# Child and Family Services Reviews

## Statewide Assessment Instrument

### December 2006

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# Introduction

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) are designed to support a stronger Federal-State partnership for improving the outcomes of child welfare services to children and families. The reviews seek to achieve this goal by linking an initial review of State child welfare services with a program improvement process and subsequent reviews that measure progress toward those improvements. Moreover, the CFSR process is intended to be coordinated with other Federal child welfare requirements, such as the planning and monitoring of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). The reviews were authorized by the 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act (SSA), and are administered by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Specifically, the CFSRs assess how well States perform in achieving positive outcomes in the following three domains for children and families engaged in child welfare services: child safety, child permanency, and child and family well-being. The CFSRs also examine seven State and local child welfare agency systemic factors that affect the achievement of positive outcomes by the children and families that agencies serve. The systemic factors assessed during the CFSRs are based on the requirements in the title IV-B and IV-E regulations, and States are rated on (1) the extent to which they have met those requirements through systems, policies, procedures, or training, (2) how those systems are operating in day-to-day practice in the field, as demonstrated through data or stakeholder input, and (3) the effectiveness of the State with regard to the systemic factors in achieving positive outcomes for children and families.

**The CFSR Process**

The CFSR is a two-phase process. The first phase is a Statewide Assessment conducted by a State child welfare agency in collaboration with the agency's external partners or stakeholders and the Children's Bureau Central and Regional Office staff. The Statewide Assessment Team completes the Statewide Assessment Instrument.

The second phase of the review process is an onsite review, conducted by a team of Federal representatives (including consultant reviewers) and State representatives (including external partners). The onsite process includes case record reviews, case-related interviews, and stakeholder interviews. The Onsite Review Team uses the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions to rate cases, and the Stakeholder Interview Guide to guide and document the results of the stakeholder interviews.

Information from both the Statewide Assessment and the onsite review then is used to determine the State's conformity with the State plan requirements for child protective services, foster care, adoption, and family preservation and support services. States found out of conformity are required to develop a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the identified areas needing improvement. States participate in subsequent reviews at intervals related to their achievement of conformity. (For more information about the CFSRs, see the *Child and Family Services Reviews Procedures Manual* at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/tools_guide/proce_manual.htm.)

**The Statewide Assessment Instrument**

The Statewide Assessment Instrument is intended as a tool for States to use in examining their capacity and performance in improving outcomes for children and families engaged in child welfare services. Each section, as outlined below, is designed to enable States to gather and document information that is critical to analyzing that capacity and performance during the Statewide Assessment phase of the CFSR process.

- Section I of the Statewide Assessment Instrument requests general information about the State agency.

- Section II contains data profiles for the safety and permanency outcomes. These include the data indicators, which are used, in part, to determine substantial conformity. Additional contextual data are provided that was not included in profiles during the first round. The data profiles are developed by the Children's Bureau based on the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) data submitted by the State. The Children's Bureau provides the profiles to the State upon initiation of the Statewide Assessment. (Note: If a State does not submit child-specific NCANDS data and requests to use an alternate source of safety data for the Statewide Assessment, that request must be made through the Children's Bureau Regional Office prior to initiating the Statewide Assessment. States must provide sufficient documentation of the alternate source in the request for the Children's Bureau data team to approve the use of such data; see the *Child and Family Services Reviews Procedures Manual*. Following approval of the alternate data source, the State also must produce the necessary data in time for inclusion in the data profiles and for timely initiation of the Statewide Assessment.)

- Section III requires a narrative assessment of the seven outcome areas based on the data profiles in section II and new information on the State's performance in these areas since the previous Statewide Assessment. In the narrative, States should use evaluative language to present changes in practice and performance, as measured by the State, that resulted from the implementation of the PIP. These might include changes highlighted through the State's quality assurance system, or via other data generated by the State's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) or another automated information system.

- Section IV focuses on State child welfare agency characteristics and requires narrative responses for each of the seven systemic factors. These responses are developed by analyzing data, to the extent that the data are available to the State, and using external stakeholders' and partners' input. In the narrative, States should use evaluative language to present changes in policy, practice, and performance since the previous Statewide Assessment that resulted from the implementation of the PIP and other strategies initiated by the State.

- Section V requires the State to assess its strengths and challenges and identify issues and geographic locations requiring further examination during the onsite review. The State

also should list here the stakeholders that it involved in developing the Statewide Assessment.

The Statewide Assessment Instrument is available electronically on the Children's Bureau Web site at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/tools_guide/statewide.htm.

**The Statewide Assessment Team**

States must include broad representation from within and outside the child welfare agency in forming a team to conduct the Statewide Assessment. The Statewide Assessment Instrument must be completed in collaboration with State representatives who are not staff of the State child welfare agency (external partners or stakeholders), pursuant to 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1355.33 (b). Those individuals should represent the sources of consultation required of the State in developing its title IV-B State plan and may include, for example, tribal representatives; court personnel; youth; staff of other State and social service agencies serving children and families; and birth, foster, and adoptive parents or representatives of foster/adoptive parent associations. Moreover, States should consider including on the Statewide Assessment Team individuals who have the skills to serve as case record reviewers during the onsite review and to assist in developing the PIP, as needed. States must include a list of the names and affiliations of external representatives participating in the Statewide Assessment in section V of the Statewide Assessment Instrument.

**How the Statewide Assessment Is Used**

Information about the State child welfare agency compiled and analyzed through the Statewide Assessment process is used to support the CFSR process in a range of ways. The Statewide Assessment is used to do the following:

- Guide site selection by the Children's Bureau and the State for the onsite review

- Provide an overview of the State child welfare agency's organization, capacity, and performance for the Onsite Review Team

- Facilitate identification of issues that need additional clarification before or during the onsite review

- Serve as a key source of information for rating the CFSR systemic factors

- Provide context for the outcome ratings

- Enable States and their stakeholders to identify early in the CFSR process the areas potentially needing improvement and to begin developing their PIP approach

- Inform the CFSP and Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) processes

- Educate stakeholders about State strengths and needs and enlist their support in developing and making program improvements

- Inform stakeholders and the public about the improvements/progress the State has made since the previous Statewide Assessment

- Openly share with stakeholders and the public the areas that the State child welfare agency has identified as continuing to need improvement

Further information about conducting the Statewide Assessment and developing the Statewide Assessment document is provided in the Instructions section of this instrument.

THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 240 hours for the initial review and 120 hours for subsequent reviews. This estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, completing the assessment, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

# Instructions

While each State will adopt an approach to conducting the Statewide Assessment that best suits their unique circumstances, they should undertake the following steps in completing the Statewide Assessment process and instrument:

1. Develop a process for working with the designated Children's Bureau Regional Office staff member regarding the development and review of the Statewide Assessment. The Regional Office staff are one of the State's key external partners during the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process.

2. Identify key agency staff and community representatives or stakeholders to serve on the Statewide Assessment Team and/or to participate in the Statewide Assessment process (such as those who are serving on the Child and Family Services Plan [CFSP]/Annual Progress and Services Report [APSR] planning committee and those who are involved in the Court Improvement Program). States should select agency staff on the basis of their expertise in a specific area, such as quality assurance, child protection or safety, permanency planning, youth services, licensing, and foster care provider support. States should select a mix of external partners so that the Statewide Assessment process will include the representation of organizations, agencies, and individuals with (1) experience providing an array of service types and delivery mechanisms relevant to the needs of children and families, including relative and kinship care providers, (2) a range of perspectives on the State agency's practice and performance, including cross-system collaborative efforts, and (3) expertise in the specific areas that the State has identified as priorities for making improvements.

3. Consolidate the process for developing the CFSP and Statewide Assessment to address common goals in the most efficient way possible. The development of the CFSP and the Statewide Assessment requires extensive consultation with a wide array of representatives of State, local, tribal, and judicial agencies and organizations. This includes both public and private community-based entities with experience in administering programs for infants, children, youth, adolescents, and families (this also may include faith-based organizations). The State also should consult with children, youth, and families who have received or are receiving child welfare services.

   States are encouraged to use a variety of approaches in consulting with external partners and stakeholders. The agency might gather information, for example, through the following:

   - Initiating strategies for linking the Statewide Assessment with the ongoing consultation process used for CFSP/APSR development

   - Holding focus groups with stakeholders or consumer groups

   - Conducting surveys or interviews

- Hosting joint planning forums in the State

- Developing a Web site through which the State updates stakeholders about the status of the Statewide Assessment process and allows those stakeholders to share their experiences regarding State child welfare services and/or comment on drafts of the Statewide Assessment, as appropriate

4. Review the Statewide Assessment, Final Report, and Program Improvement Plan (PIP) progress reports from the previous CFSR to identify promising approaches, areas needing improvement, and progress made.

5. Review and use existing data sources, develop additional sources of information to inform the Statewide Assessment process, and continually assess how to further analyze the data provided through existing systems.

- Examine existing State documents that provide evaluative information about State agency performance during the period under review and that might be useful in completing the Statewide Assessment. The review team, for example, would look for evaluative data in the (1) CFSP/APSR, (2) quality assurance reports, (3) management reports, (4) studies, (5) commission reports, (6) State auditor reports, (7) task force findings, (8) National Resource Center technical assistance and training reports, and (9) descriptions of new strategies and initiatives. Through these reports, the State can identify evaluative information, for example, about new policies, training, and practices that led to improvements in the outcomes and systemic factors.

