



Quarterly Report for Child Welfare and Juvenile Services

Lead Agency's Name: Nebraska Families Collaborative		
Address: 14100 Crawford Street Boys Town, NE 68010		
Lead Agency's Contact Person: Angela Bredenkamp Telephone Number: (402) 498-1239		
Quarter	Reporting Periods	Due Dates
<input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 1	July 1 – September 30	October 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2	October 1 – December 31	January 15
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3	January 1 – March 31	April 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4	April 1 – May 31	June 15
<input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (update)	April 1 – June 30	July 15
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1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The following accomplishments and barriers have been identified this past reporting period. The Nebraska Families Collaborative, herein after referred to as the NFC, has experienced many changes in 2011 and continues to work together with state administrators, Eastern Service Area staff members, judicial representatives, families, and other stakeholders to identify solutions that will result in better outcomes for children and families.

This quarter **415 families participated** in Aftercare. **Fifty-six** new families were eligible for Aftercare services this quarter. **NFC had no re-entries into Case Management during this reporting period.** This is a major accomplishment of the NFC.

In the last quarterly report, the NFC discussed adapting the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS). The NFC is pleased to report that we have **fully implemented** the CANS this reporting period. The direct impact on service delivery continues to be monitored and evaluated through Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance activities. Due to full implementation of the CANS, this reporting period there is not enough data to report the direct impact; the NFC will have first set of data to report within the next one (1) to two (2) quarters. Anecdotal information has been observed through improved understanding of the child's needs and strengths and identification

of areas to be addressed through ongoing case planning. The CANS has assisted Family Permanency Specialists (FPS) discussions with providers to identify **functional strength based** strategies for each youth. The CANS is tied directly to the case planning process and discussed at each Family Team Meeting. It should be noted that utilization of the CANS has assisted with **improved discharge planning and moving children to their natural homes**.

During the first two months (January and February) of this quarterly reporting period, there was *little change* in moving families to case closure. This is largely due to the change in roles and responsibilities due to the uncertainty in roles from key stakeholders (Judges, County Attorney, GAL). NFC will continue to advocate for closure and permanency and ensure that children are safe through completing the closure safety assessment (NSIS). Areas of concern regarding case closure have been worked out and resolved with minimal need to elevate concerns to the Professional Judgment Resolution.

The NFC will continue to move forward in full support of Families Matters and further its mission, vision and values. Below are just a few accomplishments and barriers that occurred during this reporting period.

System Specific Accomplishments

January 2011 certain **Case Management** responsibilities were transferred to the lead agencies in the Eastern Service Area (ESA). To ensure that Family Permanency Specialist and Supervisors were adequately prepared, staff attended training in December 2010 to enhance current skills and to obtain additional knowledge in Case Management. In addition to transferring limited Case Management responsibilities, DHHS transitioned all official case files to the lead contractor. The NFC is now responsible for collecting and filing all ongoing paperwork as well as preparing the files for various audits.

NFC continues to **work collaboratively** with DHHS and KVC. As a lead agency in the ESA, weekly partner meetings continue to take place to ensure that key areas of responsibility and changes are addressed. The three lead agencies participated in a strategic planning retreat to identify barriers and strategies to achieving positive outcomes in the six (6) goal areas, which consist of:

- Decrease the number of youth entering the system and increase the number of youth exiting the system
- Increase the number of youth served at home with their families
- Increase the number of youth placed in a family-like setting
- Increase the number of youth placed with relatives
- Decrease the number of youth served more than 150 miles from Omaha
- Increase the number of families and youth actively involved in Aftercare services

The NFC, KVC and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) established an **Initial Response Unit (IRU)**. NFC positioned two full-time Family Permanency Specialists located at Project Harmony. The focus is to collaborate with DDHHS when:

- law enforcement remove children from the family
- when a Priority 1 intake is received
- a family with historic and multiple intakes receives a new intake through the Hotline

As of March 31, 2011, NFC assisted with 32 families. Twelve of the 32 families were assisted and diverted from Case Management. The IRU continues to make it a priority to keep children with their families whenever possible and to have children live with caregivers whom they know when it is determined they have to be removed. NFC has developed 16 *in home safety plans*, with only four out of home plans and three combinations that utilize both in and out-of- home resources.

Of the children placed *out-of-home*, only two children went into foster care. The other children have been placed with fathers, relatives or family friends who were known to the child. Overall, it appears the IRU is making positive strides to keep children with their families and out of the legal system when possible. The NFC supports maintaining this project and will continue to monitor the quality, effectiveness and outcomes.

NFC Specific Accomplishments

The NFC launched its first **Community Advisory Board** comprised of child welfare and juvenile justice stakeholders in the Eastern Service Area. Fifteen participants represented birth families, foster families, providers, public schools, legal parties, and other interested stakeholders. The purpose of the board is to advise NFC on its service delivery and to provide a mechanism for community feedback to the agency. The board intends to meet five to six times per year.

On March 24, 2011, NFC's Board of Directors engaged in a daylong retreat with national public-private expert, Charlotte McCullough. The purpose of the retreat was to **update NFC's strategic plan** and further develop its provider network. As a result, the NFC board has formed a performance based contracting workgroup, which will advise the board on NFC's next steps in its network development. This ongoing development will be instrumental in advancing service needs consistent to the children and families served.

