



Advocating for the protection of Iowa's children and strengthening the child welfare system

Iowa Child Advocacy Board

FISCAL YEAR 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2018

Report of the Iowa Child Advocacy Board

Fiscal Year 2018

Dear Colleagues,

The Iowa Child Advocacy Board (ICAB) is an independent board appointed by the Governor of Iowa to provide for citizen involvement in child welfare issues. ICAB oversees two volunteer child advocacy programs designed to help protect Iowa children and their best interests while being served by the child welfare system. The Iowa Child Advocacy Board is pleased to submit to you its annual report Fiscal Year 2018.

During the past year 645 volunteers worked as Court Appointed Special Advocates and Foster Care Review Board Members to serve more than 3,000 children during the past fiscal year. We are impressed with their professionalism and dedication to their advocacy missions. They shine a light of hope for improvement of the life outcomes for these children and their families. The CASA and FCRB volunteers are supported by a corps of equally dedicated staff and contracted partners, most of whom have devoted their professional lives to the service of vulnerable children in Iowa.

The Board has great appreciation for the support and partnership the Legislature, Governor, the Iowa Court System, and the Iowa Department of Human Services have provided to Iowa's CASA and FCRB programs. Restoring a portion of previous decreases in our appropriation helps provide a sound footing for continued program improvements.

The contribution of our expanding cadre of volunteer CASA Coaches is an exciting program advance that will gradually extend advocacy services to hundreds of children who are not currently receiving this support. Continued development of a world-class approach to increasing the knowledge and capacity of both paid and volunteer staff will yield improved advocacy results in the years to come. Advances in the use of automated computer support for paid and volunteer staff is already contributing to efficiencies and improved safeguards for highly sensitive information regarding the children our volunteers serve. Newly developed assessment tools will be implemented in FY 2019 to focus advocacy efforts on the full range of children's needs and to eventually measure children's progress toward important life outcomes.

We value the partnership with our non-profit sister organization, the Friends of Iowa CASA and IFCRB. The Friends organization has made great strides during the past three years to develop a stable base of individual donors who contribute to the support of our programs. With continued expansion of the ranks of our volunteer Advocates and Coaches, state support and continued increases in voluntary contributions to Friends, our hope is to resume extension of our program coverage to many more parts of the state in the future.. We appreciate the generosity of Iowa's caring citizens who have supported our program through their volunteerism and private donations.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Myers
Chair, Iowa Child Advocacy Board

Board Members –Fiscal Year 2018

*Courtney Clarke
Marc Elcock
Mark Hargrafen*

*Beth Myers
William Owens
Sara Parris*

*Elaine Sanders
Wayne Schellhammer
Michael Steele*



Our Stories

These stories don't represent any particular child or the average child or youth we serve. But they do reflect some of the main circumstances we see in key areas where we focus our advocacy work. Greta's story helps illuminate the challenges of helping a child achieve both legal and relational permanency. Kamau's struggle is with educational stability and academic success in a world far different from where he started his life.

Greta

Greta, an only child, was born in 2002 into a happy family. Her mom and dad, Sue and Bob, were loving parents who doted on Greta and saw to it that she had every opportunity to succeed in life. Until Greta was 12, she was thriving and the joy of her parents' lives. Then things turned upside down. Doctors discovered through a routine exam that Sue had cancer, a particularly dangerous form.

A week after Greta turned 13, Sue passed away. Greta and her dad were devastated. For Greta, the loss of a mother whom she loved so much was especially difficult when she was experiencing so many other changes in her own life. Her dad went into a deep depression he couldn't shake, despite work with doctors and a counselor. He started drinking to self-medicate, and over a relatively short period of time, the drinking became very heavy. Bob was frequently incoherent and unable to attend to any of Greta's concerns at a time when she most needed support. She still loved her dad, but couldn't understand why he was doing what he did. She was hurt, angry and alone. Though Bob had never in his life been violent, one day, in a drunken rage, he beat Greta severely. Her

face was bruised, her arm broken. The neighbors heard the noise and called police.

The police and Child Protective Services intervened. Bob was arrested. Greta was immediately placed in an emergency foster home. Because this was the first time Bob had ever done anything like this, the court allowed him to enter a treatment facility. But multiple rounds of treatment didn't work, so the court found Greta to be a Child in Need of Assistance. A CASA Advocate was appointed.

Bob couldn't care for Greta and was an ongoing danger to her. Greta still loved her dad but knew she could never live with him again unless he could become -- and stay -- sober. It wasn't to be. The Advocate worked with Greta, advocating for the supports she needed to move ahead with her life and making sure the court and all the others involved were aware of Greta's needs and wishes. Ultimately, after Greta had been with the same foster family for two years, Bob's parental rights were terminated.

Now 16, Greta didn't want to consider adoption. The foster family was willing to continue caring for her until she graduated from high school, but Greta was still holding out hope

that her dad would become sober and things could go back to the way they were.

Through the supportive relationship the Advocate had with Greta, it was possible for them to have some pretty deep discussions about what Greta hoped for in the future. She wanted to go to college and, because of her own experience, was very interested in some type of helping profession, health care or social work, so that she could help other children and families. The Advocate learned that Greta had a particularly strong relationship with one of her high school teachers, Mrs. Evans. Greta really enjoyed talking with her frequently after school. Mrs. Evans knew quite a bit about what Greta was going through and wanted to support her in any way possible.



The Advocate shared that information with the DHS worker. Knowing that adoption would never work, they approached the teacher together about the possibility of serving as a mentor to Greta - someone who could be around and available to her through the rest of high school, into college and throughout her transition to adulthood.

Mrs. Evans, having no children of her own, was both scared and thrilled about this possibility. Together she planned with the Advocate and the DHS worker to move slowly and carefully toward this relationship in an informal way. Over the next year, Mrs. Evans helped Greta with planning for college -- making applications,

filling out the FAFSA forms, visiting colleges. The relationship grew and eventually, Mrs. Evans offered to welcome Greta on weekends and college breaks. This solidified the relationship.

While Greta will age out of foster care without legal permanence, she will have something perhaps even more important -- relational permanency with Mrs. Evans. Many other youth in Greta's situation will eventually turn back to their birth parents and birth families even though the legal relationship has been dissolved. This may yet happen with Greta. But her strong and now permanent caring relationship with Mrs. Evans provides her with the connection, the stability, a place to get advice and help her through all the major decisions she will need to make as she moves into adulthood.

Kamau

Kamau -- his name means silent warrior -- came into the world in Ghana in 2004. His mother died in childbirth. His father, Kojo, did his best to raise Kamau well with help from his sister. He worked mostly as a farm laborer but did as many odd jobs as possible because he longed to move to America where there were far greater economic opportunities.

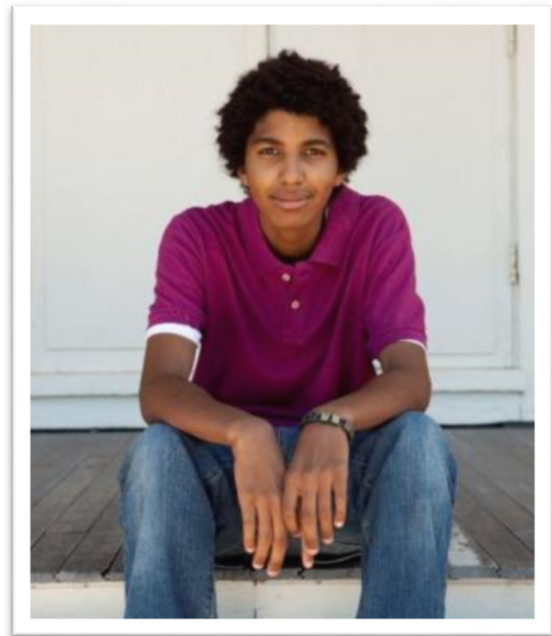
By 2011, Kojo had saved enough, advanced his education enough, and obtained approval to emigrate to the US with sponsors in Iowa. Kamau entered second grade in his school in Iowa. Though his primary first language was Akan, he learned to read and speak English well enough to get along in school. His dad found a decent job and worked hard and continued to take on extra work whenever he could. He was able to make ends meet for a couple years, but by the time Kamau was in sixth grade, Kojo had difficulty keeping track of Kamau. Eventually, a report of denial of critical care for failure to provide proper supervision was "founded" after

many efforts to help Kojo arrange for and provide good supervision. Kamau was adjudicated a Child in Need of Assistance and placed in foster care until his dad could make stable arrangements for supervision.

The Foster Care Review Board began reviewing Kamau's foster care placement every three months, with Kamau attending each hearing. At first things were going well, but when Kamau entered seventh grade, he started having difficulties in school, failing to turn in assignments on time, especially those that had to do with writing. Kamau started skipping school on days when he didn't have a completed assignment. Teachers were concerned, but Kamau offered no excuses or explanations for his behavior and didn't respond to their assistance.

By the time of his third FCRB hearing, Kamau had become comfortable talking with the board members. When the lead questioner asked Kamau about the difficulty he was experiencing in school, Kamau felt at ease enough to explain that he was embarrassed because he wasn't able to understand everything he was reading or prepare some of the written assignments because of it. He skipped school to avoid embarrassment at not having his work done.

