Florida Department of Children and Families

Enterprise Metrics Guidebook

**Data Analytics and Research Unit**

**Quality Office**

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# List of Abbreviations

CFSR: Children & Family Services Reviews

CBC: Community Based Care

CFOP: Children and Families Operating Procedure

FSFN: Florida Safe Families Network

OHC: Out-of-Home Care

PIP: Performance Improvement Plan

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# Safety Metrics

# Percentage of Children with No Recurrence of Verified Maltreatment within Twelve Months of a Prior Verified Maltreatment

**Ownership:** The child welfare system as a whole, including investigators, case managers, and legal representatives.

**Description:** This is the percentage of children who were victims of a verified maltreatment who were not victims in a subsequent report of a verified maltreatment within twelve months of the initial report. This measure is a federal indicator. This measure is an important indicator of the extent to which agencies are effective in providing for the continuing safety of children and for their ability to establish an environment for children that remains safe. Florida Statutes (409.986(2(a)) states that the goal of the Department is first and foremost to protect children from abuse and neglect. As stated in CFOP 170-1, the mission of the Department of Children and Families is to protect the vulnerable, with the child welfare system designed to determine whether children are safe and provide the appropriate interventions and infrastructures to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being. Per Florida Statute (827.03(2)), the abuse or neglect of a child is a felony, the severity of which determining whether it is a felony of the first, second, or third degree.

**Research Base:** In child protection services, multiple maltreatment recurrences has been a concern drawing increased attention because of its persistent harm to the children and the need to consider more effective intervention strategies to meets its unique needs. Children with prior involvement with child protective services are more likely to have re-reports and recurrence than children without prior involvement (Casanueva, C. et al, 2015), though research has indicated that developing responsive intervention strategies can impact the trend of chronic maltreatment (Zhang, S., et al, 2013).

**Report Period:**  The month ending fifteen months prior to the end of the report month (e.g. June 1, 2019 to June 20, 2019 for the report month ending September 20, 2020)

**Source:** FSFN, Report #1227

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 90.3%, based on national standards.

# Rate of Children Not Abused During Out-of-Home Care

**Ownership:** The case management program is responsible for ensuring that children are not abused while in out-of-home care.

**Description:** This is the rate at which children are the victims of abuse or neglect while in foster care during the report period. Florida Statutes (409.986(2)(a) states that the goal of the Department is first and foremost to protect children from abuse and neglect. This measure is an important indicator of the extent to which agencies are effective in providing for the continuing safety of children under their care. At the national level, the Children's Bureau developed a series of seven (7) statewide data indicators for the Safety and Permanency of children involved with state child welfare agencies. These are collected via AFCARS reports and summarized annually on a national basis as an indicator of statewide performance. This measure is one of the seven.

**Research Base:** Numerous studies have outlined the negative outcomes associated with abuse in children, including long-term health status, such as increased risk for diabetes, lung disease, malnutrition, and vision problems (Widom, C., et al, 2012), mental disorders (Turner, S. et al., 2017), drug use (Widom, C., et al., 2012), suicide attempts (Michael, S., et al., 2016), and domestic violence (Machisa, M., et al, 2016). Additionally, in a systematic review of studies investigating the outcomes of child abuse in long-term care, there were significant associations between the experience of child abuse in long-term care and adjustment across the life span in the domains of mental health, physical health, and psychosocial adjustment.

**Report Period:**  The month ending three months prior to the report month to allow for verification of abuse.

**Source:** FSFN, Report #1107

**Calculation:**

**\*100,000**

**Standard:** <9.07, based on national standards

# Percentage of Children Not Abused During In-Home Services

**Ownership:** The case management program is responsible for ensuring that children are not abused while receiving in-home services.

**Description:** This is the percentage of children that did not have a verified case of abuse or neglect while receiving in-home services. This measure is an important indicator of the extent to which agencies are effective in providing for the continuing safety of children in families engaged in services. Florida Statute (409.986(2)(a)) states that the goal of the Department is first and foremost to protect children from abuse and neglect. Safety, permanency, and well-being are the three central goals for the Florida child welfare program. As stated in the CFOP 170-1, the mission of the Department of Children and Families is to protect the vulnerable, with the child welfare system designed to determine whether children are safe and provide the appropriate interventions to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being. CFOP 170-7, Chapter 11, requires that "The primary child welfare professional responsible for the case will continuously monitor and assess the family’s condition and dynamics to inform ongoing safety planning and plan modification in order to ensure that children remain safe in the home.

