



## For Immediate Release

May 19, 2015

### Contact

Russ Reno, Communications and Legislative Services, 402-471-8287, [russ.reno@nebraska.gov](mailto:russ.reno@nebraska.gov)

Kathie Osterman, Communications and Legislative Services, 402-471-9313, [kathie.osterman@nebraska.gov](mailto:kathie.osterman@nebraska.gov)

## **Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services Extends Contract with Nebraska Families Collaborative**

*Public-private partnership between the two agencies will continue for another year*

**Lincoln** – The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Nebraska Families Collaborative (NFC) have worked in partnership to extend the case management contract for one year. The state's current contract with NFC was originally signed in 2009 and has been extended once already for one year. The new extension will take the contract through June 30, 2016.

"This contract extension allows us to continue our review of the recent report by Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. regarding child welfare privatization in Nebraska, and to work with members of the Legislature, NFC and other partners to determine the best way to move forward with child welfare services," said Courtney Phillips, DHHS CEO.

Nebraska Families Collaborative, the remaining provider in the state's reform effort, provides case management services in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, the state's Eastern Service Area. The Hornby Zeller evaluation shows that NFC and DHHS have both improved services to children and families, achieving the best outcomes in recent history.

Phillips has made it clear that DHHS and NFC will work together to meet statewide federal outcome measures and maximize federal funding opportunities.

NFC president and CEO David Newell thanked Phillips for her confidence in the work being done in the ESA and highlighted the fact that great strides have been made since 2009 in the number of children who are being safely served in their own homes.

In 2009, the ratio of children in the custody of the state in ESA served in out-of-home care was 73 percent compared to 27 percent served in their homes. Today, the corresponding ratio of children in the custody of the state is 83 percent in out-of-home care compared to 17 percent served in their homes.

In addition, NFC also provides state-funded services to support 231 families, including nearly 650 children who are not state wards. These children and their families are served in their own homes with the intent that children will not become state wards due to proactive services. When added together, NFC is serving 60 percent of all children (state wards and non-state wards) in their homes.

“Clearly, when considering all families, the data shows that statewide, DHHS and NFC are making progress on reducing the ratio of children served in out-of-home care,” said Newell.

Nebraska Families Collaborative was formed by Boys Town, Child Saving Institute, Heartland Family Services, OMNI Behavioral Health and Nebraska Family Support Network and is meeting the needs of more than 2,400 children and families each year in Douglas and Sarpy Counties.