The Board recommended that the caseworker seek an assessment of his need by school personnel. In the assessment, the school found that Kamau's reading ability seemed good when he read aloud, but his comprehension was very poor. His reading ability had served him well previously, when the demands were fewer, but now he wasn't able to keep up with the work. The school arranged for Kamau to receive special tutoring to help with comprehension and to learn more about basic writing skills that allowed him to again shine in school. As a result, Kamau was able to gradually catch up with his work, is no longer missing school, and is even getting Bs on some of his papers.



Academic success is important for all children, and more important for children who have been abused and come into the system. Kamau's situation illustrates only part of the difficulty kids in the child welfare system have. For those who are placed outside their homes, changes in placement -- accompanied by changes in schools -- result in failed, disrupted social connections and loss of learning. From one-third to two-thirds of foster children nationally graduate from high school. While half of children in foster care express a desire to go to college, only about ten percent do. Of those who do attend, only about a third graduate compared to more than half of other students.

Education is a primary route out of "the system" for many, but not for all children in the foster care system. We believe that the Foster Care Review Boards across the state can help all others working in the system make educational stability and academic success a reality and a part of the permanency plan for many of the children we serve.



The Iowa Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program recruits, trains, and supports concerned community volunteers who advocate for and promote the best interest of the children who are victims of abuse and/or neglect. Many of the children have been removed from their parental home due to safety issues.

CASA Advocates contribute selflessly, through:

- ❖ Serving as an effective voice in court for abused and neglected children.
- ❖ Safeguarding children who are already victims of abuse or neglect from further harm by the system.
- ❖ Being appointed by judges to guide one child or one set of siblings through the system to safe and permanent homes as quickly as possible.
- ❖ Meeting with their assigned child or sibling group monthly, at a minimum.
- ❖ Researching case records and speaking to each person involved in a child's life, including family members, teachers, doctors, therapists, lawyers and social workers.
- ❖ Preparing a Report to the Court for each hearing involving the child, which allows the Court to make better informed decisions.

- ❖ Monitoring the progress of the child and family throughout the case and advocating for the child's current and future needs in court, in school, and in agency meetings.
- ❖ Serving as a consistent presence in the life of their assigned child and remaining assigned to the case until successful case closure.
- ❖ Mentoring and coaching new advocates in the CASA role and responsibilities.
- ❖ Working towards the betterment of their community and the future lives of its children.
- ❖ Offering fairness and objectivity in all activities, including openness to other viewpoints.

CASA Program Highlights in FY2018

- ❖ Pre-Service and In-Service volunteer training offered consistently statewide
- ❖ Statewide judicial survey conducted in March 2018
- ❖ Steady increase in the number of children served throughout the fiscal year
- ❖ Steady increase in the number of new volunteer advocates trained throughout the year
- ❖ *Policy and Procedures* manual formatted for digital use with "Quick Links"
- ❖ CAMS data system for volunteer and case management and assessment
- ❖ First-year curriculum offerings required for all new CASA Advocates
- ❖ Active involvement with the National CASA Association



* FYE2018 data provided is estimated based on ICAB's former data system Iowa Child Online (ICO) and monthly dashboard information. All data shown is estimated to be below actual figures. When final FYE2018 data is confirmed through new data system, Child Advocacy Match System (CAMS), data will be updated on the ICAB website and provided in Child Advocacy Board meeting minutes.



CASA TRAINING

First-Year Advocates

- Year-long curriculum
- Asking applicable questions
- Writing court reports
- Advocating for children and families using a trauma-focused lens

Seasoned Advocates

- 12 hours in-service
- Enhance advocacy skills
- Further knowledge on case issues

Pre-Service
Training, 30 hours
total, as prescribed
by National CASA.

Offered consistently statewide

Child Advocacy Match System (CAMS)

In March 2018, CASA staff began using a new data system. The Child Advocacy Match System (CAMS) replaced the Iowa Child Online (ICO) data system. The former data system existed only for staff to use in the collection of case and volunteer information. The former system did not allow for a confidential exchange of

information between the volunteer and CASA Program staff. Email, storing important documents on home computer files and even paper copies were utilized to create the volunteer's case record. Information security was always a top concern of CASA staff and volunteers.

Showing 0 to 0 of 0 entries

Previous Next

Children In Case [New]

Show 10 entries Search:

Action	Child Name	Begin Date	DOB	J/V/I/T #
[Edit Assignment]		02/21/2017	05/11/2004	05771 J/V/J/241783
[Edit Assignment]		02/21/2017	07/21/2015	05771 J/V/J/241787
[Edit Assignment]		02/21/2017	03/10/2014	05771 J/V/J/241786
[Edit Assignment]		02/21/2017	02/05/2013	05771 J/V/J/241785
[Edit Assignment]		02/21/2017	03/28/2006	05771 J/V/J/241784

Showing 1 to 5 of 5 entries

Previous Next

Events [New Event]

Show 10 entries Search:

Action	Event Type	Event	Date/Time	Location	Linked Children
[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Termination of Parental Rights Hearing	02/04/2019 08:30AM		
[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Permanency Hearing	10/01/2018 09:00AM	Justice Center	
[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Permanency Review Hearing	07/09/2018 09:00AM		
[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Permanency Review Hearing	07/09/2018 09:00AM		
[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Permanency Review Hearing	07/09/2018 09:00AM		
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[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Permanency Review Hearing	07/09/2018 09:00AM		
[Edit] [Delete]	Hearing	Permanency Review Hearing	07/09/2018 09:00AM		

Showing 1 to 10 of 10 entries

Previous Next

CAMS Features and Benefits

- ❖ Manages all facets of volunteer and child/family case records
- ❖ Digital case file for volunteers – case notes, monthly reports to Program Coordinator
- ❖ Integrated CASA Report to the Court, based on case notes
- ❖ Digital child assessment tool to identify child needs – safety, permanency, health, education and transitional planning
- ❖ Best practices in child advocacy and case record privacy

In FY 19:

Assessment tool will allow ICAB to report child outcomes at the individual and systemic levels.



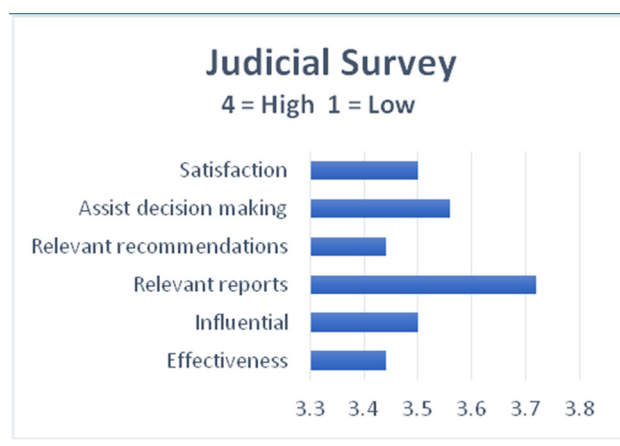
National CASA Activities

The Iowa CASA Program is actively involved with the National CASA Association, based in Seattle WA. This year, CASA Program staff participated in a pilot curriculum with National CASA to learn about and complete a Logic Model for each local CASA Program. Additionally, several Iowa CASA staff members have been selected to serve on National CASA Councils and Workgroups to identify and effect changes throughout the country. Most notably, Judge William Owens serves on the National CASA Association Judicial Leadership Council and ICAB Administrator Jim Hennessey serves on the National CASA State and National Leadership Councils.



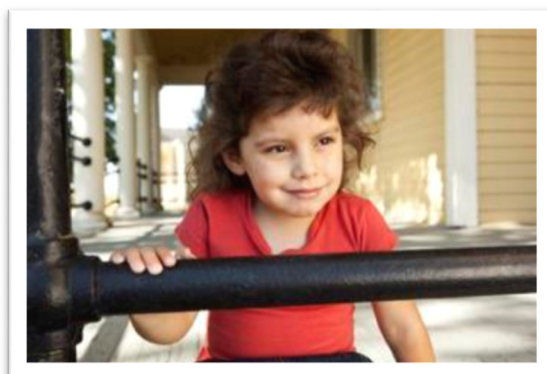
Survey of Juvenile Court Judges

The CASA Program enjoys support throughout the state judiciary. In this fiscal year, the Child Advocacy Board conducted a survey of Judges who serve juvenile court. Thirty-two percent of those surveyed responded, with 100% of those judges having CASA Programming in their area.



Survey Items

- CASA Advocates effectively and professionally speak for the best interest of the child throughout the judicial process.
- The CASA program is influential in impacting positive outcomes for children.
- CASA reports contain relevant information
- CASA recommendations are supported by the content in the report.
- CASA reports help me [judge] get a detailed understanding of the child's situation to assist in making decisions about the child.
- Overall, I'm satisfied with the CASA program in my coverage area.



