

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS

Florida

FINAL REPORT

2023

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Final Report: Florida Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Florida. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau (CB) to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and (3) assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Federal law and regulations authorize the CB, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, to administer the review of child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSRs are structured to help states identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their child welfare practices and programs as well as institute systemic changes that will improve child and family outcomes.

The findings for Florida are based on:

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and submitted to the CB on August 23, 2023. The Statewide Assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan.
- The February 2023 State Data Profile, prepared by the CB, which provides the state's Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) compared to national performance on 7 statewide data indicators.
- The results of case reviews of 65 cases [40 foster care and 25 in-home], conducted via a CB-Led Review process at Miami-Dade, Hillsborough-Tampa, and Okaloosa-Fort Walton Beach in Florida during October 23–27, 2023, examining case practices occurring October 2022 through October 2023.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
 - Attorneys for the agency
 - Attorneys for children/youth and Guardians ad Litem
 - Attorneys for parents
 - Child protective investigator supervisors
 - Child welfare agency and child protection investigation directors
 - Child welfare agency caseworkers, case managers, and child protective investigators
 - Child welfare agency leadership, headquarters staff, and program managers
 - Child welfare contractors and service providers
 - Foster and adoptive parent licensing staff
 - Foster and adoptive parents and relative caregivers, and representatives from the state foster and adoptive parent association
 - Information Technology (IT) staff
 - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) staff and Hotline Out-of-Town Inquiry staff
 - Judges and judicial officers
 - Parents
 - Quality Assurance (QA) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) staff
 - State Licensed/Approved Child Care Facility Staff
 - Tribal Representatives/Leaders
 - Youth

Background Information

The Round 4 CFSR assesses state performance with regard to substantial conformity with 7 child and family outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Each outcome incorporates 1 or more of the 18 items included in the case review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on an evaluation of certain

child welfare practices and processes in the cases reviewed in the state. With two exceptions, an item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90% or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies to those items. For a state to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. In addition, for Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, the state's RSP on applicable statewide data indicators must be better than or no different than national performance. This determination for substantial conformity is based on the data profile transmitted to the state to signal the start of that state's CFSR. The state's RSP in subsequent data profiles will be factored into the determination of indicators required to be included in the state's Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

Eighteen items are considered in assessing the state's substantial conformity with the 7 systemic factors. Each item reflects a key federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on how well the item-specific requirement is functioning. A determination of the rating is based on information provided by the state to demonstrate the functioning of the systemic factor in the Statewide Assessment and, as needed, from interviews with stakeholders and partners. For a state to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors, no more than 1 of the items associated with the systemic factor can be rated as an Area Needing Improvement. For systemic factors that have only 1 item associated with them, that item must be rated as a Strength for a determination of substantial conformity. An overview of the pathways to substantial conformity for the CFSR outcomes and systemic factors is in Appendix B of the Round 4 *CFSR Procedures Manual*.

The CB made several changes to the CFSR process, items, and indicators that are relevant to evaluating performance, based on lessons learned during the third round of reviews. As such, a state's performance in the fourth round of the CFSRs may not be directly comparable to its performance in the third round.

I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Florida 2023 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes and Systemic Factors

The CB has established high standards of performance for the CFSR based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our country's most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be considered acceptable. The high standards ensure ongoing attention to achieving positive outcomes for children and families regarding safety, permanency, and well-being. This is consistent with the CFSR's goal of promoting continuous improvement in performance on these outcomes. A state must develop and implement a PIP to address the areas of concern identified for each outcome or systemic factor for which the state is found not to be in substantial conformity. The CB recognizes that the kinds of systemic and practice changes necessary to bring about improvement in some outcome areas often take time to implement. The results of this CFSR are intended to serve as the basis for continued improvement efforts addressing areas where a state still needs to improve.

Table 1 provides a quick reminder of how case review items and statewide data indicators are combined to assess substantial conformity on each outcome:

Table 1. Outcomes, Case Review Items, and Statewide Data Indicators

Outcome	Case Review Item(s)	Statewide Data Indicators
Safety Outcome 1	Item 1	Maltreatment in foster care Recurrence of maltreatment
Safety Outcome 2	Items 2 and 3	N/A
Permanency Outcome 1	Items 4, 5, and 6	Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care

Outcome	Case Review Item(s)	Statewide Data Indicators
		Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more Reentry to foster care in 12 months Placement stability
Permanency Outcome 2	Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11	N/A
Well-Being Outcome 1	Items 12, 13, 14, and 15	N/A
Well-Being Outcome 2	Item 16	N/A
Well-Being Outcome 3	Items 17 and 18	N/A

Florida was found in substantial conformity with 1 of the 7 outcomes:

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

The following 2 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Staff and Provider Training
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

CB Comments on State Performance

The following are the CB's observations about cross-cutting systemic and practice themes for the Florida DCF Round 4 CFSR.

In Florida's 2016 Round 3 CFSR, none of the seven outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity. Three systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity: Quality Assurance System, Staff and Provider Training, and Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Florida entered into a PIP to address the areas of nonconformity and successfully completed implementation of its PIP. In its Round 4 CFSR, Florida was found to be in conformity with one outcome—Safety Outcome 1, Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect, and two systemic factors, Staff and Provider Training, and Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

As a fully privatized child welfare system, Florida's Community-Based Care (CBC) system contracts with local nonprofit agencies to provide child welfare services through Lead Agencies. The service delivery process is coordinated through an administrative structure that includes all six geographical regions. The regions are aligned with Florida's 20 judicial circuits. Within the six DCF regions, Lead Agencies under contract with DCF are responsible for providing foster care and related services, including family preservation, prevention and diversion, dependency caseworker, out-of-home care, emergency shelter, independent living, and adoption. Many of the lead agencies contract with subcontractors for case management and direct care services for the children and families they serve. Each lead agency is tasked with ongoing collaborative efforts with a variety of community partners, including the legal and judicial communities (judges, Court Improvement Project [CIP], child and parent attorneys, Guardians ad Litem, Children's Legal Services, and courts), families, caregivers, and providers. DCF remains responsible for program oversight, operating the Abuse Hotline, conducting child protective investigations, and providing legal representation in court proceedings. In 2023, investigations conducted by the Sheriff's Office in seven counties transitioned back to DCF.

Stakeholders indicated that they reached out to all three federally recognized Tribes to problem-solve around improved partnership opportunities. While there can be challenges at the local level, each county and Tribe has contacts that are routinely used to address barriers as they arise. Implementing and sustaining program improvement will require ongoing partnership and collaboration between public and private providers. Strengthening existing processes for monitoring services and standards may lead to improvements to the entire statewide system.

The Round 4 CFSR case review results saw practices Florida installed during its Round 3 PIP that the state can build upon in its Round 4 PIP to support achievement of substantial conformity with the CFSR outcomes and systemic factors. The review found that Florida has many strengths. First is the ongoing commitment of DCF staff at all levels; attorneys who represent children, parents, and caregivers; and judges in the child welfare system to support positive outcomes for children and their families. The case review results were strong, with 96.67% of the applicable cases reviewed showing strong practice in the timeliness of initiating face-to-face contact with children in accepted child maltreatment reports within the timeframes established by agency policies. This is a clear demonstration of Florida's commitment to responding to reports of child maltreatment in a timely manner.

The case review saw solid practices to ensure that children experience placement stability while in foster care (80%). In the cases reviewed, more than half of the children were placed with relatives or in a pre-adoptive home. This is a strong agency practice that contributes to placement stability. However, more *consistent* efforts to identify, locate, and evaluate both paternal and maternal relatives of children in care are needed on an ongoing basis during the life of the case. It should be noted that the state's performance on the statewide data indicator (SWDI) for Placement Stability is worse than national performance and has been trending in a negative direction for the previous four reporting periods. This indicator measures the number of moves per 1,000 days in care for children in their entry year, while the onsite case review considers whether the moves that occurred during the period under review (PUR) were planned by the agency to achieve case plan goals and meet the needs of the child. Additionally, of those children in the CFSR foster care sample, children of Hispanic origin appeared to have stronger performance on placement stability than children of other races. Children who experienced more than one placement generally had intensive or behavioral needs that contributed to more placement moves and placement instability.

Florida is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training, but—like most child welfare systems across the country—is confronted with maintaining a sufficient workforce to sustain this important work. Workforce challenges were observed in referrals for services, creating problems with reasonable efforts and delays in submitting required court reports. Initial training has been redesigned to ensure that all staff are certified timely by the Florida Certification Board (FCB) prior to receiving a caseload. While this redesign of training is a critical step, key stakeholders shared that caseworkers were not adequately prepared for their roles and that initial training missed some major components of the job, such as navigating and using the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). Florida is currently in the process of rolling out a supervisor certification program. Ongoing training is readily available to ensure that staff maintain their certification and to support quality professional development.

Florida is not in conformity with the Service Array systemic factor. This will need to be a major focus of the state's PIP. The array of services is insufficient, and Florida lacks the ability to individualize services to meet the unique needs of children and families. Stakeholders indicated that individualization of services is largely dependent on the specific service provider or area where the family resides. There are challenges in accessing services that are linguistically and culturally responsive, especially in rural areas. Finding services that can be tailored to meet the developmental needs, when identified, of children and youth is also difficult. Children and families in Florida experience waitlists in key service areas such as domestic violence, substance use, and mental and behavioral health.