- Assess data and data collection methodologies used by the State to determine its performance on the CFSR outcomes and systemic factors. The sources of the data may include the State's quality assurance systems, for example (1) CFSR-style case reviews, (2) surveys (such as client satisfaction surveys), (3) supervisor or administrative reviews, peer reviews, and other quality assurance system components, and (4) the results of efforts to analyze quality assurance system findings.

- Use data from State child welfare management information systems (MIS), including the following:

  - Data profiles

  - Data addressing State performance on CFSR items (for example, data on timeliness of investigations, face-to-face contacts, and filing for termination of parental rights)

  - Results of efforts to further analyze information system data to more clearly pinpoint variations in performance (for example, analysis of performance based on case characteristics, such as age, type of case, or location)

- Review internal and external partner and stakeholder input/feedback documented through the following:

  - Reports, plans, needs assessments, and data from interagency strategic planning efforts and other programs, such as the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Children's Justice Act, Children's Mental Health, and Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program, to determine if they provide insight into the State's practices in these areas (even if the CFSR does not specifically review for requirements in these programs).

  - Reassessments conducted under the Court Improvement Program (CIP) and the current State CIP strategic plan. The strategic plan must give priority to any legal and judicial issues identified in the PIPs developed as part of the State's CFSR and title IV-E foster care eligibility reviews.

  - Reports and data from activities in response to lawsuits, consent decrees, and settlements

  - Surveys, focus groups, and Web sites through which the agency or other stakeholders or partner organizations, such as foster parent associations and provider agencies, collect data/input from stakeholders

6. Analyze the data profiles provided by the Children's Bureau, using the following steps (including consulting with non-review team members, as appropriate):

   - Review and analyze the data related to each safety and permanency outcome in the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions, and identify areas of strength or the need for further examination during the onsite review.

   - Compare the State's performance on the data indicators with the national standards, where applicable. States will need to address in their PIP the indicators that fall below the national standards. It therefore is important for States to identify the factors affecting these indicators.

   - To the extent possible, examine other data and community or situational factors that may be affecting State data trends. These data analyses then can be used to lay the foundation for developing future PIP action strategies.

7. Consult with external partners or stakeholders regarding the data indicators. For example, the Statewide Assessment Team might talk with caseworkers, guardians ad litem, foster parents, youth in foster care, and group care providers to help identify the underlying causes of presenting data issues, such as the high number of placement settings experienced by children. States also will consult with stakeholders to obtain information that will be used to complete the narrative section on systemic factors in the Statewide Assessment Instrument.

States can use the exploratory issues that appear in the body of the Statewide Assessment Instrument to analyze key issues and to consult with stakeholders regarding the outcomes and systemic factors under review. Those simply are intended to provide States with guidance for managing the Statewide Assessment process; they are not intended to impose additional requirements on the States nor to limit their flexibility and creativity in managing that process or completing the Statewide Assessment Instrument. States also may access technical assistance, through the Children's Bureau Regional Offices, on planning for and implementing the Statewide Assessment process.

**National/State Data Presentation and Analysis**

- **Data Analysis:** States are encouraged to explore how they can broaden their data collection analysis by identifying which data might warrant further examination. To do so, they can ask questions such as the following:

  - Are there subject or functional areas in which quality assurance or MIS data could be further analyzed to provide more information on State strengths, needs, and barriers to performance?

  - Are there specific CFSR outcomes or items that might warrant further attention/ analysis, for example by reviewing additional cases or specific subsets of case types?

  - How could the existing data be further analyzed to provide information about local jurisdictions during site selection for the CFSR?

- **Data Presentation:** For data referenced in the Statewide Assessment, States should provide information such as the period that the data address, and the sample size and type of cases. States might use the following language, for example, when describing the data: "A random statewide sample of 100 open foster care cases for the period from July 1, 2005, to December 31, 2005, indicated the following . . ."

  In addition, for the data presented, States should fully describe each data methodology used, such as a CFSR-style case review or other performance measurement system. States also should explain how each system measures CFSR performance outcomes and any alternate data approaches used to provide additional perspective on State performance.

  Finally, States should describe trends in the agency's performance, for example, by comparing the quality assurance system results for each quarter across the previous CFSR, the previous PIP, and the current Statewide Assessment.

**Production of the Statewide Assessment**

States should use the Statewide Assessment Instrument to compile the information collected through their assessment process. States are encouraged to summarize key points from other related documents and to avoid attaching those, whenever possible. The Statewide Assessment should be approximately 75–85 pages and contain the following:

- Brief description of the agency structure and programs

- Information about the relationship between the outcome item description, the available data, and the State's practices and policies

- Changes since the previous Statewide Assessment, with an emphasis on changes resulting from PIP implementation

- Information on the effectiveness of each systemic factor item being reviewed, including any quality assurance results, if available (See also the specific requirements by systemic factor below.)

- Most recent State data profile and summary of State data provided by the Children's Bureau that are relevant to the outcomes and systemic factors during the past 3 years

- Trends or notable changes in the data over the past 3 years, including possible contributing factors affecting the trends

- Effectiveness measures that demonstrate the State's functioning for each item

For each systemic factor, the State should provide the following:

- Overview of the system under review, including the requirements, structure, law, policy, and functions

- Identification of areas in which the State agency relies on stakeholders or external partners to carry out some of these responsibilities through contracting or intergovernmental agreements, including those areas in which the State provides oversight of such activities.

- Information on the effectiveness of the system, including strengths, gaps, needs, and usefulness

- Information on how the State's functioning in each systemic area affects the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being

- Changes since the previous Statewide Assessment, with an emphasis on changes resulting from PIP implementation or other strategies or initiatives implemented by the State

- Information on ongoing processes or mechanisms, such as the State's quality assurance system, that routinely examine the effectiveness of the systemic factor and promote continuous improvement in that area

It is important that the completed Statewide Assessment clearly show an analysis of the relationship between State data and practice, and the quality/effectiveness of the system under review. If a State's data show that children experience frequent re-entries into care following reunification, for example, the State should use the Statewide Assessment process to explore, and then document, the possible reasons that this is occurring. To do so, the State might examine the availability, accessibility, and quality of services to support family reunification. Or if the State's data show that children wait long periods for permanent placements, the State might explore the case review system and its effectiveness in moving children to permanency in a timely manner.

**Evaluative Language**

States should present information in the Statewide Assessment using "evaluative language" whenever possible. Presenting information in this format requires the Statewide Assessment Team to focus on what their State's data are showing about State practice and to present information about the quality and effectiveness of policies and practices, rather than simply describing those.

Evaluative language does the following: (1) presents judgments, (2) assesses status and outcomes, and (3) gauges, ranks, and rates performance. This type of language provides the reader of the Statewide Assessment with an understanding of how well the State agency is doing; it offers an analysis of the effectiveness of the agency's policies and practices and the areas that require ongoing improvements to achieve positive outcomes. States should use evaluative language as frequently as possible throughout their Statewide Assessment. This is particularly important during the second and subsequent rounds of reviews, when the previous review findings and PIP measures provide a bar against which to evaluate the agency's progress and current effectiveness and identify underlying strengths and challenges.

While some descriptive language may be necessary, it should be used only to present a brief overview of what the State agency does (policy and practice) and to provide context for the more critical information to follow: the assessment of the agency's performance. Descriptive language does the following: (1) presents a picture, (2) shares a narrative story, and (3) outlines characteristics. In other words, States should use descriptive language sparingly to set the stage for their analysis of the child welfare agency's ability to create positive outcomes for children and families.

**Illustrative Examples of Descriptive and Evaluative Language**

The following examples of descriptive versus evaluative language are designed to illustrate how States can share their CFSR-related findings in an evaluative manner. These examples should not be considered exhaustive with regard to how a State should address the child welfare practice issues shown in the examples.

**Example 1:** **This example shows the difference between using descriptive versus evaluative language to present information about how the agency is monitoring the implementation of a new staff training program on managing caseworker face-to-face contacts with children during investigations of child abuse and neglect. The descriptive statement simply reiterates that the State is providing training to staff; the evaluative (preferred) language provides detailed information on who has been trained, how training participation is tracked, and the agency's process for institutionalizing the training.**

Descriptive: The State child welfare agency provided training last year to all of its supervisors and caseworkers on the required face-to-face contact with children during investigations of child abuse and neglect.

Evaluative: During fiscal year (FY) 2005, 80 percent of State child welfare agency supervisors and caseworkers were trained on State policy on face-to-face contact with children during investigations of child abuse and neglect. The remaining 20 percent of agency supervisors and caseworkers were trained during the first quarter of FY 2006. In addition, during the third quarter of FY 2005, the State incorporated the new training into the initial training that is conducted for all new child protection workers. Staff training is tracked through the State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), and supervisors receive a monthly report on the status of staff completion of agency-provided trainings.

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**Example 2:** **This example shows the difference between using descriptive versus evaluative language to present information on the effectiveness of an agency's PIP action step—training—in increasing caseworker face-to-face contact with children during investigations of child abuse and neglect. The descriptive statement does not provide supporting data about how the new training is affecting staff performance in this area; the evaluative (preferred) language does.**

Descriptive: After participating in the training on managing face-to-face contact with children during investigations of child abuse and neglect, staff increased their compliance with the requirement to establish face-to-face contact within 24 hours of a report of abuse or neglect.

