



Advocating for the protection of Iowa children

# Iowa Child Advocacy Board Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report



## IOWA CHILD ADVOCACY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

*Respectfully submitted as required under Iowa Code §237.18(2)(c) and (7)(d)*

The Iowa Child Advocacy Board (ICAB) is an independent board appointed by the Governor of Iowa to engage citizen involvement in child welfare issues. ICAB's core function is to operate two independent child advocacy programs designed to help protect Iowa children and their best interests while being served by the child welfare system: the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program and the Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board (ICFCRB) program.

The mission of the Iowa Child Advocacy Board is "advocating for the protection of Iowa's children and improvement of the child welfare system." This mission was achieved during the past year through the amazing work of 683 highly trained, dedicated volunteers and 37 professional staff who served a total of 2,617 of Iowa's abused or neglected children.

We are pleased to present the fiscal year 2020 annual report highlighting the great work accomplished through the Iowa Child Advocacy Board.



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# CASA PROGRAM

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.

The Iowa CASA Program's structure includes volunteer advocates, volunteer coaches, along with local and state program staff. Advocates, who have received more than 30 hours of training and are sworn in by a judge, are appointed to cases of children who are adjudicated Child In Need of Assistance by the juvenile court. A CASA Coach has received specialized training to support 3 to 5 advocates in their casework. The CASA Coach assists local program staff by assuming some of the case-related supervision of the advocate, freeing the local Coordinator to spend additional time recruiting new advocates and training all volunteers, ensuring the most effective advocacy possible for the children they serve.

The Iowa CASA Program is a member of, and enjoys a strong relationship with, the National CASA/GAL Association, based in Seattle WA. Several Iowa CASA staff members serve on National CASA councils and committees to identify and effect change throughout the CASA / GAL network. The Iowa CASA program has adopted the National CASA/GAL Association's core model as policy for programming in Iowa. Iowa's implementation of the Core Model is as follows:

*The CASA Program utilizes screened, trained, and qualified community volunteers who are appointed by the court to advocate for the best interest of children and youth ages birth up to age 18 (or 21 if special circumstances exist), who are living in out of home care or remain in their home, who come before the court as a result of abuse or neglect as defined by the Iowa laws.*

## CASA Advocates and Coaches contribute selflessly, through:

- Serving as effective voices 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.
- Establishing a relationship with their assigned child(ren) by meeting with them at least once per month throughout the life of the case.
- Researching case records and speaking to each person involved in a child's life, including family members, teachers, doctors, therapists, lawyers and social workers.
- Conducting assessments of children to track important child welfare issues such as protective and promotive factors, relational permanency, education, Adverse Childhood Experiences, health and transitional needs.
- 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 the assigned child and remaining assigned to the case until successful case closure.
- Mentoring and coaching new advocates in the CASA role and responsibilities.

- Working toward the betterment of their community by advocating for improved outcomes for children -- outcomes that will impact the futures of children and their families.
- Offering fairness and objectivity in all activities, including openness to other viewpoints.

## CASA Program Highlights in FY2020

- Continued increase in the number of children served and new advocates trained.
- Program staff trained on Family First legislation implementation.
- Timely response and updates provided to volunteers and partners during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Statewide judicial satisfaction survey conducted in April of 2020.
- Iowa Child Advocacy Board received the 2019 Outstanding Volunteer or National Service Program award.
- Began development of virtual pre-service training.

## CASA and COVID-19

In March 2020, the Iowa CASA program made the difficult decision to restrict CASA Advocates from conducting in-person CASA-related work. For the first time in the history of the CASA program, advocates were not authorized to visit their assigned children in person due to uncertainty of the spread of the virus. During this time, CASA Advocates found creative ways to continue their advocacy work. Advocates told stories of virtually playing games, going on a scavenger hunt around the house or even using special CASA funding to purchase food and medical supplies for CASA-served youth in independent living situations. After learning more and implementing safety precautions, Advocates were allowed to resume in-person activity in June 2020.

## Survey of Juvenile Court Judges

The CASA Program experiences strong support throughout the state judiciary. In this fiscal year, the Child Advocacy Board conducted a survey of judges who serve juvenile court. Forty-one percent of those surveyed responded, with 100% of those judges having CASA programming in at least one county in their coverage area.



## Surveyed judges said they...

Assign the most complex cases to a CASA



91%

Believe CASAs effectively speak for a child's best interests



94%

Are very satisfied with CASA court reports



91%

Adopt 75-100% of CASA recommendations



91%

## Agreed that...

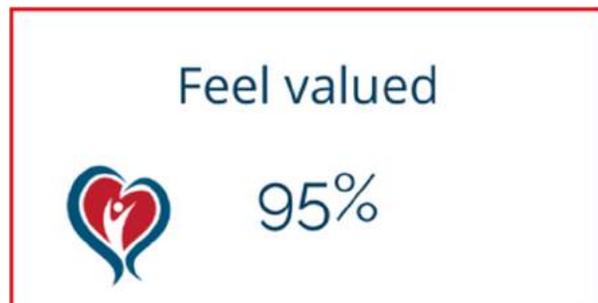
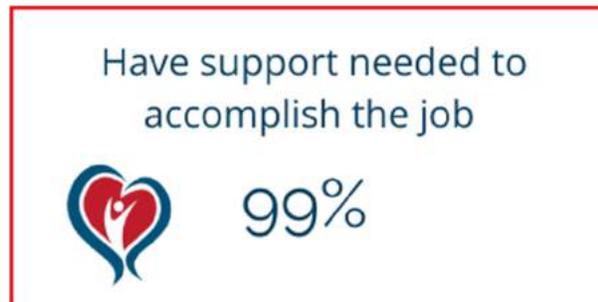
- I have a better understanding of what is happening in a case when a CASA Advocate is appointed.
- I have more information on which to base decisions regarding a child's best interest when a CASA Advocate is assigned.
- I believe the CASA Program is influential in impacting positive outcomes for children.