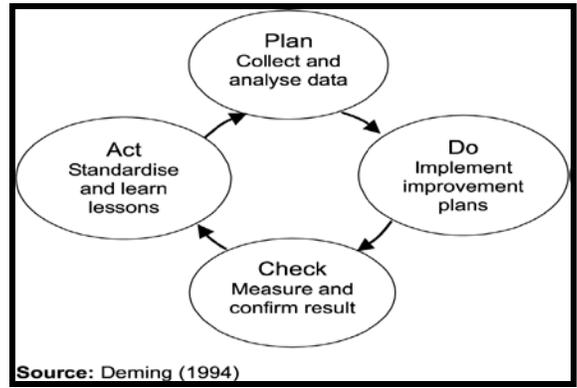
The NFC adopted the widely acclaimed **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool**. NFC staff has been trained on the evidence-based instrument (www.praedfoundation.org) to help guide Family Permanency Specialists in meaningful service planning. The CANS offers a module specifically for the child welfare and juvenile justice population and therefore will be used by NFC staff for service planning all children and families.

NFC's **Utilization Review (UR) Team** process evolved this reporting period. The UR Review Team evaluates children and families with the following characteristics:

- children at home for 3 or more months
- children in out of home care for 12 or more months
- youth on Parole for 3 or more months
- non-court families who have had been involved for 3 or more months

- children never removed from the home and involved for 3 or more months

NFC utilizes these reviews to further discuss families who have a high utilization of key services and identify how to safely decrease services and move children and families to permanency. The NFC utilizes the Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) process for monitoring of quality assurance.



The NFC instituted a **Detention Plan** that outlines strategies and monitors the improvements made that directly affect youth involved with the Juvenile Justice system. The plan's goals are to:

- Reduce the number of youth entering detention by developing services that prevent them from entering
- Decrease the amount of time youth reside in detention
- Develop services designed to serve youth in the least restrictive setting
- Maintain youth and community safety

The NFC has made gains in implementing its detention plan. Several efforts are currently underway related to addressing the situation of youth residing in detention:

- NFC conducted a profiling of characteristics of a percentage of its youth who have been detained and have had multiple stays in detention or failed placements. A work team of partner agencies was developed to meet ongoing to evaluate the progress of the NFC detention plan and make recommendations and adjustments based on need.
- The NFC is working with its network to develop the following specialized services for the OJS population:
 - Foster Care for single child placements
 - Foster Care placements specific to juvenile delinquents and offenders
 - CBAR model
 - Intensive Family Preservation Model
 - Family Support Model
 - Staff Secure Programs

The NFC Detention Plan was developed to determine alternative services for those youth in a Detention setting. The NFC model supports a truly independent and objective case management structure to ensure that services for youth and families are provided at the right time, for the right

duration, and at the appropriate intensity. The following data reflects that model which is tracked and monitored daily. An example of some of the progress includes:

- The number of youth placed out-of-home at entry decreased from 26% in December 2010 to 21% in March 2011.
 - This gain reflects the attention to early involvement when cases are assigned and demonstrates the significant impact early intervention has when working with families. The NFC will continue its efforts to develop creative ways to engage families by increasing their level of participation, commitment and willingness to maintain children in their natural homes or with relatives.
- The NFC continues to address the number of children who are placed more than 150 miles from Omaha.
 - The NFC recognizes the importance of serving youth within close proximity to their families. The NFC is committed to bringing the remainder of the youth back to the Omaha area and will continue to develop solid plans with its network of providers to ensure that few youth are sent more than 150 miles away from their families. The NFC is pleased to report that it has the lowest number of children placed out of state in the Eastern Service Area.

These two measures will continue to be an emphasis of the NFC CQI process and will utilize the Utilization Review Team to monitor for additional gains.

Barriers:

Foster Care recruitment continues to be a barrier to youth accessing quality and timely placements. The NFC has identified several gaps in foster care that include:

- Stable and permanent families for teens
- Families who can support children with special needs
- Families who can support children with high risk behaviors
- Children with Mental Health needs
- Children with Substance Abuse behaviors
- Children with Sexual Behaviors
- Families who can support teenage mothers and their children
- Families who can support large sibling groups

The NFC is working with foster care providers to recruit and retain families capable of meeting these needs and providing more supports for families of individuals familiar with the child or relative homes.

Family Engagement continues to present its own set of challenges. Families in child welfare often are afraid to become involved and are fearful of the child welfare process. The NFC has recently implemented the CANS as a tool to better develop communication and rapport with the youth and family to accurately identify and meet unmet needs and build upon strengths of the children and family in order to improve child and family outcomes.

To better engage children and their families the NFC selected the Permanency Teaming Model (PTP) from the Casey Family Services. The PTP is in process of becoming deemed an Evidence Based Practice. The model is child-centered and family focused and centered on achieving permanency for the child with an emphasis on meeting the unmet needs of families so that timely permanency can be achieved.

NFC continues to address the challenges for conducting Family Team Meetings and engaging families. NFC has developed FTM tools and a training manual that staff members use to prepare for and facilitate FTMs.

NFC continues to provide training and support to staff so that they may become more skilled in building rapport with families, ensuring all necessary parties are present for Family Team Meetings, utilization of the CANS tool as a communication and case planning tool and how to actively engage and/or locate parents.

National wraparound expert, John VanDenBerg, will be spending two full days conducting NFC training during the month of May. He will spend one entire day working with leadership on integrating wrap Overview of the latest innovations in the wraparound process to include the movement from relationship based supervision to skill focused coaching; ownership of the supervisors/leaders; manage safety in Wraparound; avoiding co-dependency/enabling; unconditional care and balancing with Juvenile Justice.

The second day he will training NFC FPS staff on the wraparound process; CANS in Wraparound; speaking of the strengths of children and families; identifying needs language as opposed to deficits or negative language; skill set definition to increase fidelity, especially individualization, family voice and choice; ensuring culturally competent wraparound plans and managing safety in Wraparound.