Evaluative: The Quality Assurance Team's review of 100 cases during the first 2 quarters of FY 2006 showed that State child welfare agency staff increased face-to-face contact with a child within 24 hours of a report of abuse or neglect from 53 to 75 percent following staff participation in the training on this agency-required interaction.

To further assess the reasons that staff did not make face-to-face contact with a child following a report of abuse or neglect, the Quality Assurance Team reviewed the 25 percent of the cases in which this did not happen. They found that in 10 percent of the cases, the caseworker attempted to make contact but was unable to locate the family. In the other 15 percent of the cases, half were from offices located in rural areas in which staff must drive long distances to reach families and the other half were from offices with social worker vacancies.

**Using the Statewide Assessment Checklist**

At the end of this instrument is a Statewide Assessment Checklist that should be used by State child welfare agency staff before beginning the Statewide Assessment process; the checklist will help them to focus on the type of information that they need to collect and analyze. Both the State and the Children's Bureau Regional Office staff then can use the checklist to review and comment on Statewide Assessment drafts.

# Statewide Assessment Instrument

## Section I – General Information

| Name of State Agency |
|---|
|  |

| Period Under Review |
|---|

Onsite Review Sample Period: _____

Period of AFCARS Data: _____

Period of NCANDS Data (or other approved source; please specify if alternative data source is used): _____

| State Agency Contact Person for the Statewide Assessment | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | |
| **Title:** | |
| **Address:** | |
| | |
| | |
| **Phone:** | |
| **Fax:** | |
| **E-mail:** | |

# Section II – Safety and Permanency Data

For detailed information about the data profile including a Quick Reference Guide to the Child and Family Services Reviews State Data Profile Elements, a toolkit is available on the National Resource Center for Information Technology Web site at www.nrccwdt.org/cfsr/cfsr_toolkit.html.

## State Data Profile Example

| Child Safety Profile | Fiscal Year 2004 | | | | | | Fiscal Year 2005 | | | | | | Fiscal Year 2006 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Reports | % | Duplic. Chn.[2] | % | Unique Chn.[2] | % | Reports | % | Duplic. Chn.[2] | % | Unique Chn.[2] | % | Reports | % | Duplic. Chn.[2] | % | Unique Chn.[2] | % |
| I.   Total CA/N Reports Disposed[1] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| II.  Disposition of CA/N Reports[3] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Substantiated and Indicated | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unsubstantiated | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| III. Child Cases Opened for Services[4] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IV.  Children Entering Care Based on CA/N Report[5] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| V.   Child Fatalities[6] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| STATEWIDE AGGREGATE DATA USED TO DETERMINE SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VI.  Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence[7] [Standard: 94.6% or more] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VII. Absence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care[8] (12 months) [Standard: 99.68% or more] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

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| ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES FOR INFORMATION ONLY* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fiscal Year 2004 | | | | | Fiscal Year 2005 | | | | | Fiscal Year 2006 | | | | |
| | Hours | | | Unique Chn.[2] | % | Hours | | | Unique Chn.[2] | % | Hours | | | Unique Chn.[2] | % |
| **VIII. Median Time to Investigation in Hours (Child File)[9]** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **IX. Mean Time to Investigation in Hours (Child File)[10]** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **X. Mean Time to Investigation in Hours (Agency File)[11]** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **XI. Children Maltreated by Parents While in Foster Care[12]** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| CFSR ROUND ONE SAFETY MEASURES TO DETERMINE SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fiscal Year 2004 | | | | | | Fiscal Year 2005 | | | | | | Fiscal Year 2006 | | | | | |
| | Reports | % | Duplic. Chn.[2] | % | Unique Chn.[2] | % | Reports | % | Duplic. Chn.[2] | % | Unique Chn.[2] | % | Reports | % | Duplic. Chn.[2] | % | Unique Chn.[2] | % |
| **XII. Recurrence of Maltreatment[13] [Standard: 6.1% or less]** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **XIII. Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care[14] (9 months) [Standard: 0.57% or less]** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

*There are no national standards associated with these measures.

**These measures are used primarily by States completing round one Program Improvement Plans, but States also may review them to compare to prior performance.

*Section II – Safety and Permanency Data*

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| NCANDS DATA COMPLETENESS INFORMATION FOR THE CFSR | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Description of Data Tests | Fiscal Year 2004 | Fiscal Year 2005 | Fiscal Year 2006 |
| **Percent of Duplicate Victims in the Submission** [At least 1% of victims should be associated with multiple reports (same CHID). If not, the State would appear to have frequently entered different IDs for the same victim. This affects maltreatment recurrence.] | | | |
| **Percent of Victims With Perpetrator Reported** [File must have at least 75% to reasonably calculate maltreatment in foster care.] | | | |
| **Percent of Perpetrators With Relationship to Victim Reported** [File should have at least 75%.] | | | |
| **Percent of Records With Investigation Start Date Reported** [Needed to compute mean and median time to investigation.] | | | |
| **Average Time to Investigation in the Agency File** [PART measure.] | | | |
| **Percent of Records With AFCARS ID Reported in the Child File** [Needed to calculate maltreatment in foster care by the parents; also, all Child File records should now have an AFCARS ID to allow ACF to link the NCANDS data with AFCARS. This is now an all-purpose unique child identifier and a child does not have to be in foster care to have this ID.] | | | |

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

## Footnotes To Data Elements In Child Safety Profile

Each maltreatment allegation reported to NCANDS is associated with a disposition or finding that is used to derive the counts provided in this safety profile. The safety profile uses three categories. The various terms that are used in NCANDS reporting have been collapsed into these three groups.

| Disposition Category | Safety Profile Disposition | NCANDS Maltreatment Level Codes Included |
|---|---|---|
| A | Substantiated or Indicated (Maltreatment Victim) | "Substantiated," "Indicated," and "Alternative Response Disposition Victim" |
| B | Unsubstantiated | "Unsubstantiated" and "Unsubstantiated Due to Intentionally False Reporting" |
| C | Other | "Closed — No Finding," "Alternative Response Disposition — Not a Victim," "Other," "No Alleged Maltreatment," and "Unknown or Missing" |

"Alternative Response" was added starting with the 2000 data year. The two categories of "Unsubstantiated" were added starting with the 2000 data year. In earlier years, there was only the category of "Unsubstantiated." The disposition of "No alleged maltreatment" was added for Federal FY 2003. It primarily refers to children who receive an investigation or assessment because there is an allegation concerning a sibling or other child in the household, but not themselves, and who are not found to be a victim of maltreatment. It applies as a Maltreatment Disposition Level but not as a Report Disposition code because the Report Disposition cannot have this value (there must have been a child who was found to be one of the other values).

Starting with Federal FY 2003, the data year is the fiscal year.

Starting with Federal FY 2004, the maltreatment levels for each child are used consistently to categorize children. While report dispositions are based on the field of report disposition in NCANDS, the dispositions for duplicate children and unique children are based on the maltreatment levels associated with each child. A child victim has at least one maltreatment level that is coded "substantiated," "indicated," or "alternative response victim." A child classified as unsubstantiated has no maltreatment levels that are considered to be victim levels and at least one maltreatment level that is coded "unsubstantiated" or "unsubstantiated due to intentionally false reporting." A child classified as "other" has no maltreatment levels that are considered to be victim levels and none that are considered to be unsubstantiated levels. If a child has no maltreatments in the record, and the report has a victim disposition, the child is assigned to "other" disposition. If a child has no maltreatments in the record and the report has either an unsubstantiated disposition or an "other" disposition, the child is counted as having the same disposition as the report disposition.

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

1.  The data element, "Total CA/N Reports Disposed," is based on the reports received in the State that received a disposition in the reporting period under review. The number shown may include reports received during a previous year that received a disposition in the reporting year. Counts based on "reports," "duplicated counts of children," and "unique counts of children" are provided.

2.  The duplicated count of children (report-child pairs) counts a child each time that (s)he was reported. The unique count of children counts a child only once during the reporting period, regardless of how many times the child was reported.

3.  For the column labeled "Reports," the data element, "Disposition of CA/N Reports," is based on the highest disposition of any child who was the subject of an investigation in a particular report. For example, if a report investigated two children, and one child is found to be neglected and the other child found not to be maltreated, the report disposition will be substantiated (Group A). The disposition for each child is based on the specific finding related to the maltreatment(s). In other words, of the two children above, one is a victim and is counted under "substantiated" (Group A) and the other is not a victim and is counted under "unsubstantiated" (Group B). In determining the unique counts of children, the highest finding is given priority. If a child is found to be a victim in one report (Group A), but not a victim in a second report (Group B), the unique count of children includes the child only as a victim (Group A). The category of "other" (Group C) includes children whose report may have been "closed without a finding," children for whom the allegation disposition is "unknown," and other dispositions that a State is unable to code as substantiated, indicated, alternative response victim, or unsubstantiated.

4.  The data element "Child Cases Opened for Services" is based on the number of victims (Group A) during the reporting period under review. "Opened for Services" refers to post-investigative services. The duplicated number counts each time a victim's report is linked to ongoing services; the unique number counts a victim only once regardless of the number of times services are linked to reports of substantiated maltreatment.

5.  The data element "Children Entering Care Based on CA/N Report" is based on the number of victims (Group A) during the reporting period under review. The duplicated number counts each time a victim's report is linked to a foster care removal date. The unique number counts a victim only once regardless of the number of removals that may be reported.