100%

## SURVEY OF CASA VOLUNTEERS

In June, CASA volunteer advocates and coaches across the state had the opportunity to participate in the annual satisfaction survey. All active and “on-leave” volunteers were invited to share their thoughts and feelings about their volunteer experience. Here are a few highlights from the survey.



## VOLUNTEER SURVEY COMMENTS

CASA volunteers are satisfied with their roles and feel they're accomplishing their goals. Here is a selection of free-form comments from the survey.

I truly believe that one person can change someone's world by their impact. That is what I am aiming for. I can list two very vital people in my life and without them who knows where I would be.

To give back to a system that helped me as a CINA.

I want little children to have a voice, which they currently don't have. I want someone to be in their corner and help them get what they want.

I have adopted children who were in the foster care system. They would have benefited from a CASA in their cases.

I wanted to give kids the voice I did not have when I was a foster child.

Originally volunteered for part of my school of social work application - but a lot has changed and I now can't imagine not volunteering as a CASA.

Our family is not in a position to provide foster care at this time, and felt this was a way to be involved with children and families in need instead of fostering.

I had a great childhood and wonderful parents. I believe every kid should have that opportunity.

~



# IOWA CITIZEN FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD PROGRAM

Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Boards (ICFCRB) are mandated by Iowa Code §237.20 to review the case of each child receiving foster care where local boards are established. This is accomplished through the use of trained volunteers approved by the Iowa Child Advocacy Board (ICAB) and appointed by a local judge. 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.

Volunteers serve on local boards that meet regularly to review case plans, hear from interested parties, and provide the Court and the Department of Human Services (DHS) with their findings and recommendations about the safety, well-being and permanency of children from their communities who are placed in foster care or under the guardianship of DHS. In FY2020 there were 27 local boards reviewing cases in 50 Iowa counties.

## ICFCRB Program Improvements

In FY2020, ICAB developed a Quality Assurance and Improvement program to assess the overall quality of Foster Care Review Board reports issued for the courts, DHS and interested parties. The assessment revealed a disconnect between local board findings, barriers and recommendations. As a result of the assessment, additional training was provided to all FCRB facilitators and board members during FY2020 to address these issues. Another assessment will be conducted in FY2021 for comparison data. An ICFCRB Program subcommittee created new materials to educate stakeholders, youth, families and other interested parties about the purpose of citizen foster care review boards. Enhancing partnerships with child welfare stakeholders and the individuals involved in the review process continues to be a key goal in ICAB's strategic plan.

ICAB refined its evaluation program regarding citizen foster care review programming to better align with statutory requirements. Gathering input from interested parties and child welfare partners annually is essential to assessing the overall quality and value

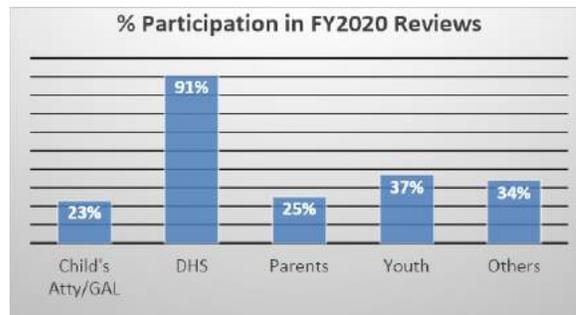


that citizen reviews have within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. More information is included in the Foster Care Review Board Evaluation Program Report contained in this annual report.

## FY20 ICFCRB Program Impact

### Participation of Interested Parties at Local Reviews

In order for board members to be well-informed about a case and what is happening in the life of a child, participation from Interested Parties (IP) is essential. Interested Parties include: the person, court, or agency responsible for the child; the parent or parents of the child unless termination of parental rights has occurred; the foster care provider; the child receiving foster care if the child is 14+ years of age; the child’s guardian ad litem, the department, the county attorney and any persons providing services to the child or the child’s family. Interested parties have a right to representation by counsel at the review. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, foster care reviews held between March 26, 2020 and June 30, 2020 were conducted virtually by local boards, who conducted case file reviews only with no direct interaction with interested parties. While in-person reviews were suspended, interested parties were invited to submit a case update via recorded or written message. Of the interested parties notified of foster care reviews in FY2020, 40% participated in the review process by either attending in person or providing a case update.



### Timeliness of Review Reports

All ICFCRB reports were filed and distributed within 15 days of the foster care review pursuant to Iowa Code §237.20(2)(a).

