

October 7, 2009

FOLLOW US ON:

[BLOG](#)

[TWITTER](#)

[FACEBOOK](#)

[YOUTUBE](#)

**MEDIA
INFORMATION**

If you are a member of the media and would like more information on anything in this e-newsletter, please email Berk Brown at: Berk.Brown@PlatteInstitute.org or call (402) 452.3737. Members of the media may use any or all parts of this information in reproduction as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the Platte Institute for Economic Research.

**SEND A LETTER TO
THE EDITOR**

The Platte Institute strongly believes in the importance of citizens participating in the public dialogue on issues important to Nebraska. Writing a letter to the editor is an outstanding

PLATTE CHAT

Latest Report Looks at Nebraska's Foster Care System

Today, the Platte Institute releases the report: [Nebraska's Foster Care Conundrum: Federal Reimbursement Hinders Reform.](#)

This report, authored by intern Kelly Dunlap, takes a sobering look at the issues impacting Nebraska's foster-care system. When a child-welfare program struggles, not only is the impact felt by those in the system, but it also can put a strain on the state's economy.

According to the report, on an average day in 2007, approximately 12 children were removed from their homes in Nebraska, usually due to abuse or neglect.

Some child welfare reformers have accused the state of adopting the "take-the-child-and-run" approach - meaning that it removes children at an unnecessarily high rate. According to a report published by the National Coalition for Child Protection Reform, Nebraska has been removing children from the home at one of the

way to partake in the discussion and have your voice heard by thousands of people. To make the process easier, the Platte Institute has assembled a list of links which allow you to submit a letter to the editor to nearly all Nebraska newspapers. Simply [CLICK HERE](#) for a listing of the newspapers and follow the appropriate link to submit your letter.

highest rates in the nation.

Each year from 2004-2007, Nebraska ranked highest in the nation at taking children from their homes on a per 1,000 impoverished children ratio. In 2007, Nebraska dropped to second, but still removed children at a rate almost three-times that of the national average. Why has the state had such a high removal rate? The report suggests a large part of the problem comes from the federal reimbursement program which creates an incentive to shuffle a child into foster care, not because it is the best option for the child but because, in many cases, funding is sure to follow.

Furthermore, the report states that the Nebraska State Foster Care Review Board, formed by the Nebraska Legislature, produces independent reviews of the state's foster care system. The Board analyzes select cases of children in the system in order to expose flaws and provide recommendations to policy-makers to improve the system.

The following are just a few of the 2007 Annual Report's main findings:

- 30.2% of the children's plans had objectives that were not in the best interest of the child.
- 31.4% of the children's cases were not making progress towards permanency.
- 51.7% of children had been put in four or more different placements by the end of the year.
- 41.7% of children had been in foster care for at least two years of their lives.

The report suggests Nebraska should look to Florida as an example of how to be more financially efficient while also improving the stability of the

foster care system.

To read the full report, please [CLICK HERE](#).

www.platteinstitute.org

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter or if you wish to be removed from all future newsletters, please [click here](#) to manage your subscriptions.