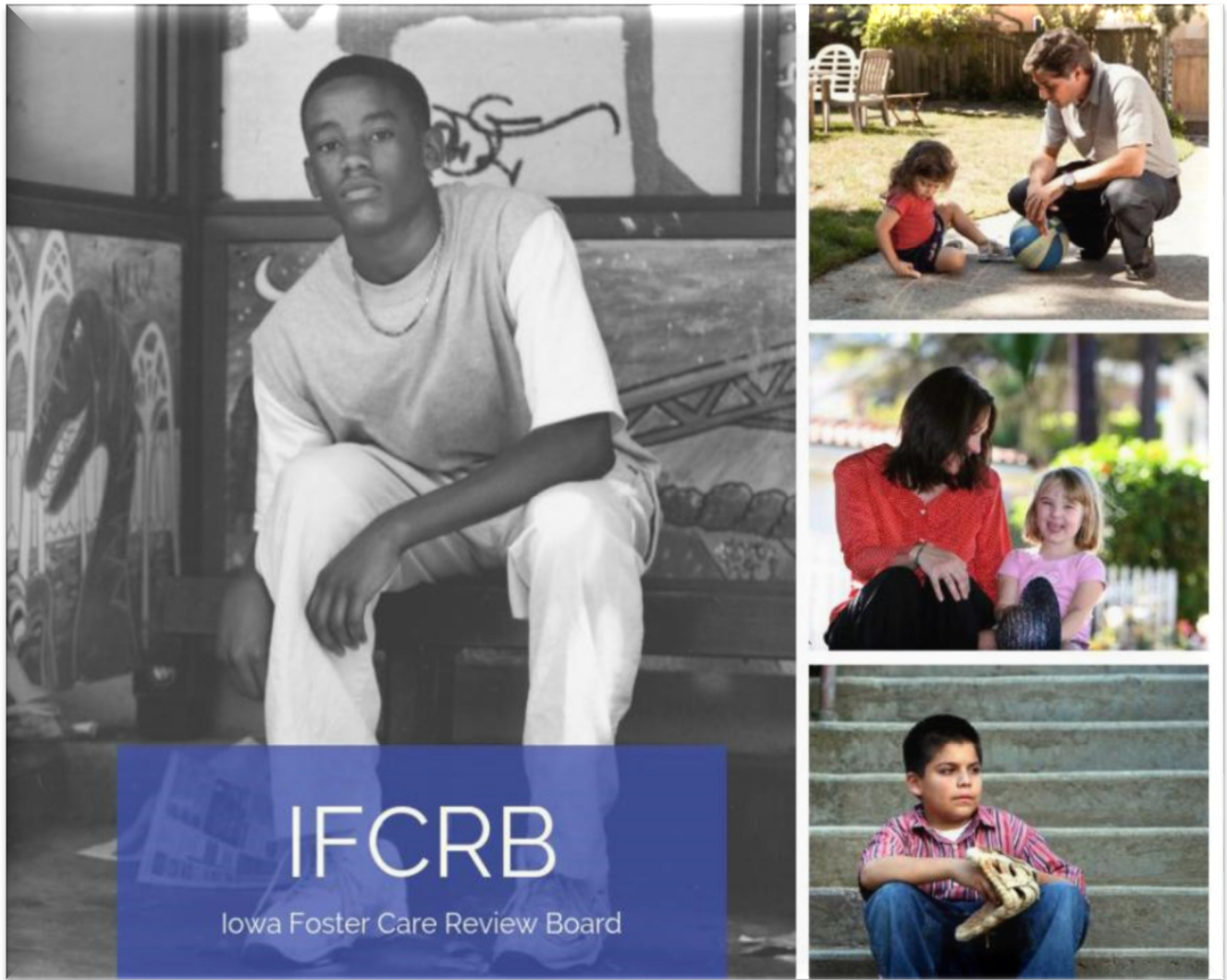
Path Forward

In FY2019, the Iowa CASA program will focus on quality, effectiveness and efficiency of both the State and Local CASA programs. Staff members have started a monthly assessment of CASA Reports that are submitted to the court for quality and effective advocacy services. Through the use of a quality assessment tool and proposed tool to compare advocate recommendations made in the Report to the Court to the Court's actual order, CASA staff will conduct quality reviews of cases. This review process will identify strengths, deficiencies and potential training needs for individual advocates and training curriculum changes needed throughout the program. Additionally, FY2019 will see a continued focus on advocate training, incorporating CAMS learning needs into pre-service training and child assessment learning needs into in-service training.



CASA Values





Iowa Citizens Foster Care Review Boards are mandated by Iowa Code §237.20 to review the case of each child receiving foster care assigned to the local board by the state board. These reviews are conducted to determine whether satisfactory progress is being made toward the goals of the case permanency plan pursuant to section §237.22. Exhibit E of our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the responsibilities of the Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) and the Department of Human Services (DHS), as it relates to the periodic status reviews of children placed in foster care. As part of the MOU, DHS reimburses DIA for the federal share for all Child Advocacy Board costs associated with the

LFCRB and DIA administrative costs involved for work performed which qualifies for federal financial participation (FFP) under Title IV-E. This includes costs associated with administering and conducting foster care administrative reviews, including the training of volunteers and personnel. As a program of ICAB, the FCRB Program receives appropriated funding from the Iowa Legislature. This appropriation pays staff salaries, benefits and other system needs such as technology, equipment and administrative resources.

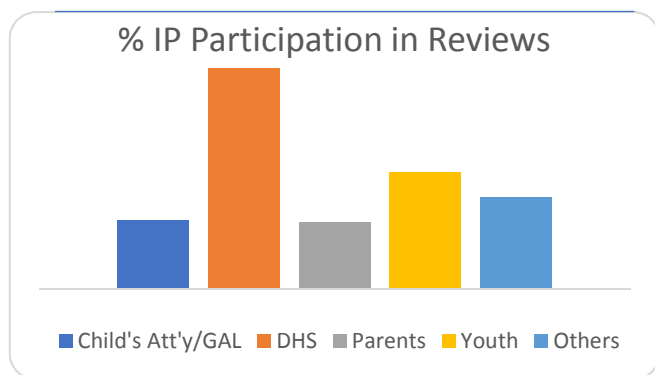
Foster Care Review Board volunteers serve on local community boards that meet regularly to review case plans, hear from interested parties,

and provide the Court and DHS with their findings and recommendations about the safety, well-being and permanency of children from their communities who are removed from parental custody.

FY18 FCRB Program Results

Participation of Interested Parties at Local Reviews

Participation of Interested Parties (IP) is essential for an effective foster care review in order for board members to be well-informed about the case and what is happening in the life of the child before making recommendations to the court and interested parties. Data continues to show a need to improve participation.



Timeliness of Review Reports

"Timeliness of review reports" is a required quarterly report of DIA-DHS MOU. The MOU states, "In 90% of the foster care cases reviewed by a LFCRB, LFCRB review reports will be provided to the juvenile court, DHS caseworker and all interested parties within 15 days of the foster care administrative review pursuant to Iowa Code §237.20(2)(a)." The average compliance in FY18 was 100%.



Foster Care Review Board CFSR Findings

DHS uses a modified Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) approach to help measure achievements for children in Iowa's foster care system. Twenty (20) federal child welfare benchmarks are reported on by the trained FCRB volunteers at the time each youth receives a review. Those benchmarks relate to important safety, permanency and well-being issues for foster youth to determine child welfare system strengths and areas needing to be strengthened. ICAB analyzed data gathered by the local Foster Care Review Boards in 815 CFSR reviews of children conducted between July 2017 and June 2018. The FCRB members found 100% success on 8 of the measures and more than 85% success on 9 other measures. Areas of concern are with 1) achieving reunification/guardianship/relative placement within 12 months (58%), 2) finalized adoption within 24 months (49%), and 3) filing of termination petitions in 15 of 22 months cases (64%).



FY18 Foster Care Review Board CFSR Findings

CFSR Finding	# of responses	Yes Responses	Percent Yes
Re-entry was not within 12 months of a prior episode	524	519	99%
FC placement stable, with any changes consistent with achieving goal	802	777	97%
The current goal matches the child's need for a permanent home	787	757	96%
If foster care entry in past 6 months, CPP goal was written within 60 days	301	280	93%
Reunification/guardianship/relative placement on target for 12 months	391	226	58%
Adoption expected within 24 months of most recent entry to foster care	204	99	49%
APPLA – Current placement committed to provide care until majority age	65	59	91%

For child age 14, transition planning and independent living skills provided	118	103	87%
TPR was sought by filing in 15 of 22 months, unless compelling reason	161	103	64%
FC placement within 1 hour travel from parent of removal	639	626	98%
Placement with siblings (up to 4 in same home) unless safety concerns	497	448	90%
Concerted efforts for child visits with parents and siblings in FC unless safety concerns	685	683	100%
Concerted efforts to preserve a child's connections with school, clubs, faith	750	734	98%
Inquired about Indian heritage, notified tribe, and followed ICWA placement preference	792	792	100%
Concerted efforts made to seek relative placement, maternal and paternal	761	761	100%
Concerted efforts to promote and support positive relationships of child and parents	660	660	100%
Concerted efforts made to involve child and parents in case planning process	690	687	100%
Concerted efforts to meet child's educational needs	802	800	100%
Concerted efforts to meet child's physical and dental health needs	813	813	100%
Concerted efforts to meet child's mental and behavioral health needs, including substance abuse	702	702	100%

Local FCRB FY18 Comment Card Results

Following each individual review, all groups of participants are given the opportunity to provide feedback about the reviews. The boards and staff are diligent in their efforts to be respectful and thoughtful in their work. This set of survey responses documents that 97% of participants agree or strongly agree they were listened to and treated respectfully.



