Since 1999, the NCJFCJ has conducted 53 trainings in Nebraska for more than 3,700 judges, magistrates, commissioners, attorneys, and other juvenile and family court-related professionals. In addition to its national work, the NCJFCJ supports Nebraska’s efforts to improve the juvenile and family courts. The following activities were undertaken by the NCJFCJ over the past 11 years to support and enhance widespread systemic reforms and facilitate the achievement of better outcomes for Nebraska’s children and families.

DEMONSTRATION PILOT SITES: The NCJFCJ has a number of national initiatives focused on improving practice, policy, and court-agency-community collaboration in the areas of child protection, juvenile justice, and family violence. Each initiative includes demonstration pilot sites, training, and outreach at the local, state, and national levels. The NCJFCJ provides various forms of training, technical assistance, and research directly to these demonstration sites. Because successful practices, policies and reforms developed locally are shared nationally, these demonstration sites play a critical role in shaping national policy and best practices. Nebraska has one demonstration site.

♦ THE CHILD VICTIMS ACT MODEL COURTS PROJECT focuses on improving the governmental response to children and families in the child welfare system to ensure safe, timely, and permanent homes for children. Omaha has been a “Model Court” demonstration site since 2002. Among its many accomplishments and significant systems improvements, the Omaha Model Court under the leadership of Co-Lead Judges Wadie Thomas, Jr., and Christopher Kelly has:
  - Been selected as one of three pilot sites for the Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard Implementation field study.
  - Participated in a training on institutional and structural racism to continue with the local implementation of the Courts Catalyzing Change National Agenda.
  - Held a strategic planning meeting with all five juvenile court judges in October 2007 to further enhance judicial leadership, communication, and commitment to Model Court goals and principles.
  - Partnered with the Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative of the Nebraska Supreme Court, NCJFCJ, and other professional organizations and provided Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) training for stakeholders to better understand the Native American culture and to collaborate with tribal courts and tribal agencies to achieve better outcomes for Native American children and families.
  - Designed and implemented two regularly held statewide trainings: “Helping Babies from the Bench” facilitated by Judge Douglas Johnson; and Cultural Competency Training facilitated by Co-Lead Judge Wadie Thomas, Jr.
  - Become a ZERO TO THREE Court Team for Maltreated Infants and Toddlers Project to offer family drug court that focuses on families with children under the age of five.
  - Formed several subcommittees to achieve Model Court goals including: Visitation committee to develop a visitation protocol; and the Transitioning Youth committee to work collaboratively with the Foster Youth Council to improve the system in preparing youth transitioning out of foster care.

♦ SAFE HAVENS: SUPERVISED VISITATION AND SAFE EXCHANGE GRANT PROGRAM in partnership with Praxis International in Duluth, Minn., and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, the project provides technical assistance to three types of visitation center grantees: planning projects, implementation projects, and demonstration sites. The goal of this project is to support supervised visitation grantees in their efforts to increase the number of centers available, to enhance the quality of services, and to increase their abilities to assist
victims of family violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and stalking. Since October 2003, Nebraska has two planning grantees – the City of Grand Island and the Lincoln – Ponca Tribe.

- In 2005-06, 15 technical assistance requests were filled: Helped grantee community identify ways to overcome the challenges it is experiencing with the domestic violence and court partners; facilitated the planning of a site visit/training, including surveying committee members to identify their needs; strategized with grantee on how to bring DV to the forefront of the collaborative effort during the site visit; provided assistance with and research on policies and procedures, documentation, staff training, court referral forms, people-based court management models, case management, consulting committees, strategic planning, staff training, and confidentiality.

- THE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS (AOD) PROJECT recognizes the impact which alcohol and other drugs have on the youth and families who come before our nation’s justice system. NCJFCJ’s Alcohol and Other Drugs Division has developed cutting edge trainings, publications, and technical assistance opportunities to assist courts in dealing with this issue. The goal of the AOD Division is to work with jurisdictions at a local level to create programs that provide opportunities for youthful offenders and their families to reduce substance use, abuse and criminal behavior; strengthen family and community ties; and improve educational opportunities within a framework of strength-based services that promote responsible citizenship and public safety.

