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**(Neb.)-AP Interview: Child Services Director Starts Work**



By: Dennis and Kathi Brown Posted at: 04/22/2012 07:38 AM

By GRANT SCHULTE

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Nebraska (AP) - The new head of Nebraska's child and family services agency says the state needs to remove fewer children from their homes and do a better job coaching parents before family problems escalate into abuse and neglect.

Thomas Pristow is assuming his new role at a time of upheaval for the Nebraska Division of Child and Family Services. The former Marine with a master's degree in social work says he wants to restore public confidence in a system plagued by financial problems, high staff turnover and a failure to place many children in permanent homes.

Lawmakers approved a series of child welfare reforms this year.

But family advocates say the state still needs to reduce the number of children who are taken from their homes and kept in foster care.

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