Both trainings will be centered on theory of change and will focus on four major reasons why wrap works. The outcomes of this training should help develop strategies with the NFC so that families can:

- Identify and prioritize their own needs
- Rapidly move toward self-efficacy and the ability to manage their needs on their own
- Build natural support networks and using them for reciprocal support
- Move systems from collaboration to integration

Description of Strategic Partnerships /Collaborations:

The NFC built its existence on collaboration. The voices of consumers, providers and key stakeholders are vital and occur every day and in multiple forums and occasions. The NFC values the input and feedback and will continue such efforts to further the success of the reform.

Partnering with KVC

The NFC has also been working with KVC to address the complex system challenges that exist between the behavioral health, medical and child welfare systems. Ongoing collaboration efforts at both a statewide level as well as at the direct care staff level will continue. Both the NFC and KVC have a continued interest in supporting reform efforts.

Partnering with Stakeholders

The NFC bases its beliefs on collaboration and will continue to work with Nebraska stakeholders across Nebraska to ensure that Family Matters Reform continues to develop so that children and families are best served. The NFC utilizes existing knowledge from stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvement as well as incorporates the voice of stakeholders in ongoing aspects of organizational need.

Many examples of forms of partnerships that occur each day between the NFC and other stakeholders are:

1184 Multidisciplinary Teams (Douglas and Sarpy County) – NFC is actively engaged into all 1184 Multidisciplinary teams for Douglas and Sarpy County. NFC will refer children and families to be reviewed by these teams for assistance with case planning and identifying treatment services that may be beneficial to the family. NFC collaborates with all team members and actively assists with other children and families that are presented during this team meeting.

Billing and Claims Workgroup – NFC engages with providers during this meeting to discuss updates and trends that are occurring in child welfare.

Douglas County Drug Court – NFC works with 4 drug courts in Douglas County (3 family courts and 1 juvenile court). NFC has family and youth involved with all of these drug courts. NFC is active with the planning for all families and the drug courts to ensure positive outcomes and success for all families and youth involved with the drug courts.

Douglas County Model Court – NFC is an active participant during the monthly meetings in Douglas County. NFC engages in the problem solving and educational discussions to ensure that Families Matters reform is able to progress in key areas that are presented to this group.

Foster Care Review Board – NFC works on a monthly basis with the foster care review board. We have assisted in CQI activities and work closely to improve the file retention and NFOCUS documentation that will allow Board members to have adequate information to review the children and families during the month.

Foster Youth Council – NFC attends monthly meetings with the Foster Youth Council and interacts during other community meetings. NFC provides a forum on a monthly basis for the Foster Youth Council staff to attend meetings and provide information regarding activities occurring for young people in our community.

Metro Child Abuse Coalition-MCAC – This is a community group that provides education and training to community social workers and child welfare advocates. NFC is an active member and we utilize these community trainings to assist our staff in professional growth and development opportunities.

Metro Hospital Medical School Worker Meetings – NFC participates in this meeting on a quarterly basis. This meeting has been beneficial to ensure that connections and relationships between area hospital social workers and NFC can be established. Through this quarterly meeting, NFC has been able to increase our understanding of the process and protocols established within the area hospitals and what they require when children and families need additional assistance from the Child Welfare System.

Nebraska Association of Homes and Services for Children (NEAHSC) – NFC participates in the Association with other providers to discuss issues and trends across the state.

Omaha Independent Living Plan – NFC participate with multiple committees and groups associated with the Omaha Independent Living Plan. These connections and meeting has allowed the NFC has a greater understanding of the multiple resources available for young people in the Omaha metro area. NFC has a positive working relationship with many stakeholders and agencies that work with the Omaha Independent Living Plan.

Sarpy County; Through the Eyes of Child – NFC attends the Sarpy County Model Court Meetings on a monthly basis. This meeting has allowed NFC to established key relationships with court professionals and stakeholders involved with the Sarpy County Juvenile Court. NFC has been involved in focused discussions, which have facilitated a greater understanding of the Families Matters reform and allowed NFC to provide increase knowledge of our Service Delivery Model.

Region VI TRY Team – This team has been integral in allowing NFC to establish key relationships with providers of Adult Mental Health and Developmental Disability Services in the Omaha Metro area. NFC has been able to work with this group to ensure that youth approaching the age of 19 have well established and coordinated services as they age out of the Child Welfare Foster Care System.

Working with Families

The voice of families is the most crucial aspects of feedback to an organization directly affecting the lives of children and families. The Family Team Meeting process is utilized for all NFC cases. The process is a strength-based approach primarily driven by the family versus the professionals involved with the families. The NFC is currently exploring additional ways in which the Family Team Meeting process can be more family centered while having a positive impact to families. During the FTM

process, protective factors are discussed tied directly to nurturing and attachment, parenting and child and youth development, parental resilience, social connections and identification of supports to parents.

Local Community Engagement

The NFC works with the local community to actively engage families with community resources and to get family members more involved in activities that include schools, recreational and leisure resources for children, after school programs, mentoring and tutoring programs, financial services, church and civic involvement and many other local community organizations. Each Family Permanency Specialist works with families to develop strategies of engagement throughout the life of the case and helps families identify their own engagement strategies as part of their Aftercare Plan.

Partnering with Providers

The NFC continues to work with its partnering agencies and subcontract providers to further develop a comprehensive system of care for children and families. Partnerships will continue to be strengthened so that identified barriers become opportunities to improve the service delivery of child welfare services.