In Nebraska:
- 4 jurisdictions have participated in juvenile drug court training.
- 23 participants have attended youth DWI training.
- 3 jurisdictions received on-site juvenile drug court technical assistance.

PAST PROJECTS
- THE JUVENILE SANCTIONS PROGRAM focuses on developing or improving juvenile accountability-based sanctioning programs to increase diversion opportunities and alternatives to secure detention for minor and intermediate level juvenile offenders. Although the demonstration site component of the project officially ended in 2006, the lessons learned from the progress of the 15 “Sanctions” demonstration sites located around the country were highlighted in the national graduated sanctions training programs held in 2007. Omaha was a “Sanctions” demonstration site from 2002 until the project ended in May 2006. Among its many accomplishments and significant systems improvements, the Omaha Sanctions Site has:
  - Continued to provide Cultural Competency training to system professionals.
  - Sought grant funding for production of a handbook on youth rights and responsibilities.
  - Sought funding to add an enhanced tracking system to HOME program so that higher risk youth can be released from detention pending trial.

JUDICIAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING ACTIVITIES: The NCJFCJ sponsors a variety of training activities tailored to meet the needs of individual jurisdictions or states. These may include site visits or cross-site visits to jurisdictions with innovative programs, training presentations on specific topics or programs for local jurisdictions or states, full-day programs on a variety of topics, or strategic planning sessions for sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of Programs Conducted</th>
<th># Participants Trained</th>
<th>Topic Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>ASFA, testifying in court, and court/agency collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>Permanency planning issues, and update on Federal Legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>Implementing the ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY GUIDELINES, family group conferencing, dependency mediation, and reasonable efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>ICPC, infant and toddler mental health, and impact of ASFA on reasonable efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Juvenile court process and testifying in court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>Testifying in court; implementing best practice; juvenile justice; sexual predators; and resource guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Juvenile sex offenders</td>
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</table>

Includes information through 12/31/10.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>625</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES:** The NCJFCJ provides a wide range of technical assistance to local communities and states to assist in their efforts toward improving juvenile and family courts and related systems. Technical assistance may include provision of topic-specific materials from our extensive library of resources; publications related to innovative programs, best practices, and practical tools; resource contacts for exploration of solutions in other jurisdictions; and in-depth, on-site assistance for strategic planning, needs assessment, or other identified focus areas.

Technical assistance is the process of providing help to resolve a problem and/or create innovative approaches related to juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, child abuse and neglect, and family violence. Products and services include:

- **Publications** – Special educational curricula or topic-specific publications for juvenile and family court-related professionals.
- **Expanded assistance** – Focused technical assistance for a jurisdiction’s targeted areas of need can be arranged to include on-site and cross-site visits. Such visits may include observation of court hearings, interviews or meetings with stakeholders, research, information sharing, and strategic planning.
- **Conference materials** – At a variety of programs and meetings, the NCJFCJ provides additional resource materials to the participants.

Since 1999, the NCJFCJ has fulfilled more than 1,380 requests for technical assistance from judges, lawyers, and other juvenile and family court-related professionals in Nebraska. Topics of interest include implementation of federal law (e.g., ASFA, ICPC, ICWA), court improvement programs, dependency mediation, mental health courts, drug courts, foster care, contact information and resources for Native American tribes, case plans, CFSRs, family preservation services, permanency planning, family violence, family group conferencing, best practices, adoption, preliminary protective hearings, judicial workloads, infants and toddlers in court, Model Courts, children exposed to violence, juvenile delinquency, disproportionate representation, graduated sanctions, and educational outcomes for children in foster care. A wide variety of information is also available via NCJFCJ’s Web site (www.ncjfcj.org), where publications and other materials can be accessed and/or downloaded. During 2010, there were more than 78,000 downloads of materials from NCJFCJ’s Web sites by juvenile and family justice professionals and others from around the country and the world.

**RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:** The NCJFCJ is committed to evidence-based practice and informed policy development. To this end, the NCJFCJ provides research services through its Reno offices and its National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) in Pittsburgh, Pa. Research and process and outcome evaluation services to courts and related programs to assess best practice and policy implementation, program outcomes, and the consequences of various system reforms for the court, allies and agencies, and most importantly, children and families. In addition to providing concrete policy and practice recommendations to the specific jurisdictions and communities, these research and evaluation activities often result in nationally-disseminated publications that present findings on program and policy effectiveness and outcomes. One of NCJJ’s many activities is maintaining the State Juvenile Justice Profiles Web site (http://www.ncjj.org/stateprofiles), which provides detailed descriptions of each state’s juvenile justice system. The site has become a mainstay for federal and state officials, as well as the media, to understand and compare the states on basic legal dimensions, such as provisions for transfer to criminal court and the placement of juvenile court jurisdiction. In recent years, NCJFCJ and NCJJ have provided the following assistance:

- **Pre-Hearing Conference Evaluation for the Separate Juvenile Court, Omaha, Nebraska.** Funded by HHS, Children’s Bureau and OJJDP.
- **Court Performance and Judicial Workload.** Funded by the U.S. Dept. of HHS Children’s Bureau. Site: Omaha.
- **Provided on-site technical assistance to the Nebraska Court Improvement project to improve the tracking of juvenile cases statewide.**
- **Worked closely with the Douglas County Juvenile Court to implement an automated case tracking system**

Includes information through 12/31/10.
• Provided assistance to the Douglas County Juvenile Court on issues including ethics, waiver and certification, and foster care visitation.
• Evaluation of pre-trial conferencing model implemented in Douglas County (Omaha) funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children’s Bureau.

LEADERSHIP AND OUTREACH: Judicial officers and experts from many states have participated in committees and activities to influence changes in policy and practice in their states and nationwide. For example, judicial officers and experts may serve on subcommittees designed to address policy and practice issues in a wide range of topic specific areas, or they may serve on multi-disciplinary drafting committees to create policy statements or develop foundational best practice documents, training materials, and topic focused curricula. Many also serve as faculty. In almost every case, the successes of the local jurisdictions are integrated into these various activities and resultant materials.

A State team led by Chief Justice John Hendry, Supreme Court of Nebraska, participated in the 2005 National Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children, “Justice for Children: Changing Lives by Changing Systems,” held in Minnesota. The Summit convened teams including chief justices, appellate and trial judges, court administrators, child welfare directors, and state court improvement representatives. These teams came together to develop policy and practice-based state plans for improving practice in child abuse and neglect cases, implementing the best practices of the NCJFCJ’s RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Practice in Child Abuse & Neglect Cases (1995) and the recommendations of the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, and expediting the appellate process for child welfare cases in their jurisdictions.

• Judge Douglas Johnson of the Douglas County Separate Juvenile Court in Omaha is NCJFCJ’s Immediate Past President. He presides over Omaha’s first Family Drug Treatment Court, which opened in May 2005, and played a major role in starting Douglas County’s CASA program. Judge Johnson is co-chair of the Nebraska Supreme Court’s Commission on Children in the Courts and he serves on the Governor’s Commission on Protection of Children. He frequently teaches on behalf of the NCJFCJ on issues involving child abuse and neglect.
• Judge Christopher Kelly and Judge Wadie Thomas Jr. of the Douglas County Separate Juvenile Court serve as Co-Lead Judges of the Omaha Model Court. Judge Thomas is a past member of NCJFCJ’s Board of Trustees.

MEMBERSHIP: NCJFCJ has 18 members in Nebraska, including Judicial and Associate memberships.

Includes information through 12/31/10.