

## Level Two for Describing Need: Extent to Which Existing Home Visiting Programs Address Risk

This document describes the process by which Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) determined the extent to which existing home visiting programs operating within the 17 counties (identified in Level 1) address specific risks. Level 1 determined the state's counties with the highest risks for poor outcomes that could be addressed through home visitation, as per requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The goal of the Level 2 analyses was to evaluate the existing level of services in the counties. The analysis was done in three parts: first, determine how many "at risk" children are currently being served in each county; second, determine whether existing programs were addressing the risks identified in their county; and third, combine the two scores for a final score. Once Level 2 was complete, the level service score was combined with the Level 1 score in order to conclude where the largest unaddressed need exists.

This analysis was limited by the types of data collected at the county and program level, and is only as good as the information that the programs provided to DHHS. Further, the levels of current services are not static - they change over time, thus these results can only represent a snapshot in time.

### Methodology

1. **Preparation:** DHHS staff spent time exploring methodologies and examining options for objectively measuring counties' current level and type of home visiting services. After a great deal of thought and debate the second level was constructed with three separate steps. The first step determined "penetration" of existing programs - the number of at-risk children in the county actually being served by a home visiting program.

Penetration was measured by the ratio of children 0-5 living in poverty being served by the program compared to the estimated number of children 0-5 living in poverty in the county. This criterion was scored so that counties serving a lower percentage of children received a higher score:

- 0 = Higher than 50% penetration
- 1 = 20% or higher penetration
- 2 = 10% or higher penetration
- 3 = 0-10% penetration

The second step assessed whether the home visiting program(s) were using a formal model-based approach to address the county-specific risks identified in Level 1. This criterion was scored so that programs with fewer targeted activities received a higher score:

- 0 = addressing all risks with a model
- 1 = addressing some/most of the risks with a model
- 2 = addressing some of the risks
- 3 = addressing none of the risks or not offering enough visits to address risks

The third step, described below, combined the scores from steps 1 and 2 to provide a county score.

2. Data collection. For step 1, county-level data (2008/2009) on numbers of young children at risk were obtained from the US Census Bureau, specifically:

- a) Estimated number of children <5 years<sup>1</sup>
- b) Estimated number of children <5 years living in poverty<sup>2</sup>

To obtain the additional information needed for step 2, staff developed a telephone interview form that sought information on client demographics and programmatic activities specifically addressing the county's identified risks. Staff requested an interview from all home visiting programs identified during Level 1 and sent the interview questions prior to the call. Information was gathered from 30 of the 32 identified programs. All interviews were conducted during December, 2010 and January, 2011. It is important to note that the programs provided the best estimates possible based on their most current available information. As such, results should be considered a "best estimate" of actual numbers.

3. Analysis. Step 1: Calculations of the estimated number of children <5 years living in poverty served by the program(s) were performed by dividing the number of children living in poverty served by the program(s) by the estimated number of children living at 100% of the poverty level in the county. County-specific level of penetration was scored by the criteria described above.

Step 2: To assess the degree to which risks were being addressed under a home visiting model, staff utilized data collected from the programs during Level 1 (the initial "Zoomerang" surveys) and the supplemental phone interviews to determine whether the programs are:

- a) Implementing a formal home visiting model
- b) Offering more than one visit
- c) Offering programming and/or activities that address their county's identified risks

Program-specific levels of "risk addressed" were scored by the criteria described above. Where there was more than one program in a county, its score was weighted by its proportion of the total number of children at risk being served in the county. The overall county score was then the sum of the weighted program scores. For counties with only one eligible home visiting program, the program score is the same as the county score.

Step 3: The penetration and risk addressed scores were added together, yielding a total Level Two score for each county. Combined Level 2 scores ranged from 0.08 to 6.0.

4. Counties received a final ranking based on the sum of their Level One and Level Two scores.

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<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau, Population Division, July 2010, Annual Estimates of the Civilian Population by Single-Year of Age and Sex for the United States and States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Estimates Branch, November 2010, Table 1: 2008 Poverty and Median Income Estimates – Counties, Nebraska.