This reporting period the NFC joined the Nebraska Association of Homes and Services for Children (NeAHSC). The NFC participation in the Association will allow for increased communication and collaboration among its network of providers.

Results of utilization of identified service models

The NFC monitors and evaluates results of its utilization of service models based on reports by partner agencies on each model utilized. Partner agencies utilize various service models, which are incorporated in the NFC originating proposal and contract. Each child requiring services is matched to a specific service and model based on youth and family needs. Specific service and service models are then determined and are monitored and evaluated through the CQI process.

Several service models utilized by the NFC network providers include:

- Boys Town In-Home Family Program (Evidence-Informed/Emerging)
- Boys Town Treatment Family Home Program (Promising Practice)
- Celebrating Families (Well-Supported Evidence-Based Practice)
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (Well-Supported Evidence-Based Practice)
- Family Peer-to-Peer Mentoring (Evidence-Informed/Emerging)
- Homebuilders (Supported Evidence-Based Practice)
- Multi-systemic Therapy (Well-Supported Evidence-based Practice)
- Nurturing Parenting Program (Promising Practice)
- Wraparound (Promising Practice)

The NFC utilizes its comprehensive quality network of providers of child welfare and community services in the Eastern Service Area. The NFC as a (non-service provider) utilizes the wraparound

model and its network of providers utilizes several Evidence Based and Promising Practices and services are identified based on need. The CANS process will help to continue to identify service needs that are appropriate and specific to the individual need of each child and family served.

The NFC's network of providers was designed to ensure that services and service models are provided at the right time, right duration and at the appropriate intensity regardless of the service provider. The network includes:

NFC Network of Subcontract Providers*	
Total Number of Subcontracting Agencies in ESA	48
Number of Collaborating partners of the NFC within total	5
Number of Agency Foster Care subcontracting providers in ESA within total	10
Number of other Lead contractor subcontractors in ESA	1

**Data derived from Network Database*

The NFC also provided the following single services during the Initial Assessment phase:

Referrals	January	February	March	Quarterly Total
One Time Service Referrals				
Drug Screen	8	8	11	27
Interpreter	4	4	5	13
Comprehensive Child and Adolescent Assessments (CCAA)	0	2	0	2
Placement during an OJS evaluation	1	0	1	2
Total One Time Service Referrals	13	14	17	44
Service Coordination Referrals				
Child Abuse and Neglect (3A)	20	19	21	60
Status Offender (3B)	3	5	8	16
Delinquent (OJS)	2	4	7	13
Total Service Coordination Referrals	25	28	36	89

**Data derived from NFC Intake Specialist*

The NFC has maintained fidelity to its model even through the transition of limited Case Management responsibilities. The fidelity to the model has ensured that NFC Family Permanency Specialists are able to ensure effective Case Management and service delivery to children and families.

NFC SERVED DATA	
585 families	92 % involved with the court system

1217 children	91% were involved with the court system

**Data derived from Families Matter: Pathways to Progress Monthly Report (March 2011)*

As discussed previously, NFC's Board of Directors has formed a performance based contracting workgroup, which will advise the board on NFC's next steps in its network development. The focus of this development will be instrumental in advancing service needs consistent to the children and families served.

Future Plans / Next Steps

- NFC will continue to develop and strengthen the provider network and the services offered to decrease the number of children in out of home care.
- Gaps in services will be evaluated to determine changes to current or new services that might assist families more appropriately.
- The NFC will continue to increase its presence in the community and will develop additional programming and outreach activities as needs are identified.
- The NFC will continue to work on initiatives that support the Fostering Youth Connections and Child and Family Service Review goals and objectives.
- The NFC will continue to enhance Authorization and Billing database (Penelope) to ensure that providers have easy access to submit billing and provide timely services to children and families.
- The NFC will continue to work with our collaborating partners to increase service delivery and out of home capacity to meet the families and children's identified needs. NFC will have a focus in this area to further develop our alternative detention resources and programming.
- The NFC will continue to monitor the quality of Case Management provided to families and children and utilize data provided from Penelope, N-FOCUS, and Quality Assurance (QA) reviews to ensure that coordination activities are provided in accordance to the Contract and Operation Manual.
- The NFC will ensure that Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) activities occur with all of the NFC network providers to ensure compliance with the Contract and Operation Manual. NFC will further provide feedback based on information tracked through Penelope as well as the NFC internal Provider Complaint tracking system.
- The NFC will initiate a collaborative workgroup on April 19, 2011 with partner agencies to identify necessary steps to move NFC's provider network to performance based contracting.
- The NFC will initiate a search for management information systems (MIS) that will better support NFC's ability to manage its network to desired outcomes for children and families. A MIS solution will be identified no later than July 1, 2011.
- The NFC will participate and/or implement within NFC's scope or functions all State of Nebraska Performance Improvement Plans with the U.S. Administration for Children and Families.

2. CONTRACTOR EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

NFC has the allotted number (52) of FTE's for FPS that manages the current caseload of families. The NFC has restructured its workforce to increase its effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and families, providers, and employees. During this reporting period, the following positions were created and filled:

- Two Intake Coordinators to work at the IRU
- Adoption/Permanency Consultant who will focus on quickly moving children permanency
- Legal Counsel who will work closely with child welfare and juvenile justice stakeholders to address legal barriers to permanency

The following positions were added this reporting period to improve internal efficiencies of the NFC:

- Two Foster Care Specialists to provide support to foster care initiatives and the day-to-day processing of agencies' home studies, holds, etc. They will assist in supervision and monitoring of compliance and quality assurance of foster care agencies.
- A second Assistant Director of Operations to oversee three of the NFC's Family Permanency Specialist Teams and assists in meeting NFC's strategic operation goals.
- A Records Specialist was added to lead the records management team since records were transferred to the NFC this past reporting period.