### Foster Care Review Board Findings

Local boards make case type specific findings to help measure achievements for children in Iowa’s foster care system. These benchmarks relate to important safety, permanency and well-being issues for youth to determine child welfare system strengths and areas needing to be strengthened.

| Reunification/Guardianship Case Findings by ICFCRBs   | # of Responses | Yes Responses | Percent Yes |
|---|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. The Board finds the Case Permanency Plan (CPP) meets timelines and addresses the child(ren)’s current out-of-home placement. | 1175           | 1005          | 85.53%      |
| 2. The Board finds the written CPP permanency goal of reunification / guardianship is appropriate for the child(ren).           | 1177           | 681           | 57.86%      |

|  |      |      |        |
|--|------|------|--------|
| 3. The Board finds that DHS has developed a concurrent plan for the child(ren).  | 1175 | 983  | 83.66% |
| 4. The Board finds continued out-of-home placement is appropriate while awaiting achievement of the permanency goal.   | 1177 | 1148 | 97.54% |
| 5. The Board finds the level of placement is the least restrictive setting available to meet the child(ren)'s needs.   | 1178 | 1168 | 99.15% |
| 6. The Board finds DHS made concerted efforts to place the child(ren) with a relative or a person who has a caregiver relationship.  | 1177 | 1121 | 95.24% |
| 7. The Board finds DHS made concerted and/or continued efforts to place the child(ren) with siblings. *  | 953  | 910  | 95.48% |
| 8. The Board finds DHS made concerted efforts to inquire about Indian heritage, notify the tribe, and follow ICWA placement preferences.   | 1173 | 1092 | 93.09% |
| 9. The Board finds DHS has ensured appropriate services are in place to make it possible for the family to achieve the permanency goal and services are responsive to the parents' needs.                    | 1171 | 1144 | 97.69% |
| 10. The Board finds the proximity of the placement to the parental home is consistent with the child(ren)'s best interests, and conducive to achieving the permanency goal of reunification (if applicable). | 1178 | 1134 | 96.26% |
| 11. If youth is 14 years or older, the Board finds DHS has initiated transition planning for the youth. *  | 228  | 132  | 57.89% |
| 12. The Board finds that the Court has held a permanency hearing within ASFA timelines for the child(ren). *   | 581  | 487  | 83.82% |

(\*) Findings 7, 11 and 12 do not apply to all children in foster care due to the child's age at the time of the review, lack of siblings in care and/or length of time in foster care at the time of the review; percentage is calculated based on number of applicable cases.

| <b>Adoption Case Findings by ICFCRBs</b>   | <b># of Responses</b> | <b>Yes Responses</b> | <b>Percent Yes</b> |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. The Board finds the goal of adoption is appropriate for the child(ren).   | 584                   | 569                  | 97.43%             |
| 2. The Board finds the Case Permanency Plan (CPP) meets timelines and addresses adoption planning for the child(ren).                    | 584                   | 525                  | 89.90%             |
| 3. The Board finds DHS made concerted efforts to inquire about Indian heritage, notify the tribe, and follow ICWA placement preferences. | 582                   | 574                  | 98.63%             |
| 4. The Board finds DHS made concerted efforts to place the child(ren) with a relative or a person who has a caregiver relationship.      | 584                   | 571                  | 97.77%             |
| 5. The Board finds DHS made concerted and/or continued efforts to place the child(ren) with siblings. *                                  | 473                   | 462                  | 97.67%             |
| 6. The Board finds the current placement is appropriate to meet the child(ren)'s need for permanency.                                    | 584                   | 546                  | 93.49%             |
| 7. The Board finds DHS has ensured appropriate services are in place to safeguard the child(ren)'s safety and well-being.                | 584                   | 574                  | 98.29%             |
| 8. The Board finds the DHS casework responsibility has been transferred to the adoption specialist.                                      | 584                   | 541                  | 92.64%             |
| 9. The Board finds the adoption specialist has met with the child.   | 584                   | 484                  | 82.88%             |

|   |     |     |        |
|---|-----|-----|--------|
| 10. The Board finds the child(ren) has a Life Book.                                   | 584 | 173 | 29.62% |
| 11. The Board finds the child(ren) will be adopted within 24 months of entering care. | 583 | 227 | 38.94% |

(\*) Finding 5 does not apply to all children in foster care due to the lack of siblings in care.

| <b>APPLA Case Findings by ICFCRBs</b>  | <b># of Responses</b> | <b>Yes Responses</b> | <b>Percent Yes</b> |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. The Board finds the court-ordered goal of APPLA is appropriate for the youth and continued out-of-home placement is appropriate until majority age. | 98                    | 96                   | 97.96%             |
| 2. The Board finds the Case Permanency Plan (CPP) meets timelines and addresses the youth's current foster care placement.                             | 98                    | 82                   | 83.67%             |
| 3. The Board finds the Case Permanency Plan (CPP), Part C includes the youth's transition plan.  | 97                    | 69                   | 71.13%             |
| 4. The Board finds the youth has completed the Casey Life Skills Assessment.   | 98                    | 79                   | 80.61%             |
| 5. The Board finds that a transition planning meeting has been held for the youth.   | 98                    | 71                   | 72.45%             |
| 6. The Board finds DHS made concerted efforts to inquire about Indian heritage, notify the tribe, and follow ICWA placement preferences.               | 98                    | 96                   | 97.96%             |
| 7. The Board finds DHS made concerted efforts to place the youth with a relative or a person who has a caregiver relationship.                         | 98                    | 90                   | 91.84%             |
| 8. The Board finds DHS made concerted and/or continued efforts to place the youth with siblings.   | 98                    | 64                   | 65.31%             |
| 9. The Board finds the level of placement is the least restrictive setting available to meet the youth's needs.  | 98                    | 96                   | 97.96%             |
| 10. The Board finds DHS has ensured appropriate services are in place to make it possible for the youth to transition to adulthood.                    | 98                    | 81                   | 82.65%             |
| 11. The Board finds the youth has at least one caring adult in his/her support system.   | 98                    | 93                   | 94.90%             |

