

those other foster care homes? It's these workers. They don't have time and so we have all these problems. We bring a child in, where are we going to put him? We don't have a group home out in Franklin County or Kearney County. We have to rely on somebody else's home whose been licensed or who will take them in. We don't have time to investigate them. We may be putting them into a worse situation. But also in that are some guidelines and they are guidelines handed down by the federal government and they say that we've got to go back in within the first 24 hours and make that initial investigation, but we're supposed to make a second contact as well. These workers don't have the time and they are placed with unreasonable demands. They also have to go through and do a fairly typical day of travel and I want to show you an example of a worker that is in Minden. She has been doing this for years. She is one of the most dedicated child protective service workers we probably have in the state. She drives 30 miles in the morning to go up to Kearney to check in and she gets a state car. Then she drives another 50 miles back through Minden, back down to Franklin for a ten o'clock hearing that she spends her time down there, then she drives all the way back to Kearney again to check back in. She may well drive back to Minden for court that afternoon. Then after she has had court in Minden that afternoon, she drives back to Kearney to check in so she can drive home. She spends most of her time on the road. She has a caseload of 29 kids right now and she is supposed to write a report every month on those kids; she's supposed to appear in five different courts and she can't do it. She's in a room that's less than the size of most of our offices with five other workers. They have no confidentiality. They are overworked, they are understaffed and the morale is zero. And we talk about all these lofty goals of going out and saving children. Well that's true, but quite frankly, there is a day to day problem, there's not enough of those workers. Those workers are burdened to pieces and we need to do something to relieve them. They also have some problems with numbers of hours. There's state requirements out there that they have to do all their work within the 40 hours of the week. If they do more than that, they are to quit. If they put their 40 hours in by Wednesday, they're done for the week. These workers are not nine to five workers. These child protective service workers are on 24 hours call. If there is a problem, they go out and investigate that night. They may spend half the night trying to find a home for a couple of kids that need some place right away. They can't wait until morning. They can't sit down at the police station.