Due to the lead agencies now being responsible for the DHHS active files NFC had to create a Records Management Team, which currently consists of four part-time temporary Records Clerks and one full-time temporary Records Specialist.

During this reporting period, the NFC had a turnover rate of 12% for Family Permanency Specialists (FPS) and 0% for Supervisors. For consistency purposes, it should be noted that FPS were formerly reported as Service Coordinators (SC). Service Coordinator name change reflects that of changes made with the additional roles and responsibilities.

Employment Information			
Fiscal Quarters	Qtr 1: July- September	Qtr 2: October- December	Qtr 3: January- March
Allotted FTE's for Family Permanency Specialists	46.5	46.5	52
Filled Family Permanency Specialist Positions	46.5	45.5	42
Family Permanency Specialist positions currently in training	0	0	10
Vacant Family Permanency Specialist positions	0	1	5
Average length of employment for Family Permanency Specialists in days	278	353	343
Allotted FTE's for Referral/Aftercare Specialists	4	4	4
Filled Referral/Aftercare Specialists	4	4	4

Vacant Referral/Aftercare Specialists	0	0	0
Allotted FTE's for Supervisor	7	7	7
Supervisor positions that are filled	7	7	7
Supervisor positions that are vacant	0	0	0
Average length of employment for Supervisors in days	362	403	462
Allotted FTE's for Team Support Specialist positions	5	5	5
Team Support positions that are filled	5	5	5
Allotted FTE's for Clinical staff positions	3	3	3
Clinical Staff positions that are filled	3	3	3
Allotted FTE's for Intake & Billing Specialist	1	1	1
Intake & Billing Specialist position that is filled	1	1	1
Allotted FTE's for Other staff	7	7	7
Other positions that are filled	7	7	7
Allotted FTE's for Leadership Team	9	9	9
Leadership Team positions that are filled	9	9	9

**Data derived from Banner and Training Roster*

3. FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

NFC, KVC, and DHHS have been collaboratively providing oversight to the child placing agencies in the Eastern Service Area. At this time, the NFC supervises Boys Town, Child Connect, Child Saving Institute and Omni Behavioral Health. Each of the above agencies are responsible for their own recruitment and retention plan. However, with the addition of foster care staff this reporting period the NFC will work collaboratively with the agencies to develop a master NFC recruitment and retention plan.

Combined recruitment activities between the NFC supervised agencies include:

Recruitment Activity From Agency Plans	Agency
Billboards	BT
Portable recruiting units	BT
Brochures	BT
Contact with NFAPA families	ALL
Outreach to local business	ALL
Outreach at community organizations	ALL
Foster Care Network Meeting	BT, CSI, OMNI
Word of Mouth	ALL
Referral Bonus Program	ALL

The NFC is not a child-placing agency, therefore, works directly with the supervised agencies to develop recruitment and retention strategies to support its network need and to develop services for specialized populations. There are many upcoming events for Foster Care Awareness Month planned by the agencies during May.

Newly Licensed Foster Homes	13
Closed Foster Homes	26
Foster Homes transfers from a non-subcontracted provider	0
Foster Homes transfers to a non-subcontracted provider	0
Foster Homes transfers within NFC oversight subcontracted providers	3
Total Number of Licensed Foster Homes	256
Total number of foster homes on hold	17
Total number of foster homes waiting for licensing approval	11

The NFC is currently working with the partner agencies to further review the increase in closed foster homes this reporting period. Strategies related to the findings will be developed and implemented to ensure that there are the necessary supports in place to maintain open homes. There were no homes this quarter that transferred outside of the NFC Provider Network and only three that transferred across subcontract agencies.

The NFC works with its partner agencies to match foster homes based on:

- the best interest of the child
- proximity to birth family
- proximity to school
- proximity to neighborhood
- proximity to friends and activities
- cultural needs
- behaviors
- special needs
- Foster parent specialties

During this reporting period, the NFC has explored various national models and resources to locate potential relative or child specific placements. The newly hired Adoption/Permanency Consultant and Foster Care Specialist staff members will continue to identify other national models and resources to locate relative and child specific placements. The roll out of the selected model (Seneca Family Finder) that best fits the NFC mission, vision and values is scheduled to be fully implemented spring 2011.

A thorough assessment comprised of an Ecomap, Genogram and CANS is completed on each youth to determine potential relative or child specific placements. Relative and child specific searches are exhausted prior to an agency foster care referral. Each identified relative/child specific placement is contacted to determine the appropriateness of interaction or placement. The best match to the best interest of the child is essential.

The following table depicts the number of youth placed in relative/child specific types of homes:

NFC Relative/Child Specific Foster Care Homes	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3
Children placed in relative/child specific care	294	297	276

Home studies completed	14	18	16
Homes approved for relative/child specific care	54	33	16
Homes licensed for relative/child specific care	0	0	9
Approved Homes Closed	0	0	0
Licensed Homes Closed	0	0	0

**Data derived from NFC Penelope report and DHHS Derived Placement report*

The NFC has requested that a DHHS Info View report titled *Foster Care Statistics* be upgraded to show the results by child placing agencies as well as county to have a common reporting mechanism for the information above.