**Research Base:** Numerous studies have outlined the negative outcomes associated with abuse in children, including long-term health status, such as increased risk for diabetes, lung disease, malnutrition, and vision problems (Widom, C., et al, 2012), mental disorders (Turner, S. et al., 2017), drug use (Widom, C., et al., 2012), suicide attempts (Michael, S., et al., 2016), and domestic violence (Machisa, M., et al, 2016).

**Report Period:**  The month ending three months prior to the report month to allow for verification of abuse.

**Source:** FSFN, Report #1107

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 98%, state target

# Qualitative Index for Safety

**Description:** This is the overall performance on safety related items, items 1-3, on the Life of Case Investigations and Life of Case On-Going Services tools.

**Report Period:**  The last day of the month at the end of the report month

**Source:** Life of Case Investigations and Life of Case On-Going Services Review Tool.

**Item 1: Timeliness of seeing children in an investigation**

* Investigations Questions:
  + CPI saw or made ongoing diligent efforts to see all children in the household of focus within the assigned response priority of the intake or of learning they were in the home

**Item 2: Services to prevent removal**

* Investigations Questions:
  + Investigator made concerted efforts to provide services to prevent removal by safety planning in the least intrusive means achievable to ensure child safety.
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Did the agency make concerted efforts to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect the children and prevent their entry or re-entry (after reunification) into out-of-home care?

**Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management**

* Investigations Questions:
  + Maltreatments were added during the investigation as new information was obtained
  + The maltreatment findings were supported within the totality of the Investigation
  + The Risk Assessment questions were completed correctly based on the documentation in the entirety of the case record.
  + The Present Danger Assessment is correct.
  + The Impending Danger Assessment is correct
  + The present danger safety plan is sufficient to control identified threats
  + The impending danger safety plan is sufficient to control identified danger threats
  + The present danger plan is actively managed
  + The impending danger safety plan is actively managed by the CPI
  + Is an Immediate Child Safety Action Required? (for significant safety concerns).
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Are background checks completed when required?
  + Is the information obtained from the background checks evaluated and used to address potential danger threats?
  + Is the most recent family assessment sufficient to document family dynamics?
  + Is an Immediate Child Safety Action Required?
  + There was a sufficient safety plan with the family to manage identified danger threats or safety concerns.
  + The agency actively monitored and updated the safety plan as needed to ensure it is working effectively to protect the children from identified danger threats including monitoring family engagement in any safety-related services.
  + Were all new safety concerns adequately addressed by the agency pertaining to any child(ren) remaining in the family home?
  + Were all safety concerns related to visitation with parents or family members adequately addressed?
  + Were all safety concerns pertaining to the child(ren) in out of home care adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency?

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 90%, based on national standards

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# Permanency Metrics

# Percentage of Children Achieving Permanency within Twelve Months

**Ownership:** The child welfare system as a whole, including investigators, case managers, and legal representatives.

**Description:** This is the percentage of children who achieved permanency within twelve months of entering out-of-home care. This measure is a federal indicator. Per Florida Statute (39.523(a)), it is the basic tenant of child welfare practice and the law that a child be placed in a permanent home in a timely manner. One of the central goals of the Office of Child Welfare is for Florida’s children to achieve permanency, so that Florida’s children can enjoy long-term, secure relationships within strong families and communities. The Office of Child Welfare and regional Family Safety program offices are directed to work in partnership with local communities, courts, and tribes to ensure the safety, timely permanency, and well-being of children.

**Research Base:** The length of time spent in foster care is associated with non-reunification. The likelihood of reunification is greatest during the first four months after a child is placed in care, but then drops dramatically and continues to decrease with each additional month in care (Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013). Additionally, multiple child placement moves are associated with poor psychological, social and academic outcomes (Chambers, R., 2018).

**Report Period:** The month ending twelve months prior to the end of the report month.

**Source**: FSFN, Report #1182

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 35.2%, based on national standards.