Most notable in the applicable foster care and in-home cases reviewed was that the agency often struggled to ensure that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all the identified mental/behavioral health needs. The reasons for this varied and included lack of follow-through of assessment recommendations, an insufficient number of providers who could meet the child's specific mental health needs, services not being provided consistently, and appropriate services not being provided. These findings are consistent with challenges identified by stakeholders. There are also noted barriers in payment for services and transportation, which affect access to the service array across multiple jurisdictions in Florida, especially in rural areas.

An additional area identified as a challenge was a lack of foster families to serve the unique needs of the children and youth entering Florida's foster care system. Stakeholders identified specific service challenges for children or youth with extreme behavioral needs, LGBTQIA+ children/youth, teenagers/older youth, placements for trafficking victims, and children with co-occurring disorders. Stakeholders stated that when DCF

is not able to secure a placement for a child or youth, a “night-to-night” placement is secured. These children attend school and then travel to an afterschool program and/or to an agency office where they stay until 10 p.m., when they are taken to a foster home to sleep. They are then picked up in the morning and brought to school. Placements aren’t always the same each night or in the same area, and children are sometimes being transported 1 or 2 hours away for the night’s placement. Florida should explore this practice to determine if the increase in night-to-night placements is having a negative impact on the available traditional foster homes and the emotional and physical toll this practice has on the children and youth who experience it. Florida’s performance is worse than national performance on the Placement Stability Data Indicator. The night-to-night placement practice is likely contributing to the state’s performance if this practice is used for children in their first year of placement. The state should explore the extent that this practice is affecting placement stability.

In the cases reviewed during the CFSR, initial safety and risk assessments appeared to be taking place. However, Florida faces challenges in conducting ongoing safety and risk assessments. Ongoing assessments of safety and risk performed somewhat better in foster care cases (77.5%) compared with in-home cases (64%). Both case types have room for improvement and should be areas of focus in the PIP. Observations of note for Safety Outcome 2 included a lack of quality and comprehensive visits with families at critical case junctures, including case closure, not assessing all the children in the home for in-home cases, and assessments and services appearing incident-focused and not accounting for all relevant family dynamics. As for safety planning, the cases reviewed had varied results. In some of the cases reviewed, safety plans were monitored; in other cases, safety plan monitoring was lacking. Some of the common practice areas of concern for safety planning included lack of adequate safety plans and lack of ongoing monitoring. There were additional factors identified in multiple cases related to safety and risk assessments. They included a lack of regular contact with the family, a lack of adequate assessment of relative placements, and a lack of adequate assessment of domestic violence incidents.

Parental engagement is foundational for improving safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families involved in the Florida child welfare system. This will be a key practice area for Florida to address in its PIP. Case review results show that performance was low around caseworker visits with parents. For foster care cases, both frequency and quality of caseworker visits with mothers were stronger compared with fathers. However, in in-home cases, performance was similar between mothers and fathers for frequency and overall performance, with a slightly higher frequency for mothers. For both mothers and fathers, performance in in-home cases was stronger than in foster care cases. Visit quality was the overall practice challenge identified through the case reviews. Caseworkers did not spend enough time with parents or address relevant case details in their communications. There were also concerns with visits occurring in unhelpful locations such as during family visits or court hearings.

Another observation of note includes needs assessments and services to parents. When the quality of visits was low, the quality of assessments with parents tended to lag as well. Several areas appeared to drive the low rating in this area, including lack of contact with the parents during the PUR, delays in service provision, and a lack of comprehensive assessments and services across multiple cases related to substance use, domestic violence, and housing challenges. In both foster care and in-home cases, practice in this area was stronger with mothers than with fathers, and performance in in-home cases was stronger than performance in foster care cases for both mothers and fathers. Additionally, stakeholders sharing their experiences said that in foster care cases, parents were not being meaningfully involved in establishing their case plans. Stakeholders expressed that even in cases where parents were invited to a case planning meeting, they had little, if any, input into the resulting case plan. Conversely, it was noted that parental engagement was a hallmark of cases that were involved in Dependency Drug Court (DDC) proceedings. These areas should also be a focus for program improvement planning.

Florida continues to be challenged in achieving permanency and stability for children who come into care. Of the 40 foster care cases reviewed, Florida achieved a Strength rating of 15% for Permanency Outcome 1. As noted above, placement stability was rated as a Strength in 80% of the cases reviewed. The appropriateness of permanency goals and the achievement of permanency remain areas requiring attention and were the major contributing factors to the outcome rating. In the case review sample, the most prevalent goal type was adoption, in 26 cases. Of those cases, few received Strength ratings for achieving adoption within federal

timelines. When the timeline was met, often it was because a termination of parental rights (TPR) petition was filed when the child entered care due to case circumstances requiring early or expedited TPR. For the other cases, there were myriad process delays noted in achieving timely permanency by adoption. Delays in securing home studies were most often cited as contributing factors, as were background checks. Reviewers observed that concerted efforts were made by both the child welfare agency and the courts and in several cases noted delays in receiving timely orders terminating parental rights. The delays in receiving timely orders resulted in delays in the agency moving adoptions toward finalization. Further, as noted both in the case reviews and through stakeholder interviews, the timely filing of TPR petitions was often delayed beyond federal timeframes, adding more time to the achievement of the goal of adoption.

The next highest category of case by goal type within the case review sample was reunification, the goal in 13 cases. Federal timeframes for achieving reunification within 12 months of entering care were met in 3 of those 13 cases. A review of those cases reveals strong parental engagement, progressive visitation, and appropriate and timely services, which aided in the timely achievement of permanency by reunification. For the other 10 cases, often the reunification goal was in place for too long and was not appropriate to the case circumstances. In Florida, goal changes must be approved by the courts. Therefore, it is incumbent upon both courts and agencies to establish permanency goals timely and to ensure that goals, including concurrent goals, are appropriate given the facts of each unique case. Some reviewed cases reviewed did not have concurrent plans and could have benefitted from them. Caseworker turnover was another factor cited as having a negative effect on timely reunification. The comparable SWDI looks at permanency achieved within 12 months, which is most often reunification. For that metric, Florida's most recent performance was statistically worse than national performance and reflects a continuing downward trend. Florida must include achieving permanency by reunification in its PIP.

Related to Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2, the Case Review System systemic factor is another area on which to focus. In addition to parental engagement in case planning and timely filing of TPR petitions, discussed above, the Case Review System systemic factor also examines the timeliness of periodic review hearings and permanency hearings. Florida submitted data, largely confirmed through stakeholder interviews, indicating that permanency hearings are consistently held timely although periodic reviews are not. Many stakeholders remarked, and the data suggest, that timely permanency hearings may not be resulting in timely permanency. They also shared their experiences and beliefs that the timeliness of periodic reviews, as well as the filing of TPR petitions, suffer due to continued hearings, lack of docket space, late court reports, and high caseworker turnover. Florida is encouraged to examine the quality of both permanency hearings and periodic reviews (judicial reviews) to support the establishment of appropriate permanency goals based on the unique circumstances of each case, which includes considering concurrent goals and improving the timely achievement of permanency.

As DCF begins its work to develop a PIP and understand the root causes of some of the areas highlighted above, it will be important to build on the state's already established process of engaging its legal and judicial partners, Tribes, parents, youth, and other community partners. In 2021, as the result of a legislative mandate, DCF created a new accountability system that will play an important role in enhancing the collection and analysis of data needed to examine contributing factors and underlying causes of practice and systemic concerns, and to identify strengths to build on in making improvements.

Equity Observations and Considerations

Ensuring that child welfare is serving all people equitably and with respect for all individuals is essential to the work in child welfare and is a focused priority at the Children's Bureau. To create a system that is effective and equitable for all, states must pay particular attention to variation in performance metrics because disparity in outcomes could signal inequity that should be explored and addressed. During Round 4 of the CFSR, there is a focus on using data and evidence to identify disparities in services and outcomes; to understand the role that child welfare programs, policies, and practices may play in contributing to those disparities; and to inform and develop system improvements to address them.

Maltreatment in care: Black and Hispanic children accounted for 45% of the total days children spend in care across the state and experienced nearly half of all victimizations; in contrast, White children accounted for 46%

of the total days in care and experienced 43% of all victimizations. In addition, Black and Hispanic children experienced higher rates of maltreatment while in care (7.37 and 7.81 victimizations, respectively, per 100,000 days) compared to the state's observed performance (6.94) as well as to White children (6.51).

Recurrence of maltreatment: Over the past 3 reporting years, the proportion of Black children who experienced a recurrence of maltreatment decreased by 5%, which was in line with the state's overall improvement on this indicator. However, White children experienced a decrease of over 11% while Hispanic children, who make up nearly a fifth of all initial victims, experienced an 18% increase (from 5.3% to 6.2%) in the proportion of initial victims who experienced a recurrence during this timeframe.

Timeliness to permanency: Black children were consistently less likely to achieve permanency when compared to the overall state performance in each of the last 3 reporting years regardless of time spent in care. In fact, as time in care increased, the share of Black children exiting to permanency decreased. In the latest reporting period, Black children made up 29% of all entries and exits to permanency, 29% of all children in care 12–23 months but 27% of all exits, and 31% of all children in care at least 24 months but only 28% of all exits for this group. In contrast, while White children made up 44% of all entries but only 41% of exits, they were more likely to achieve permanency the longer they were in care; White children were 47% of all children in care 12–23 months and 47% of exits for this group, and while they accounted for 44% of all children in care at least 24 months, this group represented 47% of all exits to permanency.

Reentry into care: Performance on this indicator has improved over the last 3 reporting years statewide and across White, Black, and Hispanic children. However, Hispanic children continued to reenter care within 12 months more often (6.5%) than these other groups as well as the state overall (5.7%). These children made up 21% of all exits in the most recent reporting period but 24% of all reentries.

Placement stability: Black children had consistently higher rates of placement moves per 1,000 days in care than both White and Hispanic children in each of the last 3 reporting years. Similarly, while performance worsened for each of these 3 groups, both Hispanic and White children consistently had better rates of placement moves than the overall state for the same timeframe.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide the state's performance on the applicable statewide data indicators from the data profile that was transmitted to the state to signal the launch of the CFSR and performance summaries from the case review findings of the onsite review. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. A summary of the state's performance for all outcomes and systemic factors is in Appendix A. Additional information on case review findings, including the state's performance on case review item rating questions, is in the state's practice performance report in Appendix B.

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

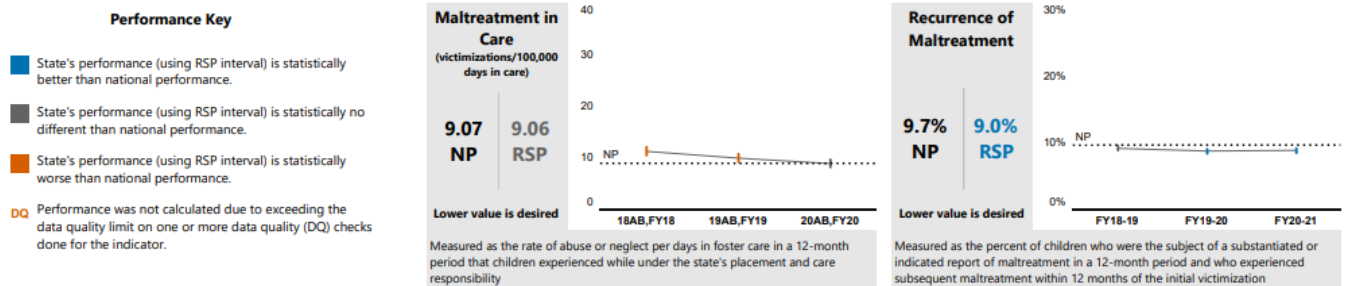
The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on two statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.

For reports assigned for immediate response, the Florida Child and Family Operating Procedure requires that the investigator attempt to make initial face-to-face contact with an alleged child victim as soon as possible but no later than 4 hours following assignment of the investigation by the Hotline. A 24-hour response time established by the Hotline requires the investigator to attempt to make initial face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim as soon as pre-commencement activities are completed but no later than 24 hours following assignment by the Hotline. If the investigator is unable to contact the family after timely commencement of the investigation, the investigator must make diligent attempts to revisit the home or visit other known or suspected locations of household members and attempt contact at different times of the day, including weekends, until contact has been made.

Statewide Data Indicators

The chart below shows the state's performance from the February 2023 data profile that signaled the start of the statewide assessment process and was used to determine substantial conformity for Safety Outcome 1.

Figure 1. State's Performance on Safety Outcome 1 Indicators



Case Review

Figure 2. Performance on Safety Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Florida was found to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1:

- The state's performance on the "maltreatment in foster care" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "recurrence of maltreatment" data indicator was statistically better than national performance.
- More than 95% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 1.

Notable Changes and Observations in Performance on the Safety Outcome 1 Data Indicators During Round 4¹

Table 2. Risk-Standardized Performance Compared to National Performance—Safety 1 Data Indicators

Statewide Data Indicator	Data Profile Transmitted With Statewide Assessment and Used to Determine Substantial Conformity	August 2023 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Maltreatment in Foster Care	No Different	No Different	No
Recurrence of Maltreatment in 12 months	Better	Better	No

Florida's performance for both indicators associated with Safety Outcome 1 has improved over the past 3 reporting years. For Maltreatment in Care, the state's RSP improved from worse than national performance to no different than national performance. While the total number of days children spent in care decreased over 5% between FY 2019 and FY 2021, the total number of victimizations decreased over 11% during that same period.

- Children aged 0–3 months were the only age group that experienced an increase in the rate of maltreatment over the last 3 reporting years—increasing from 3.77 to 5.35 victimizations per 100,000 days in care.
- Likewise, Hispanic children experienced an increase in the rate of maltreatment in care during the same period (7.64 to 7.81), while the rates for Black and White children decreased.
- For the most recent FY 2021 reporting year, children aged 11–16 years contributed 24% of the total days in care for children in the state but 39% of all victimizations. The rate of maltreatment for this group (11.44) was over twice the rate of maltreatment as all other children combined (5.54).

For Recurrence of Maltreatment, the state's RSP has remained better than national performance over the last 3 reporting years. The number of children with an initial substantiated or indicated maltreatment report decreased by 15% between FYs 2019–20 and FYs 2021–22, and the number of children who experienced recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months decreased by 19% during that same timeframe.

- Despite the overall improvement on this indicator over the past 3 reporting years, children aged 1–5 years, who make up a third of all initial victims, did not show improvement, and children aged 11–16 years, who make up a quarter of all initial victims, had the only increase in the proportion of initial victims who experienced a recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months.
- The top nine counties in FYs 2021–22 by the number of initial victims accounted for more than half of all initial victims in the state, and five of those counties reported an increase in the recurrence of victimizations since FYs 2019–20. This included three of the top four counties: Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Broward Counties.

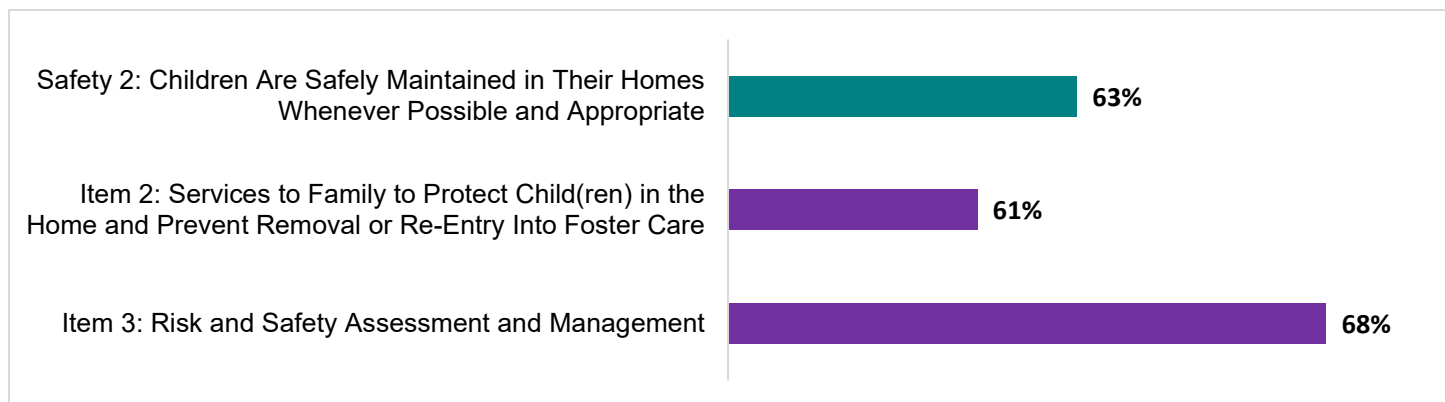
¹ Observations are based on the data available in the August 2023 Data Profile and Supplemental Context Data Workbook.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

Case Review

Figure 3. Performance on Safety Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2:

- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were rated as substantially achieved.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 2.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 3.

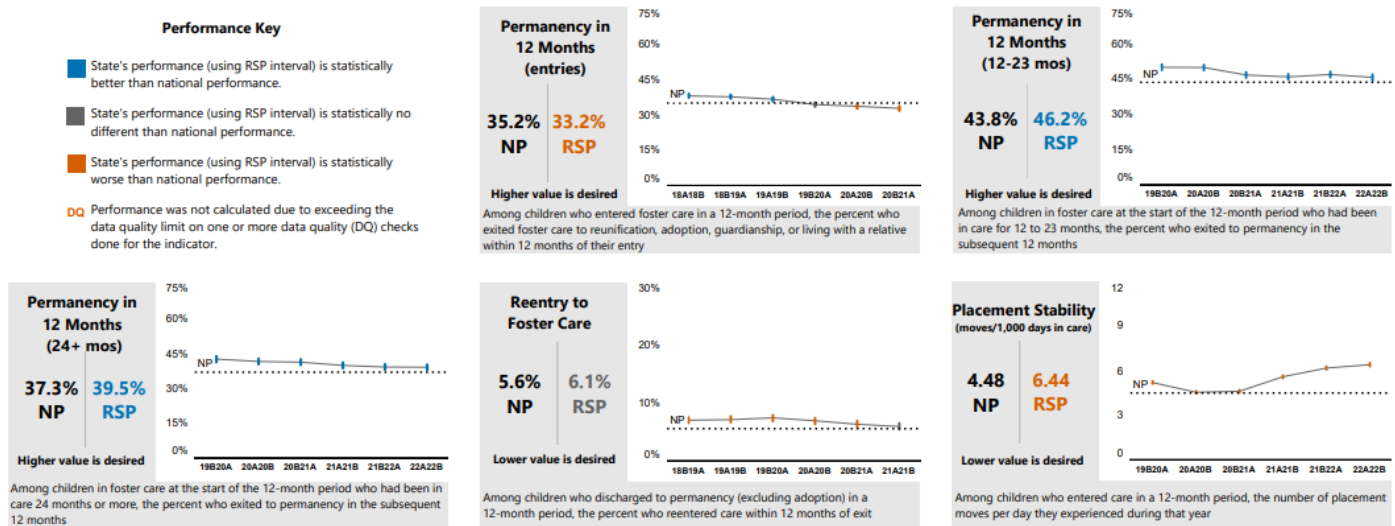
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on 5 statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6.

Statewide Data Indicators

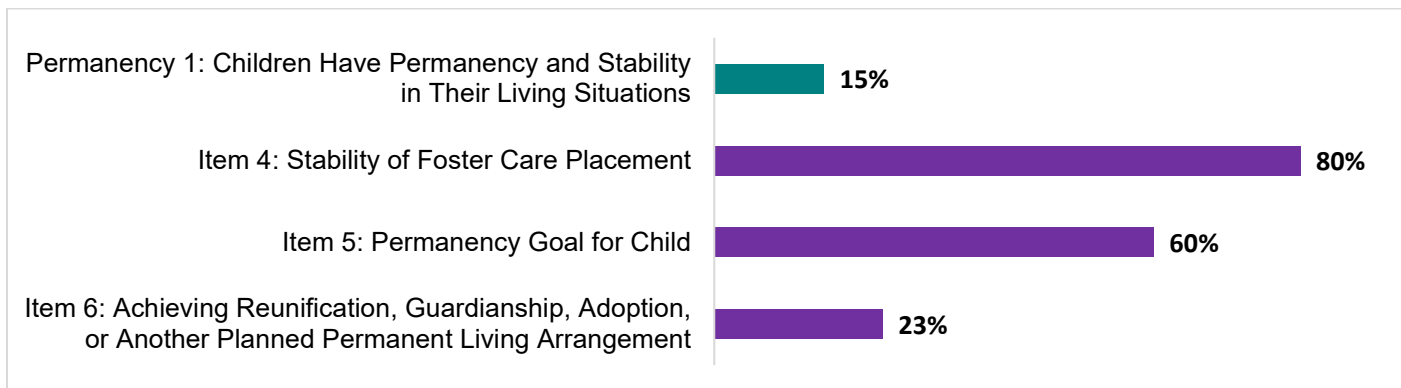
The chart below shows the state's performance from the February 2023 data profile that signaled the start of the statewide assessment process and was used to determine substantial conformity for Permanency Outcome 1.

Figure 4. State's Performance on Permanency Outcome 1 Indicators



Case Review

Figure 5. Performance on Permanency Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1:

- The state's performance on the "permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care" data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months" data indicator was statistically better than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more" data indicator was statistically better than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "reentry to foster care in 12 months" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "placement stability" data indicator was statistically worse than national performance. Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were rated as substantially achieved.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 4.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 5.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 6.

Notable Changes and Observations in Performance on the Permanency Outcome 1 Data Indicators During Round 4

Table 3. Risk-Standardized Performance Compared to National Performance—Permanency 1 Data Indicators

Statewide Data Indicator	Data Profile Transmitted With Statewide Assessment and Used to Determine Substantial Conformity	August 2023 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Permanency in 12 months for children entering care	Worse	Worse	Yes
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months	Better	Better	No
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	Better	Better	No
Reentry to foster care in 12 months	No Different	Worse	No
Placement stability	Worse	Worse	Yes

While Florida's performance on achieving permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months and 24 months or more has been better than national performance in each of the last 6 reporting periods, it is worth noting that the state's Observed Performance for all 3 indicators on timely permanency has consistently trended downward.

- Statewide, the entry rate for children has consistently declined in each of the last 6 reporting periods. The top 6 counties by child population account for nearly half of all children in the state but only 36% of all children who entered care.
- While the number of children entering care and in care 12–23 months have declined (by 12% and 5%, respectively), the number of children in care for at least 24 months has increased by 12%.
- Of the three timely permanency indicators, only for children entering care did Black children outperform White children in achieving permanency in each of the last 3 reporting years. However, while Black children make up approximately 20% of all children in the state, they made up a third of all entries in the most recent reporting period.

Performance on Placement Stability has been worse than national performance in each of the last 6 reporting periods. However, the state's performance in the most recent period represented the first improvement in performance in an otherwise steady trend in the undesired direction.

- For each of the last 3 reporting years, the rate of placement moves increased the older the reporting age group; children aged <1 year consistently experienced the lowest rate of placement moves while youth aged 17 years experienced the highest rate. Children aged 11–16 were disproportionately represented in this indicator, contributing 22% of the total days in care for all children in the state but experiencing 39% of all placement moves in the latest period.
- Two-thirds of Florida's counties each contribute 1% or less of all placement moves in the most recent reporting period; however, 8 counties accounted for half of all moves experienced by children in the state.

Florida's performance of children reentering care within 12 months has been worse than national performance in 5 of the last 6 reporting periods but has shown steady overall improvement. While the number of exits to permanency (excluding adoptions) decreased by 16%, the number of reentries into care had a 29% decrease.

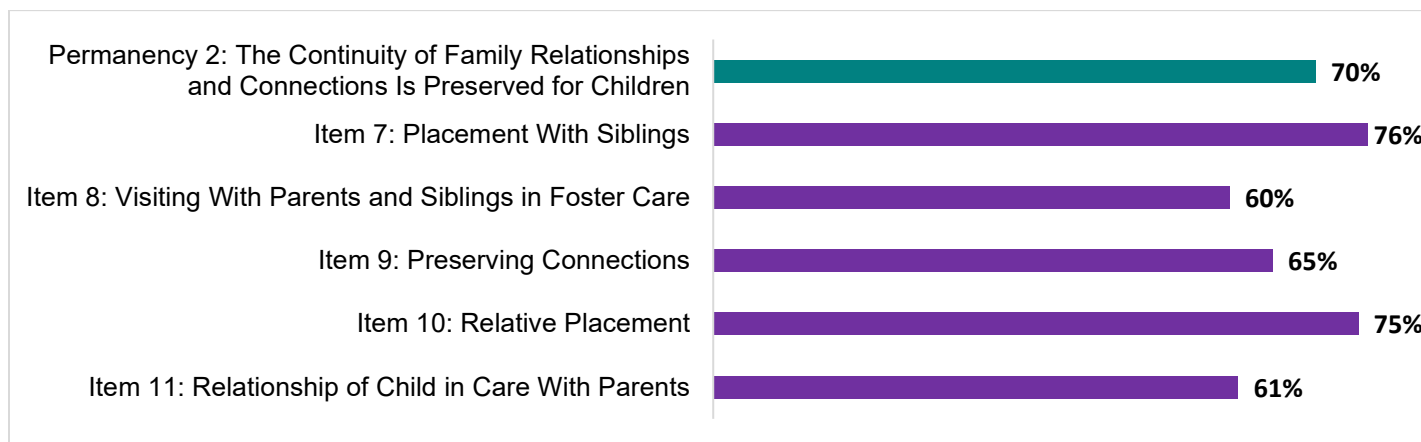
- Children aged 1–5 years and 11–16 years are disproportionately represented in this measure, accounting for 64% of all exits but 74% of all reentries in the latest data period. In contrast, children aged 6–10 years accounted for 28% of all entries, but only 22% of all reentries into care.
- Despite the overall improvement in performance, the 5 counties with the highest number of reentries (Hillsborough, Broward, Orange, Marion, and Volusia), 37% of all reentries in the state, were all disproportionately represented on this indicator—having proportionately more reentries than exits to permanency.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state’s performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Case Review

Figure 6. Performance on Permanency Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2:

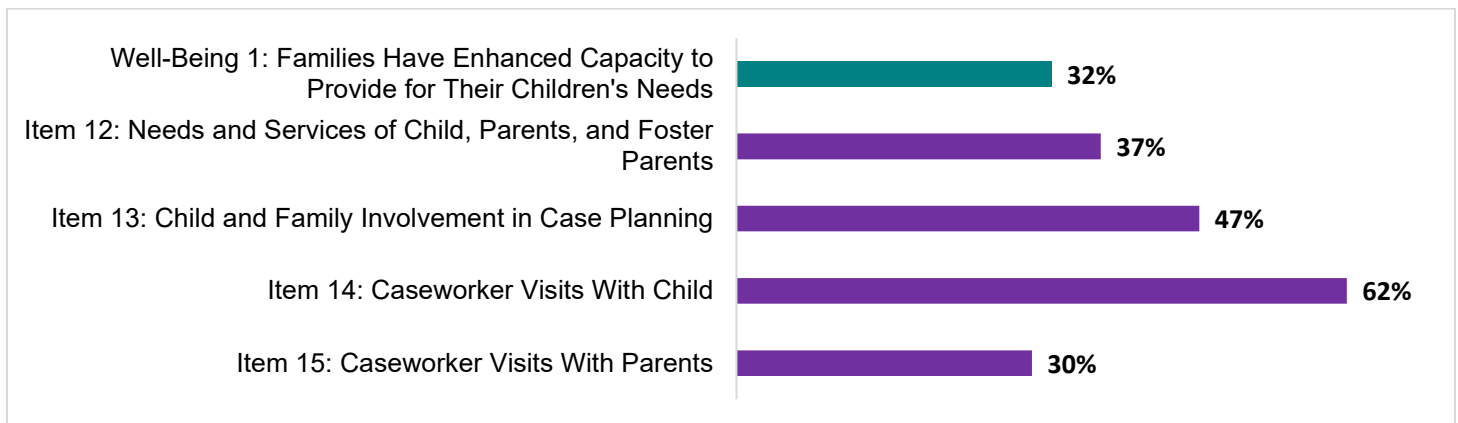
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were rated as substantially achieved.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 7.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 8.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 9.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 10.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 11.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state’s performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

Case Review

Figure 7. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1:

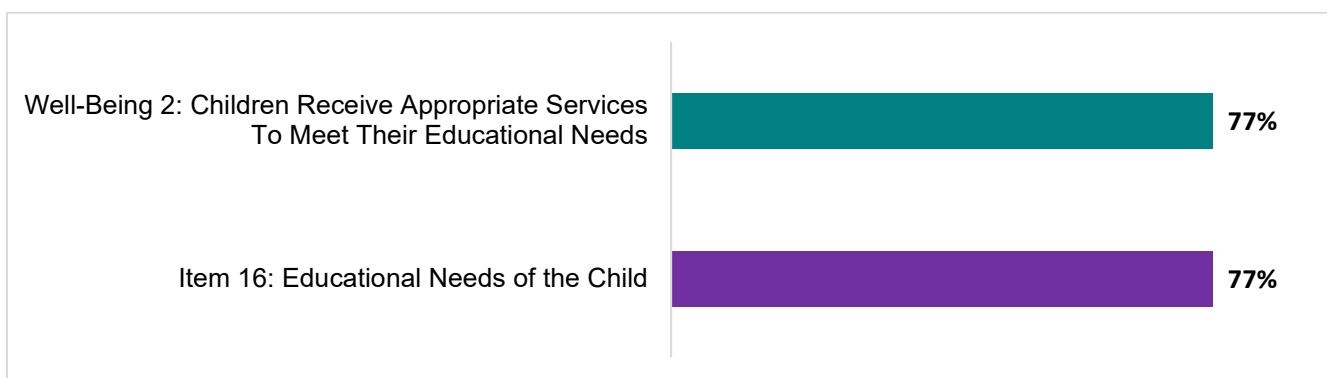
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were rated as substantially achieved.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 12.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12A.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12B.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12C.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 13.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 14.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 15.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Item 16.

Case Review

Figure 8. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2:

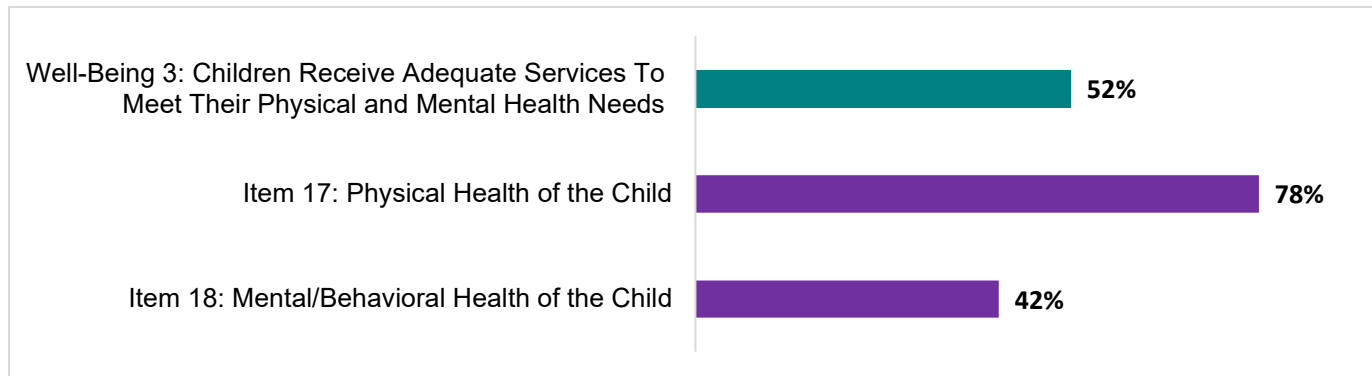
- Less than 95% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 16.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

Case Review

Figure 9. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 and Supporting Items



Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3:

- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were rated as substantially achieved.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 17.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 18.

III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the 7 systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The CB determines substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined based on ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the CB must find that no more than 1 of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the CB must find that the item is functioning as required. For each systemic factor below, we provide performance summaries and a determination of whether the state is in substantial conformity with that systemic factor. In addition, we provide ratings for each item.

Statewide Information System

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Item 19.

Item	Rating
Item 19: Statewide Information System	Area Needing Improvement

Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System.

Item 19: Statewide Information System

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The statewide information system is functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state 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.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, the agency reported that system users can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, goals, and placement of all children in foster care or who have been in foster care in the past 12 months and described how supervisory reviews and the Office of Quality and Innovation case reviews monitor the accuracy of data entry. Stakeholder interviews supported these assertions, reporting that the agency system tracks and time-stamps all data entries and updates information daily, and that the quarterly supervisory reviews and case reviews monitor the accuracy of data entry on the 4 required elements. They noted that daily reports that include the 4 required elements are available to multiple system users. As data is tied to funding and the state undergoes multiple audits per year, stakeholders were confident in the accuracy of the data. However, data for more recent time periods than initially presented in the March 2022 Statewide Assessment were not provided. There was also no information provided to counter the placement entry data that demonstrated lack of timely input or the concerns about the timeliness of placement data entry. In addition, no data were provided to support timeliness or accuracy of the data for demographics, status, or goals.

Case Review System

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

Items	Rating
Item 20: Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement

Items	Rating
Item 21: Periodic Reviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 22: Permanency Hearings	Strength
Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Area Needing Improvement

Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System.

Item 20: Written Case Plan

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In its Statewide Assessment, Florida provided information on its case planning process, laws regarding the requirement for completing a case plan with the parent within 60 days, and data from its Life of Case Reviews that demonstrated moderate efforts to include mothers in case planning and marginal efforts to include fathers in case planning. Stakeholder interviews provided conflicting information regarding efforts to include parents in case planning, while supporting the observation that inclusion of fathers is less successful than for mothers. Practice regarding the inclusion of parents in case planning is not consistent across all jurisdictions.

Item 21: Periodic Reviews

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 21 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data in the Statewide Assessment showed that a large percentage of children in care more than 6 months had a judicial review within the past 6 months; however, no data were provided to specifically show whether initial and ongoing reviews were held timely within the first 6 months of the child's entry into foster care and then every 6 months thereafter until permanency was achieved. Stakeholders described inconsistent practices across the state regarding ongoing judicial reviews, with some circuits reporting timely reviews every 5 months to ensure the required timeframes were met, while others reported continued hearings, lack of docket space, and late court reports affecting the timeliness of reviews.

Item 22: Permanency Hearings

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

- Florida received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, Florida provided data to support the timely scheduling and completion of initial permanency hearings within 12 months of custody. Stakeholder interviews supported the data submitted indicating that in almost all cases and circuits, initial permanency hearings were scheduled

and held timely every 12 months as were subsequent permanency hearings. Stakeholders largely agreed that often permanency hearings were held in shorter timeframes than the required 12 months to monitor permanency progress.

Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Florida provided data related to their state statute requirement of filing for termination of parental rights (TPR) within 60 days of a goal change; however, no data were provided to demonstrate whether TPR petitions were filed within Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) timeframes or whether documented exceptions exist. Information from stakeholder interviews highlighted challenges with timely filing of TPRs in multiple circuits, including caseworker turnover, confusion between the ASFA and Florida statute requiring filing within 60 days of goal change, lack of concerted efforts, housing challenges affecting reunification, and judges wanting to allow additional time for parents to meet their goals when they are in partial compliance with the case plan.

Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, Florida provided Life of Case Review data and survey responses regarding Notice and Right to Be Heard that did not support strong and consistent practice. Stakeholders said that caregivers were not routinely informed of hearings and their right to be heard in all circuits and noted that there was no consistent way in which caregivers were given notice, which led to circumstances in which notice was not provided.

Quality Assurance System

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Item 25.

Item	Rating
Item 25: Quality Assurance System	Area Needing Improvement

Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System.

Item 25: Quality Assurance System

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The quality assurance system is functioning statewide to ensure that it (1) is operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 25 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.

- In the Statewide Assessment, Florida described a robust case review process through its Life of Case Review and publicly available information such as the Accountability Report, which was confirmed through stakeholder interviews. Data-sharing and problem-solving efforts occur on a regular basis within the agency and with its partners through quarterly meetings. However, neither the Statewide Assessment nor stakeholder interviews provided evidence of how improvement strategies were tracked, monitored, or adjusted based on ongoing assessment. Survey data provided in the Statewide Assessment showed that only a marginal percentage of respondents believed that the Quality Assurance (QA) system evaluated the array and quality of services to parents, youth, or foster parents. Florida did not provide evidence to show how the agency established targeted strategies for improvement and tracked progress toward desired outcomes. In addition, the state did not describe how the agency provided feedback to internal and external stakeholders on how the agency used their input. Florida also did not provide evidence to support systematic review, modification, and implementation of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process.

Staff and Provider Training

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

Items	Rating
Item 26: Initial Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement
Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training	Strength
Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength

Florida was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training.

Item 26: Initial Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 26 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information regarding the requirement for all staff to be certified timely by the Florida Certification Board (FCB) prior to receiving a caseload was included in the Statewide Assessment and supported by stakeholders. While initial training has been redesigned based on research and provides critical information needed for caseworkers and supervisors, key stakeholders indicated that caseworkers were not adequately prepared with the basic skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties as new caseworkers in their first year on the job. Stakeholders also said that the training did not address some major components of the job, such as navigating and using the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS).

Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Florida received an overall rating of Strength for Item 27 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the Statewide Assessment described the requirements for ongoing staff training as tracked by a third-party certification board. Stakeholders verified that multiple reports and automated

reminders are provided to ensure that all staff maintain their training and certification requirements on an ongoing basis. Multiple respondents indicated that the training resources for ongoing training regarding basic skills and knowledge needed to carry out the duties of established caseworkers are robust and address a wide array of topics needed to support quality professional development. Opportunities to assess the effectiveness of training are provided through pre- and post-training evaluations and surveys, as well as an annual needs assessment. Supervisors complete a standardized training program and mentorship.

Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

- Florida received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The Statewide Assessment provided an overview of the placement levels of foster homes and the core and specialized training requirements for the various placement levels. Training for residential staff is the responsibility of individual providers. Stakeholder interviews showed that initial training for foster/adoptive parents and residential staff was available and completed prior to placements or working directly with children, and that initial and ongoing trainings were generally effective at providing the skills necessary to support children. Although some stakeholders indicated that initial training alone was not sufficient to prepare foster/adoptive parents and residential staff, the stakeholders noted that mentoring opportunities and ongoing support in those roles bridged the gaps and that ongoing trainings were more effective and responsive to individual training needs.

Service Array and Resource Development

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

Items	Rating
Item 29: Array of Services	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30: Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement

Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development.

Item 29: Array of Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP: (1) services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, (2) services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, (3) services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and (4) services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, Florida described efforts made by the agency to expand its service array throughout the state, particularly focused on prevention efforts. In the Statewide Assessment, Florida identified, and stakeholders concurred with, challenges in service availability across the state. Many

areas, particularly rural, experienced waitlists and insufficient providers of key service areas such as domestic violence, substance use, and mental and behavioral health. Challenges in payment for services and lack of transportation created barriers and affected access to the service array in multiple jurisdictions. The agency also experienced a lack of placement resources, resulting in office stays and night-to-night placements for children in care, and challenges in identifying appropriate placements for sibling groups and older youth.

Item 30: Individualizing Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning statewide to ensure that the services in Item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, Florida acknowledged challenges regarding capacity and accessibility of specialized services across the state, especially in rural areas. Survey responses provided in the assessment showed marginal support for the availability and timeliness of services in the respondent's specific county or circuit. Stakeholders said that individualization of services was largely dependent on the specific service provider or area where the family resides. Challenges in providing linguistic and culturally responsive services exist, especially in rural areas. Finding services that can adapt to the developmental needs of children and families was also difficult.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

Items	Rating
Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Strength
Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength

Florida was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that, in implementing the provisions of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and developing related Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSRs), the state engages 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 includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

- Florida received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The agency described ongoing collaborative efforts with a variety of community partners, including the legal and judicial communities, i.e., judges, Court Improvement Project (CIP) representatives, child and parent attorneys, Guardians ad Litem, Children's Legal Services, courts, families, caregivers, and providers. These parties are also involved in joint planning efforts around the CFSP and APSR. Stakeholders said that all three of Florida's federally recognized Tribes have been engaged by the agency and have been involved in recent meetings with the agency to identify strengths and challenges of their working relationship and to problem-solve around improved partnership opportunities. Although

there can be challenges on the local level, each county and Tribe has contacts that are routinely used to address barriers as they arise. Bimonthly calls are held with partners to provide ongoing collaboration and planning.

Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

- Florida received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Information in the Statewide Assessment showed that the agency works closely with other federal programs serving the same population, such as the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Agency for Health Care Administration, and the divisions of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, and Economic Self-Sufficiency. To coordinate services effectively, the agency has developed formalized agreements, Memoranda of Understanding/Memoranda of Agreement (MOUs/MOAs), and participates in statewide councils, committees, and advisory boards. In addition, the agency participates in Multi-Disciplinary Teams to coordinate services across state departments and sister agencies. Local review teams are also involved to ensure ongoing collaboration and to identify gaps in service coordination. Data are collected monthly to assess the effectiveness of this process.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

Items	Rating
Item 33: Standards Applied Equally	Area Needing Improvement
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Area Needing Improvement

Florida was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

Item 33: Standards Applied Equally

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 33 based on information from Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Florida did not provide data to demonstrate that licensing standards are consistently applied across all foster home and child-placing/child-caring agencies throughout the state. Although the state said that a shared system generates reports regarding licensure status, no reports were provided from this system. Stakeholders said that statewide tracking of waivers recently began in January 2023 and that prior to this date, tracking was done at the local level. While the number of waivers approved for 2022 was supplied, there was no information to demonstrate that these waivers were appropriate and timely. DCF reports completing random file reviews as a quality check to monitor lead agencies completing

licensure; however, results of those reviews were not provided. Stakeholders said that waiver approvals are managed on a local basis, making it difficult to determine consistency of application.

Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

- Florida received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from stakeholder interviews.
- Florida requires background checks on all foster parents, adoptive parents, and child-caring agency staff prior to a child being placed. Stakeholders reported that policies and procedures for ensuring background checks were robust and safety planning was conducted when issues arose in foster homes or residential placements. Interviewees confirmed that automatic holds were placed in the system when any placement was out of compliance with updated background checks, home visits were conducted, and safety plans were in place to address any reports of noncompliance or safety concerns related to placements. Meetings were held at relicensure to review patterns of noncompliance or reported concerns to determine whether the license should be renewed.

Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, Florida explained that recruitment is solely the responsibility of the lead agencies in the state. Stakeholders said that regional meetings were replaced with statewide meetings to provide oversight. Data provided demonstrated disparities in the availability of foster homes that meet the racial and ethnic needs of children in foster care and did not accurately represent the number of children in foster care. Stakeholders provided no specific strategies or efforts to consistently address this requirement across all jurisdictions.

Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.

- Florida received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The Statewide Assessment, and stakeholders during interviews, did not provide data or information to demonstrate the effective and timeliness of completion of cross-jurisdictional requests to facilitate adoptive or permanent placements in the state. The one year of data Florida provided did not demonstrate timely completion of ICPC requests received by the state. Stakeholders confirmed that ICPC requests from other states are not completed within the 60-day timeframe. Barriers to timely completion of home studies included communication with sending states, slow returns on Adam Walsh checks, families moving between jurisdictions, and staffing/turnover.

IV. APPENDIX A

Summary of Florida 2023 Child and Family Services Review Performance

I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes and Items and Performance on Statewide Data Indicators

Outcome Achievement: Outcomes may be rated as in substantial conformity or not in substantial conformity. 95% of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

Item Achievement: Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement. For an overall rating of Strength, 90% of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of Item 1 and Item 16) must be rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies.

Statewide Data Indicators: For Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, the state's performance is also considered against the national performance for each statewide data indicator. State performance may be statistically better, worse, or no different than the national performance. If a state did not provide the required data or did not meet the applicable item data quality limits, the CB did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

RSP (Risk-Standardized Performance) is derived from a multi-level statistical model, reflects the state's performance relative to states with similar children, and takes into account the number of children the state served, the age distribution of these children and, for some indicators, the state's entry rate. It uses risk adjustment to minimize differences in outcomes due to factors over which the state has little control and provides a fairer comparison of state performance against national performance.

RSP Interval is the 95% confidence interval estimate for the state's RSP. The values shown are the lower RSP and upper RSP of the interval estimate. The interval accounts for the amount of uncertainty associated with the RSP. For example, the CB is 95% confident that the true value of the RSP is between the lower and upper limit of the interval.

Data Period(s) Used refers to the initial 12-month period and the period(s) of data needed to follow the children to observe their outcomes. The FY or federal fiscal year refers to NCANDS data, which spans the 12-month period October 1–September 30. All other periods refer to AFCARS data. "A" refers to the 6-month period October 1–March 31. "B" refers to the 6-month period April 1–September 30. The 2-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	In Substantial Conformity	97% Substantially Achieved
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations	Strength	97% Strength

DATA INDICATORS FOR SAFETY OUTCOME 1

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Overall Determination	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP	RSP Interval	Data Period(s) Used
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	9.07	No Different Than National Performance	Lower	9.06	8.34–9.85	20A–20B, FY20–21
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.7%	Better Than National Performance	Lower	9.0%	8.6%–9.3%	FY20–21

SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	Not in Substantial Conformity	63% Substantially Achieved
Item 2: Services to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	61% Strength
Item 3: Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	68% Strength

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	Not in Substantial Conformity	15% Substantially Achieved
Item 4: Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	80% Strength
Item 5: Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	60% Strength
Item 6: Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or another planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	23% Strength

DATA INDICATORS FOR PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Overall Determination	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP	RSP Interval	Data Period(s) Used
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	35.2%	Worse Than National Performance	Higher	33.2%	32.3%–34.0%	20B–22B
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months	43.8%	Better Than National Performance	Higher	46.2%	44.9%–47.4%	22A–22B
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	37.3%	Better Than National Performance	Higher	39.5%	38.4%–40.6%	22A–22B
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	5.6%	No Different Than National Performance	Lower	6.1%	5.6%–6.7%	21A–22B
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.48	Worse Than National Performance	Lower	6.44	6.32–6.56	22A–22B

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	Not in Substantial Conformity	70% Substantially Achieved
Item 7: Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	76% Strength
Item 8: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	60% Strength
Item 9: Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength
Item 10: Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength
Item 11: Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	61% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	Not in Substantial Conformity	32% Substantially Achieved
Item 12: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	37% Strength
Sub-Item 12A: Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	62% Strength
Sub-Item 12B: Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	36% Strength
Sub-Item 12C: Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength
Item 13: Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	47% Strength
Item 14: Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	62% Strength
Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	30% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	Not in Substantial Conformity	77% Substantially Achieved
Item 16: Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	77% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Not in Substantial Conformity	52% Substantially Achieved
Item 17: Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
Item 18: Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	42% Strength

II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the 7 systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The CB determines

substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined on the basis of ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the CB must find that no more than 1 of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the CB must find that the item is functioning as required.

STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 19: Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Case Review System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 20: Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21: Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 22: Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 25: Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
Item 26: Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Service Array and Resource Development	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 29: Array of Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30: Individualizing Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment	Strength

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 33: Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

APPENDIX B: PRACTICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Florida CFSR (CB-Led) 2023

The Practice Performance Report provides an aggregated summary of practice performance for all 18 items in the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI) for all approved and final cases from all the sites in the [state] CFSR ([CB-Led/State-Led]) and includes a breakdown of performance by case type. Please refer to the Rating Criteria section at the end of each item in the OSRI to identify which responses to questions will result in a Strength rating. For more information on the OSRI, see <https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/resources/round-4-resources/cfsr-round-4-instruments-tools-and-guides>

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

Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment

Practice Description	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 1A) Investigations or assessments were initiated in accordance with the state's timeframes and requirements in cases.	96.67% (29 of 30)
(Question 1B) Face-to-face contact with the child(ren) who is (are) the subject of the report were made in accordance with the state's timeframes and requirements in cases.	96.67% (29 of 30)
(Question 1C) Reasons for delays in initiation of investigations or assessments and/or face-to-face contact were due to circumstances beyond the control of the agency.	0% (0 of 1)
Item 1 Strength Ratings	96.67% (29 of 30)

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

Item 2: Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 2A and 2B) Agency made concerted efforts to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect the children and prevent their entry or reentry into foster care.	44.44% (4 of 9)	50% (7 of 14)	47.83% (11 of 23)
(Questions 2A and 2B) Although the agency did not make concerted efforts to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect the children and prevent their entry into foster care, the child(ren) was removed from the home because this action was necessary to ensure the child's safety.	22.22% (2 of 9)	Not Applicable	22.22% (2 of 9)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 2A and 2B) Agency did not make concerted efforts to provide services and the child was removed without providing appropriate services.	11.11% (1 of 9)	Not Applicable	11.11% (1 of 9)
(Questions 2A and 2B) Concerted efforts were not made to provide appropriate services to address safety/risk issues and the child(ren) remained in the home.	11.11% (1 of 9)	50% (7 of 14)	34.78% (8 of 23)
Item 2 Strength Ratings	77.78% (7 of 9)	50% (7 of 14)	60.87% (14 of 23)

Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 3A1) There were no maltreatment allegations about the family that were not formally reported or formally investigated/assessed.	95% (38 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	95.38% (62 of 65)
(Question 3A1) There were no maltreatment allegations that were not substantiated despite evidence that would support substantiation.	92.5% (37 of 40)	100% (25 of 25)	95.38% (62 of 65)
(Question 3A) The agency conducted an initial assessment that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	80% (4 of 5)	80% (4 of 5)	78.95% (15 of 19)
(Question 3B) The agency conducted ongoing assessments that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	77.5% (31 of 40)	64% (16 of 25)	72.31% (47 of 65)
(Question 3C) When safety concerns were present, the agency developed an appropriate safety plan with the family and continually monitored the safety plan as needed, including monitoring family engagement in safety-related services.	62.5% (5 of 8)	53.33% (8 of 15)	56.52% (13 of 23)
(Question 3D) There were no safety concerns pertaining to children in the family home that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	71.43% (10 of 14)	72.73% (8 of 11)	72% (18 of 25)
(Question 3E) There were no concerns related to the safety of the target child in foster care during visitation with parent(s)/caregiver(s) or other family members that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	96% (24 of 25)	Not Applicable	96% (24 of 25)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 3F) There were no concerns for the target child's safety in the foster home or placement facility that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	95% (38 of 40)	Not Applicable	95% (38 of 40)
Item 3 Strength Ratings	72.5% (29 of 40)	60% (15 of 25)	67.69% (44 of 65)

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

Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 4B) Placement changes for the child were planned by the agency in an effort to achieve the child's case goals or to meet the needs of the child.	12.5% (1 of 8)	12.5% (1 of 8)
(Question 4C) The child's current or most recent placement setting is stable.	90% (36 of 40)	90% (36 of 40)
Item 4 Strength Ratings	80% (32 of 40)	80% (32 of 40)

Item 5: Permanency Goal for Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 5A3) Permanency goal(s) is (are) specified in the case file.	100% (40 of 40)	100% (40 of 40)
(Question 5B) Permanency goals in effect during the period under review were established in a timely manner.	77.5% (31 of 40)	77.5% (31 of 40)
(Question 5C) Permanency goals in effect during the period under review were appropriate to the child's needs for permanency and to the circumstances of the case.	72.5% (29 of 40)	72.5% (29 of 40)
(Question 5D) Child has been in foster care for at least 15 of the most recent 22 months.	77.5% (31 of 40)	77.5% (31 of 40)
(Questions 5E) Child meets other Adoption and Safe Families Act criteria for termination of parental rights (TPR).	0% (0 of 9)	0% (0 of 9)
(Questions 5F and 5G) The agency filed or joined a TPR petition before the period under review (PUR) or in a timely manner during the PUR or an exception applied.	93.33% (28 of 30)	93.33% (28 of 30)
Item 5 Strength Ratings	60% (24 of 40)	60% (24 of 40)

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve reunification in a timely manner.	33.33% (3 of 9)	33.33% (3 of 9)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve guardianship in a timely manner.	0% (0 of 2)	0% (0 of 2)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner.	18.18% (4 of 22)	18.18% (4 of 22)
(Questions 6A4 and 6C) The agency and court made concerted efforts to place a child with a goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) in a living arrangement that can be considered permanent until discharge from foster care.	100% (1 of 1)	100% (1 of 1)
(Questions 6A4 and B or 6A4 and C) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve concurrent goals. If one of two concurrent goals was achieved during the period under review, rating is based on the goal that was achieved.	16.67% (1 of 6)	16.67% (1 of 6)
Item 6 Strength Ratings	22.5% (9 of 40)	22.5% (9 of 40)

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

Item 7: Placement With Siblings

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 7A) The child was placed with all siblings who also were in foster care.	48.28% (14 of 29)	48.28% (14 of 29)
(Question 7B) When all siblings were not placed together, there was a valid reason for the child's separation from siblings in placement.	53.33% (8 of 15)	53.33% (8 of 15)
Item 7 Strength Ratings	75.86% (22 of 29)	75.86% (22 of 29)

Item 8: Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was more than once a week.	29.41% (5 of 17)	29.41% (5 of 17)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was once a week.	29.41% (5 of 17)	29.41% (5 of 17)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	23.53% (4 of 17)	23.53% (4 of 17)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	5.88% (1 of 17)	5.88% (1 of 17)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a month.	11.76% (2 of 17)	11.76% (2 of 17)
(Question 8A1) Child never had visits with mother.	0% (0 of 17)	0% (0 of 17)
(Question 8A) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the frequency of visitation between the mother and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	88.24% (15 of 17)	88.24% (15 of 17)
(Question 8C) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the mother and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	88.24% (15 of 17)	88.24% (15 of 17)
(Questions 8A and 8C) The frequency and quality of visitation between the child and mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.	82.35% (14 of 17)	82.35% (14 of 17)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was more than once a week.	25% (2 of 8)	25% (2 of 8)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was once a week.	0% (0 of 8)	0% (0 of 8)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	25% (2 of 8)	25% (2 of 8)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	12.5% (1 of 8)	12.5% (1 of 8)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a month.	25% (2 of 8)	25% (2 of 8)
(Question 8B1) Child never had visits with father.	12.5% (1 of 8)	12.5% (1 of 8)
(Question 8B) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the frequency of visitation between the father and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	62.5% (5 of 8)	62.5% (5 of 8)
(Question 8D) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the father and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	83.33% (5 of 6)	83.33% (5 of 6)
(Questions 8B and 8D) The frequency and quality of visitation between the child and father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.	50% (4 of 8)	50% (4 of 8)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was more than once a week.	20% (3 of 15)	20% (3 of 15)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was once a week.	0% (0 of 15)	0% (0 of 15)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	26.67% (4 of 15)	26.67% (4 of 15)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	26.67% (4 of 15)	26.67% (4 of 15)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than once a month.	26.67% (4 of 15)	26.67% (4 of 15)
(Question 8E1) Child never had visits with siblings in foster care.	0% (0 of 15)	0% (0 of 15)
(Question 8E) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the frequency of visitation between the child and siblings in foster care was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	66.67% (10 of 15)	66.67% (10 of 15)
(Question 8F) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the child and siblings in foster care was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	86.67% (13 of 15)	86.67% (13 of 15)
(Questions 8E and 8F) The frequency and quality of visitation with siblings in foster care was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.	66.67% (10 of 15)	66.67% (10 of 15)
Item 8 Strength Ratings	60% (15 of 25)	60% (15 of 25)

Item 9: Preserving Connections

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 9A) Concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's important connections (for example, neighborhood, community, faith, language, extended family members including siblings who are not in foster care, Tribe, school, and/or friends).	65% (26 of 40)	65% (26 of 40)
Item 9 Strength Ratings	65% (26 of 40)	65% (26 of 40)

Item 10: Relative Placement

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 10A1) The child's current, or most recent, placement was with a relative.	57.5% (23 of 40)	57.5% (23 of 40)
(Question 10A2) The child's current or most recent placement with a relative was appropriate to the child's needs.	100% (23 of 23)	100% (23 of 23)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Identify maternal relatives.	80% (8 of 10)	80% (8 of 10)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Locate maternal relatives.	70% (7 of 10)	70% (7 of 10)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Inform maternal relatives.	70% (7 of 10)	70% (7 of 10)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Evaluate maternal relatives.	70% (7 of 10)	70% (7 of 10)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Identify paternal relatives.	75% (6 of 8)	75% (6 of 8)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Locate paternal relatives.	50% (4 of 8)	50% (4 of 8)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Inform paternal relatives.	50% (4 of 8)	50% (4 of 8)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Evaluate paternal relatives.	62.5% (5 of 8)	62.5% (5 of 8)
Item 10 Strength Ratings	75% (30 of 40)	75% (30 of 40)

Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 11A) Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive, nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.	70.59% (12 of 17)	70.59% (12 of 17)
(Question 11B) Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive, nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.	37.5% (3 of 8)	37.5% (3 of 8)
Item 11 Strength Ratings	61.11% (11 of 18)	61.11% (11 of 18)

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

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
Item 12 Strength Ratings	35% (14 of 40)	40% (10 of 25)	36.92% (24 of 65)

Sub-Item 12A: Needs Assessment and Services to Children

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12A1) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the children's needs.	70% (28 of 40)	72% (18 of 25)	70.77% (46 of 65)
(Question 12A2) Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's needs.	48.28% (14 of 29)	55.56% (10 of 18)	51.06% (24 of 47)
Sub-Item 12A Strength Ratings	60% (24 of 40)	64% (16 of 25)	61.54% (40 of 65)

Sub-Item 12B: Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12B1) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the mother's needs	50% (10 of 20)	62.5% (15 of 24)	56.82% (25 of 44)
(Question 12B3) Appropriate services were provided to meet the mother's needs.	42.11% (8 of 19)	52.17% (12 of 23)	47.62% (20 of 42)
(Questions 12B1 and B3) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of mothers.	45% (9 of 20)	50% (12 of 24)	47.73% (21 of 44)
(Question 12B2) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the father's needs.	20% (3 of 15)	42.86% (6 of 14)	31.03% (9 of 29)
(Question 12B4) Appropriate services were provided to meet the father's needs.	20% (3 of 15)	38.46% (5 of 13)	28.57% (8 of 28)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 12B2 and 12B4) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of fathers.	20% (3 of 15)	35.71% (5 of 14)	27.59% (8 of 29)
Sub-Item 12B Strength Ratings	31.82% (7 of 22)	40% (10 of 25)	36.17% (17 of 47)

Sub-Item 12C: Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12C1) The agency adequately assessed the needs of the foster or pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care on an ongoing basis.	77.5% (31 of 40)	77.5% (31 of 40)
(Question 12C2) The agency provided appropriate services to foster and pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care.	65.71% (23 of 35)	65.71% (23 of 35)
Sub-Item 12C Strength Ratings	65% (26 of 40)	65% (26 of 40)

Item 13: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 13A) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the child in the case planning process.	50% (12 of 24)	71.43% (10 of 14)	57.89% (22 of 38)
(Question 13B) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the mother in the case planning process.	45% (9 of 20)	66.67% (16 of 24)	56.82% (25 of 44)
(Question 13C) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the father in the case planning process.	25% (3 of 12)	42.86% (6 of 14)	34.62% (9 of 26)
Item 13 Strength Ratings	40.63% (13 of 32)	56% (14 of 25)	47.37% (27 of 57)

Item 14: Caseworker Visits With Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was more than once a week.	0% (0 of 40)	4% (1 of 25)	1.54% (1 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was once a week.	0% (0 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	20% (8 of 40)	32% (8 of 25)	24.62% (16 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	77.5% (31 of 40)	56% (14 of 25)	69.23% (45 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a month.	2.5% (1 of 40)	8% (2 of 25)	4.62% (3 of 65)
(Question 14A1) Caseworker never had visits with child(ren).	0% (0 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 of 65)
(Question 14A) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the child(ren) was sufficient.	95% (38 of 40)	84% (21 of 25)	90.77% (59 of 65)
(Question 14B) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the child(ren) was sufficient.	62.5% (25 of 40)	60% (15 of 25)	61.54% (40 of 65)
Item 14 Strength Ratings	62.5% (25 of 40)	60% (15 of 25)	61.54% (40 of 65)

Item 15: Caseworker Visits With Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was more than once a week.	0% (0 of 20)	0% (0 of 24)	0% (0 of 44)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was once a week.	0% (0 of 20)	8.33% (2 of 24)	4.55% (2 of 44)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the	15% (3 of 20)	20.83% (5 of 24)	18.18% (8 of 44)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
caseworker and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.			
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	35% (7 of 20)	29.17% (7 of 24)	31.82% (14 of 44)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a month.	35% (7 of 20)	37.5% (9 of 24)	36.36% (16 of 44)
(Question 15A1) Caseworker never had visits with mother.	15% (3 of 20)	4.17% (1 of 24)	9.09% (4 of 44)
(Question 15A2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	50% (10 of 20)	58.33% (14 of 24)	54.55% (24 of 44)
(Question 15C) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	47.06% (8 of 17)	56.52% (13 of 23)	52.5% (21 of 40)
(Questions 15A2 and 15C) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the mother were sufficient.	35% (7 of 20)	41.67% (10 of 24)	38.64% (17 of 44)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was more than once a week.	0% (0 of 12)	7.14% (1 of 14)	3.85% (1 of 26)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was once a week.	0% (0 of 12)	0% (0 of 14)	0% (0 of 26)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	8.33% (1 of 12)	14.29% (2 of 14)	11.54% (3 of 26)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	16.67% (2 of 12)	42.86% (6 of 14)	30.77% (8 of 26)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a month.	25% (3 of 12)	28.57% (4 of 14)	26.92% (7 of 26)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15B1) Caseworker never had visits with father.	50% (6 of 12)	7.14% (1 of 14)	26.92% (7 of 26)
(Question 15B2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	25% (3 of 12)	57.14% (8 of 14)	42.31% (11 of 26)
(Question 15D) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	33.33% (2 of 6)	46.15% (6 of 13)	42.11% (8 of 19)
(Question 15B2 and 15D) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the father were sufficient.	16.67% (2 of 12)	42.86% (6 of 14)	30.77% (8 of 26)
Item 15 Strength Ratings	23.81% (5 of 21)	36% (9 of 25)	30.43% (14 of 46)

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

Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 16A) The agency made concerted efforts to accurately assess the children's educational needs.	91.43% (32 of 35)	62.5% (5 of 8)	86.05% (37 of 43)
(Question 16B) The agency made concerted efforts to address the children's educational needs through appropriate services.	68.18% (15 of 22)	50% (3 of 6)	64.29% (18 of 28)
Item 16 Strength Ratings	80% (28 of 35)	62.5% (5 of 8)	76.74% (33 of 43)

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

Item 17: Physical Health of the Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 17A1) The agency accurately assessed the children's physical health care needs.	92.5% (37 of 40)	100% (10 of 10)	94% (47 of 50)
(Question 17B1) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the	60% (6 of 10)	Not Applicable	60% (6 of 10)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
physical health issues of the target child in foster care.			
(Question 17B2) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified physical health needs.	78.13% (25 of 32)	90% (9 of 10)	80.95% (34 of 42)
(Question 17A2) The agency accurately assessed the children's dental health care needs.	87.18% (34 of 39)	100% (3 of 3)	88.1% (37 of 42)
(Question 17B3) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified dental health needs.	75.86% (22 of 29)	75% (3 of 4)	75.76% (25 of 33)
Item 17 Strength Ratings	75% (30 of 40)	90% (9 of 10)	78% (39 of 50)

Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 18A) The agency accurately assessed the children's mental/behavioral health needs.	72.41% (21 of 29)	50% (7 of 14)	65.12% (28 of 43)
(Question 18B) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the mental/behavioral health issues of the target child in foster care.	62.5% (5 of 8)	Not Applicable	62.5% (5 of 8)
(Question 18C) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified mental/behavioral health needs.	48.28% (14 of 29)	35.71% (5 of 14)	44.19% (19 of 43)
Item 18 Strength Ratings	44.83% (13 of 29)	35.71% (5 of 14)	41.86% (18 of 43)