The NFC works with agencies that promote diversity, support for highly specialized youth, family identification and connections and ensures that all staff and foster parents receive education and training. The NFC requires that all foster care agencies provide **PS-MAPP** training. In addition, the NFC works with its network foster care agencies to promote strategies to recruit and support relative placements and adoptive placement. These two major initiatives will continue to be the focus of the NFC and its network so that greater placement stability and permanency can be achieved.

Supports and education are the primary responsibility of each agency. Day to day support to foster parents is provided by the Foster Care Specialist within the agency and training is provided by each agency.

4. LICENSING WAIVERS

There were no **Licensing Waivers** requested by NFC this quarter.

Licensing Waivers (case-by-case waivers of non-safety licensing standards)					
	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Annual Total
Number of case-by-case waivers granted	0	0	0		0

a) **An assessment of how granting such waivers have affected children in foster care, including their safety, permanency and well-being**

The NFC continues to seek ways to increase the licensing of kinship foster homes realizing the impact this has directly tied to safety, permanency and well-being. The NFC is committed to seeking ways to support this so that the state may increase funding streams.

b) **Reasons why relative foster family homes may not be licensed despite authority to grant such case-by-case waivers of non-safety licensing standards**

NFC is evaluating various opportunities to increase the number of licensed foster family homes. NFC is in discussion to determine if a new position can be created to streamline the family home home study process while also informing and encouraging the family to become licensed. NFC is also discussing with their partnering agencies regarding supports that they might be able to offer these families to encourage them to become licensed. NFC will ensure each home that has the potential to receive a licensing waiver has a clear understanding of the process and responsibilities to help them determine if it is an appropriate choice for them. The agency that the foster parent will be with will also have the ability to determine if licensing is appropriate as well.

c) Actions the Lead Agency plans to take or is considering taking to increase the percentage of relative foster family families who are licensed while ensuring the safety of children in foster care and improving their permanence and well-being; and

The NFC has redesigned the foster care oversight department to now included one manager of foster care, two foster care specialists and one support staff. One foster care specialist is designated to work with kinship foster parents directly. They will be responsible for completing the home study and supporting the parents. NFC is creating an opening packet to provide to kinship foster care parents, which will include information about licensing waiver and the benefits. NFC is working with its partner agencies to provide those supports that include training, support and connection to their agencies to receive the licensing waiver.

d) Suggestions the Lead Agency has for administrative and/or legislative actions to increase licensed relative care.

The NFC is interested in working with the Department to develop collective suggestions for both administrative and legislative action so that licensed relative care increases in the state of Nebraska. NFC is aware of the federal and state discussions related to how states could better utilize funds with states that successfully increase licensed relative care. These additional funds could support services in home versus foster care.

5. CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN (CFSP) UPDATE

The NFC became involved in the implementation of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) plan this reporting period, March 2011. Since the transition of limited case management responsibilities the leads are an essential part of this plan and will collaborate and work with the Department.

On March 16, 2011 the lead agencies along with the Department and federal DHHS met to discuss the NSIS, Family Team Meetings, Quarterly Reports and Foster Care recruitment and retention plans. In the month of March the lead agencies were informed of the Nebraska Safety Intervention System (NSIS) increased implementation and proficiency development section of the plan and what their role would be. The NFC provided a draft Family Team Meetings plan that will be updated once the Family Team Model is rolled out as described in Section One: *General Overview*.

In December 2009 DHHS requested contractors to provide a foster care recruitment and retention plan and since NFC is not a child placing agency these were collected from all of the subcontracted providers. The federal DHHS determined that not all of the plans meet the PIP requirements. It was also suggested that a service area specific recruitment and retention plan be created and disseminated down to the subcontracted providers.

There was further discussion regarding the Quarterly Reports and if they are meeting the PIP requirements and at this time there is a group comprised of DHHS and lead contractors reviewing the Operation Manual, which includes the reporting requirements for contractors. This group will review the PIP and implement the benchmarks.

The NFC continues to be committed to ensure compliance with Children and Family Services Plan and help to improve the areas needing improvement in the Children and Family Services Review. The NFC has reviewed the measures at the DHHS website (<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/compass/safety-current.htm>) and determined positive changes in the following areas:

- The percent of all children placed in out-of-home care will be reunified within 12-months
- The percent or less of all reunified children re-enter out-home-care within 12-months of discharge. (Less is better in this case)
- The percent of cases of children legally free for adoption will be adopted within 12-months of being legally free for adoption
- The percent of cases, of youth in care for 24 or more continuous months discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18th birthday

The information along with the graphs are located on the DHHS website.

6. DISASTER PLAN UPDATES

The only changes that have been made to the NFC Disaster Plan were staff contact updates to the Calling Tree. The NFC has a Disaster Plan that identifies youth in out-of-home care and families assigned to Family Permanency Specialists. The Plan is capable of distributing families that have been displaced due to a disaster and has a plan to deploy additional community resources in the event of such occurrence. The NFC has a backup system to preserve client and family records.

7. CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE UPDATE

The NFC has not made any changes to the Department approved NFC Independent Living Plan. The plan addresses specific ways in which the NFC assist youth in transitioning to self-sufficiency; receive education, training and employment; support for youth aging out of the system; financial; housing; counseling; and other supports for youth between the ages of 18 and 21 years of age.

Several activities that the NFC and its network of providers do to meet these efforts include:

- Independent Living skills provided in Case Management through the Family Permanency Specialist
- Utilization of the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment
- Require service providers to ensure Independent Living skills are taught with youth served
- Linking youth to local community resources to better prepare them for adulthood
- Work with providers that specifically offer Independent Living services

The NFC also participates in the Project Everlast Self Evaluation Team, which meets quarterly to address the needs of youth who are currently in foster care or who are alumni of the foster care system. The group works to gather, analyze, evaluate and communicate data as it relates to these youth, ages 14-24.