# Percentage of Children Achieving Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Out-of-Home Care Between Twelve and Twenty-Three months

**Ownership:** The child welfare system as a whole, including investigators, case managers, and legal representatives.

**Description:** This is the percentage children who had been in OHC between twelve and twenty-three months who achieved permanency within twelve months. Per Florida Statute (39.523(a)), it is the basic tenant of child welfare practice and the law that a child be placed in a permanent home in a timely manner. One of the central goals of the Office of Child Welfare is for Florida’s children to achieve permanency, so that Florida’s children can enjoy long-term, secure relationships within strong families and communities. The Office of Child Welfare and regional Family Safety program offices are directed to work in partnership with local communities, courts, and tribes to ensure the safety, timely permanency, and well-being of children.

**Research Base:** The length of time spent in foster care is associated with non-reunification. The likelihood of reunification is greatest during the first four months after a child is placed in care, but then drops dramatically and continues to decrease with each additional month in care (Carnochan, Lee, & Austin, 2013). Additionally, multiple child placement moves are associated with poor psychological, social and academic outcomes (Chambers, R., 2018).

**Report Period:**  The month ending twelve months prior to the end of the report month.

**Source**: FSFN, Report #1138

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 43.8%, based on national standards.

# Percentage of Children Placed with Relatives or Non-Relatives

**Ownership:** The case management program is responsible for attempting to place children in kinship care on their initial placement.

**Description:** This is the percentage of children who are placed in out-of-home care with a family member or person known to the family. Florida Statute 39.5085 recognizes the value of kinship placements in its establishment of the Relative Caregiver Program. This statute states that it is the intent of the Legislature to acknowledge the valued resource available through grandparents and relatives of children, and specified nonrelatives of children. It further states the intent to recognize family relationships in which a grandparent or other relative is the head of a household that includes a child otherwise at risk of foster placement and to enhance family preservation through its utilization of such placements.

**Research Base:** Studies suggest that children in kinship care fare better with behavioral and social skills problems, mental health therapy use, and psychotropic medication use (Sakai, Lin, and Flores 2011). A systemic review found that compared to children in foster care, children in kinship care also experience increased well-being, less placement disruption, fewer mental health services, and similar reunification rates (Winokur, Holdan, and Batchelder 2015). Across studies, children in kinship care experience greater permanency in terms of a lower rate of reentry, greater placement stability, and more guardianship placements in comparison to children living with foster families (Bell and Romano 2015).

**Report Period:** Each month of the quarter pulled individually and the values totaled to calculate the quarter

**Source:** FSFN Report #1325

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 60%

# Rate of Placement Moves per 1,000 Bed Days in Out-of-Home Care

**Ownership:** The case management program is responsible for placing children in residences that are most likely to be permanent to reduce the number of moves.

**Description:** This is the rate at which children change placements while in out-of-home care during the report period. Florida Statute (39.5085) supports the minimization of placement moves by supporting the development of liaison function to relatives and nonrelatives to ensure placement stability. Further, providing safe and stable placements for children aligns with the DCF mission for best practices relating to evidence-based child welfare.

**Research Base:** Children with greater placement instability (higher number of moves), on average, have increased rates of delinquency, aggression, depression, and trauma symptoms (Mishra, Schwab-Reese, & Murfree, 2020).

**Report Period:**  The year previous from the report date

**Source:** FSFN Report #1320

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** Less than 4.5 Moves per 1,000 bed days, federal standard.

# Percent of Children who Do Not Re-Enter Out-of-Home Care within 12 Months of Exit from Out-of-Home Care

**Description:** This metric is the percent of exits from out-of-home care to permanency for a cohort of children who entered out-of-home care during the report period and exited within twelve months of entering and do not re-enter out-of-home care within 12 months of their permanency date. It is the goal of the Department to achieve permanency as quickly as possible for children in out-of-home care and to ensure that children are placed in a safe environment.

**Research Base:** While much research focus has been on services that prevent children from entering out of home care for the first time, it is equally important to recognize the risks for children who have already experienced a removal episode. Exiting and re-entering out-of-home care may have long-lasting, negative consequences for children due to a lack of stability and continuity. Preventing children from re-entering care decreases the trauma experienced by the child, trauma which has impacts on the child’s, such as poor psychological, social and academic outcomes (Chambers, R., 2018). Children are also less likely to be reunified if they have reentered foster care (McGrath-Lone, Dearden, Harron, Nasim & Gilbert, 2017).

**Report Period:** The month ending twenty-four months prior to the end of the report month.

**Source:** FSFN Report #1100

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 94.4%

# Qualitative Index for Permanency

**Description:** This is the overall performance on permanency related items, items 4-11, on the Life of Case Investigations and Life of Case On-Going Services tools.

**Report Period:**  The last day of the month at the end of the report month

**Source:** Life of Case Investigations and Life of Case On-Going Services Review Tool.

**Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Were all placement changes during the period under review planned by the agency in an effort to achieve the child's case goals or to meet the needs of the child?
  + Did the agency make efforts to stabilize placements when there was an indication that the placement was not stable?

**Item 5: Permanency Goal for the Child**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Are the permanency goals for each child entered accurately in the FSFN Legal Module? (Systemic Factor Information System)
  + Was an appropriate permanency goal for the child(ren) established in a timely manner?
  + The permanency goal(s) in effect were appropriate to the child's need for permanency and to the circumstances of the case?
  + Was a Termination of Parental Rights petition filed in a timely manner?

**Item 6:** **Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Concerted efforts were made to achieve the permanency goals of reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement in a timely manner?

**Item 7:** **Placement with Siblings**

* Investigations Questions:
  + In the case of a removal, the CPI made concerted efforts to place siblings together.
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Were siblings placed together in out-of-home care?

**Item 8: Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care**

* On-going Services Questions:
  + Concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation (or other forms of contact if visitation not possible) between the child in out of home care and his or her mother was of sufficient quality to maintain or support the continuity of the relationship.
  + Concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation (or other forms of contact if visitation not possible) between the child in out of home care and his or her father was of sufficient quality to maintain or support the continuity of the relationship.
  + Concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation (or other forms of contact if visitation not possible between the child in out of home care and his or her siblings (also in out of home care) was of sufficient quality to maintain or support the continuity of the relationship.

**Item 9: Preserving Connections**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Concerted efforts were made to maintain the children's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family including siblings not in out of home care, Tribe, school, and friends (If no, check all that apply were missed)

**Item 10: Relative Placement**

* Investigations Questions:
  + In the case of a removal, the CPI made concerted efforts to place children with relatives.
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + The Child Welfare Professional made concerted efforts to identify, locate, inform, and evaluate relatives as potential placements for the child until ruled out as placement resources due to unwillingness or child's bests interest.

**Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care with Parents**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Concerted Efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in out of home care and his or her mother.
  + Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in out of home care and his or her father.

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 90%, based on national standards

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# Well-Being Metrics

**Data Analytics and Research Unit**

# Percentage of Children Seen Every 30 Days

**Ownership:** The case management program is responsible for conducting visits with children every 30 days.

**Description:** This is the percentage of children transferred to case management who are seen at intervals no longer than 30 days. Florida Statute (39.301(11)) requires the monitoring of the quality and timeliness of engagements with the child. CFOP 170-9, Chapter 6, and CFOP 170-6, Chapters 11-12 state that the case manager will make face-to-face contact to monitor the child's needs and ensure that the family is making progress. Florida Statute (39.6011(5)(c)) requires case managers to develop a plan for face-to-face meetings to be held each month with the child to review the progress of the (case) plan, to eliminate barriers to progress, and to resolve conflicts or disagreements. This measure is also supported by Florida Statute (409.988(1)(i)), which requires all lead agencies to comply with federal and state statutory requirement and agency rules, including frequency of visits with case managed children.

**Related Measure**: This measure is a quantitative measure of data pulled directly from the FSFN database. A related qualitative measure is based on the Life of Case review tool, percentage of quality caseworker visits with the child. Both measures are identified as accountability metrics to meet the intent of Florida Statute 39.301(11).

**Research Base:** Frequent contact is supported by The Casey Foundation, which states that face-to-face visits are critical to effective casework (Casey, 2015).The Casey Foundation notes that outcomes for children and families improve when staff both work directly with children and families and perform the case management tasks of arranging, referring and monitoring tasks of case management, using their judgement in increasing frequency and determining the types of services needed. Additionally, effective relationships between the case worker and the child were a key factor in successful reunifications (Jedwab, et al., 2018).

**Report Period:**  Each month of the quarter pulled individually and the values totaled to calculate the quarter

**Source:** FSFN Report #1144

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 99.5%

# Percent of Sibling Groups where All Children are Place Together

**Description:** This metric is the percent of sibling groups with two or more children in out-of-home care as of the end of the report period where all siblings are placed together. Florida Statute (39.402(6)) states that a core principle of prevention and intervention is that every possible effort to place siblings in the same home and in the event of permanent placement of siblings, to place them in the same adoptive home.

**Research Base:** Social research has identified that the sibling bond is among the strongest in abuse relationships, and that the bond typically grows due to the shared experience. Although exceptions exist, in the majority of joint-placement cases, research has found that the relationships are positive, giving children role models and helping provide older siblings with a sense of responsibility. In contrast, removal has been associated with issues related to trust and feelings of consistency in a child’s life.

**Report Period:**  The last day of the report month

**Source:** FSFN Report #1166

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 65%

# Qualitative Index for Well-Being

**Description:** This is the overall performance on well-being related items, items 12-18, on the Life of Case Investigations and Life of Case On-Going Services tools.

**Report Period:**  The last day of the month at the end of the report month

**Source:** Life of Case Investigations and Life of Case On-Going Services Review Tool.

**Item 12: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents**

* Investigations Questions:
  + CPI attempted to connect the family to appropriate services if the child(ren) has been determined to be safe but high or very high risk.
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Q5.1: The child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or informal assessments that accurately identified the children's needs.
  + Q5.9: Appropriate Services were provided to meet any additional needs of the children
  + Q6.2: The child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or informal assessments that accurately identified the mother's needs
  + Q6.7: The child welfare professional provided appropriate services to meet the identified needs of the mother
  + Q7.2: The child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or informal assessments that accurately identified the father's needs
  + Q7.7: The child welfare professional provided appropriate services to meet the identified need of the father.
  + Q8.5: The child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or informal assessments that accurately identified the needs of the foster parents, relative/non-relative caregiver, or pre-adoptive parents on an ongoing basis with respect to services they need in order to provide appropriate care and supervision to ensure safety and well-being of the children in their care.
  + Q9.6: Has the child welfare professional had ongoing contact with service providers involved with the family?
  + Was a Comprehensive Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA) completed for the child upon entering out of home care?
  + Was a Comprehensive Behavioral Health Care Assessment (CBHA) updated based on case circumstances?
  + Was a Comprehensive Behavioral Assessment (CBHA) or other mental health assessment used as part of the case manager's assessment?

**Item 13: Permanency Goal for the Child**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + The child welfare professional made concerted efforts to actively involve the child in the case planning process
  + The child welfare professional made concerted efforts to actively involve the mother in the case planning process
  + The child welfare professional made concerted efforts to actively involve the father in the case planning process

**Item 14:** **Caseworker Visits with the Child**

* Investigations Questions:
  + CPI Conducted quality interviews with the child(ren).
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Is the frequency and quality of the visits between the case manager and the child(ren) sufficient to address issues pertaining to the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals?

**Item 15: Caseworker Visits with Parents**

* + The CPI conducted quality Interviews with the parents/caregivers/household members
  + CPI saw or made ongoing diligent efforts to interview all parents and adult household members within the assigned response priority of the intake or of learning they were in the home
* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Is the quality of the visits between the case manager and the child's mother sufficient to ensure child safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?
  + Is the quality of the visits between the case manager and the child's father sufficient to ensure child safety and evaluate progress toward case plan outcomes?
  + Were conditions for return discussed with the father on an ongoing basis?
  + If no, select all that apply; if “conditions for return not discussed at frequency needed for circumstances of the case”, is selected as the reason the visit was not of quality, this is counted negatively toward the performance.

**Item 16:** **Educational Needs of the Child**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + Child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or informal assessments that accurately and thoroughly identified the children’s educational needs.
  + Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's identified educational needs.

**Item 17: Physical/Dental Health Needs of the Child**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + The children's health records are up-to-date, in the case plan, and plan to address identified issues are in the case plan.
  + Child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or information assessments that accurately and thoroughly identified the children’s medical needs.
  + Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's identified medical needs.
  + Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's identified dental needs.
  + Child welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or information assessments that accurately and thoroughly identified the children’s dental needs.

**Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child**

* On-Going Services Questions:
  + The Child Welfare professional conducted or arranged for formal or informal assessment that accurately identified the children's behavioral health needs.
  + The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medication for mental/behavioral health issues.
  + Q5.7: Appropriate Services were provided to meet the children's identified behavioral health needs

**Calculation:**

**Standard:** 90%, based on national standards

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