Relation to Child	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Grand Total
CASA	97.5%	2.5%	0.0%	80
Child's Attorney	100%	0.0%	0.0%	10
Child's Atty/GAL	100%	0.0%	0.0%	132
DHS	98.4%	1.3%	0.3%	669
Foster Parent	99.8%	0.2%	0.0%	419
GAL	100%	0.0%	0.0%	25
Other	93.8%	4.8%	1.3%	227
Parent	92.7%	5.0%	2.3%	300
Parent's Attorney	99.3%	0.7%	0.0%	148
Relative Caregiver	100%	0.0%	0.0%	42
Service Provider	97.6%	1.7%	0.7%	296
Youth	95.0%	1.7%	3.3%	60
Not Identified	100%	0.0%	0.0%	20
Grand Total	97.5%	1.9%	0.7%	2428

FCRB Program Improvements

During FY18, notable improvements were made to the case file management process for local foster care reviewers to enhance the security of confidential information and better utilize resources for the FCRB program. FCRB members receive the majority of case file information through a secure shared Google Drive managed by administrative staff. In addition to reducing the amount of confidential information provided in hard copy, other benefits of this method include cost savings in supplies, postage and staff time spent copying case file materials.

For over a decade, the FCRB program utilized a standard report template to document the testimony, findings and recommendations of local review boards. Board findings focused on the Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) criteria. In assessing the value of the findings related to the types of cases that are reviewed by local boards, it was apparent that the CFSR criteria are not a "one size fits all" because many of the findings do not apply for children who have the legal permanency goals of adoption or another planned permanent living arrangement. Through internal review,

collaboration with DHS Social Work Administrators, and feedback from a judicial survey and interested party survey, the FCRB developed three new report templates for implementation in FY19. Foster care reviews will focus findings, barriers to achieving the goal and recommendations on three case types: 1) reunification or guardianship, 2) termination of parental rights, and 3) another planned permanent living arrangement. It is projected that these improvements to the review process and reports will add more value at the case level and provide more consistent data on systemic barriers that prevent children and families from achieving permanency goals and plans.

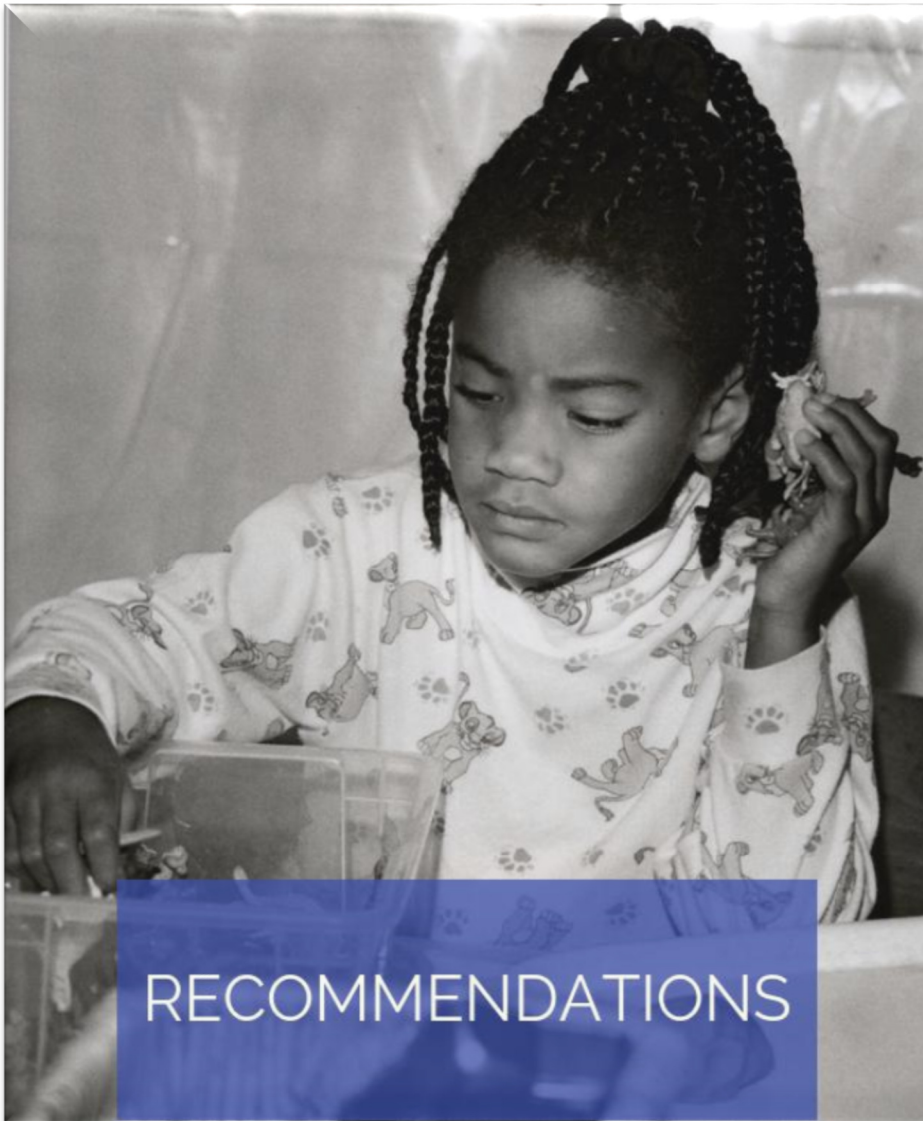


In response to "What did you like best about the review," comments from youth participants included:

"I was listened to and could express how I felt."

"Talking about my goals."

"I like that there are volunteers that are willing to help people in this way. Very respectful people."



Child Advocacy Board Recommendation: Minor Guardianship Reform

Seeking to achieve excellence in Iowa's guardianship and conservatorship and to avoid the serious failures that have beset similar systems in other states, the Iowa Supreme Court established the Guardianship and Conservatorship Reform Task Force in January 2015. Over the course of the following two years, representatives of all sectors that have involvement in safeguarding the well-being, rights and assets of Iowa's vulnerable citizens

labored to develop a "roadmap for the future of the Iowa guardianship and conservatorship system" embodied in the final Task Force Report.

https://www.iowacourts.gov/static/media/cms/Final_Task_Force_Report_5A992F4D4AF86.pdf

Iowa's current guardianship and conservatorship system is operated by the probate court within the district court, administered by the judicial branch of government. Guardians are court appointed to make decisions about the care of both children and adults under guardianship while

conservators are authorized to make decisions about property and finances for children and adults who are under conservatorship. More than 22,000 Iowans were under guardianship and conservatorship in 2016. In a University of Iowa study of 4,000 of the case files related to these Iowans, about 36% were minors with about 65% of the minors under guardianship only, 26% under conservatorship only and 9% under both guardianship and conservatorship. The study further documented that in 82% of the cases, parent's inability or unwillingness to carry out parental responsibilities led to the appointment of a guardian. (Gittler, 2018)

The Task Force has recommended that the jurisdiction over minor guardianship be moved to the juvenile court from the probate court which is part of the district court. District court judges currently handle minor guardianship cases as well as a variety of other civil and criminal cases. As members of the Child Advocacy Board, we are charged with reviewing systems that serve vulnerable children and recommending changes that will "assist the systems in being more cost-effective and better able to protect the best interests of children..." (Iowa Code Section 237.18, subsection 9) We strongly support the recommendation and agree with the Task Force rationale for the recommendation.

The juvenile court is a specialized court, unlike the probate court, which presides nearly exclusively in juvenile proceedings within each court district. Unlike the generally passive stance of the probate court, the juvenile court is expected to be proactive in protecting the interests of children subject to court proceedings. This proactive stance is evident on the juvenile court's *one judge/one family* approach through which a single judge follows a family from initial filing through the entire life of the case, providing decision-making continuity and consistency for the child and

MINOR GUARDIANSHIP REFORM

The Child Advocacy Board endorses the recommendations of the Supreme Court Task Force on Guardianship and Conservatorship Reform related to minor guardianships. The Board finds that the newly drafted Minor Guardianship Bill, a successor to last year's SSB 3187, meets the needs for reform of the minor guardianship system in Iowa and recommends its adoption by the Iowa General Assembly in its 2019 session and approval by the Governor. We strongly believe this will advance the best interests of vulnerable children in Iowa who are in need of guardianship.

family involved. Further, due to the court's specialized nature, with a focus safeguarding the health, safety, well-being and legal and relational permanency of children under its jurisdiction, the juvenile court judge is uniquely positioned with expertise needed to monitor the sensitive needs of vulnerable, developing children who require guardianship. Finally, the recommended change will address the problems that arise when the juvenile court's jurisdiction and the probate court's minor guardianship jurisdiction overlap.