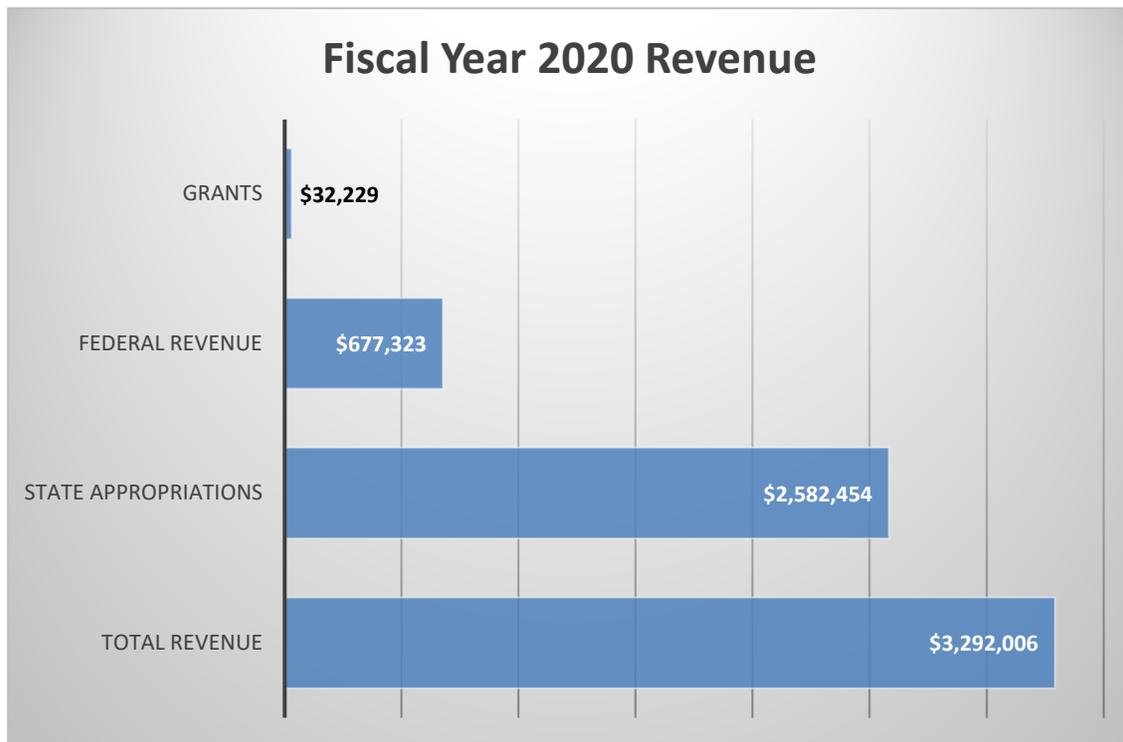
## Looking Ahead

The Iowa Child Advocacy Board will monitor the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act and its impact on the number of children in Iowa's foster care system. Resources may need to be reallocated to provide citizen foster care reviews for children in more populated areas of the state. The State Board has approved exploration for expansion into counties adjacent to existing areas with FCRB programming. Collaborating with DHS and other stakeholders will be key for program expansion.

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# ICAB FINANCIALS





# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Successful implementation of Family First legislation will require the Department of Human Services to be fully staffed and offer the full array of evidenced-based family centered services to receive federal reimbursement. It is recommended the Department of Human Services receive an adequate appropriation for full implementation of all facets of the Family First legislation.
2. Iowa's child welfare partners are eager to assist DHS with their new service array. However, ICAB offices across the state report varying degrees of implementation of Family First legislation. It is recommended the Department of Human Services consistently implement Family First legislation in all areas of the state to help child welfare partners understand expectations and tasks needed to effectively serve children and families.
3. Results of the FCRB Evaluation Program raised concerns about the effectiveness of recommendations made by local citizen foster care review boards. It is recommended that ICAB collaborate with the Department of Human Services and other stakeholders to revamp the citizen review program with a greater emphasis on reviewing for compliance with case permanency plans as outlined in Iowa Code §237.22, identifying systemic barriers and enhancing recommendations to improve case permanency planning for children and families.
4. Data from citizen foster care reviews indicate a low percentage of cases where transition planning has been started in a timely manner for youth aged 14+. The Child Advocacy Board recommends that the Department of Human Services ensure transition planning is initiated and carried out for children 14+ years. It is suggested that the Department conduct a quality assessment of cases to identify and remedy gaps in the transition planning process across the state.

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# APPENDIX

## Foster Care Review Board Evaluation Program Report

Pursuant to Iowa Code §237.18, subsection 6, the Iowa Child Advocacy Board has refined and implemented an annual evaluation program designed to evaluate the effectiveness of citizen reviews in improving case permanency planning and meeting case permanency planning goals, identify the amount of time children spend in foster care placements, and identify problem issues in the foster care system.

There are four components to the evaluation program:

1. Annual survey of interested parties
2. Comment card results from local foster care review meetings
3. Barriers to achieving the permanency plan goal identified during local foster care reviews
4. Data on the amount of time children spend in foster care placements

### Interested Party Survey Results

Individuals and other stakeholders were invited to complete a program survey regarding the effectiveness of citizen foster care reviews in improving case permanency planning and meeting case permanency planning goals. 187 individuals participated in the survey; no youth responded.

