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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore Officially Launch Bring Up Nebraska

An effort to give local communities the ability to develop long-term plans using the latest strategies to prevent life's challenges from becoming a crisis for vulnerable Nebraska families and children

(Lincoln) – On Monday, September 25, Governor Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore, along with several other community leaders from across the state officially launched Bring Up Nebraska, a statewide effort to give local communities the ability to develop long-term plans using the latest strategies to prevent life's challenges from becoming a crisis for vulnerable Nebraska families and children.

- 5,004 Nebraska children/youth were in out-of-home care on 3/31/2017 – This represents both children/youth in the care and custody of DHHS and youth on probation and is roughly equivalent to all the high school graduates in Lancaster and Sarpy Counties for the 2014-2015 school year.
- 46% of state wards ages 0-5 have at least one parent who was also a state ward

“The state doesn't have endless resources and isn't equipped to solve all of these problems,” said Governor Pete Ricketts. “By concentrating on prevention we can help many families who are facing a challenge from experiencing a crisis that results in the state's intervention. Clearly local communities are best situated and most motivated to understanding their own strengths and needs.

First Lady Susanne Shore went on to say, “We need to look at any child in need as one of our own, not as the state's responsibility or Washington's concern but one of our own kids. These are Nebraska's kids. And we need to be the solution. I want Nebraska's local community approach to be a model for other states to follow when it comes to preventing problems from becoming a crisis for vulnerable families and children.”

With the assistance of prevention partners already involved in the Bring Up Nebraska effort, eleven communities including Dakota County Connections, Douglas County Community Response Collaborative, Families First Partnership (Lincoln County), Fremont Family Coalition (Dodge and Washington Counties), Hall County Community Collaborative (H3C) - (Hall, Howard, Valley, Sherman, Greeley Counties), Lancaster County, Lift Up Sarpy, Norfolk Family Coalition, Panhandle Partnership (Sioux, Dawes, Sheridan, Deuel, Kimball, Cheyenne, Box Butte, Scotts Bluff, Morrill, Garden, and Banner Counties), Zero 2 Eight Collaborative (Platte and Colfax Counties), and York County Health Coalition have created collaborations to:

- Understand the resources available in their local communities as well as the gaps and overlaps that may exist
- Develop long-term plans that create a network of partners working together to coordinate services for families in need.
- Assess their community's needs, strengths and issues, using the latest strategies, data, and evidence to help make appropriate decisions and implement solutions.

“Bring up Nebraska is a statewide effort to really shine a light on the need for prevention while bringing more support to communities and letting communities lead their local prevention efforts,” said Jennifer Skala, Senior VP at Nebraska Children and Families Foundation.

From the community perspective, Erin Sams of the York County Health Coalition, had this to say, “We come together to impact relationships – how people interact with each other between programs, organizations, and families so that we have a greater impact on the community at large.”

More communities are expected to join the Bring Up Nebraska effort in the months to come. If you would like to start a collaboration or join the effort taking place in your community, please visit BringUpNebraska.org.

Bring Up Nebraska, with Governor Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore as its champions, in partnership with foundations and organizations aim to give LOCAL communities the ability to develop LONG-TERM plans using the LATEST strategies and data to PREVENT life’s challenges from becoming a crises for vulnerable Nebraska families and children.

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