

Sponsored by The Iowa State Bar Association's Family Law and Juvenile Law Section

Juvenile Law Seminar


Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act

Break Out Session #1
2:15 p.m.- 3:15 p.m.



Presented by
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Friday, May 1, 2015

 Iowa Department of Human Services

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (P.L.110-351)

H.R. 6893
110th Congress - 2nd Session
Signed October 7, 2008

May 2015
Doug Wolfe, DHS Program Planner
Julie Allison, DHS, Child Welfare Bureau Chief

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Summary of the Law

- Connecting and Supporting Relative Caregivers
- Sibling placement and connections
- Expanded support and transition planning for older youth in foster care
- Educational stability and attendance requirements for children in foster care, kinship and adoptive families

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Summary of the Law (Cont.)

- Coordinated health planning for children in foster care
- Improvement of Incentives for Adoption
- Extended funds to support cross system training and family finding efforts

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Kinship Provisions

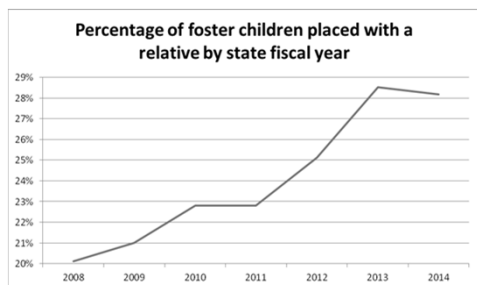
- Providing notice to relatives when children first enter care
- Providing federal funding to states that opt to create permanent guardianship programs for relatives
- Allowing waivers for non-safety-related foster home licensing standards for relatives

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Kinship Data



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Kinship Connections

- DHS utilizes the least restrictive placement when a child comes into the child welfare system
- A blood relative of the child is preferred
- DHS is to notify grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives identified by the child's parents within 30 days of removal

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Kinship (cont.)

- Licensing Standards for relatives who want to be a licensed foster home is the same for any applicant, though non-safety licensing rules may be waived.
 - Notifications to Grandparents, Siblings, and others identified by the parents
 - 30 day requirement
 - DHS Case manager sends letters

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Kinship (cont.)

Guardianship Assistance Program

- Payments to Certain Caregivers
- Iowa waiver (Dates)
- Requires licensed homes
- IVE eligibility necessitates court
- Requires child to live with relative for 6 mo.
- Medicaid

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Sibling Connections

- Reasonable efforts must be made to place siblings together, unless not safe or in the interest of the child's well being.
- If siblings are not placed together, states must document why not, and:
 - Must make reasonable efforts to provide frequent visitation between siblings or other on-going contact between siblings.
- states allowed to define "sibling"

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Education Provisions

- A plan for ensuring the education stability of the child while in foster care
- Presumption that the appropriate education setting for a child in foster care is the one the child was attending when entering foster care.
 - exception when that school setting is not in the child's "best interest".

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Education (cont.)

- Uninterrupted Scholars Act
- Amended FERPA
- Data sharing
- Raised awareness/foster care and education

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Education data

- Children who move frequently are prone to developmental issues and behavioral problems and are more likely to be retained, suspended, and/or expelled (LaViolette, 2011).
- Nationally, more than 50 percent of students in foster care end up dropping out of high school.

– *Online Curriculum Study, Iowa Department of Education 1/3/2014*

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Education Supports

- Iowa Children’s Justice Education Collaborative
- Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development
- Practice improvements:
 - Local education/foster care collaboration
 - Cooperation at the policy level

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Health Care Provisions

- **Section 205** (p. 13 of the Act) requires States to develop a plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for any child in foster care placement.
- Initial and follow-up health screenings
- Steps to ensure continuity of health care services
- The oversight of prescription medicines

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Transition Provisions

- Extends eligibility for Education Training Vouchers (ETVs) to youth who enter kinship guardianship or were adopted at age 16 or older
- Creates the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) – New data collection system to:
 - Track independent living services provided to youth
 - Measure States' performance in preparing youth for their transition from foster care to independent living
- Transition planning for youth aging out of foster care

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Transition (Foster care to 21)

About the state option to extend foster care:

- IVE funding available:
 - Licensing requirements
 - Case management requirements
 - Cost
- Regular re-evaluation
- Legislative Support

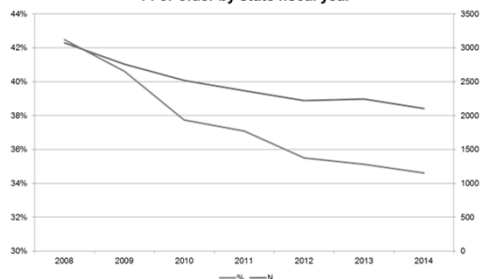
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Transition data

Percentage and number of children in foster care age 14 or older by state fiscal year



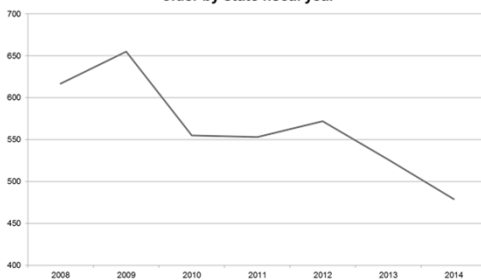
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Transition data

Number of children who exited foster care at age 18 or older by state fiscal year



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Transition Supports

- Iowa Aftercare
- Preparation for Adult Living
- Education and Training Voucher
- Transition Planning Specialists
- Youth Council

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**Preventing Sex Trafficking and
Strengthening Families Act (2014) P.L.
113-183**

- Identifying, documenting, and determining services
- Reporting instances of sex trafficking
- Locating & responding to runaway foster children

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HR4980 (cont.)

- Supporting normalcy for foster children, involving prudent parenting
- Identification/response human trafficking
- Improving transition, avoiding APPLA as a permanency option

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HR4980 (cont.)

- Empowering foster children age 14 & up in the development of their own case plan
- Ensuring foster children have a birth certificate, SS card, health insurance info, medical records, & a *driver's license or equivalent State ID*

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Thank you for helping ensure child safety, permanency, and well being.

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Resources

Fostering Connections Resource Center
<http://www.fosteringconnections.org/>

American Bar Association - Legal Center for Foster Care and Education
<http://www.abanet.org/child/education/>

Iowa Department of Human Services Foster care and adoption
<http://dhs.iowa.gov/foster-care-and-adoption>

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