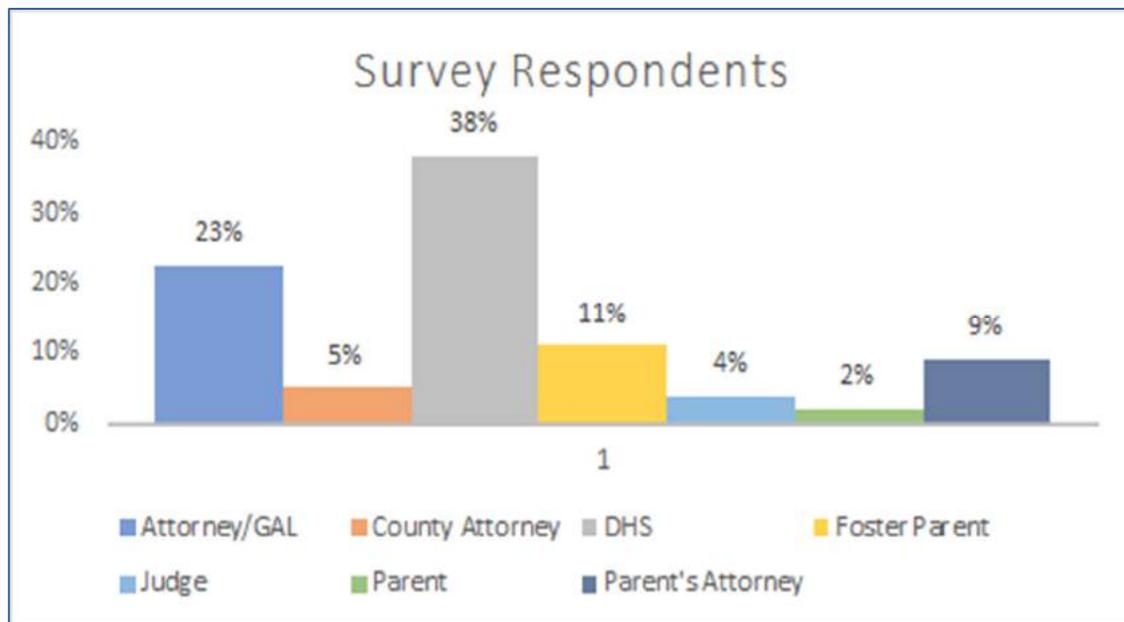


Table 1. Interested Party Survey Results

|   | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE         | DISAGREE     | STRONGLY DISAGREE | TOTAL |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| Citizen reviews adequately address current issues regarding the case permanency plan for children and families  | 35.29%<br>66   | 56.15%<br>105 | 5.35%<br>10  | 3.21%<br>6        | 187   |
| Citizen reviews adequately address progress toward completing the action steps of the case permanency plan  | 33.16%<br>62   | 57.22%<br>107 | 5.35%<br>10  | 4.28%<br>8        | 187   |
| Citizen reviews actively address whether concurrent planning is occurring for children in out-of-home placements  | 31.55%<br>59   | 55.61%<br>104 | 9.09%<br>17  | 3.74%<br>7        | 187   |
| Citizen reviews actively address whether relative searches are occurring for children in out-of-home placements   | 24.06%<br>45   | 54.01%<br>101 | 16.58%<br>31 | 5.35%<br>10       | 187   |
| Citizen reviews actively address the achievement of legal permanency for children   | 33.16%<br>62   | 54.01%<br>101 | 9.09%<br>17  | 3.74%<br>7        | 187   |
| Citizen reviews focus on the critical needs of children (i.e., educational advocacy, mental health, physical health, placement needs, relational permanence, transition planning, etc.) | 36.36%<br>68   | 54.01%<br>101 | 6.42%<br>12  | 3.21%<br>6        | 187   |
| Citizen reviews provide an opportunity to identify systemic barriers in the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems.  | 27.27%<br>51   | 47.59%<br>89  | 19.79%<br>37 | 5.35%<br>10       | 187   |
| Recommendations made by citizen review boards effectively influence case planning for families with children in out-of-home placements  | 21.39%<br>40   | 44.92%<br>84  | 22.99%<br>43 | 10.70%<br>20      | 187   |

## ICFCRB Comment Card Results and Evaluative Feedback

Following each individual case review, all groups of participants are given the opportunity to provide feedback about the review process. The Boards and staff are diligent in their efforts to be respectful and thoughtful in their work and maintain focus on the safety and permanency planning for children. Feedback and evaluation of the review process by interested parties is essential for quality assessment and program improvement.

Each interested party who attends a local review is invited to complete a comment card. Due to virtual case file reviews held for the fourth quarter of FY2020, comment cards were not applicable during that time frame. 1,477 comment cards were received in FY2020. In addition to the opportunity to provide open comments, parties are asked to evaluate four areas as shown in the table below.

| % of IP Group that Agreed with the Statement |   |   |  |  |                 |
|--|---|---|--|--|-----------------|
| Relation to Child                            | The review adequately addressed the issues regarding the child's safety and permanency plan | The Board's recommendations will effectively impact case planning | The Board listened and treated me respectfully | Timely notification of reviews was received (at least 10 days prior) | Total Responses |
| CASA   | 100%  | 100%  | 100%   | 88%  | 54              |
| Child's Atty/GAL                             | 100%  | 100%  | 100%   | 95%  | 66              |
| DHS  | 100%  | 99%   | 100%   | 100%   | 402             |
| Foster Parent                                | 99%   | 99%   | 100%   | 99%  | 268             |
| Parent                                       | 96%   | 97%   | 98%  | 99%  | 155             |
| Parent's Attorney                            | 100%  | 100%  | 100%   | 97%  | 81              |
| Relative Caregiver                           | 98%   | 100%  | 100%   | 100%   | 42              |
| Service Provider                             | 100%  | 98%   | 99%  | 91%  | 148             |
| Youth (14+ yrs)                              | 100%  | 100%  | 100%   | 99%  | 17              |

## *Youth Comments*

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

- Able to speak freely this time.
- The positive feedback.
- The compliments on how well I am doing.