8. TRAINING

With recent reform changes the NFC now completes the DHHS Child Welfare and Juvenile Services (CWJS) Training that was formerly provided by CCFL. The first new worker training the NFC provided began on 2/7/11 having staff fully prepared for Case Management duties on 4/21/11.

Training occurs 15 weeks prior to taking families for case management. The NFC is currently working with DHHS and CCFL to create transparent training schedules. The NFC has developed plans to meet the short-term and long-term training needs of our agency using the required curricula.

The NFC has collaborated with DHHS and KVC to develop a Proficiency Model whereby staff demonstrates not only an understanding, but also application of the Nebraska Safety Intervention System (NSIS).

NFC continues to update our Training Plan to meet the ongoing needs and changes to roles and responsibilities. The training plan reflects changes to the new job duties for Family Permanency Specialist as well as changes to the New Worker training.

Additional In-Service Training conducted during this reporting period includes:

- Testifying Training provided by Project Harmony: 3.5 Hours 2/3/11 and 3/21/11
 - This training was developed in collaboration with Juvenile Court Judges, County Attorney, Guardian ad Litem, DHHS staff, KVC staff, and NFC staff. The training provided FPS the opportunity to learn from the experts on how to correctly testify as well as how to best explain their job duties and professional training.
- Adoption Training: The role of the FPS provided by Stephanie Clark as a DHHS Adoption supervisor: 3 Hours 2/9/11 and 2/11/11
 - This training was an in depth training explaining the new roles of the FPS in the adoption process. Ms. Clark reviewed statute statutes and DHHS Policies regarding the adoption process and provided the proper documents necessary to conduct our work.
- Relinquishment Training for PFS provided by Stephanie Clark as a DHHS Adoption supervisor: 2 hours 2/9/11 and 2/11/11

- This training was provided as an addition to the adoption training. Ms. Clark provided staff with additional training on the relinquishment process as well as state statute and policy.
- Speaking of the Children. This training was provided by Project Harmony, all day training 3/2/11
 - This was held at the Qwest Center Omaha. Staff attended two of the following trainings: Critical Thinking in Safety Planning, Haunted Secrets, Silence and Self in the Treatment of a Victimized Child, The role of the Medical Provider in Child Abuse/Neglect, Sexualized Children and the Law, or Intergenerational Trauma in Refugees
- ICPC/ICJ Training provided by Mary Dyer, Rita Krusemark and Mike Reddish. The training was 3.5 hours. 1/20/11
 - The training provided staff from NFC and KVC correct way to do an ICPC or ICJ. The trainers also provided staff with a forum to ask questions regarding specifics on the ICPC or ICJ process.
- CANS Training provided by NFC employees who have been certified as CANS trainers. NFC combined their training materials with videos made by Dr. Lyons. This training was 8 hours 2/21/11 and 3/8/11
 - The training reviewed the CANS tool, explained the scoring guidelines and provided staff with vignettes as well as real case examples to practice.

Family Permanency New Employee Training:

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Annual Total
Number of Employees who completed initial training hours	3	0	10		13
Number of hours for DHHS New Employee Trainings Delivered	0	0	2622		2622
Number of hours for NFC New Employees Training Delivered	44	44	74		162
Number of NFC On-going /In-Service Training hours Delivered	1167	2813	1528.5		5508.5
Number of hours current NFC employees trained new NFC employees	27.25	307.25	126.5		461
Cost of Training Provided by NFC	\$25,968.76	\$67,848	\$92,790		\$186,606.76

**Data Derived from Training and Financial Departments*

Provider NFC Trainings:

Title	Date	Location	# Trainees	Conducted by	Training times	Agencies trained	Prep hours
Social Work Senior Seminar on job searches	3/7/2011	UNO, School of SW	25	Dave Newell was part of an Employer panel	10-11:30	Social work Seniors	1
NFC Provider Training	1/25/2011	BT Auditorium	21	Mariana Fox	9-11 a.m.	Alegent, Child Connect, Children's Square-Child Connect, Youth Care and Beyond, Capstone, Salvation Army, NFC, OMNI, Concord Center, Boys Town, NOVA, Catholic Charities	4
NFC Provider Training	1/28/2011	BT Auditorium	17	Mariana Fox	9-11 a.m.	NOVA, Uta Halee, Boys Town, Beneficial Behavioral Health, CSI, Omaha Home for Boys Heartland Family Service	4
NFC Provider Training	2/22/2011	BT Auditorium	19	Mariana Fox	9-11 a.m.	Lutheran Family Services, Harvest Haven, YWCA, Better Living, NOVA, ABH, Owens, CSI, NFSN, NOVA, A Better Way Therapy, APEX, Christian Heritage	4

9. PROGRAM EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE AND PROMISING PRACTICE

NFC utilizes the Wraparound Model for all children and families served (100%).

Wraparound is a complex, multifaceted intervention strategy that involves “wrapping” a comprehensive array of individualized services and support networks “around” children and families, rather than forcing them to enroll in pre-determined, inflexible treatment programs. Wraparound is a system of care for children with serious emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs, and for their families. Its approach emphasizes developing services and delivering them to families, who are strength based, highly individualized, and community oriented.

The Wraparound Process is an intensive, individualized care management process for youths with serious or complex needs. During the wraparound process, a team of individuals who are relevant to the well-being of the child or youth (e.g., family members, other natural supports as identified by the child and family, service providers, and agency representatives) collaboratively develop an individualized plan of care, implement this plan, and monitor and evaluate success over time. The wraparound plan includes formal and informal services and interventions, together with community services and interpersonal support and assistance provided by friends, kin, and other people drawn from the family’s natural social networks.