6.  The data element "Child Fatalities" counts the number of children reported to NCANDS as having died as a result of child abuse and/or neglect. Depending upon State practice, this number may count only those children for whom a case record has been opened either prior to or after the death, or may include a number of children whose deaths have been investigated as possibly related to child maltreatment. For example, some States include neglect-related deaths such as those caused by motor

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vehicle or boating accidents, house fires or access to firearms, under certain circumstances. The percentage is based on a count of unique victims of maltreatment for the reporting period.

7.  The data element "Absence of Recurrence of Maltreatment" is defined as follows: Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation during the first 6 months of the reporting period, what percent were not victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation within a 6-month period? This data element is used to determine the State's substantial conformity with Safety Outcome #1.

8.  The data element "Absence of Child Abuse/or Neglect in Foster Care" is defined as follows: Of all children in foster care during the reporting period, what percent were not victims of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff member. This data element is used to determine the State's substantial conformity with Safety Outcome #1. A child is counted as not having been maltreated in foster care if the perpetrator of the maltreatment was not identified as a foster parent or residential facility staff. Counts of children not maltreated in foster care are derived by subtracting NCANDS count of children maltreated by foster care providers from AFCARS count of children placed in foster care. The observation period for this measure is 12 months. The number of children not found to be maltreated in foster care and the percentage of all children in foster care are provided.

9.  "Median Time to Investigation in Hours" is computed from the Child File records using the Report Date and the Investigation Start Date (currently reported in the Child File in mmddyyyy format). The result is converted to hours by multiplying by 24.

10. "Mean Time to Investigation in Hours" is computed from the Child File records using the Report Date and the Investigation Start Date (currently reported in the Child File in mmddyyyy format). The result is converted to hours by multiplying by 24. Zero days difference (both dates are on the same day) is reported as "under 24 hours," one day difference (investigation date is the next day after report date) is reported as "at least 24 hours, but less than 48 hours," two days difference is reported as "at least 48 hours, but less than 72 hours," etc.

11. "Average Response Time in Hours Between Maltreatment Report and Investigation" is available through State NCANDS Agency or SDC File aggregate data. "Response time" is defined as the time from the receipt of a report to the time of the initial investigation or assessment. Note that many States calculate the initial investigation date as the first date of contact with the alleged victim, when this is appropriate, or with another person who can provide information essential to the disposition of the investigation or assessment.

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12. The data element, "Children Maltreated by Parents While in Foster Care" is defined as follows: Of all children placed in foster care during the reporting period, what percent were victims of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by parent? This data element requires matching NCANDS and AFCARS records by AFCARS IDs. Only unique NCANDS children with substantiated or indicated maltreatments and perpetrator relationship "Parent" are selected for this match. NCANDS report date must fall within the removal period found in the matching AFCARS record.

13. The data element, "Recurrence of Maltreatment," is defined as follows: Of all children associated with a "substantiated" or "indicated" finding of maltreatment during the first six months of the reporting period, what percentage had another "substantiated" or "indicated" finding of maltreatment within a 6-month period? The number of victims during the first six-month period and the number of these victims who were recurrent victims within six months are provided. This data element was used to determine the State's substantial conformity with Safety Outcome #1 for CFSR round one.

14. The data element, "Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care," is defined as follows: Of all children who were served in foster care during the reporting period, what percentage were found to be victims of "substantiated" or "indicated" maltreatment? A child is counted as having been maltreated in foster care if the perpetrator of the maltreatment was identified as a foster parent or residential facility staff. Counts of children maltreated in foster care are derived from NCANDS, while counts of children placed in foster care are derived from AFCARS. The observation period for these measures is January-September because this is the reporting period that was jointly addressed by both NCANDS and AFCARS at the time when the NCANDS reporting period was a calendar year. The number of children found to be maltreated in foster care and the percentage of all children in foster care are provided. This data element was used to determine the State's substantial conformity with Safety Outcome #1 for CFSR round one.

**Additional Footnotes:**

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| Point-In-Time Permanency Profile | Federal FY 2004 AB | | Federal FY 2005 AB | | Federal FY 2006 AB | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children |
| **I. Foster Care Population Flow** | | | | | | |
| Children in Foster Care on First Day of Year | | | | | | |
| Admissions During Year | | | | | | |
| Discharges During Year | | | | | | |
|    Children Discharging from Foster Care in 7 days or less* | | | | | | |
| Children in Care on Last Day of Year | | | | | | |
| Net Change During Year | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **II. Placement Types for Children in Care** | | | | | | |
| Pre-adoptive Homes | | | | | | |
| Foster Family Homes (Relative) | | | | | | |
| Foster Family Homes (Non-relative) | | | | | | |
| Group Homes | | | | | | |
| Institutions | | | | | | |
| Supervised Independent Living | | | | | | |
| Runaway | | | | | | |
| Trial Home Visit | | | | | | |
| Missing Placement Information | | | | | | |
| Not Applicable (Placement in Subsequent Year) | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **III. Permanency Goals for Children in Care** | | | | | | |
| Reunification | | | | | | |
| Live With Other Relatives | | | | | | |
| Adoption | | | | | | |
| Long-Term Foster Care | | | | | | |
| Emancipation | | | | | | |
| Guardianship | | | | | | |
| Case Plan Goal Not Established | | | | | | |
| Missing Goal Information | | | | | | |

**\*** These cases are excluded from length of stay calculations in the composite measures.

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| Point-In-Time Permanency Profile | Federal FY 2004 AB | | Federal FY 2005 AB | | Federal FY 2006 AB | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children |
| **IV.  Number of Placement Settings in Current Episode** | | | | | | |
| One | | | | | | |
| Two | | | | | | |
| Three | | | | | | |
| Four | | | | | | |
| Five | | | | | | |
| Six or More | | | | | | |
| Missing Placement Settings | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **V. Number of Removal Episodes** | | | | | | |
| One | | | | | | |
| Two | | | | | | |
| Three | | | | | | |
| Four | | | | | | |
| Five | | | | | | |
| Six or More | | | | | | |
| Missing Removal Episodes | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **VI.  Number of Children in Care 17 of the Most Recent 22 Months**[1] (Percent Based on Cases With Sufficient Information for Computation) | | | | | | |
| | **Number of Months** | | **Number of Months** | | **Number of Months** | |
| **VII. Median Length of Stay in Foster Care** (of Children in Care on Last Day of FY) | | | | | | |
| **VIII. Length of Time to Achieve Permanency Goal** | # of Children Discharged | Median Months to Discharge | # of Children Discharged | Median Months to Discharge | # of Children Discharged | Median Months to Discharge |
| Reunification | | | | | | |
| Adoption | | | | | | |
| Guardianship | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Missing Discharge Reason[2] | | | | | | |
| Total Discharges (excluding those with problematic dates) | | | | | | |
| Dates Are Problematic[3] | | | | | | |

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| STATEWIDE AGGREGATE DATA USED IN DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY: COMPOSITES 1 THROUGH 4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **IX. Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification [Standard: 122.6 or Higher]** Scaled scores for this composite incorporate two components. | **FY 2004 AB** State Score = | **FY 2005 AB** State Score = | **FY 2006 AB** State Score = |
| **Component A: Timeliness of Reunification** The timeliness component is composed of three timeliness individual measures. | | | |
| **Measure C1 - 1: Exits to reunification in less than 12 months:** Of all children discharged from foster care (FC) to reunification in the target 12-month period, and who had been in FC for 8 days or longer, what percent was reunified in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home? (Includes trial home visit adjustment) [**National median = 69.9%, 75th percentile = 75.2%**] | | | |
| **Measure C1 - 2: Exits to reunification, median stay**: Of all children discharged from foster care (FC) to reunification in the target 12-month period, and who had been in FC for 8 days or longer, what was the median length of stay (in months) from the date of the latest removal from home until the date of discharge to reunification? (This includes trial home visit adjustment) [**National median = 6.5 months, 25th percentile = 5.4 months (low is "good" in this measure)**] | | | |
| **Measure C1 - 3: Entry cohort reunification in < 12 months:** Of all children entering foster care (FC) for the first time in the 6-month period just prior to the target 12-month period, and who remained in FC for 8 days or longer, what percent was discharged from FC to reunification in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home? (Includes trial home visit adjustment) [**National median = 39.4%, 75th percentile = 48.4%**] | | | |
| **Component B: Permanency of Reunification.** The permanency component has one measure. | | | |
| **Measure C1 - 4: Re-entries to foster care in less than 12 months:** Of all children discharged from foster care (FC) to reunification in the 12-month period prior to the target 12-month period, what percent re-entered FC in less than 12 months from the date of discharge? [**National median = 15.0%, 25th percentile = 9.9% (low is "good" in this measure)**] | | | |