## **Barriers to Achievement of Permanency Plan Goals**

Barriers that prevent achievement of the permanency plan goal at the time of the review are identified through a discussion between the local board members and the parties in attendance. Given the individual dynamics of cases, more than one barrier may have been identified per case. The topmost identified barriers are noted for each case type reviewed by local foster care review boards.

### ***Cases with the goal of reunification or guardianship***

Of 2,627 documented barriers from 1,178 child reviews held,

- 34 had no identified barriers because the achievement of the permanency goal was in process
- 456 of the barriers were parental mental health issues
- 453 of the barriers were parental substance abuse issues
- 408 of the barriers were family economic issues to include lack of stable housing

### ***Cases with the goal of adoption***

Of 760 documented barriers from 584 child reviews held,

- 102 had no identified barriers because the finalization of adoption was pending
- 97 of the barriers were children who were not in the pre-adoptive home for 180 days at the time of the review
- 86 of the barriers were the DHS selection staffing not being held to determine the pre-adoptive placement
- 53 of the barriers were the DHS adoption specialist did not have the paperwork necessary to move forward with a finalization date.

### ***Cases with the goal of another planned permanent living arrangement***

Of 256 documented barriers from 98 reviews held,

- 36 identified the youth did not have a housing plan as part of the transition plan
- 41 identified that the youth needs employment or job experience
- 19 identified that the youth’s cognitive ability was a barrier to active involvement in transition planning

## Length of Stay in Foster Care

The average length of stay for children identified to be in foster care in June 2020 was 1.46 years.

### Conclusions

Information gathered from the interested party survey indicates a need to enhance communication with parties and stakeholders regarding the identification of systemic barriers and for the Child Advocacy Board to advance efforts for systemic advocacy to address barriers in the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems. While respondents generally agreed that citizen reviews adequately address current issues and progress toward completing case plan action steps, there was less agreement that the recommendations made by citizen reviews effectively influence case planning for children and families. As part of ICAB's continuous improvement plan for the ICFCRB program, emphasis will be placed on reviewing for compliance with case permanency plans and developing specific recommendations related to improving case plans to lead to better outcomes for children in foster care.

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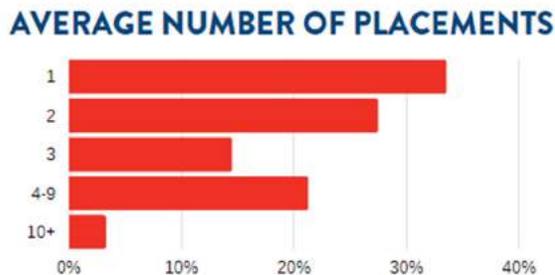
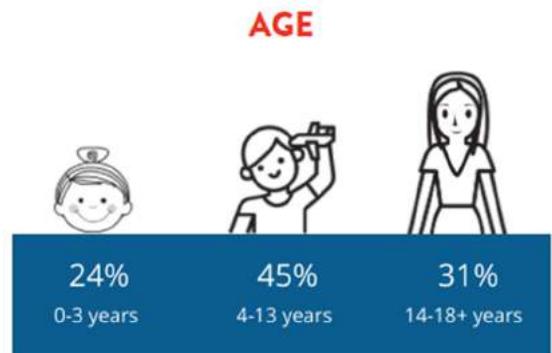
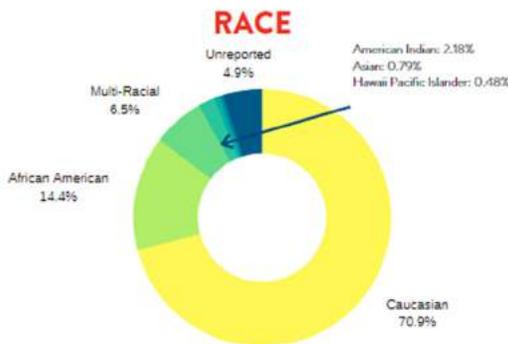
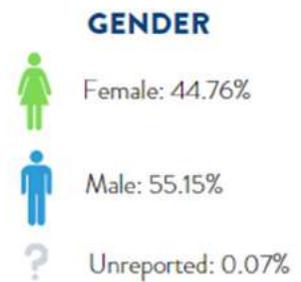
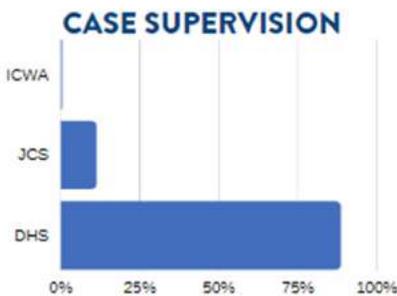


# Snapshot of Iowa's Foster Care System

The Iowa Department of Human Services (IDHS) fulfills its statutory requirement to provide data to the Iowa Child Advocacy Board for its Foster Care Registry by transmitting a confidential end-of-month report with data on all children in foster care placements or under the guardianship of IDHS. The Child Advocacy Board uses the data to prepare this report on children in foster care to Iowa public officials. The statute requires this report 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.