The team convenes frequently to measure the plan’s components against relevant indicators of success. Plan components and strategies are revised when outcomes are not being achieved. Although it is often difficult to conduct research in this field, i.e. how can we measure the success of a family that is functioning at a higher level at the end of the “wrap process” when it is hard to measure small minute progress that the family/youth might not be able to articulate or understand. Perhaps the research/practice should rely less on the objective measurable goals and instead focus on each youth/family individual story/progress.

Topics/Areas of interest:

The process of engaging the family, convening the team, developing the plan, implementing the plan, and transitioning the youth out of formal wraparound is typically facilitated by a trained care manager or “wraparound facilitator,” sometimes with the assistance of a family support worker. The wraparound process, and the plan itself, is designed to be culturally competent, strengths based, and organized around family members’ own perceptions of needs, goals, and likelihood of success of specific strategies.

Four (4) Phases of Wraparound

- 1) Planning
- 2) Implementation
- 3) Engagement
- 4) Transition

Ten (10) Principles of Wraparound

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1) Family Voice & Choice | 6) Individualized |
| 2) Team based | 7) Strengths based |
| 3) Natural supports | 8) Collaboration |
| 4) Community based | 9) Persistence |
| 5) Culturally competent | 10) Outcome Based |

Data Quantity

NFC administers the WFI to caregivers, facilitator, youth (11 years or age or older) and team members referred to NFC for Service Coordination. The WFI monitors and measures how the Wraparound principles and stages of engagement are being adhered to and implemented. The premise is by accurately applying the wraparound principles we should see better outcomes for children and families. NFC has contracted with Nebraska Family Support Network (NFSN) to complete the caregivers, youth and team member's surveys.

The WFI-4 interviews are organized by the four phases of the wraparound process (Engagement and Team Preparation, Initial Planning, Implementation, and Transition). In addition, the 40 items of the WFI interview are keyed to the 10 principles of the wraparound process, with four items dedicated to each principle. In this way, the WFI-4 interviews are intended to assess compliance to the wraparound practice model and adherence to the principles of wraparound in service delivery.

NFC assessed 22 children/youth during this quarter.

- o The combined WFI scores indicate NFC's overall fidelity at 72% as compared to the national mean of 77%. Individually the Facilitators rated overall fidelity at 75%, Caregivers at 83% and youth at 72%.
- o The WFI scores indicate NFC's fidelity scores by phase at 81% for Engagement, 67% for Plan Development, 83% for Implementation and 69% for Transition. As compared to the national mean of 76% for Engagement, 76% for Plan Development, 81% for Implementation and 69% for Transition.
- o The WFI scores indicate NFC's fidelity scores by principle at 87% for family voice and choice, 72% for team based, 71% for natural supports, 70% for collaboration, 64% for community-based, 93% for culturally competent, 72% for individualized, 80% for strengths based, 89% for persistence, 51% for outcome based. As compared to the national mean of 83% for family voice and choice, 72% for team based, 64% for natural supports, 85% for collaboration, 71% for community-based, 91% for culturally competent, 69% for individualized, 83% for strengths based, 82% for persistence, 67% for outcome based.

Data Quality

NFC recently met with NFSN regarding concerns for the low number of responses to the surveys and determined to no longer utilize NFSN for this service. At this time, NFC is evaluating proposals and next steps to completing the WFI surveys.

Strengths

Overall strength is that these data measures are systematically tracked. Additional oversight from the QA staff and quarterly reports are provided to Operations Director and the training department to determine next steps.

Weaknesses

Distinctions must be made between Wraparound and Family Centered Practice and utilization of these guiding principles are provided in relation to completing PCAs, Family Team Meetings, and Case Plan development. Also due to the relatively small sample of clients to date, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions regarding the efficacy of the Wraparound model for families referred through the child welfare system.

Points for Improvement & Plan of Action

NFC will determine next steps to completing the WFI and will continue to monitor the fidelity of Wraparound through the WFI. Inefficiencies in the application of Wraparound model and the completion of the WFI surveys will continue to be determined and be addressed by NFC. It is necessary to continue to collect data and monitor the long-term outcomes for families who have participated in this program in order to determine the efficacy of the Wraparound model.

10. AFTERCARE SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES REPORT

NFC Aftercare services are designed to ensure that families maintain safety, permanency and well-being for twelve months following case closure of Service Coordination. Families are offered the opportunity to choose and guide supports and needs as identified by the family. The purpose of Aftercare is to ensure that families are functioning in a safe and healthy manner. NFC works to ensure families are fully engaged. A more comprehensive description of the Aftercare Plan and activities is outlined in the NFC Aftercare Plan along with definitions and levels of participation and engagement.

This quarter **415 families participated** in Aftercare. **Fifty-six** new families were eligible for Aftercare services this quarter. **NFC had no re-entries into Case Management during this reporting period.**

The following depicts the number of families that aftercare was not required:

- Seven families in which the only service provided was related to an Initial Safety Assessment or OJS evaluation
- One family moved out of state.

The NFC provided the following activities and efforts related to attempts to engage families in Aftercare:

- Face to Face Meetings
- Family Team Meetings
- Phone calls
- Email blasts

- Direct Mail

In the next reporting period, the NFC will distribute the Aftercare Newsletter and begin Monthly Aftercare Community Support Groups. These groups are facilitated by family members and monitored by NFC staff and are open to any family receiving Aftercare or post Aftercare.