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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 3, 2008

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Note: This release reflects the time that DHHS was notified (12:10 a.m. November 3). The youth was taken to the hospital at 11:10 p.m., November 2nd.

Two New Instances of Safe Haven Law Brings Total Children Involved to 26

Lincoln - Todd Landry, director of the Division of Children and Family Services for the Department of Health and Human Services, said two 16-year olds were involved in separate instances of use of the safe haven law over the weekend.

Landry said the mother of a 16-year old girl brought her to Midlands Hospital in Papillion on the afternoon of Sunday, November 2, 2008. The girl was a ward of the State of Nebraska from September 2007 to March 2008. In March 2008, the Sarpy County juvenile court dismissed the wardship based in part on the mother's desire to relocate to Arizona, where they had extended family. While in Arizona, the girl was made a ward of the State of Arizona from August 2008 to October 2008. Based on information available so far, DHHS' understanding is that in October, the Arizona court agreed to dismiss the case at the request of the mother, who desired to return to Nebraska in order to have more support from family and friends located here. The mother and daughter appear to have returned to Nebraska just last week.

The other incident involved a 16-year old boy from Douglas County, whose father brought him to Children's Hospital in Omaha at approximately 12:10 a.m. on Monday, November 3. The Department is still gathering information on this situation.

These instances of use of LB 157 bring the total number of cases to 18 and the total number of children involved to 26 since September 13, 2008.

LB 157 went into effect on July 18.

More information about Nebraska's safe haven law, as well as information about local resources for families, can be found on the Department's Website at http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Pages/children_family_services_safehaven.aspx