In prior years, the data from IDHS included information on children in placement or under supervision of DHS or Juvenile Court Services (JCS). Although there are more children in out-of-home placements, this report contains information about children in foster care settings only at the end of FY20 which does not include voluntary placement agreements, unlicensed relative care or suitable other placement. Since the data set for FY20 is different from previous years, ICAB is unable to make a direct comparison and offers this 6/30/2020 snapshot as a baseline for future reports.

**3082**  
CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN JUNE 2020



**1.46**  
AVERAGE YEARS IN FOSTER CARE

## Level of Care and Legal Status

The Iowa Department of Human Services tracks placements in 19 levels of care as identified in the table below.

- 25% of the children in foster care in June 2020 were on a trial home placement.
- 42% were in licensed foster care.
- 6% were placed with relatives.

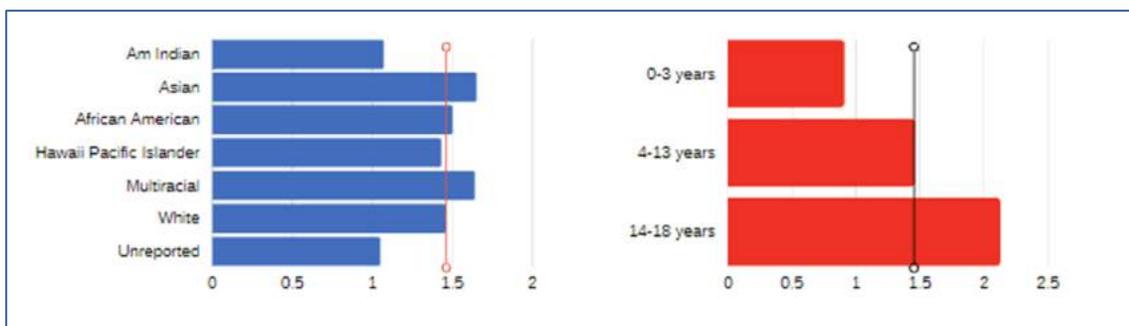
| LEVEL OF CARE                   | ICWA      | DHS         | JCS        | Total       |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| COMMUNITY FOSTER GROUP CARE     |           | 1           |            | 1           |
| COMPREHENSIVE FOSTER GROUP CARE |           | 2           |            | 2           |
| DETENTION                       |           | 13          | 27         | 40          |
| FOSTER FAMILY                   | 4         | 1567        | 17         | 1588        |
| HOSPITAL                        | 2         | 2           | 1          | 5           |
| NEURODEV/COMORBID CONDITION     |           | 6           |            | 6           |
| NON CHILD WELF RESIDENTIAL      |           | 28          | 5          | 33          |
| NON-RELATIVE                    |           | 292         | 1          | 293         |
| OTHER MEDICAID PLACEMENT        |           | 1           | 3          | 4           |
| PMIC                            |           | 84          | 11         | 95          |
| PRESUBSIDY                      |           | 216         |            | 216         |
| QUALIFIED RES TREATMENT PGM     |           | 56          | 98         | 154         |
| RELATIVE                        |           | 214         |            | 214         |
| SHELTER CARE                    |           | 81          | 10         | 91          |
| STATE INST MENTAL HEALTH        |           | 1           | 1          | 2           |
| STATE INST RESOURCE CTR         |           | 2           |            | 2           |
| STATE INST TRAINING SCH         |           | 1           | 53         | 54          |
| SUPERVISED APARTMENT LIVING     |           | 50          | 11         | 61          |
| TRIAL HOME VISIT                | 5         | 751         | 185        | 941         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>11</b> | <b>3368</b> | <b>423</b> | <b>3802</b> |

The Iowa Department of Human Services tracks legal status in eight categories as identified in this table.

- 53% were adjudicated child in need of assistance (CINA).
- 24% had a legal status of TPR/CINA.
- 8% had a delinquent adjudication.

| LEGAL STATUS                    | ICWA      | DHS         | JCS        | Total       |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| CINA                            | 3         | 1978        | 22         | 2003        |
| CUSTODY TRANSFERRED             | 8         | 67          | 44         | 119         |
| DELINQUENT                      |           | 19          | 296        | 315         |
| FINA                            |           | 1           |            | 1           |
| GUARDIANSHIP TO SUITABLE PERSON |           | 12          |            | 12          |
| MR COURT ORDERED                |           | 19          |            | 19          |
| TPR/CINA                        |           | 924         |            | 924         |
| VOLUNTARY                       |           | 348         | 61         | 409         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>11</b> | <b>3368</b> | <b>423</b> | <b>3802</b> |

## Length of Stay Snapshots



The state average for length of stay during FY20 was 1.46 years. These charts show length of stay for racial groups and age groups compared to the overall state average.