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| STATEWIDE AGGREGATE DATA USED IN DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY: COMPOSITES 1 THROUGH 4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **X.   Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of Adoptions [Standard: 106.4 or higher].** Scaled scores for this composite incorporate three components. | **Federal FY 2004 AB**<br><br>State Score = | **Federal FY 2005 AB**<br><br>State Score = | **Federal FY 2006 AB**<br><br>State Score = |
| **Component A: Timeliness of Adoptions of Children Discharged From Foster Care.** There are two individual measures of this component. See below. | | | |
| **Measure C2 - 1: Exits to adoption in less than 24 months:** Of all children who were discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in the target 12-month period, what percent was discharged in less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal from home? **[National median = 26.8%, 75th percentile = 36.6%]** | | | |
| **Measure C2 - 2: Exits to adoption, median length of stay:** Of all children who were discharged from foster care (FC) to a finalized adoption in the target 12-month period, what was the median length of stay in FC (in months) from the date of the latest removal from home to the date of discharge to adoption? **[National median = 32.4 months, 75th percentile = 27.3 months]** | | | |
| **Component B: Progress Toward Adoption for Children In Foster Care for 17 Months or Longer.** There are two individual measures. See below. | | | |
| **Measure C2 - 3: Children in care 17+ months, adopted by the end of the year**: Of all children in foster care (FC) on the first day of the target 12-month period, and who were in FC for 17 continuous months or longer (and who, by the last day of the year shown, were not discharged from FC with a discharge reason of live with relative, reunify, or guardianship), what percent was discharged from FC to a finalized adoption by the last day of the year shown? **[National median = 20.2%, 25th percentile = 22.7% (low is "good" for this measure)]** | | | |
| **Measure C2 - 4: Children in care 17+ months achieving legal freedom within 6 months:** Of all children in foster care (FC) on the first day of the target 12 month period, and who were in FC for 17 continuous months or longer, and were not legally free for adoption prior to that day, what percent became legally free for adoption during the first 6 months of the year shown? Legally free means that there was a parental rights termination date reported to AFCARS for both mother and father. This calculation excludes children who, by the end of the first 6 months of the year shown had discharged from FC to "reunification," "live with relative," or "guardianship." **[National median = 8.8, 75th percentile = 10.9%]** | | | |

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| STATEWIDE AGGREGATE DATA USED IN DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY: COMPOSITES 1 THROUGH 4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Federal FY 2004 AB** | **Federal FY 2005 AB** | **Federal FY 2006 AB** |
| **Component C: Progress Toward Adoption of Children Who Are Legally Free for Adoption.** There is one measure for this component. See below. | | | |
|     **Measure C2 - 5**: **Legally free children adopted in less than 12 months:** Of all children who became legally free for adoption in the 12-month period prior to the target 12 month period (i.e., there was a parental rights termination date reported to AFCARS for both mother and father), what percent was discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in less than 12 months of becoming legally free? **[National median = 45.8%, 75th percentile = 53.7%]** | | | |
| **XI.  Permanency Composite 3: Permanency for Children and Youth in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time [Standard: 121.7 or higher].** Scaled scores for this composite incorporate two components. | State Score = | State Score = | State Score = xx |
| **Component A: Achieving Permanency for Children in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time.** This component has two measures. | | | |
|     **Measure C3 - 1: Exits to permanency prior to 18th birthday for children in care for 24 + months**. Of all children in foster care for 24 months or longer on the first day of the target 12-month period, what percent was discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18th birthday and by the end of the fiscal year? A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification. **[National median 25.0%, 75th percentile = 29.1%]** | | | |
|     **Measure C3 - 2: Exits to permanency for children with TPR:** Of all children who were discharged from foster care in the target 12-month period, and who were legally free for adoption at the time of discharge (i.e., there was a parental rights termination date reported to AFCARS for both mother and father), what percent was discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18th birthday? A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification. **[National median 96.8%, 75th percentile = 98.0%]** | | | |
| **Component B: Growing Up in Foster Care.** This component has one measure. | | | |
|     **Measure C3 - 3: Children Emancipated Who Were in Foster Care for 3 Years or More.** Of all children who, during the 12-month target period, either (1) were discharged from foster care prior to age 18 with a discharge reason of emancipation, or (2) reached their 18th birthday while in foster care, what percent were in foster care for 3 years or longer? **[National median 47.8%, 25th percentile = 37.5 % (low is "good" for this measure)]** | | | |

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| STATEWIDE AGGREGATE DATA USED IN DETERMINING SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY: COMPOSITES 1 THROUGH 4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Federal FY 2004 AB** | **Federal FY 2005 AB** | **Federal FY 2006 AB** |
| **XII. Permanency Composite 4: Placement Stability [National standard: 101.5 or higher].** Scaled score for this composite incorporates no components but three individual measures (below). | State Score = | State Score = | State Score = |
| **Measure C4 – 1: Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for less than 12 months:** Of all children served in foster care (FC) during the 12-month target period and who were in FC for at least 8 days but less than 12 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings? **[National median = 83.3%, 75ᵗʰ percentile = 86.0%]** | | | |
| **Measure C4 – 2: Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for 12 to 24 months:** Of all children served in foster care (FC) during the 12-month target period who were in FC for at least 12 months but less than 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings? **[National median = 59.9%, 75ᵗʰ percentile = 65.4%]** | | | |
| **Measure C4 – 3: Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for 24+ months:** Of all children served in foster care (FC) during the 12-month target period who were in FC for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings? **[National median = 33.9%, 75ᵗʰ percentile = 41.8%]** | | | |

**Special Footnotes for Composite Measures:**

In most cases, a high score is good on the individual measures. In these cases, you will see the 75th percentile listed to indicate that this would be considered a good score. However, in a few instance, a low score is good (shows desirable performance), such as re-entry to foster care. In these cases, the 25th percentile is displayed because that is the target direction for which States will want to strive.

Of course, in actual calculation of the total composite scores, these "low is good" scores on the individual measures are reversed so they can be combined with all the individual scores that are scored in a positive direction, where "high is good."

*This data profile is for illustrating the format and showing the national standards. Changes in the format may be made over time. The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| Permanency Profile First-Time Entry Cohort Group | Federal FY 2004 AB | | Federal FY 2005 AB | | Federal FY 2006 AB | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children |
| **I. Number of Children Entering Care for the First Time in Cohort Group** (% = first-time entry of all entering within first 6 months) | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **II. Most Recent Placement Types** | | | | | | |
| Pre-adoptive Homes | | | | | | |
| Foster Family Homes (Relative) | | | | | | |
| Foster Family Homes (Non-relative) | | | | | | |
| Group Homes | | | | | | |
| Institutions | | | | | | |
| Supervised Independent Living | | | | | | |
| Runaway | | | | | | |
| Trial Home Visit | | | | | | |
| Missing Placement Information | | | | | | |
| Not Applicable (Placement in Subsequent Year) | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **III. Most Recent Permanency Goal** | | | | | | |
| Reunification | | | | | | |
| Live With Other Relatives | | | | | | |
| Adoption | | | | | | |
| Long-Term Foster Care | | | | | | |
| Emancipation | | | | | | |
| Guardianship | | | | | | |
| Case Plan Goal Not Established | | | | | | |
| Missing Goal Information | | | | | | |

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| Permanency Profile First-Time-Entry Cohort Group | Federal FY 2004 AB | | Federal FY 2005 AB | | Federal FY 2006 AB | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children |
| **IV.  Number of Placement Settings in Current Episode** | | | | | | |
| One | | | | | | |
| Two | | | | | | |
| Three | | | | | | |
| Four | | | | | | |
| Five | | | | | | |
| Six or More | | | | | | |
| Missing Placement Settings | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **V. Reason for Discharge** | | | | | | |
| Reunification/Relative Placement | | | | | | |
| Adoption | | | | | | |
| Guardianship | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Unknown (Missing Discharge Reason or NA) | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | **Number of Months** | | **Number of Months** | | **Number of Months** | |
| **VI. Median Length of Stay in Foster Care** | | | | | | |

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| AFCARS DATA COMPLETENESS AND QUALITY INFORMATION* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Federal FY 2004 AB | | Federal FY 2005 AB | | Federal FY 2006 AB | |
| | N | As a Percent of Exits Reported | N | As a Percent of Exits Reported | N | As a Percent of Exits Reported |
| File Contains Children Who Appear to Have Been in Care Less Than 24 Hours | | | | | | |
| File Contains Children Who Appear to Have Exited Before They Entered | | | | | | |
| Missing Dates of Latest Removal | | | | | | |
| File Contains "Dropped Cases" Between Report Periods With No Indication as to Discharge | | | | | | |
| Missing Discharge Reasons | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | N | As a Percent of Adoption Exits | N | As a Percent of Adoption Exits | N | As a Percent of Adoption Exits |
| File Submitted Lacks Data on Termination of Parental Rights for Finalized Adoptions | | | | | | |
| Foster Care File Has Different Count Than Adoption File of (Public Agency) Adoptions (N=Adoption Count Disparity) | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | N | As a Percent of Cases Having Missing Data | N | As a Percent of Cases Having Missing Data | N | As a Percent of Cases Having Missing Data |
| File Submitted Lacks Count of Number of Placement Settings in Episode for Each Child | | | | | | |

*2% or more is a warning sign.

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

| PERMANENCY AGGREGATE DATA USED TO DETERMINE SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY IN ROUND ONE* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Federal FY 2004 AB | | Federal FY 2005 AB | | Federal FY 2006 AB | |
| | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children | # of Children | % of Children |
| **IX.** Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage was reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home? (4.1) **[Standard: 76.2% or more]** | | | | | | |
| **X.** Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home? (5.1) **[Standard: 32.0% or more]** | | | | | | |
| **XI.** Of all children served who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home, what percentage have had no more than two placement settings? (6.1) **[Standard: 86.7% or more]** | | | | | | |
| **XII.** Of all children who entered care during the year, what percentage re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode? (4.2) **[Standard: 8.6% or less]** | | | | | | |

*These are CFSR round one permanency measures. They are intended to be used primarily by States completing round one Program Improvement Plans, but also could be useful to States in CFSR round two in comparing their current performance to that of prior years.