Members of the Child Advocacy Board also agree with the Task Force recommendations that address many of the concerns that have emerged about the fairness of the existing guardianship process to the children and parents involved and the need for effective oversight and review of guardians. These recommendations include:

- ❖ Statutory criteria for minor guardianships with and without parental consent

- ❖ Clear provisions for guardianship petitions and notices to the parties involved
 - ❖ Requirements for representation of minors and parents in the proceedings
 - ❖ Emergency guardianship appointment
 - ❖ Establishing and defining the duties of a “court visitor” to provide for objective observation, review and recommendations to the court about the needs of the minor under guardianship.
 - ❖ Enhanced ongoing court monitoring of minor guardianships after their establishment to ensure that minors are receiving needed care and protection.
-
- ❖ Promotes reduction in time to permanency for 0-5 children.
 - ❖ Promotes addressing the developmental needs of 0-5 children.

Part VIII. Ensuring States Reinvest Savings Resulting from Increases in Adoption Assistance

- ❖ Delays Fostering Connections federal assistance for adoption of special needs children.
- ❖ Children with special needs under 2 years old who meet current requirements will be eligible.

We understand that Senate Study Bill 3187 which sought to implement Task Force recommendations on juvenile guardianships was introduced but not acted upon during the 2018 legislative session. The Child Advocacy Board has reviewed a successor bill that provides some modifications to SSB 3187. The newly drafted bill received support in June 2018 of the Family and Juvenile Law Section of the Iowa Bar Association.



Child Advocacy Board Recommendation: Invest in Child Advocacy

During the past five years, a decline in the funding for the Child Advocacy Board, together with increases in the cost of employee salaries and benefits, required a decrease of five full-time-equivalent positions. Ultimately this required the organization to make a difficult choice to scale back availability of the CASA program from about 69 counties in which service was available to 45 counties beginning last year and to require our staff to resume responsibility for facilitating Foster Care Review Boards. All this is to the detriment of the rapidly increasing number of Iowa children who do not have access to the advocacy of our two programs.

Despite the decrease in available staff, we have strived to continue efforts to upgrade the quality of the support provided to the hundreds of volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of abused and neglected children and children in out-of-home placement in Iowa.

- ❖ CASA Advocates have stepped forward to become Coaches to expand the level of support to other Advocates throughout the state.
- ❖ Our pre-service training has been substantially upgraded to support every volunteer to “hit the ground running” in providing excellent advocacy to children as soon as they complete training.
- ❖ The local program Coordinators have developed the capacity to directly deliver in-service training that furthers the advocacy effectiveness of our CASA and FCRB volunteers.
- ❖ Our Foster Care Review Board volunteers have turned to a more

paperless process for reviewing case reports and preparing for review days.

- ❖ We are nearing completion of an automated system which is used directly by CASA volunteers to document their contacts and observations on assigned cases and to prepare their court reports for review within the system by their assigned Coach and submission to the court by their assigned Coordinator.
- ❖ Soon the new automated system will provide the capacity to capture initial and ongoing child assessment information in all important life domains that will help further guide advocacy efforts and document the child’s progress.

Our volunteers have always been highly dedicated and judicious in their work. With the program advances made over the last few years, these caring people are nothing short of fully professional in terms of their ability to discern child needs, make the observations the courts and child welfare workers can use to make good choices and decisions about services and support the child and family need. Hardly a day passes when one of our Coordinators does not comment about how one of the judges has directly used observations or recommendations in their court orders. Many judges report that the work of the CASA Advocates provides a more complete picture of child and family progress to the more frequent and detailed observations the Advocates are able to supply. They find this to be essential supplementary information that helps them make well-considered decisions in their court orders.

Child Advocacy Board staff conducted a study of how courts used CASA and FCRB reports during the month of June 2018. The study revealed that 34 percent of the reports were directly

referenced in subsequent court orders and that about 43 percent of the 259 recommendations contained in the reports were included in the court orders. Certainly, some of those recommendations were similar to DHS recommendations to the court, but many were not. With some frequency, judges quote entire passages in CASA reports to provide partial basis for decisions and rulings.

Citation of FCRB reports in court orders was less frequent; about 12 percent were cited, and about 22 percent of recommendations were included in the court's orders.

During a time of burgeoning abuse and neglect reports being made to the Department of Human Services, large increases in the number of founded and substantiated reports are occurring and the number of children in the foster care system has increased over the past year.

In 2018, 7,130 children were abused and neglected and received child welfare services. Many of these children suffered great physical and emotional damage. The cost to taxpayers to support the needs of abused and neglected children in 2019 will be approximately \$300 million. Iowa's Child Advocacy programs provide a chance to make a difference in the lives of children and the cost to taxpayers.

National data shows that children with a CASA Advocate are in foster care less time, less likely to re-enter foster care, more likely to find safe, permanent homes and more likely to succeed in school and attend college

The time has come to invest in the valuable advocacy services that are proven effective in lifting the voices of Iowa's vulnerable children to help them toward better lives and to reduce the high monetary toll of abuse and neglect on our state's economy.

INVEST IN CHILD ADVOCACY

The Child Advocacy Board seeks the time, talent and treasure of all our fellow Iowans who may be able to contribute to the improvement of life outcomes for our abused and neglected children.


- Elected state and local policy makers: we urge that you engage your constituencies in understanding the advocacy and service needs of our vulnerable children and in supporting those needs in whatever manner they are able. When funds are available, look for opportunities to invest in the services and advocacy these children need to build a better future.
- Judges, guardians ad litem, social workers, service providers: we ask that you use the data and information in this report to find areas of high need for corrective intervention to address long stays in foster care, multiple placement transfers and disproportionate representation of or lack of services for minority and rural children in the foster care and juvenile justice system. Consider seeking or appointing a CASA Advocate when more hands on deck are needed to attend to unmet needs of our children.
- Citizens of Iowa: we implore you to search your hearts and find the time and energy to contribute in a small or large way to assisting our vulnerable children. Become a foster parent, tutor a child struggling academically, become a Court Appointed Special Advocate or Foster Care Review Board Member.



APPENDIX

DATA REVIEW AND ANALYSIS





The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) fulfills its statutory requirement to provide data the Iowa Child Advocacy Board needs to maintain a Foster Care Registry by transmitting a confidential monthly report with current month-end data on all children in placement or under supervision of DHS or Juvenile Court Services (JCS). The Child Advocacy Board has used the monthly DHS data to prepare a report on children in foster care to Iowa public officials. The report needs to include data on the number of days children are in care, the number of placements and the characteristics of children in care along with an evaluation of the data.

The Child Advocacy Board is able to construct three different views of the data:

- 1) **Month-end point in time view.** This view allows comparison of the entire caseload between any two months. This annual report includes a comparison of the number of children in the system at the end of fiscal years 2017 and 2018 and several case and demographic factors for the children involved at these two points in time.
- 2) **Total children served during a fiscal year.** This view includes data on all children in the system at any point during the course of the year including those in the system at the beginning of the year, those who entered at some point during the year, and those who exited from the system during the year.
- 3) **Children who exited the system during the year.** This “exit cohort” view of the data provides a picture of the average length of service for children who left the system during the year, the average number of placements during the current placement episode, and the associated case and demographic data for those children. Annual comparison of exit cohort data may enable an understanding of progress toward reducing overall lengths of service, number of placements during an episode, disproportionate representation of minority children and any other factors represented in the data set.

Comparison of Month-End Caseload from June 2018 to June 2017

At the end of June 2018, DHS reports the total number of children in care at 6,776 including 6,045 children under DHS supervision and 717 under JCS supervision. This is 4.7% more than the number of children in care at the end of June 2017, including a 6.2% increase in the number of children under DHS supervision and 6% decrease in those under JCS supervision.

Level of Care. DHS saw 351 more children in the system at the end of FY 2018 as compared to FY 2017, with some change in the allocation of placements between the various levels of care.

- Care levels with higher numbers in 2018 included 165 children in relative placements, 73 in trial home visits, 46 in non-relative placements, 42 in comprehensive foster group care and 29 in foster family placements,.

- Offsetting the levels with higher numbers, 28 fewer children were in pre-subsidy placements and 18 fewer children in enhanced residential treatment at the end of FY 2018 than at the end of FY 2017.

JCS supervised placements were fewer by 75 children at the end of FY 2018 than at the end of FY 2017. As with DHS, some shifts occurred in allocations between levels of care:

- 60 more children were in comprehensive foster group care, and 10 more children were in supervised apartment living.
- Offsetting the higher numbers were decreases of 71 children in community foster group care, 25 in enhanced residential treatment and 11 in State Training School placements.