Analysis

Step One of Level Two: Penetration of Existing Programs, by County

County	Total Population , 2009 Census Est.			Living in Poverty, 2008 Small Area Est.		Est. "Served" by "program"		Score
	ALL	Pop <5	% Pop <5	Pop <5	% Pop <5	Pop <5	% Pop <5	
Box Butte	10,891	767	7.0	148	19.3	36	24.3	1
Boyd	2,063	92	4.5	30	4.0	0	0.0	3
Buffalo	45,814	3,337	7.3	586	17.6	15	2.6	3
Colfax	10,332	1,093	10.6	152	13.9	120	78.9	0
Dakota	20,651	2,016	9.8	469	23.3	85	18.1	2
Dawson	25,076	2,175	8.7	532	24.5	10	1.9	3
Douglas	510,199	42,647	8.4	8,243	19.3	1006	12.2	2
Gage	22,653	1,391	6.1	286	20.6	175	61.2	0
Hall	57,487	5,048	8.8	1,123	22.2	560	49.9	0
Jefferson	7,238	389	5.4	87	22.4	29	33.3	1
Lancaster	281,531	20,616	7.3	3,145	15.3	792	25.2	1
Lincoln	35,670	2,541	7.1	466	18.3	186	39.9	1
Morrill	4,911	317	6.5	87	27.4	3	3.4	3
Nemaha	6,856	429	6.3	72	16.8	0	0.0	3
Richardson	8,125	426	5.2	107	25.1	66	61.7	0
Scotts Bluff	36,854	2,760	7.5	687	24.9	143	20.8	1
Thurston	7,306	802	11.0	353	44.0	NA	NA	3
Nebraska	1,796,619	134,717	7.5	24,301	18.0			

Step Two of Level Two: Risks Addressed by Existing Program(s) within Counties\*

County	Child Welfare	Juvenile Crime	Economics	Education	Health Outcomes	Pregnancy Outcomes	Social Welfare	Health Behaviors	Weighted Score
Box Butte		0/2					2/2		1.19
Boyd		0				0			3
Buffalo	1/1	0/1							1
Colfax				2/3			2/3	2/3	0.08
Dakota				1/1			1/1	1/1	0
Dawson				0/1	0/1			1/1	1
Douglas	5/7	1/7						6/7	1.11
Gage				1/2	1/2				2.67
Hall	2/2			1/2			0/2	1/2	1.12
Jefferson	1/2						0/2		2.1
Lancaster	3/3						3/3		0.03
Lincoln	1/1	0/1				1/1	1/1		1
Morrill		0/1				0/1			3
Nemaha		0	0						3
Richardson			0/1		0/1				3
Scotts Bluff	1/2	1/2	1/2		1/2		0/2	1/2	2.5
Thurston			2/2	2/2				2/2	3

\*The left-hand number represents the number of programs with activities addressing the specific risk; the right-hand number is the total number of programs identified in the county.

Step Three of Level Two: Summation by County of Extent to Which Existing Services Address Risk

County	Penetration	Risk	Total
Box Butte	1	1.19	2.19
Boyd	3	3	6
Buffalo	3	1	4
Colfax	0	0.08	0.08
Dakota	2	0	2
Dawson	3	1	4
Douglas	2	1.11	3.11
Gage	0	2.67	2.67
Hall	0	1.12	1.12
Jefferson	1	2.1	3.1
Lancaster	1	0.03	1.03
Lincoln	1	1	2
Morrill	3	3	6
Nemaha	3	3	6
Richardson	0	3	3
Scotts Bluff	1	2.5	3.5
Thurston	3	3	6

## Results

### Combined Level One and Two Scores, Ranked

County	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Scotts Bluff	5	3.5	8.5
Thurston	2	6	8
Boyd	1	6	7
Morrill	1	6	7
Nemaha	1	6	7
Dawson	2	4	6
Douglas	2	3.11	5.11
Buffalo	1	4	5
Lincoln	3	2	5
Hall	3	1.12	4.12
Jefferson	1	3.1	4.1
Dakota	2	2	4
Richardson	1	3	4
Gage	1	2.67	3.67
Box Butte	1	2.19	3.19
Colfax	2	0.08	2.08
Lancaster	1	1.03	2.03