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30*

# Footnotes to Data Elements in the Permanency Profile

1.  We designated the indicator, 17 of the most recent 22 months, rather than the statutory time frame for initiating termination of Parental Rights proceedings at 15 of the most 22 months, since the AFCARS system cannot determine the date the child is considered to have entered foster care as defined in the regulation. We used the outside date for determining the date the child is considered to have entered foster care, which is 60 days from the actual removal date.

2.  This count only includes case records missing a discharge reason, but which have calculable lengths of stay. Records missing a discharge reason and with non-calculable lengths of stay are included in the cell "Dates are Problematic."

3.  The dates of removal and exit needed to calculate length of stay are problematic. Such problems include: 1) missing data, 2) faulty data (chronologically impossible), 3) a child was in care less than 1 day (length of stay = 0) so the child should not have been reported in foster care file, or 4) child's length of stay would equal 21 years or more. These cases are marked NA = Not Applicable because no length of stay can legitimately be calculated.

*The permanency data for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2006, were based on the annual file created. All CFSR round one safety results are on page 15; permanency round one results are on page 30.*

# Section III – Narrative Assessment of Child and Family Outcomes

**Instructions**

To complete the narrative assessment for each outcome item, including the data analysis, State agencies should do the following:

1. Describe and compare any changes in data over time, specifically including changes since the previous Statewide Assessment and Program Improvement Plan (PIP), the reasons for those changes, the factors affecting the numbers, and the effect on the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

2. Describe the additional data, case review, or interview results that could explain the reasons for the numbers or outcomes.

3. Discuss each item even if no change is detected, and describe whether or not the lack of change is a desirable outcome.

4. For the outcome items that are to be measured against the national standards and composite measures, discuss the State's performance as indicated in the data profile provided for the Statewide Assessment, compare it with the national standard and individual data elements in the composite measure, and determine its level of conformity on the basis of the most recent year included in the profile. Describe the issues or factors that may have affected the item's level of conformity, including changes since the first Statewide Assessment and PIP.

5. Use the exploratory issues to thoroughly address the factors that affect each item and to evaluate how effectively the State is performing with regard to each outcome.

**A. Safety**

**Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.**

**Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.** How effective is the agency in responding to incoming reports of child maltreatment in a timely manner?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item, including alternative response policy requirements, if applicable

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the timeliness of investigations

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on safety data profile elements XIII and IX concerning response time, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the availability of bilingual caseworkers

- Factors affecting the rate of substantiated versus unsubstantiated reports, and factors that influence decisionmaking regarding the disposition of incoming reports

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 2: Repeat maltreatment.** How effective is the agency in reducing the recurrence of maltreatment of children?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about repeat maltreatment

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on safety data profile elements VI and XI; reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, including factors that affect the rates of absence of maltreatment recurrence in the State; and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the availability of services to families

- System used by the State for tracking and analyzing repeat maltreatment

- Patterns in the circumstances, characteristics, and demographics of children who experience repeat maltreatment

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.**

**Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care.** How effective is the agency in providing services, when appropriate, to prevent removal of children from their homes?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about services to protect children and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care

- Other changes, such as service availability, policy, practice, staffing, or external factors such as consent decrees or other court issues

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on safety data profile elements III and IV concerning cases opened for services and children entering care based on a maltreatment report, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as consistency in following up with families receiving preventive services

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management.** How effective is the agency in reducing the risk of harm to children, including those in foster care and those who receive services in their own homes?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about reducing risk to children

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on safety data profile elements VII and XIII concerning absence of maltreatment in foster care, reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, and possible data quality issues

- The incidence of children in foster care maltreated by a parent, safety data profile element XI, what has been learned, and subsequent actions taken, as needed

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) use of an adequate risk assessment process, (2) how the State ensures that safety issues are assessed continually while families receive services and at key decisionmaking points throughout the case (for example, when unsupervised visits are permitted, at reunification, or at case closure), (3) how the State ensures that children remain safe after they are placed in foster care, and the effectiveness of this approach, and (4) how the State handles reports of suspected child maltreatment for cases already being investigated or open for services

- The incidence of child fatalities due to maltreatment in the State, the agency's process for reviewing such cases, what has been learned from the reviews, and subsequent actions taken, as needed

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**B. Permanency**

**Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.**

**Item 5: Foster care re-entries.** How effective is the agency in preventing multiple entries of children into foster care?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about foster care re-entries

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element IX [Permanency Composite 1, including Component B, measure b(1)], reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as adequate screening of relative placements

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 6: Stability of foster care placement.** How effective is the agency in providing placement stability for children in foster care (that is, minimizing placement changes for children in foster care)?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the stability of foster care placements

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element XII [Permanency Composite 4, including measures (1), (2), and (3)] and first-time entry cohort data profile element IV, including reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the use of shelters or temporary placements

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 7: Permanency goal for child.** How effective is the agency in determining the appropriate permanency goals for children on a timely basis when they enter foster care?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about permanency goals

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element III and first-time entry cohort profile data element III concerning placement goals for children in care, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) the use of long-term foster care as a permanency goal, (2) how the State establishes initial and subsequent permanency goals for children in foster care, particularly those with the goal of other planned permanent living arrangement, and the timeliness of establishing goals, and (3) how the State uses, or does not use, concurrent planning (simultaneously working toward two different goals, such as adoption and reunification)

- The role of the courts in determining the permanency goal

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives.** How effective is the agency in helping children in foster care return safely to their families when appropriate?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element IX [Permanency Composite 1, including Component A, measures a(1), a(2), and a(3)], reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the agency's strategies for supporting reunification, as appropriate

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 9: Adoption.** How effective is the agency in achieving timely adoption when that is appropriate for a child?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about achieving timely adoptions

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element X [Permanency Composite 2, Component A, measures a(1) and a(2), Component B, measures b(1) and b(2), and Component C, measure c(1)], including reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the availability of adoptive families for children with special needs

- Factors pertaining to the recruitment and retention of adoptive families, and support services for adoptive families, that affect performance on this item

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangement.** How effective is the agency in establishing planned permanent living arrangements for children in foster care, who do not have the goal of reunification, adoption, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives, and providing services consistent with the goal?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about establishing planned permanent living arrangements for children in foster care, as appropriate, and providing services to achieve that goal

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element XI [Permanency Composite 3, including Component A, measures a(1) and a(2), and Component B, measure b(1)], including reasons that the State either exceeds or does not meet the national standards, and possible data quality issues

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) the availability of independent living services for adolescents in group homes or (2) the effectiveness in providing services to children to ensure a permanent home consistent with the goal

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.**

**Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement.** How effective is the agency in placing foster children close to their birth parents or their own communities or counties?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about placement proximity

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) the availability of placement options, or (2) the circumstances under which the agency places children out of the State or county or at long distances from their parents, and the number of children placed out of State

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 12: Placement With Siblings.** How effective is the agency in keeping brothers and sisters together in foster care?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about placement with siblings

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the availability of placement options

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care.** How effective is the agency in planning and facilitating visitation between children in foster care and their parents and siblings placed separately in foster care?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about visits with parents and siblings

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as the availability of transportation for visits

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 14: Preserving Connections.** How effective is the agency in preserving important connections for children in foster care, such as connections to neighborhood, community, faith, family, tribe, school, and friends?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about preserving connections

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as emphasis on placing children in their own communities

- How the State's processes, practices, and policies ensure compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) provisions concerning identifying tribal children, notifying tribes, observing placement preferences, and involving tribes in decisions regarding Native American children in foster care

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 15: Relative Placement.** How effective is the agency in identifying relatives who could care for children entering foster care, and using them as placement resources when appropriate?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about relative placement

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as when and how relatives and noncustodial parents are identified and assessed

- How the State conducts searches for both paternal and maternal relatives

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents.** How effective is the agency in promoting or helping to maintain the parent-child relationship for children in foster care, when it is appropriate to do so?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about relationships of children in care with their parents

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as how the agency works with noncustodial parents of children in foster care

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**C. Child and Family Well-Being**

**Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.**

**Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents.** How effective is the agency in assessing the needs of children, parents, and foster parents, and in providing needed services to children in foster care, to their parents and foster parents, and to children and families receiving in-home services?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about assessment and service provision

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) how and when the agency assesses needs, including those of the noncustodial parent, or (2) differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care cases and in-home services cases, if any

- How and when the agency assesses needs and provides services for all youth (ages 16 and older) to prepare them to be independent, regardless of their permanency goal

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning.** How effective is the agency in involving parents and children in the case planning process?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about parental and/or child/youth involvement in case planning

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) how and when the agency engages parents and children in case planning, (2) efforts made to locate and engage absent parents, and (3) differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care and in-home services cases, if any

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 19: Caseworker visits with child.** How effective are agency workers in conducting face-to-face visits as often as needed with children in foster care and those who receive services in their own homes?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item, including policies regarding visitation of children placed out of State

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the frequency and quality of caseworker visits with children

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) how, when, and where caseworkers visit with children, (2) whether travel out of State by caseworkers is supported financially, (3) strategies for improving the quality of contact between staff and children, (4) differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care and in-home services cases, and between cases handled by the State agency and those handled by private agencies under contract with the State, if any