CHILDREN IN CARE AT EACH LEVEL OF CARE BY CASE MANAGER - JUNE 2018				CHILDREN IN CARE AT EACH LEVEL OF CARE BY CASE MANAGER - JUNE 2017				CHANGE FROM 2017 TO 2018		
LEVEL OF CARE	DHS	JCS	TOTAL	LEVEL OF CARE	DHS	JCS	TOTAL	DHS	JCS	TOTAL
COMMUNITY FOSTER GROUP CARE	44	100	144	COMMUNITY FOSTER GROUP CARE	37	171	208	18.9%	-41.5%	-30.8%
COMPREHENSIVE FOSTER GROUP CARE	148	161	309	COMPREHENSIVE FOSTER GROUP CARE	106	101	207	39.6%	59.4%	49.3%
DETENTION	7	23	30	DETENTION	8	31	39	-12.5%	-25.8%	-23.1%
ENHANCED RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT	45	54	99	ENHANCED RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT	63	79	142	-28.6%	-31.6%	-30.3%
FOSTER FAMILY	1895	23	1919	FOSTER FAMILY	1866	19	1886	1.6%	21.1%	1.7%
HOSPITAL	10		11	HOSPITAL	8	1	9	25.0%	-100.0%	22.2%
NON CHILD WELF RESIDENTIAL	36	10	46	NON CHILD WELF RESIDENTIAL	22	6	28	63.6%	66.7%	64.3%
NON-RELATIVE	314	5	319	NON-RELATIVE	268	1	273	17.2%	400.0%	16.8%
OTHER MEDICAID PLACEMENT	5	7	12	OTHER MEDICAID PLACEMENT	4	2	6	25.0%	250.0%	100.0%
PMIC	74	14	88	PMIC	73	21	94	1.4%	-33.3%	-6.4%
PRESUBSIDY	211		211	PRESUBSIDY	239		241	-11.7%	NA	-12.4%
RELATIVE	2083	17	2106	RELATIVE	1918	20	1944	8.6%	-15.0%	8.3%
SHELTER CARE	140	33	175	SHELTER CARE	144	38	182	-2.8%	-13.2%	-3.8%
STATE INST MENTAL HEALTH	4		4	STATE INST MENTAL HEALTH	1		1	300.0%	NA	300.0%
STATE INST RESOURCE CTR	1		1	STATE INST RESOURCE CTR				NA	NA	NA
STATE INST TRAINING SCH	9	53	62	STATE INST TRAINING SCH	5	64	69	80.0%	-17.2%	-10.1%
SUPERVISED APARTMENT LIVING	54	24	78	SUPERVISED APARTMENT LIVING	40	14	54	35.0%	71.4%	44.4%
TRIAL HOME VISIT	965	193	1162	TRIAL HOME VISIT	892	195	1088	8.2%	-1.0%	6.8%
TOTAL	6045	717	6776	TOTAL	5694	763	6471	6.2%	-6.0%	4.7%

Legal Status. The major changes in allocations among legal status categories in the number of DHS supervised children were that 304 more children were adjudicated Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) and 57 more children were in voluntary placements at the end of 2018 as compared to the same time in the previous year. Partially offsetting the increases were 18 fewer CINA-adjudicated children whose parental rights were terminated.

103 JCS supervised children were adjudicated delinquent while 27 more children were in voluntary placements at the end of FY 2018 than at the end of the previous year.

CHILDREN IN EACH LEGAL STATUS BY CASE MANAGER -JUNE 2018			
LEGAL STATUS	DHS	JCS	TOTAL
CINA	3877	25	3910
CUSTODY TRANSFERRED	230	53	289
DELINQUENT	31	584	615
FINA	0	0	0
GUARDINASHIP TO SUITABLE PERSON	1	1	2
MR COURT ORDERED	17		17
TPR/CINA	905	2	907
VOLUNTARY	984	52	1036
TOTAL	6045	717	6776

CHILDREN IN EACH LEGAL STATUS BY CASE MANAGER - JUNE 2017			
LEGAL STATUS	DHS	JCS	TOTAL
CINA	3573	11	3596
CUSTODY TRANSFERRED	215	38	253
DELINQUENT	28	687	715
FINA	1	0	1
GUARDINASHIP TO SUITABLE PERSON	4	0	4
MR COURT ORDERED	23	0	23
TPR/CINA	923	2	927
VOLUNTARY	927	25	952
TOTAL	5694	763	6471

CHANGE FROM 2017 TO 2018		
DHS	JCS	TOTAL
8.5%	127.3%	8.7%
7.0%	39.5%	14.2%
10.7%	-15.0%	-14.0%
-100.0%	NA	-100.0%
-75.0%	NA	-50.0%
-26.1%	NA	-26.1%
-2.0%	0.0%	-2.2%
6.1%	108.0%	8.8%
6.2%	-6.0%	4.7%

Race and Ethnicity. The counts of racial identity in this compilation do not include a count of children identifying as being of two or more races. Because each racial identity is counted for every child, some duplication of children is included in the race count totals shown in this chart. The rate of duplication for children under DHS supervision is nearly equal for both 2017 and 2018. However, the duplication rate for JCS supervised children was about eight times higher for 2018 than the rate for 2017, which may indicate a more complete identification of racial identity for that group of children. The most prominent racial identities are White and Black/African American in both the DHS and JCS subgroups. In percentage terms, children identified as White rose less than those identified as Black/African American. With a far smaller share of the total group of children, the percentage changes for children identified as American Indian, Asian and Hawaii/Pacific Islander may represent only data anomalies. Disproportionate representation of minority children will be explored more later in this review.

COMPARISON OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY OF CHILDREN IN CARE IN 2017 AND 2018									
	June 2018			June 2017			Change from 2017 to 2018		
	DHS	JCS	Total	DHS	JCS	Total	DHS	JCS	Total
Racial Identity									
American Indian	171	12	183	150	8	158	14.0%	50.0%	15.8%
Asian	51	16	67	44	10	54	15.9%	60.0%	24.1%
Black/African American	963	255	1218	908	222	1130	6.1%	14.9%	7.8%
Hawaii/Pacific Islander	23	16	39	25	13	38	-8.0%	23.1%	2.6%
White	4896	546	5442	4700	486	5186	4.2%	12.3%	4.9%
Unable to identify	281	54	335	225	46	271	24.9%	17.4%	23.6%
Declined to answer	3	1	4	3	0	3	0.0%		33.3%
Race Count Total (Duplicated)	6388	900	7288	6055	785	6840	5.5%	14.6%	6.5%
Child Count Total (Unduplicated)	6045	717	6762	5694	763	6471	6.2%	-6.0%	4.5%
Ethnic Identity									
Hispanic or Latino	578	107	685	496	80	576	16.5%	33.8%	18.9%
Unable to identify	336	58	394	281	49	330	19.6%	18.4%	19.4%
Not Hispanic or Latino	5177	694	5871	4897	625	5522	5.7%	11.0%	6.3%
Declined to answer	17	9	26	8	7	15	112.5%	28.6%	73.3%
Ethnicity Count Total (Duplicated)	6108	868	6976	5682	761	6443	7.5%	14.1%	8.3%
Child Count Total (Unduplicated)	6045	717	6762	5694	763	6471	6.2%	-6.0%	4.5%

Child Age. A striking feature of these data is the percentage change between 2017 and 2018 in several age cohorts. The number of children in age cohorts 1, 6, 11 and 15 are each 15% or more higher at the end of FY 2018 while age cohorts 13, 17, 18 and 19 all show a percent decrease from 2017 to 2018. However interesting, these data are insufficient to indicate a trend.

CHILDREN BY AGE LEVEL - JUNE 2018			
CHILD AGE	DHS	JCS	TOTAL
0	159		159
1	579		580
2	508	1	510
3	463		465
4	447		450
5	352		352
6	341		342
7	314		315
8	313		313
9	285		285
10	279		279
11	314	1	315
12	256	4	260
13	233	11	245
14	254	70	325
15	267	111	378
16	251	176	429
17	238	217	455
18	178	122	301
19	14	4	18
TOTAL	6045	717	6776

CHILDREN BY AGE LEVEL - JUNE 2017			
CHILD AGE	DHS	JCS	TOTAL
0	159		159
1	501		501
2	505		509
3	450		450
4	421		422
5	351		351
6	296		297
7	297		297
8	294		295
9	266		266
10	273		273
11	251	1	253
12	233	3	237
13	259	25	284
14	236	49	285
15	219	100	320
16	246	178	424
17	253	264	519
18	170	136	308
19	13	7	20
20	1		1
TOTAL	5694	763	6471

CHANGE FROM 2017 TO 2018		
DHS	JCS	TOTAL
0.0%	NA	0.0%
15.6%	NA	15.8%
0.6%	NA	0.2%
2.9%	NA	3.3%
6.2%	NA	6.6%
0.3%	NA	0.3%
15.2%	NA	15.2%
5.7%	NA	6.1%
6.5%	NA	6.1%
7.1%	NA	7.1%
2.2%	NA	2.2%
25.1%	0.0%	24.5%
9.9%	33.3%	9.7%
-10.0%	-56.0%	-13.7%
7.6%	42.9%	14.0%
21.9%	11.0%	18.1%
2.0%	-1.1%	1.2%
-5.9%	-17.8%	-12.3%
4.7%	-10.3%	-2.3%
7.7%	-42.9%	-10.0%
NA	NA	NA
6.2%	-6.0%	4.7%

Total Children Served During Fiscal Year 2018.

Based on data provided by DHS, a total of 10,668 children were under supervision of DHS or JCS and in placement over the course of Fiscal Year 2018. This includes 9,423 under DHS case management and 1,244 under JCS case management. The tables on the next page display the number of children by race, ethnicity and gender under case management of DHS and JCS. The case manager is not identified for 21 children.

