Federal Measure).



### Outcome 3: Well-Being

Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs.

Indicator 3a: Case manager's visit with children in out-of-home care: Both PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries will visit face-to-face with children a minimum of one time each month 95% of the time (Federal Measure).



The Nebraska Quality Assurance team completes quarterly Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) case reviews. The reviews are completed using the Federal CFSR Round 3 Children and Family Services Review tool. These case reviews are required to measure the State’s progress toward achievement of the goals contained within the Federal CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

Approximately 30 Eastern Service Area cases are randomly selected for review each calendar quarter. The case reviews consist of 18 focus areas designed to assess case management activities according to the Federal/State statutes & CFS policies. Ten of the 18 items are included in the 2019 CFSR PIP. The federally mandated PIP items include items 1-6 and items 12-15.

Thirty-four child welfare cases were reviewed in the Eastern Service Area during January-March 2020 quarter. Nineteen of the case were out-of-home youth reviews, 12 were in-home family reviews, and three were CFS managed Alternative Response cases. Additional counts are illustrated in the table below.

The following table illustrates the recent and historical results for CFSR items 1-18 in the Eastern Service Area. Each item represents case management processes within a defined safety, permanency and well-being outcome/group.

## Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) Eastern Service Area

Note: The standard goal for each item is 90% to be rated a strength; however, Items 1 and 16 have a goal of 95% to be rated strengths, due to being the only Item within their respective outcomes. Statewide Nebraska is required to achieve the target goals listed below for Items 1-6 and 12-15 to complete the federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP). Each of the indicated PIP items have independent target values established by the Children's Bureau.

	PIP Baseline	PIP Quarter 1	PIP Quarter 2	PIP Quarter 3	PIP Quarter 4 <small>(*Preliminary Results)</small>	<b>CFSR PIP Target Goals</b>
Review Months	Oct - Dec 2018	Feb & Mar 2019	Jul, Aug & Sep 2019	Oct, Nov & Dec 2019	Jan, Feb, March 2020	
Period Under Review	Nov 2017 to Dec 2018	Feb 2018 to Mar 2019	July 2018 to Sep 2019	October 2018 to Dec 2019	Jan 2019 to March 2020	
Number of Cases	30	31	37	34	34	
Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations (CFS Staff Only)	66.7%	71.4%	85.2%	81.0%	61.1%	84.6%
Item 2: Services to Family to Protect Children in home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry	64.3%	78.6%	100.0%	84.6%	91.7%	85.6%
Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management	66.7%	64.5%	83.8%	85.3%	79.4%	80.8%
Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement	76.5%	52.9%	66.7%	85.0%	57.9%	83.8%
Item 5: Permanency Goal for Child	47.1%	52.9%	57.1%	50.0%	36.8%	66.6%
Item 6: Achieving Permanency	23.5%	35.3%	38.1%	20.0%	21.1%	52.5%
Item 7: Placement With Siblings	100.0%	100.0%	87.5%	92.8%	88.2%	90%
Item 8: Visiting With Parents and Siblings	81.3%	53.3%	68.4%	80.0%	69.2%	90%
Item 9: Preserving Connections	76.5%	64.7%	81.0%	80.0%	84.2%	90%
Item 10: Relative Placement	87.5%	70.6%	76.2%	75.0%	89.5%	90%
Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents	76.9%	75.0%	68.8%	78.6%	81.8%	90%
Item 12: Needs and Services	36.7%	29.0%	51.4%	67.7%	50.0%	55.6%
Item 13: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	70.0%	64.5%	66.7%	85.3%	59.4%	83.1%
Item 14: Caseworker Visits With Child	73.0%	77.4%	75.7%	64.7%	73.5%	85.0%
Item 15: Caseworker Visits With Parents	60.7%	51.9%	63.6%	63.3%	51.9%	68.7%
Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child	83.3%	77.3%	83.3%	95.2%	94.7%	95%
Item 17: Physical Health of the Child	63.2%	81.8%	88.5%	88.5%	78.3%	90%
Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the child	56.5%	66.7%	54.6%	72.7%	61.5%	90%

**\*PIP quarter four results are preliminary.** Cases are currently undergoing secondary oversight reviews by the Children's Bureau and results may change.

## Section II: Contract Monitoring and Accountability

### A. Communication and Feedback

Type of Feedback	Participants	Frequency	Purpose
<b>Local Operations Meeting</b>	Local CFS staff and Saint Francis Ministries Program Staff	Bi-Monthly	To review outcome data from the continuous quality improvement reports specific to ESA. Data analysis leads to strategy / action steps developed for formation of workgroups to further data analysis and data drill down. Operational processes reviewed and revised as needed.
<b>Management Meeting</b>	CFS Eastern Service Area Administrator and Saint Francis Ministries Regional Vice President	Monthly	Discussion and resolution regarding programmatic or contract issues. Review of questions and clarification on contractual roles/responsibilities. Discussion and action on community efforts needed with providers and other stakeholders.
<b>Monthly Data Share</b>	Data share	Monthly	Sharing of CFS generated data reports of various outcome measures and data.
<b>Legal Calls</b>	CFS/Saint Francis Ministries leadership and legal staff	Monthly	Monthly conference call to discuss any legal issues in the ESA and strategies to address.
<b>Calls with County Attorneys</b>	CFS/leadership and lead county attorneys for Douglas and Sarpy counties	Monthly	Monthly conference call to discuss any court issues in the ESA and strategies to address.
<b>Provider Meetings</b>	Saint Francis Ministries program staff and CFS program staff and Providers	Bi-Monthly	Meeting with providers in Saint Francis Ministries network to address foster care issues and service needs.
<b>ESA Contract Monitoring Team</b>	ESA contract monitoring team and Saint Francis Ministries Program Staff	Daily	CFS staff respond to grievances and concerns voiced by families, children, judicial and legal parties to ensure quality and compliance to SDM models and CFS policy.
<b>Assessment Team Meeting</b>	CFS local program staff and Saint Francis Ministries program staff	Monthly	Review of new out-of-home assessments and concerns with foster care homes. Develop coordinated action plans.
<b>Daily Intake/Transfer Call</b>	CFS program staff and Saint Francis Ministries program staff	Daily as needed	Review of any new intake on an open case and/or any case ready for transfer to Saint Francis Ministries. Develop specific role and responsibility tasks for each agency.
<b>Daily Huddle Calls</b>	CFS/Saint Francis Ministries leadership huddle calls	Daily or as needed	Review any case management issues, policy issues, practice issues. Communications from CFS Central Office.
<b>Quality Assurance Reviews</b>	CFS CQI team	Monthly	Review of random sampling of cases and feedback back to Saint Francis Ministries staff of case management accolades or concerns. Quarterly CQI meetings with Saint Francis Ministries staff and administration.

**B. Compliance Reviews** - Compliance reviews are conducted. The chart below identifies the type of review and the dates on-site reviews were completed.

Type of Review	Date of On-Site Reviews
<b>Personnel File Review- On-Site Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sept 30, 2019 100% Compliance</li> <li>Dec 5, 2019 90% Compliance</li> <li>Mar 31, 2020 88% Compliance*</li> <li>June 25, 2020 80% Compliance*</li> </ul>
	*The files from Saint Francis Ministries were missing E-verify form but included a Social Security Administration document. Corrective action was implemented: % above indicates compliance of personnel files excluding E-verify forms.

**C. Process and Outcome Measures** - CFS continues to monitor the lead agency's performance utilizing Process and Outcome Measures.

Process Measures	Frequency of Review	Forum
<b>Family Team Meetings 1 x every 90 days</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Contact with Child in out of home care- 1 x month</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Contact with Child in non-court case-1 x month</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting

Outcome Measures	Frequency of Review	Forum
<b>Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Absence of Maltreatment in Foster Care</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Permanency for Children in Foster Care</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Timeliness of Adoption</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Exits to Adoption in less than 24 months</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Placement Stability</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting
<b>Reduction of Children in out of home care</b>	Monthly/Quarterly	Monthly data share/Quarterly meeting

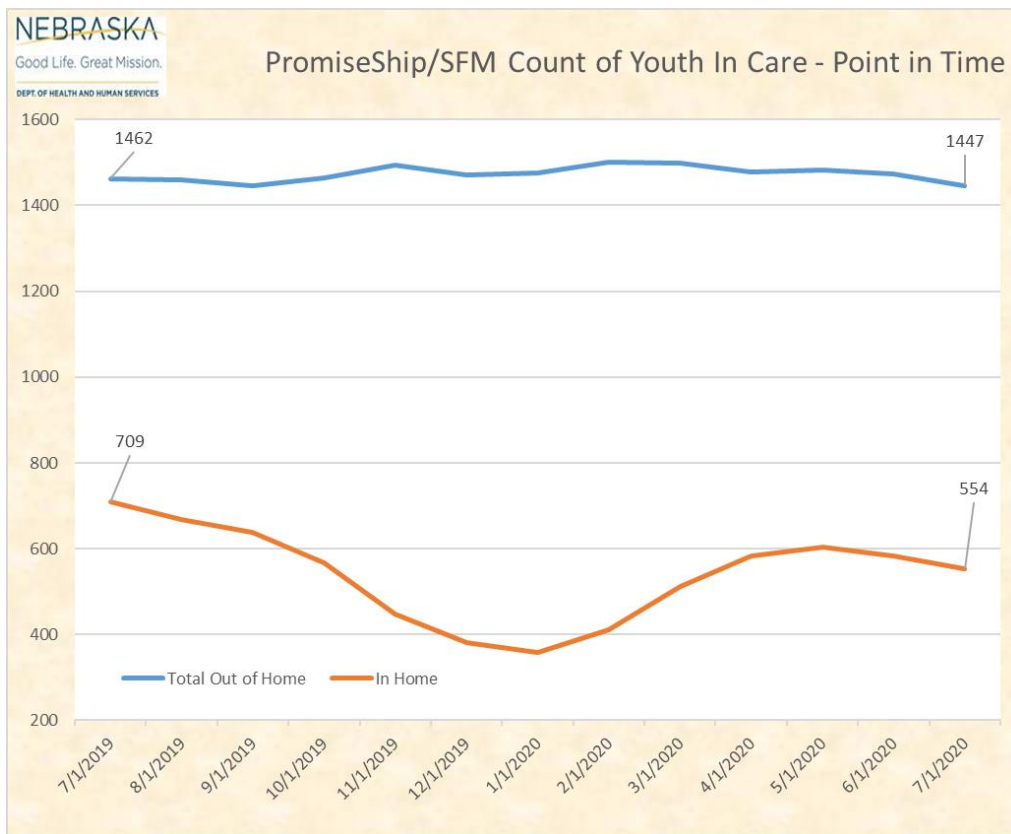


### Section III: Fiscal Monitoring

CFS monitors the lead agency’s financial statements. Saint Francis Ministries is a sub-recipient, and reimbursed for costs incurred to provide services. Saint Francis Ministries is required to conduct and submit an annual A-133 audit, as over \$500,000 in federal funds are utilized for this sub-grant.

CFS requires Saint Francis Ministries to submit an actual invoice for each service provided during the month. Invoiced expenditures are recorded via N-FOCUS in order to accurately claim federal funding for Title IV-E maintenance payments. A quarterly reconciliation of invoices to the monthly financial statement continues to be a requirement.

Below is a chart depicting the number of in-home and out-of-home youth served by PromiseShip or Saint Francis Ministries point-in-time.



### Section IV: Corrective Action

The Saint Francis Ministries contract includes performance retention measures enhancing CFS’ ability to impose financial retention based on five performance metrics. These measures will begin to be enforced beginning January 1, 2021, one year after the contract beginning. During the spring of 2020, CFS placed Saint Francis Ministries on a corrective action plan based on several performance measures. Beginning July 20, 2020, CFS added a Service Area Administrator to the ESA contract monitoring team to increase oversight and support the lead agency’s provider & judicial/legal engagement, case management reviews, and operation processes performed by the lead agency.

## **Section V: Functional Capacities**

Children and Family Services (CFS) has conducted a review organized by the strengths and needs of the leads agency's functional capacities as required by legislation.

### **A. Direct Case Management**

#### *CFS Analysis of Direct Case Management Capacity:*

Saint Francis Ministries began full service case management services in the Eastern Service Area starting on October 1, 2019, and transfer of cases began on October 22, 2019. This was a change to the original start date of the contract, January 1, 2020. The decision to begin transferring cases earlier ensured an intentional, strategic, and safe transition of cases from the previous contractor, PromiseShip (Formerly Nebraska Families Collaborative), to Saint Francis Ministries. During the transition period, it was possible to have PromiseShip and Saint Francis Ministries manage cases in the Eastern Service Area. On January 1, 2020, all cases were transferred to Saint Francis Ministries, and it was determined that measurement of performance of Saint Francis Ministries would commence on January 1, 2020.

CFS requested Saint Francis Ministries submit a hiring plan on September 1, 2020, to address the issue of hiring staff to meet the caseload ratio. Saint Francis Ministries has proposed to hire 116 case management positions to meet the state standard for caseload ratio. At the time of this report, Saint Francis Ministries has hired 130 case managers. Of those 130 case managers, 25 are in various stages of training.

Case management staff receives necessary training and CFS reviews and approves training curriculum. The administrative infrastructure within Saint Francis Ministries that supports case management includes Human Resources, Legal Services, Finance, Communications, Information Technology and Training.

### **B. Utilization of Social Work Theory and Evidence-Based Practices to Include Processes for Ensuring Fidelity with Evidence-Based Practices**

#### *CFS Analysis of Social Work Theory and Evidence Based Practices Capacity:*

CFS and Saint Francis Ministries have expertise and experience with on-going fidelity monitoring of evidence-based practices. Each agency continues to establish evidence-based models for services in the Eastern Service Area. In 2014, CFS implemented the Structured Decision Making assessment for safety, which Saint Francis Ministries adopted through the Eastern Service Area contract. Additionally, Saint Francis Ministries is establishing contracts for evidence-based models to assist CFS adherence to the Families First Prevention Service Act (FFPSA).

Saint Francis Ministries has contracts with approximately 40 sub-contracted agencies to provide services to children and families in the Eastern Service Area. To support collaborative engagement and service delivery, Saint Francis Ministries has started conversations with seven local agencies to initiate Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) services for Evidence-Based Models. The

agencies that will provide FFPSA services include: Omaha Home for Boys - Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT); Heartland Family Service - Parent Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT); KVC - PCIT; Omni - PCIT; Paradigm - PCIT, Multi-systemic Therapy (MST), TF-CBT; Nebraska Children's Home Society - Healthy Families America; Boys Town – MST, and; Daybreak - PCIT, TF-CBT. Additionally, Saint Francis Ministries is establishing Family Centered Treatment in the Eastern Service Area: however, it is running into a challenge of hiring a therapist level position for this program.

### **C. Supervision**

#### *CFS Supervision Capacity Analysis:*

The organizational chart demonstrates that supervision capacity is available and identifies the following leadership positions: President/CEO, COO, Regional Vice President, Legal Counsel, Human Resources Manager, Accounting Director, Grant Development Director, Research and Analysis Manager. The supervisor to case manager ratio is 1:8 and is consistent with best practice standards.

### **D. Quality Assurance**

#### *CFS Quality Assurance Capacity Analysis:*

The full-service case management contract has sufficient capacity for quality assurance as evidenced by frequent and regular communication between CFS and Saint Francis Ministries Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) teams, the Regional Vice President, Director of Operations, Network Administration, Provider Relations Manager, Foster Care Director as well as others involved with CQI functions in the Eastern Service Area.

### **E. Training**

#### *CFS Training Capacity Analysis:*

The Eastern Service Area contract has adequate capacity to complete the core functions of training. The Center for Children Families and the Law (CCFL) provides initial staff training for both CFS Children and Family Service Specialists (CFSS) and Saint Francis Ministries case managers. This allows for consistent training in child welfare practices in accordance with state statute. It also supports building relationships between the CFS Initial Assessment teams and ongoing case management (Saint Francis Ministries).

Saint Francis Ministries maintains a strong training program for its workforce. Saint Francis Ministries case managers receive numerous opportunities for staff development including workshops and/or online training. Additionally, CFS has coordinated with Saint Francis Ministries to train all Saint Francis Ministries case managers in the Safety Organized Practice model which serves to enhance case management.

## **F. Subcontract Management**

### *CFS Subcontract Management Capacity Analysis:*

Saint Francis Ministries manages its subcontractors through its Provider Relations team, which develops contracts for services and monitors performance and compliance of the subcontractors.

## **G. Network Development And Management**

### *CFS Network Development and Management Capacity Analysis:*

Saint Francis Ministries has contracts with approximately 40 sub-contracted agencies to provide services to children and families in the Eastern Service Area. During the transition of cases and into the first year of the operational start date, Saint Francis Ministries had to continue services established by the previous contractor in order to maintain stability in cases. As the year progresses, Saint Francis Ministries has been able to establish its own service array with local agencies.

## **H. Financial Management**

### *CFS Analysis of Financial Management Capacity:*

Saint Francis Ministries has sufficient financial staff to manage the agency's finances. Their Finance Services unit, which consists of a CFO, Financial Compliance Director, Senior Accountants and Billing Specialists, bring resources and expertise in the area of financial management and have child welfare experience in multiple states and internationally.

## **I. Financial Controls**

### *CFS Analysis of Capacity for Financial Controls:*

Annually, independent auditors review Saint Francis' financial statements. CFS has reviewed and approved the policies for payment processing and internal auditing. CFS also performs audits and monthly cost reconciliations of all project expenditures. The lead agency has sufficient capacity in the area of financial controls.

## **J. Utilization Management**

### *CFS Analysis of Utilization Management Capacity:*

Saint Francis Ministries has a Utilization Management team dedicated to assisting case management in identify and implementing services for children and families in the Eastern Service Area. The Utilization Management team accesses services through local providers to meet the needs of families in their community.

## **K. Community Outreach**

*CFS Analysis of Community Outreach Capacity:*

Saint Francis Ministries community outreach efforts includes attending various meetings such as Douglas County Through the Eyes of the Child, Operation Youth Success, Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition meetings, South Omaha Juvenile Justice Forum, and RED Meeting Urban League of Nebraska.

## **L. Coordination and Planning**

*CFS Analysis of Coordination and Planning Capacity:*

CFS and Saint Francis Ministries are actively engaged in coordination of activities from training to transfer of cases. This includes development and delivery of services to meet the needs of children and families in the Eastern Service Area.

## **M. Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

*CFS Analysis of Community and Stakeholder Engagement:*

Saint Francis Ministries community and stakeholder engagement includes holding quarterly provider/stakeholder meetings, attending Judge's meetings, and various meetings in the community. In addition, Saint Francis Ministries attends the following: 1184 multidisciplinary teams (several times per week), Saint Francis Ministries Provider Meetings, Douglas County Through the Eyes of the Child, Operation Youth Success, Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition meetings, South Omaha Juvenile Justice Forum and RED Meeting Urban League of Nebraska.

Saint Francis Ministries maintains an Eastern Service Area Resource Guide listing community partners and non-government resources.

## **N. Responsiveness to Requests from Policy Makers and the Legislature**

*CFS Analysis of Responsiveness to Requests from Policy Makers and Legislature:*

The organizational structure and coordination between CFS and Saint Francis Ministries is sufficient to gather data, analyze data, and develop requested reports. On many occasions with the previous contractor, CFS requested data reports and such reports were time delivered and organized in the manner requested. Likewise, requests made to Saint Francis Ministries are provided in a timely manner to meet the deadlines of policy makers and the Legislature.