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 20: Worker visits with parents.** How effective are agency workers in conducting face-to-face visits as often as needed with parents of children in foster care and parents of children receiving in-home services?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the frequency and quality of caseworker visits with parents

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) how, when, and where caseworkers visit with parents, (2) differences in practice or policy between visits with fathers and visits with mothers, or with either parent that may be absent from the home, if any, and (3) differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care and in-home services cases, and between cases handled by the State agency and those handled by private agencies under contract with the State, if any

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.**

**Item 21: Educational needs of the child.** How effective is the agency in addressing the educational needs of children in foster care and those receiving services in their own homes?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about educational assessments and services

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) how educational needs are assessed, (2) inclusion of educational needs in the case plan and documentation in the child's record, (3) the services that the agency provides, (4) the role of the foster parents in working with the educational system, (5) the agency's involvement of birth parents in education-related issues, and (6) differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care and in-home services cases, if any

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.**

**Item 22: Physical health of the child.** How does the State ensure that the physical health and medical needs of children are identified in assessments and case planning activities and that those needs are addressed through services?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item, including (1) the requirements for conducting initial health examinations of children entering foster care and for conducting ongoing or periodic examinations, including Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT), and for including medical information in the child's record, (2) the role and responsibility of foster parents in obtaining medical care, and (3) the system for sharing medical information with foster and/or birth parents

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about physical health assessments and services

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as how health needs are assessed and the services that the agency provides

- Differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care and in-home services cases, if any

- Resource issues, such as the structure and scope of the State's health care system, and the effects on the State's capacity to provide health care services to children in foster care and children receiving in-home services

- The system for identifying and addressing dental health care needs of children in foster care

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of the child.** How does the State ensure that the mental/behavioral health needs of children are identified in assessments and case planning activities and that those needs are addressed through services?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item, including the requirements for conducting initial mental health evaluations of children entering foster care and ongoing or periodic evaluations

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about mental health assessments and services

- Casework practices and resource issues that affect this item, such as (1) how mental health needs are assessed, (2) the services that the agency provides, (3) the availability and accessibility of services, and (4) the differences in practice or policy in this area between foster care and in-home services cases, if any

- Collaborative efforts with the State mental health system, other mental health service providers, and other service providers to address the mental health needs of children in the child welfare system

- Resource and funding issues, such as the structure and scope of the State's mental/behavioral health care system, and the effects on the State's capacity to provide mental/behavioral health services to children in foster care and children receiving in-home services

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

# Section IV – Systemic Factors

## A. Statewide Information System

**Item 24: Statewide Information System.** Is the State operating a statewide information system that, at a minimum, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item
- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice
- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from Program Improvement Plan (PIP) implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes
- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available
- The system's tracking capacity (program or case management areas/information, and the status, demographics, current location, and permanency goals for children in foster care)
- The State's reporting capacity, including the types of reports generated, who within the agency uses the reports and for what purposes, and the accuracy and currency of the reports
- State approaches to using the data (for example, for planning and management purposes)
- The accessibility of the system to staff and to private-sector organizations providing services, including the extent to which information is available and readily retrievable in all areas of the State
- The mechanism for linking this systemic factor with the State's efforts to conduct continuous quality assurance, including processes that monitor for data accuracy
- The extent to which the information is complete, accurate, and current and includes the locations of all children in care, including those in relative care, unlicensed placements, voluntary placements, and unpaid placements
- Variations in the capacity of the State's information system to track groups of children in out-of-home care, including those served by title IV-E agreements with other agencies
- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county
- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency
- Promising approaches in this area
- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**B. Case Review System**

**Item 25: Written Case Plan.** Does the State provide a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan, to be developed jointly with the child, when appropriate, and the child's parent(s), that includes the required provisions?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item for both foster care and in-home cases, including timeframes for developing and updating case plans and requirements for the participation of parents and children

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the engagement of parents and age-appropriate children in case plan development

- The system for measuring and monitoring compliance with case plan requirements (for example, that every child has a current case plan that was developed within the timeframes required)

- Methods and supports for engaging both parents and age-appropriate children in case planning, including efforts to involve noncustodial parents, such as through family team meetings or by offering flexible meeting times

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 26: Periodic Reviews.** Does the State provide a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, including (1) the timing, content, and methods for reviews (court, external body, and agency administrative reviews), and (2) reviews for children served by the juvenile justice and mental health systems who are subject to this requirement

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the timeliness and quality of reviews

- The procedure(s) for supporting the participation of both birth and foster families, age-appropriate children, relative caregivers, and foster and pre-adoptive parents in these reviews, for example, support services, preparation, encouragement to attend, and timing

- The system for tracking and monitoring case review outcomes, for example, monitoring the provision of recommended services to a child or family

- The provisions for reviewing the recommendations and results of the periodic review and making adjustments to the case plan or direction of the case

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 27: Permanency Hearings.** Does the State provide a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the State has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date that the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, including hearings for children served by juvenile justice and mental health agencies who are subject to this requirement

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the timeliness and quality of hearings

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 28: Termination of Parental Rights.** Does the State provide a process for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, including (1) State policies for filing for TPR for children who have been in foster care 15 of the past 22 months and in other circumstances required by ASFA and where no adoptive placement has been identified and (2) review of the cases of children served by the juvenile justice and mental health systems who are subject to this requirement

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the timeliness of filing for TPR

- Factors that are affecting the State's performance on permanency data profile element X, Permanency Composite 2, Component B, measures b(1) and b(2), and possible data quality issues

- How the agency identifies children who have been in foster care for 15 of the past 22 months

- Common circumstances under which the State makes exceptions to filing for TPR

- How exceptions are reviewed, documented, and made available to the courts

- The impact of the courts and legal system on successes or challenges related to the TPR process

- Factors regarding TPR in the State, such as the timeliness of TPR decisions, TPR appeals, the State's use of compelling reasons not to pursue TPR, changes in TPR procedures or approach, and the TPR appellate process

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 29: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers.** Does the State provide a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item for 6-month reviews and for 12-month permanency hearings, including the responsibility for and system of notification

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the timeliness and consistency of notification

- The involvement of foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers in hearings

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**C. Quality Assurance System**

**Item 30: Standards Ensuring Quality Services.** Has the State developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about standards

- The system for measuring differences in the quality of care and/or outcomes of children served by the agency following the implementation of the standards (and the improvements achieved, as applicable)

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 31: Quality Assurance System.** Is the State operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies the strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- The State's approach to conducting quality assurance activities, for example, the structure, location, number, and type of cases reviewed; the process for reviewing cases; the frequency of the reviews; and who conducts the reviews

- The capacity of the quality assurance system to comprehensively assess outcomes and systemic factors across the continuum of child welfare services

- The involvement of service providers, parents, youth, foster parents, group care providers, relatives, tribes, courts, and/or other stakeholders in the quality assurance process

- How information from quality assurance activities is used at all levels of the agency (for example, caseworkers, local supervisors, managers and/or administrators, and the State office) and outside the agency (for example, courts, or tribes)

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**D. Staff and Provider Training**

**Item 32: Initial Staff Training.** Is the State operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, such as the level, type, duration, timeframe, amount, and intensity of training required, and whether training is completed before cases are assigned

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about (1) initial staff training, (2) the content and quality of the training, and (3) how training is reflected in job performance

- The State's capacity to track that staff are meeting State training requirements and to identify those who need training

- Whether the State requires or provides initial training for private agency staff, where the State contracts out full case management

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county, including local or regional differences in training requirements or implementation

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 33: Ongoing Staff Training.** Does the State provide for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, such as the level, type, duration, and intensity of training required

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about (1) training all staff, including supervisors and managers, (2) the content, amount, and quality of the training, and (3) how training is reflected in job performance

- The State's capacity to track that staff are meeting State training requirements and to identify those who need training

- Whether the State requires or provides ongoing training for private agency staff, where the State contracts out full case management

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county, including local or regional differences in training requirements or implementation

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 34: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training.** Does the State provide training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State-licensed or State-approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E? Does the training address the skills and knowledge base that they need to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item with regard to (1) both pre-service and ongoing training, and (2) requirements regarding licensing of, and placement of children in, foster or adoptive homes before or after training foster or adoptive parents, including training requirements for foster parents, relative caregivers, adoptive parents, and facility staff

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about (1) training all caregivers, (2) the quality of the training, and (3) how training affects the caregivers' performance

- The State's capacity to track that foster and adoptive parents are meeting State training requirements, to identify those who need training, and to document how training needs are identified

- Training requirements, needs, and opportunities for staff of child care facilities

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county, including local or regional differences in training requirements or implementation

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**E. Service Array and Resource Development**

**Item 35: Array of Services.** Does the State have in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families, that determine other service needs, that address the needs of families in addition to individual children to create a safe home environment, that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding the service array, including services provided by private contractors

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about having a sufficient and effective service array in place

- The effectiveness of the State's services regarding (1) placing and maintaining children in safe environments, (2) enabling children to remain home safely when reasonable, (3) helping children in foster care and adoptive homes achieve timely permanency, (4) supporting adoptive families after placement and finalization, and (5) helping youth to prepare for independent living

- How the State evaluates services and determines service needs

- How the State addresses service gaps and the effectiveness of such practices

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 36: Service Accessibility.** Are the services in item 35 accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item and on any differences in service availability and accessibility in different areas of the State