Disproportionality Based on Race and Ethnicity. The rate of placement per thousand children varies quite dramatically based on the race and ethnicity of the children. It is important to note that these tables include data about all children placed during the course of the year, including those who left the system prior to the end of the year, those who entered care after the start of the year and those who were involved throughout the year. These 10,668 children number about 1.6 times more than the number of children placed at the end of the year. These data help to round out the picture of the total population served during the course of the year. Because children for whom more than one racial identity were listed separately as those having “two or more races, the child counts for each racial identity are not duplicated. The tables include the portion of the total child population by race and ethnicity obtained from the U. S. Census 2017 estimated population data. These Census data are unduplicated in the same manner as the Iowa child placement data. (Total Pop:

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/prdoctreview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_5YR_B09001&prd

With these data, it is possible to compare the rate of placement per thousand children among the racial and ethnic groups for whom data are available. Of the total group of DHS supervised children in the system during the course of the year:

- American Indian children are involved about 4.3 times more than White children.
- Black/African American children are involved at a rate 2.4 times that of White children.
- Children of two or more races are placed at a rate 1.6 times that of White children.
- Hispanic children are placed at a rate about 96 percent of White children, and
- Asian children are placed at a rate about 22 percent of White children.

For children whose case management is a JCS responsibility, similar patterns appear for some of the racial groups. For the total group of JCS supervised children in the system during the course of the year:

- American Indian children are involved about 3.7 times more than White children.
- Black/African American children are involved about 7.1 more than White children.
- Hawaii Pacific Islander children are involved about 5.3 times more than White children.
- Children of two or more races are placed at a rate 1.2 times that of White children.
- Hispanic children are placed at a rate about 1.8 times that of White children, and
- Asian children are placed at a rate about 69 percent of White children.

The Child Advocacy Board currently lacks data to compare these rates to those of previous years.

DISPROPORTIONALITY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

RACE AND ETHNICITY BY CASE MANAGER	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	TOTAL CHILD POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY	NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS PER THOUSAND CHILDREN	Average of NO DAYS IN CURRENT EPISODE	AVERAGE YEARS IN CURRENT PLACEMENT EPISODE	AVERAGE PLACEMENT COUNT IN CURRENT EPISODE
DHS CASE MANAGER	9,423			483	1.3	2.3
ASIAN	50	19,292	2.59	444	1.2	1.9
F	21			484	1.3	2.0
M	29			415	1.1	1.8
AMERICAN INDIAN	128	2,591	49.40	378	1.0	2.4
F	72			346	0.9	2.2
M	56			420	1.2	2.7
BLACK AFRICAN AMERICAN	1,022	37,635	27.16	499	1.4	2.6
F	479			509	1.4	2.7
M	543			490	1.3	2.5
HAWAII PACIFIC ISLANDER	24	1,009	23.79	443	1.2	2.5
F	10			280	0.8	1.7
M	14			560	1.5	3.1
WHITE	6,492	568,757	11.41	477	1.3	2.2
F	3,175			471	1.3	2.2
M	3,313			483	1.3	2.3
(blank)	4			133	0.4	1.0
TWO OR MORE RACES	507	28,422	17.84		1.4	
F	238				-	
M	269				-	
HISPANIC OR LATINO	810	74,241	10.91		1.9	
F	414				-	
M	395				-	
(blank)	1					
DECLINED	2			583		2.0
F	1			540		2.0
M	1			626		2.0
UNKNOWN	376			414		1.9
F	177			415		1.9
M	199			412		1.9
(blank)	12			300		1.5
F	6			414		1.8
M	6			186		1.2

RACE AND ETHNICITY BY CASE MANAGER	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	TOTAL CHILD POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY	NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS PER THOUSAND CHILDREN	Average of NO DAYS IN CURRENT EPISODE	AVERAGE YEARS IN CURRENT PLACEMENT EPISODE	AVERAGE PLACEMENT COUNT IN CURRENT EPISODE
JCS	1,244			514		3.5
ASIAN	15	19,292	0.78	495		5.4
F	4			402		4.3
M	11			529		5.8
AMERICAN INDIAN	11	2,591	4.25	366		2.8
F	2			236		5.0
M	9			395		2.3
BLACK AFRICAN AMERICAN	302	37,635	8.02	611		4.6
F	52			575		4.8
M	250			619		4.6
HAWAII PACIFIC ISLANDER	6	1,009	5.95	624		4.3
F	1			1,008		2.0
M	5			547		4.8
WHITE	644	568,757	1.13	491		3.1
F	119			436		3.4
M	525			504		3.0
TWO OR MORE RACES	38	28,422	1.34			
F	15					
M	23					
HISPANIC	150	74,241	2.02			
F	29					
M						
UNKNOWN	78			465		2.8
F	20			378		2.6
M	58			494		2.8
(blank) CASE MANAGER	21			385		2.0
AMERICAN INDIAN	19			406		1.8
F	10			478		2.2
M	9			326		1.3
TWO OR MORE RACES	1			355		8.0
F	1			355		8.0
HAWAII PACIFIC ISLANDER	1			3		1.0
F	1			3		1.0

Variation in Placement Episode Length and Number of Placements within an Episode. Another source of variation in the way individual children and families are affected by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems may be differences in the length of time a child continues in the system in a single episode and the number of different placements within each episode. The aggregated data on all 10,668 children in placement during FY 2018 show variation among counties in both the average length of placement episodes and the average number of placements per episode. The table below on this page shows the number of counties matching the range of placement lengths and the range of number of placements. The number of counties falling within these ranges is displayed separately for DHS and JCS supervised children. The level of variation in the averages is in itself a matter of concern. It is important to recognize also that the average data mask some of the extremes in placement episode length and the number of different placement settings a child may enter and leave throughout the episode. For children placed during FY 2018, the DHS data show DHS-managed placement episodes of up to 13.75 years and up to 32 individual placements within episodes. For JCS-managed cases, the episode lengths range up to 8.31 years and 37 placements within episodes. Granted, these situations are not the norm, but examining these outliers closely may reveal systemic factors that need to be addressed.

VARIATIONS BY COUNTY AND CASE MANAGER:
AVERAGE YEARS IN CURRENT EPISODE AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF PLACEMENTS PER EPISODE

	NUMBER OF COUNTIES WITHIN RANGE	
RANGE: AVG NUMBER YRS IN PLACEMENT EPISODE	DHS Case Manager	JCS Case Managers
1 yr or less	16	32
>1 yr, <2 yrs	81	47
>2 yrs, <3 yrs	2	4
>3 yrs, <4 yrs	0	1
TOTAL COUNTIES	99	84
RANGE: AVG NUMBER PLACEMENTS IN EPISODE		
1 or less placement	0	9
>1, <2 placements	40	11
>2 , <3 placements	54	26
>3, <4 placements	5	25
>4, <5 placements	0	8
>5, <6 placements	0	5
TOTAL COUNTIES	99	84

Review of Data on Children who Exited the System in FY 2018

Key points of interest in data obtained from the DHS reports on exiting children include the average length of the placement episode and what the status of the children was at the time of exit.

Average Placement Time at Exit. The following table shows the average length of placement episodes by county for children exiting the system in FY 2018. The display is from highest to lowest length of time with a range of .06 years to 3.24 years. Counties in which no children exited during the year are not included in the display

County	Avg Placement Length in Years	County	Avg Placement Length in Years	County	Avg Placement Length in Years	County	Avg Placement Length in Years
Grundy	3.24	Story	1.68	Hancock	1.46	Adair	1.27
Emmet	2.81	Mitchell	1.67	Marion	1.44	Mills	1.26
Henry	2.62	Montgomery	1.65	Butler	1.43	Keokuk	1.25
Palo Alto	2.48	Clarke	1.65	Hamilton	1.40	Page	1.20
Guthrie	2.44	Sioux	1.65	Cerro Gordo	1.40	Allamakee	1.20
Madison	2.30	Scott	1.64	Taylor	1.40	Adams	1.18
O'Brien	2.22	Poweshiek	1.63	Carroll	1.39	Ida	1.16
Ringgold	2.11	Jones	1.63	Plymouth	1.39	Cass	1.14
Shelby	2.05	Black Hawk	1.62	Winnebago	1.39	Chickasaw	1.11
Monona	2.00	Polk	1.61	Bremer	1.39	Clay	1.10
Franklin	1.96	Fayette	1.61	Clayton	1.39	Pottawattamie	1.08
Decatur	1.92	Crawford	1.60	Warren	1.39	Osceola	1.08
Linn	1.88	Wapello	1.58	Dubuque	1.38	Lyon	1.08
Pocahontas	1.83	Woodbury	1.57	Floyd	1.37	Buchanan	1.06
Johnson	1.83	Delaware	1.56	Cherokee	1.36	Jefferson	1.05
Tama	1.79	Dallas	1.53	Humboldt	1.36	Appanoose	1.02
Jasper	1.78	Iowa	1.52	Marshall	1.35	Harrison	0.96
Jackson	1.77	Clinton	1.51	Fremont	1.35	Sac	0.95
Washington	1.77	Mahaska	1.49	Howard	1.34	Winneshiek	0.88
Greene	1.77	Benton	1.49	Muscatine	1.34	Davis	0.86
Boone	1.76	Hardin	1.49	Des Moines	1.31	Louisa	0.73
Calhoun	1.73	Dickinson	1.49	Buena Vista	1.30	Wayne	0.71
Audubon	1.70	Kossuth	1.48	Union	1.30	Worth	0.27
Monroe	1.70	Wright	1.48	Lee	1.29	Van Buren	0.06
				Webster	1.28	State Average	1.53

Child Status at Exit from System. Using data provided by DHS, it is possible to identify, by county, the number of exits from the foster care system and the outcome to which the child exited. The table displayed across the next two pages provides this information along with key population data.

FY 2018 FOSTER CARE SYSTEM EXITS BY COUNTY AND EXIT TYPE

CHILD'S COUNTY	Total Exits	% RETURN HOME	% REUNITED WITH EITHER PARENT	% OTHER LEGAL PERMANENCY	% AGED OUT	2017 COUNTY TOTAL POPULATION	COUNTY CHILD POPULATION
Adair	3	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	7,054	1,549
Adams	12	75.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	3,686	787
Allamakee	6	83.3%	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	13,884	3,174
Appanoose	16	81.3%	81.3%	12.5%	6.3%	12,352	2,752
Audubon	8	62.5%	62.5%	37.5%	0.0%	5,578	1,155
Benton	9	55.6%	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	25,642	6,166
Black Hawk	111	46.8%	51.4%	39.6%	9.0%	132,648	28,764
Boone	9	66.7%	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	26,484	6,000
Bremer	11	45.5%	45.5%	45.5%	9.1%	24,911	5,460
Buchanan	11	81.8%	90.9%	9.1%	0.0%	21,202	5,644
Buena Vista	26	92.3%	96.2%	0.0%	3.8%	20,110	5,212
Butler	12	83.3%	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	14,606	3,411
Calhoun	6	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	9,746	2,055
Carroll	17	58.8%	64.7%	35.3%	0.0%	20,320	5,020
Cass	12	25.0%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	13,145	2,969
Cedar	0					18,543	4,176
Cerro Gordo	49	46.9%	53.1%	44.9%	2.0%	43,064	8,932
Cherokee	8	75.0%	87.5%	0.0%	12.5%	11,316	2,467
Chickasaw	2	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	12,005	2,857
Clarke	1	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9,374	2,231
Clay	13	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16,170	3,753
Clayton	5	60.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	17,637	3,867
Clinton	51	33.3%	37.3%	60.8%	2.0%	47,010	10,915
Crawford	12	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	17,056	4,298
Dallas	23	47.8%	60.9%	26.1%	13.0%	87,235	22,982
CHILD'S COUNTY	Total Exits	% RETURN HOME	% REUNITED WITH EITHER PARENT	% OTHER LEGAL PERMANENCY	% AGED OUT	2017 COUNTY TOTAL POPULATION	COUNTY CHILD POPULATION
Davis	1	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8,966	2,576
Decatur	15	13.3%	13.3%	80.0%	6.7%	7,950	1,726
Delaware	6	16.7%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	17,153	4,160
Des Moines	40	60.0%	65.0%	32.5%	2.5%	39,417	9,108
Dickinson	17	82.4%	82.4%	11.8%	5.9%	17,199	3,258
Dubuque	77	54.5%	58.4%	39.0%	2.6%	97,041	22,336
Emmet	5	60.0%	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%	9,432	2,087
Fayette	13	61.5%	61.5%	30.8%	7.7%	19,796	4,276
Floyd	28	39.3%	39.3%	53.6%	7.1%	15,744	3,591
Franklin	5	80.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	10,164	2,379
Fremont	6	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	6,948	1,548
Greene	3	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8,981	2,015
Grundy	3	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	12,333	2,915
Guthrie	8	50.0%	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	10,670	2,394
Hamilton	25	76.0%	76.0%	20.0%	4.0%	15,115	3,476
Hancock	3	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	10,771	2,464
Hardin	11	54.5%	54.5%	36.4%	9.1%	17,048	3,758
Harrison	10	70.0%	70.0%	20.0%	10.0%	14,136	3,236
Henry	6	50.0%	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%	19,863	4,425
Howard	7	71.4%	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%	9,228	2,317
Humboldt	20	75.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	9,564	2,242
Ida	12	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	6,865	1,628
Iowa	9	55.6%	55.6%	22.2%	22.2%	16,103	3,812
Jackson	6	33.3%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	19,366	4,323
Jasper	44	54.5%	54.5%	38.6%	6.8%	36,966	8,202

FY 2018 FOSTER CARE SYSTEM EXITS BY COUNTY AND EXIT TYPE (CONT'D)

CHILD'S COUNTY	Total Exits	% RETURN HOME	% REUNITED WITH EITHER PARENT	% OTHER LEGAL PERMANENCY	% AGED OUT	2017 COUNTY TOTAL POPULATION	COUNTY CHILD POPULATION
Jefferson	13	61.5%	69.2%	30.8%	0.0%	18,422	3,463
Johnson	42	52.4%	52.4%	35.7%	11.9%	149,210	29,238
Jones	12	75.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	20,536	4,447
Keokuk	17	82.4%	82.4%	5.9%	11.8%	10,153	2,304
Kossuth	2	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	14,999	3,320
Lee	34	82.4%	85.3%	14.7%	0.0%	34,295	7,524
Linn	181	45.9%	48.6%	42.5%	8.8%	224,115	52,151
Louisa	3	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11,184	2,608
Lucas	0					8,534	1,982
Lyon	5	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11,792	3,319
Madison	9	11.1%	11.1%	77.8%	11.1%	16,013	4,074
Mahaska	20	30.0%	45.0%	50.0%	5.0%	22,235	5,356
Marion	22	59.1%	63.6%	36.4%	0.0%	33,105	7,941
Marshall	40	52.5%	55.0%	40.0%	5.0%	40,288	10,171
Mills	7	85.7%	85.7%	14.3%	0.0%	15,068	3,554
Mitchell	8	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%	37.5%	10,631	2,574
Monona	7	28.6%	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	8,740	1,777
Monroe	3	33.3%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	7,845	1,928
Montgomery	4	25.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	10,137	2,349
Muscatine	25	40.0%	52.0%	40.0%	8.0%	42,880	10,852
O'Brien	6	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	13,801	3,254
Osceola	3	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6,045	1,446
Page	24	62.5%	79.2%	16.7%	4.2%	15,224	3,118
Palo Alto	1	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9,092	2,041
Plymouth	29	48.3%	55.2%	44.8%	0.0%	25,220	6,307
Pocahontas	4	75.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	6,846	1,533
Polk	316	42.7%	45.6%	48.4%	6.0%	481,830	117,560
Pottawattamie	148	51.4%	58.1%	40.5%	1.4%	93,386	22,122
Poweshiek	23	34.8%	34.8%	47.8%	17.4%	18,314	3,632
Ringgold	2	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5,034	1,175
Sac	1	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9,817	2,207
Scott	86	34.9%	39.5%	57.0%	3.5%	172,509	41,211
Shelby	9	88.9%	88.9%	0.0%	11.1%	11,628	2,656
Sioux	13	69.2%	69.2%	7.7%	7.7%	34,860	9,424
Story	23	52.2%	52.2%	30.4%	17.4%	97,502	16,194
Tama	30	33.3%	33.3%	60.0%	6.7%	17,058	4,172
Taylor	14	57.1%	64.3%	35.7%	0.0%	6,178	1,447
Union	10	70.0%	70.0%	20.0%	10.0%	12,450	2,860
Van Buren	2	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7,157	1,759
Wapello	38	57.9%	60.5%	34.2%	5.3%	35,044	7,970
Warren	27	44.4%	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	50,163	12,181
Washington	5	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	22,281	5,502
Wayne	5	60.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	6,476	1,574
Webster	54	59.3%	63.0%	31.5%	5.6%	36,605	7,961
Winnebago	3	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	10,587	2,252
Winnesiek	1	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	20,201	3,855
Woodbury	123	39.0%	42.3%	51.2%	6.5%	102,429	26,878
Worth	3	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	7,469	1,643
Wright	12	66.7%	66.7%	25.0%	8.3%	12,784	2,990
Grand Total	2282	50.9%	54.3%	39.0%	6.5%	880,588	203,641

Of importance in reviewing the table above is consideration of the exit types children attained and what that means for them. A goal of the child welfare system and juvenile justice in Iowa is to promote legal and relational permanency in a timely manner for each child being served. The data available from DHS do not include any indicators of relational permanency – actually having a life-long connection with a caring adult. The options for legal permanency include return to the home of one or both parents, guardianship and adoption. In many cases, children who experience “aging out” of the system may

be leaving with legal ties to their parents intact, but they often have no permanent caring connection with a parent or any other adult. Readers may use this table to learn of data for their own counties about the rate at which children “age out” of the system rather than having a more permanent legal and relational outcome in their young lives.

Population data sources:

Total Pop: [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jfs?ages\[rpdctvoew/xjt,;?src+bkmk](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jfs?ages[rpdctvoew/xjt,;?src+bkmk)

Child Pop: : [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jfs?ages\[rpdctvoew/xjt,;?src+bkmk](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jfs?ages[rpdctvoew/xjt,;?src+bkmk)