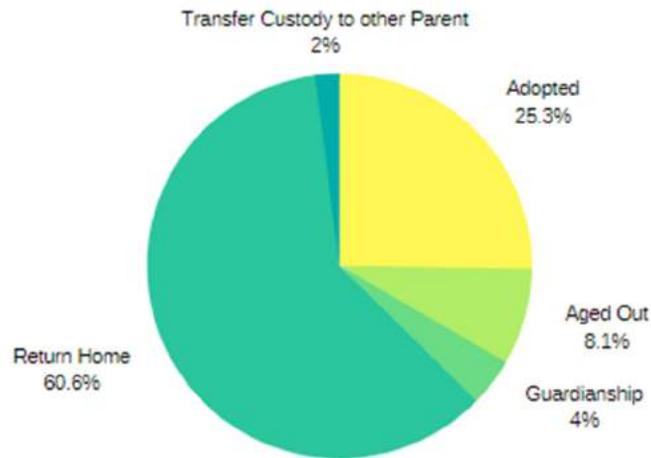
## Length of Stay in Foster Care by County

The average length of stay for children identified to be in foster care as of 06/30/2020 was 1.46 years. The following table shows the average length of stay (in years) for children by county from longest LOS to shortest.

| County     | LOS  | County        | LOS  | County               | LOS         |
|------------|------|---------------|------|----------------------|-------------|
| Audubon    | 3.76 | Polk          | 1.60 | Hardin               | 1.23        |
| Dickinson  | 2.46 | Clay          | 1.58 | Emmet                | 1.23        |
| Ida        | 2.35 | Hancock       | 1.57 | Henry                | 1.23        |
| Madison    | 2.29 | Cherokee      | 1.57 | Grundy               | 1.22        |
| Taylor     | 2.23 | Monona        | 1.55 | Benton               | 1.20        |
| Franklin   | 2.15 | Buena Vista   | 1.54 | Harrison             | 1.20        |
| Greene     | 2.14 | Keokuk        | 1.52 | Boone                | 1.20        |
| Cedar      | 2.08 | Iowa          | 1.51 | Cerro Gordo          | 1.19        |
| Shelby     | 2.06 | Montgomery    | 1.50 | Mahaska              | 1.19        |
| Washington | 2.04 | Plymouth      | 1.48 | Bremer               | 1.13        |
| Guthrie    | 1.97 | Linn          | 1.48 | Fayette              | 1.12        |
| Adair      | 1.90 | Des Moines    | 1.48 | Warren               | 1.10        |
| Jefferson  | 1.88 | Pottawattamie | 1.45 | Pocahontas           | 1.09        |
| Sioux      | 1.86 | Jackson       | 1.42 | Floyd                | 1.09        |
| Allamakee  | 1.83 | Page          | 1.37 | Fremont              | 1.08        |
| Appanoose  | 1.80 | Muscatine     | 1.36 | Marshall             | 1.06        |
| O'Brien    | 1.78 | Monroe        | 1.36 | Dubuque              | 1.06        |
| Clarke     | 1.77 | Jasper        | 1.36 | Wayne                | 1.04        |
| Lyon       | 1.71 | Johnson       | 1.35 | Delaware             | 0.97        |
| Decatur    | 1.70 | Cass          | 1.33 | Tama                 | 0.97        |
| Wapello    | 1.70 | Lee           | 1.33 | Ringgold             | 0.96        |
| Woodbury   | 1.69 | Clinton       | 1.32 | Lucas                | 0.94        |
| Osceola    | 1.69 | Winneshiek    | 1.31 | Mills                | 0.94        |
| Dallas     | 1.68 | Winnebago     | 1.30 | Carroll              | 0.89        |
| Butler     | 1.65 | Van Buren     | 1.30 | Louisa               | 0.88        |
| Adams      | 1.63 | Marion        | 1.29 | Wright               | 0.85        |
| Scott      | 1.62 | Hamilton      | 1.29 | Howard               | 0.80        |
| Story      | 1.61 | Webster       | 1.29 | Buchanan             | 0.78        |
| Poweshiek  | 1.61 | Jones         | 1.28 | Sac                  | 0.72        |
| Davis      | 1.60 | Mitchell      | 1.27 | Clayton              | 0.63        |
| Kossuth    | 1.60 | Crawford      | 1.27 | Humboldt             | 0.58        |
| Calhoun    | 1.60 | Black Hawk    | 1.26 | Worth                | 0.54        |
| Union      | 1.60 | Chickasaw     | 1.25 | Palo Alto            | 0.48        |
|            |      |               |      | <b>State Average</b> | <b>1.46</b> |

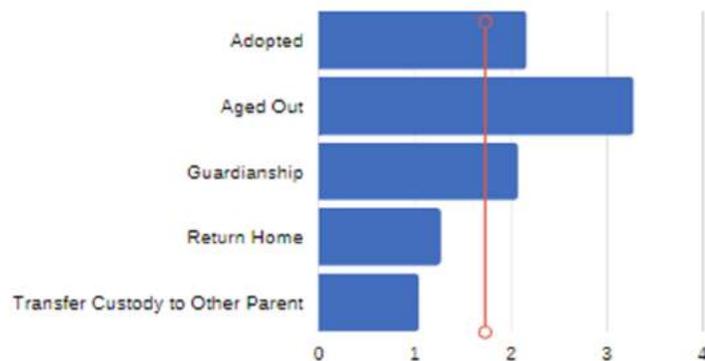
## Children Who Exited Foster Care

The data shows that 221 children exited the foster care system in June 2020. The majority of the children who exited foster care during the specified time period were returned to the parental home from which they were removed.



The average length of stay for children who exited in June 2020 was 1.78 years.

- The average LOS for children who returned home was 1.26 years, which aligns with establishing reunification within one year from removal.
- The average LOS for children who were adopted was 2.16 years, which aligns with the threshold for the Child and Family Services Review outcome that looks “at a time frame of achievement of a legally finalized adoption within 24 months of the child coming into care.”



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