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about service accessibility

- The reasons for variations in service accessibility and availability throughout the State

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 37: Individualizing Services.** Can the services in item 35 be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item and the procedures for tailoring services to meet the unique, individualized needs of children and families

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about individualizing services

- The effects of service availability or accessibility on major population groups in the State, for example, the Native American population, other ethnic or racial groups, youth served by the agency, language groups, or children in rural and/or urban areas

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**F. Agency Responsiveness to the Community**

**Item 38: State Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders.** In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, does the State engage in ongoing consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies, and include the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, and procedures for ongoing consultation with external partners linked to the State plan submissions and other agency planning

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- A description of the stakeholders engaged in consultation with the State

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results or other supporting information, if available, about how (1) actively engaged external partners have been and how their input has been used, and (2) quality assurance results or other supporting information have been shared with external partners, if applicable and available

- How key stakeholders have contributed to the planning efforts, or barriers to collaborating effectively with them, including youth, tribes, caregivers, birth parents, and courts, whose involvement is critical to effective planning

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 39: Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to the CFSP.** Does the agency develop, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Brief description of the process used in consulting with representatives, and an assessment of its effectiveness

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available

- The ongoing involvement of stakeholders in evaluating and reporting on progress toward agency goals, and how the agency uses the input of key stakeholders, including courts and tribes, in planning and setting agency goals

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 40: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs.** Are the State's services under the CFSP coordinated with the services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other information about the coordination of the CFSP services

- Coordination with key Federal programs, such as the State's title IV-D (child support and Federal Parent Locator Service) and IV-B programs, Court Improvement Program, Medicaid, child abuse prevention and early intervention programs, mental health programs, substance abuse programs, tribal programs, or juvenile justice systems

- Whether agreements are in place with other public or private agencies or contractors, such as juvenile justice or managed care agencies, to perform title IV-E or IV-B functions, and whether services provided under the agreements or contracts are monitored for compliance with State plan requirements

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**G. Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Approval, and Recruitment**

**Item 41: Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions.** Has the State implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions that are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, including key features of licensing or approval requirements for foster and adoptive homes and institutions

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about standards for foster family homes and child care institutions

- The length of time that the licensing standards for foster homes, adoptive homes, and facilities have been in effect and the processes for reviewing and updating them, as needed

- The timeframe for the completion of foster home and adoptive home studies, including whether the same study is used for both foster and adoptive placements

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 42: Standards Applied Equally.** Are the standards applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, including (1) whether the State issues different types of licenses (such as initial, provisional, or probationary licenses) and (2) whether the State uses different standards for licensing/approving resources

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- State procedures to ensure that Federal funds are claimed only for homes that meet the full standard, if applicable

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including (1) quality assurance results, if available (2) title IV-E review findings, and (3) results of monitoring of foster homes and child care facilities to ensure their compliance with the State's standards

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 43: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks.** Does the State comply with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements, and does the State have in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item, including any exclusions or exceptions to the State's requirements

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- State procedures to ensure that Federal funds are claimed only for homes that meet the Federal criminal background check requirements

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including (1) quality assurance results, if available, (2) title IV-E review findings, or (3) other available information

- Whether criminal background checks have been conducted for all approved/licensed foster and adoptive families and staff of child care facilities

- The timeliness of completion of the checks in relation to when a child is placed in a home

- How the State addresses any negative results of background checks, including exemption and/or appeals processes, if applicable, and circumstances in which a child already has been placed in the home or the home already has been licensed

- How the State addresses safety considerations for children when the agency has opted not to conduct criminal background checks of child care institution staff and foster and adoptive families

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 44: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes.** Does the State have in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed in the State?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements (plan) and monitoring system regarding this item, including diligent recruitment efforts such as (1) developing specific recruitment strategies for all parts of the community and diverse methods of disseminating general and child-specific information, and (2) following procedures for ensuring the timely placement of children, for example, the use of exchanges or other interagency efforts

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive families (through major recruitment efforts and other methods for locating families) to ensure a pool of foster and adoptive families that is ethnically and racially diverse

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

**Item 45: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements.** Does the State have in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children?

Address the relevant exploratory issues below in discussing this item:

- Brief description of/update on the State's policy requirements and monitoring system regarding this item

- How the policy requirements described above are reflected in practice

- Changes in performance and practice regarding this item since the previous Statewide Assessment; these might include (1) changes resulting from PIP implementation and/or other initiatives or strategies implemented by the State and (2) patterns or trends in, or statewide or local contributing factors affecting, those changes

- Measures of effectiveness that demonstrate the State's functioning for this item, including quality assurance results, if available, and other data about the agency's effectiveness in recruiting and using homes in other jurisdictions for waiting children

- The State's effectiveness in working within the Interstate Compact on Placement of Children and other agreements between the State and other jurisdictions for the placement of children

- Influences or issues specific to a particular region or county

- Key collaborators with the agency on this item, where applicable

- Strengths that the State has demonstrated in addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

- Promising approaches in this area

- Barriers that the State faces with regard to successfully addressing or implementing this item, including factors external to the agency

# Section V – State Assessment of Strengths and Needs

On the basis of an examination of the data in section II and the narrative responses in sections III and IV, the Statewide Assessment Team should respond to the following questions in completing this section:

1. Determine and document which of the seven outcomes and systemic factors examined during the Statewide Assessment are primarily strengths, citing the basis for the determination.

2. Determine and document which of the seven outcomes and systemic factors examined during the Statewide Assessment are primarily areas needing improvement, citing the basis for the determination. Identify those areas needing improvement that the State would like to examine more closely during the onsite review, for example, to explore possible causal factors. Prioritize the list of areas needing improvement under the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

3. Recommend two additional sites for the onsite review activities, using the strengths and areas needing improvement noted in 1 and 2 (the State's largest metropolitan area is a required location). Attempt to select sites in which the issues identified through the Statewide Assessment will be present and observable. Note the rationale for selecting these sites; if there are no issues that require further examination during the onsite review, explain which factors the State considered in site selection (for example, the need for a mix of rural and urban areas or for areas with typical practices). When making recommendations, the State should include all available data, including comparative data for the suggested sites in relation to statewide data, if available.

4. Provide comments about the State's experience with the Statewide Assessment Instrument and process. This information will assist the Children's Bureau in continually enhancing the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) procedures and instruments.

5. Provide the names and affiliations of the individuals who participated in the Statewide Assessment process; please also note their roles in the process.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Statewide Assessment**<br>**Checklist**</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">**Instructions:** Use the checklist below to assess and note whether the Statewide Assessment adequately addresses key areas. Then, considering the information collected through that assessment process, identify the following in section VI below: (1) issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment and (2) issues requiring further review on site.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">**I. Stakeholder Involvement in the Statewide Assessment**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Is there evidence of adequate consultation with youth in foster care in preparing the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Is there evidence of adequate consultation with tribes in preparing the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Is there evidence of adequate consultation with the courts in preparing the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Is there evidence of adequate consultation with the Court Improvement Program (CIP) in preparing the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Is there evidence of adequate consultation with other key parties outside the child welfare agency in preparing the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Are the stakeholders who were consulted identified in the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Are the stakeholders who are involved in other State child welfare planning and reform efforts, such as the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and subsequent Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSRs) also engaged in the Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">**II. Building on the Prior Statewide Assessment and Program Improvement Plan**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Does the current Statewide Assessment show that the State has evaluated the progress made in the outcomes and systemic factors since the previous Statewide Assessment?</td><td>☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments:</td></tr>
</table>

| | |
|---|---|
| Does the Statewide Assessment show that the State has evaluated the impact of its Program Improvement Plan (PIP) activities by, for example (1) indicating the status of the State's performance when beginning the PIP, (2) outlining the PIP accomplishments, and (3) documenting the status of the State's current performance? | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br><br>Comments: |
| **III. Use of a Variety of Information Sources** | |
| Does the Statewide Assessment show that the State used a variety of information sources, for example: | |
| Data profiles | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) or other management information system data | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| Results of quality assurance reviews | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| Consultations with external partners | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| Surveys | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| CIP re-assessment | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) reports/information | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| Citizen review panel reports | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br>Comments: |
| Other: | ☐ Yes ☐ No |

| | Comments: |
|---|---|
| | |

| **IV. Use of Data and Analysis of Program/Practice Issues** | |
|---|---|
| Does the Statewide Assessment show that the State has reviewed their Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) data, or alternate safety data, to ensure that the data are correct? | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br><br>Comments: |
| Does the Statewide Assessment include a discussion of relevant program and practice issues, based on the data pertaining to each section of the document? | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br><br>Comments: |
| **V. Usefulness of the Statewide Assessment During the Next Phases of the CFSR** | |
| Does the Statewide Assessment provide sufficient information for selecting sites for the onsite review? | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br><br>Comments: |
| Does the Statewide Assessment provide a solid overview of the agency's policies and practices for use by the Onsite Review Team? | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br><br>Comments: |
| Will the Statewide Assessment inform and help the State appropriately target subsequent PIPs? | ☐ Yes ☐ No<br><br>Comments: |

**VI. Identification of Specific Issues**

**Safety:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Permanency:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Well-being:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Information system:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Case review system:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Training:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Agency responsiveness to the community:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Licensing/recruitment/retention:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Quality assurance:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site:

**Service array:**

- Issues requiring revisions to the Statewide Assessment:

- Issues requiring further review on site: