FINAL REPORT

4th Mini Children and Family Services Review

Central Service Area

(October 25th-27th, 2010)

Executive Summary
Children and Family Services Review
(Central Service Area)

This document presents the findings from the 4th mini Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the Central Service Area. The Nebraska CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) team has identified the mini CFSR review as an important activity for assessing the performance of each service area and the state as a whole with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children and their families. Mini CFSR reviews are scheduled to take place in each service area once every quarter in year 2010 and 2011.

The Central Service Area had its fourth mini CFSR review from October 25th through October 27th, 2010. The period under review for the onsite case review was October 1st, 2009 through October 1st, 2010. The findings were derived from file reviews of 14 cases (9 foster care and 5 in home services) which were randomly selected from all open child welfare cases at some time during the period under review. The reviews also included interviews with parents, children, foster parents, Child and Family Service Specialists, and other service providers to assess items 17-20 within the review tool.

In the Central Service Area, three of the 14 cases were brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services for juvenile justice services. The cases were from the following area offices: Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney.

The review was completed by 5 DHHS reviewers. 100% of the cases were reviewed by the following second level reviewers: Kayl Dahlke (DHHS) and Micaela Swigle (DHHS).

Background Information

The mini CFSR is modeled after the Federal CFSR reviews and assesses the service area's performance on 23 items relevant to seven outcomes.

With regards to outcomes, an overall rating of Strength or Area Needing Improvement (ANI) is assigned to each of the 23 items incorporated in the seven outcomes depending on the percentage of cases that receive a Strength rating in the onsite case review. An item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed are rated as Strength. Performance ratings for each of the seven outcomes are based on item ratings for each case. A service area may be rated as having "substantially achieved," "partially achieved," or "not achieved" the outcome. The determination of whether a service area is in substantial conformity with a particular outcome is based on the percentage of cases that were determined to have substantially achieved that outcome. In order for a service area to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. The standard for substantial conformity is based on the standard set for the Federal CFSR. The standards are 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 acceptable. The focus of the CFSR process is on continuous quality improvement; standards are set high to ensure ongoing attention to the goal of achieving positive outcomes for children and families with regard to safety, permanency, and well-being.

A service area that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome must work with their local CQI team to develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas of concern associated with that outcome.

Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes

The 4th Mini CFSR identified several areas of high performance in the Central Service Area with regard to achieving desired outcomes for children. The service area achieved substantial conformity in two of the seven CFSR outcomes. These included: Safety Outcome 1 (Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.) and Well-Being 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.). They were both substantially achieved in 100 percent of the applicable cases.

Individual indicators that achieved an overall rating of Strength included: timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment (item 1), repeat maltreatment (item 2), services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care (item 3), foster care re-entries (item 5), proximity of foster care placement (item 11), and educational needs of the child (item 21). These items were strengths in 100 percent of the applicable cases reviewed.

The mini CFSR review also identified key areas of concern with regard to achieving outcomes for children and families. Concerns were identified with regards to Permanency 1, (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) which was substantially achieved in only 44 percent of the cases reviewed. Within Permanency 1, Central Service area's lowest rating was for item 7 (permanency goal for child), which was rated as a Strength in 44 percent of the cases reviewed. Well-Being 1(Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs) was only substantially achieved in 50 percent of the cases. Within Well-Being 1, item 20 (caseworker visits with parents) was rated a Strength in only 33 percent of the cases.

KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

I. SAFETY

Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

Status of Safety Outcome S1

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	3	100%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	11	79%

Item 1. Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment
In assessing item 1, reviewers were to determine whether the response to a maltreatment report occurring during the period under review had been initiated in accordance with child welfare agency policy. A new intake tool was implemented in 2003 which is based upon a priority response model with Priority 1 calling for a response by the worker within 24 hours of the time that the report is received by DHHS. Priority 2 designated reports are to have face to face contact with the alleged victim by Protection and Safety within 0 to 5 days from the time the intake is received and Priority 3 has a response time of 0-10 days. Data is generated monthly to ensure compliance with the response times.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***3 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item.***
- ***3(100%) cases were rated as strengths. 1 was an in-home case and 2 were out-of-home cases***
- ***0 cases were rated as needing improvement.***

Strengths: For the cases rated as strengths, reviewers found documentation that the face-to-face contact with the child was occurring during the established timelines. Two intakes were Priority 2's and two were Priority 3's. One of the cases had two different intakes.

Areas needing improvement: There were no cases rated as needing improvement.

Item 2. Repeat maltreatment
In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether there had been at least one substantiated/inconclusive/petition to be filed maltreatment report during the period under review, and if so, whether another substantiated/inconclusive/petition to be filed report occurred within a 6 month period before or after the report identified. Cases were considered not applicable for assessment if the child or family had never had a maltreatment report.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***2 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***2(100%) cases were rated as strengths. Both were out-of-home cases.***
- ***0 cases were rated as needing improvement.***

Strengths: In both cases rated as strengths, there were no additional reports of maltreatment during the period under review outside of the reports that opened the case.

Areas needing improvement: There were no cases rated as needing improvement.

S1. Outcome reviewer comments: On the cases that were substantially achieved, reviewers commented that it appeared investigation timelines were being met and there did not appear to be any concerns with maltreatment occurring.

Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Status of Safety Outcome S2

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	12	86%
Partially Achieved:	1	7%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	1	7%
Not Applicable:	0	0%

Item 3. Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal
For this item, reviewers were to assess whether in responding to a substantiated/inconclusive/petition to be filed maltreatment report or risk of harm, the agency made diligent efforts to provide services to families to prevent removal of children from their homes while at the same time ensuring their safety.

Review Findings:

- ***6 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***6 (100%) cases were rated as strengths. 4 were in-home cases and 2 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***0 cases were rated as needing improvement.***

Strengths: In two of the cases rated as strengths, the agency did not provide services before the child was removed, but it was necessary to ensure the safety of the child. In the four other cases rated as strengths, reviewers did see agency efforts in arranging for appropriate services. Some of the services included intensive family preservation, multi-systemic therapy, and family support services. In the eight cases that were not applicable, reviewers determined that there were no safety concerns during the period under review or the child entered foster care

before the period under review and remained in foster care the entire period under review and there were no safety concerns with other children in the home.

Areas needing improvement: There were no cases rated as needing improvement.

Item 4. <u>Risk of harm to child</u>

The assessment of Item 4 required reviewers to determine whether DHHS had made, or was making, diligent efforts to reduce the risk of harm to the children involved in each case. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the agency terminated the child's parent's rights as a means of decreasing risk of harm for the child (for example, a termination of parental rights would prevent a child from being returned to a home in which the child would be at risk) and has taken action to minimize other risks to the child (for example, preventing contact with individuals who pose a risk to the child's safety). If a case is/was open for services for a reason other than a court substantiated, inconclusive, petition to be filed or unfounded report of abuse or neglect, or apparent risk of harm to the child(ren) (for example, a juvenile justice case), reviewers were to document this information and rate the item as not applicable. Note, however, that for a child(ren) noted as a "child in need of supervision" or "delinquent", reviewers were to explore and determine whether there was a risk of harm to the child, in addition to the other reasons the case may have been opened, prior to rating it as not applicable. Cases were not applicable for assessment of this item if there was no current or prior risk of harm to the children in the family.

Review Findings:

- ***All 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***12 (86%) cases were rated as strengths. 4 were in-home cases and 8 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***2 (14%) cases were rated as needing improvement. 1 was an in-home case and 1 was an out-of-home case.***

Strengths: Eight of the cases were rated as strengths because reviewers determined there was no risk of harm to the child. In the other cases rated as strengths, the agency conducted initial and ongoing assessments. Reviewers noted a safety plan being updated in one of the cases. Reviewers also identified that risk assessments were being done informally through family team meetings and ongoing visits by the worker.

Areas needing improvement: In the cases found to be needing improvement, reviewers saw a lack of ongoing assessments being done. These included safety plans not being updated when it appeared they should have been. Reviewers also noted a lack of contact with the family in one of these cases.

S2. Outcome Review Comments: On the cases that were rated as being substantially achieved, reviewers commented that they saw services being implemented to keep children in the home, such as intensive family preservation and family support. Reviewers also noted good use of family group conferencing in two of the cases. They also noted good documentation of safety being informally assessed during family team meetings and face-to-face contacts.

On the cases that were partially or not achieved, reviewers saw a lack of documentation of ongoing assessments being completed when case circumstance showed that they should have

been. Reviewers commented that some of the case files appeared to be missing a lot of information so they did not know if assessments were not being done or just not in the file.

II. PERMANENCY

Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Status of Permanency Outcome P1

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	4	44%
Partially Achieved:	5	56%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	5	36%

Item 5. Foster care re-entries
Reviewers rated this assessment a Strength if during the period under review a child did not have an entry into care within a 12-month period from being discharged from another entry into foster care. Reviewers also rated this item as a Strength if a re-entry was an isolated incident during which the agency did what was reasonable to manage the risk following reunification but the child re-entered care for another reason (for example, the death of a parent). Reviewers rated this item as an Area Needing Improvement if re-entries occurring within a 12-month period were due to the same general reasons or same perpetrators. Reviewers rated this item as Not Applicable if : (1) the child entered foster care before, and remained in foster care during, the period under review; or (2) the child entered foster care before, and exited foster care during, the period under review and there was not another entry into foster care during the period under review.

Review Findings:

- ***2 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***2(100%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***0 cases were rated as area needing improvement***

Strengths: In the two cases that were rated as strengths, there was not a re-entry into foster care after being discharged from foster care during the previous twelve months.

Areas needing improvement: There were no cases that were rated as needing improvement.

Item 6. Stability of foster care placement
In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether the child experienced multiple placement changes during the period under review, and if so, whether the changes in placement settings were necessary to achieve the child's permanency goal or meet the child's service needs.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***9 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***7 (78%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***2 (22%) cases were rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In four of the cases rated as strengths, the child remained in the same stable foster placement during the entire period under review and this placement was meeting their needs. One of these was a relative placement. In the other three cases rated as strengths, the child's moves were based on safety concerns or in helping meet their permanency goal of adoption or guardianship. In one of these cases both the placements were with relatives.

Areas needing improvement: In one of the cases rated as needing improvement, the youth's current placement was unwilling to do a guardianship and another family had not been identified. In the other case needing improvement, the reviewer felt that the foster home could have been supported more in trying to make the placement successful instead of just moving the child to another home when the child had some behaviors.

Item 7. <u>Permanency goal for child</u>

In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether DHHS had established an appropriate permanency goal for the child in a timely manner, including filing for termination of parental rights when relevant. Reviewers examined the appropriateness of a goal that ultimately rules out adoption, guardianship, or return to family. Reviewers assessed whether the child's best interests were thoroughly considered by DHHS in setting a goal of other planned living arrangement, and that such a decision is /was continually reviewed for ongoing appropriateness. Cases were assigned a rating of Strength for this item when reviewers determined that DHHS had established an appropriate permanency goal in a timely manner. Cases were assigned a rating of Area Needing Improvement when goals of reunification were not changed in a timely manner when it was apparent that reunification was unlikely to happen, termination of parental rights was not filed when the child had been foster care for 15 of the past 22 months and no compelling reasons were noted in the file, or the goal established for the child was not appropriate. Cases were identified as Not Applicable if the child was not in foster care.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***9 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***4 (44%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***5 (56%) cases were rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In the four cases rated as strengths, the child's permanency goal was established in a timely manner and reviewers determined that they were appropriate.

Areas needing improvement: In the five cases rated as needing improvement, reviewers determined that the permanency goals of the child were not established in a timely manner. In two of these cases reviewers did not agree with the concurrent goals that were identified in the case files.

Item 8. <u>Reunification, Guardianship or Permanent Placement with Relatives</u>
In assessing these cases reviewers determined whether DHHS had achieved children's goals of reunification, guardianship or placement with relatives in a timely manner. If the goals had not been achieved in a timely manner reviewers determined whether DHHS had made diligent efforts to achieve the goals.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***8 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***5 (63%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***3 (38%) cases were rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In the five cases rated as strengths, the reviewers determined that the agency was making or made efforts to achieve the goal in a timely manner. Increasing visitation was noted in one of the cases. Reunification and adoption were both scheduled to happen within the next month in two of the cases.

Areas needing improvement: In one of the cases needing improvement, the child recently had a new placement that has agreed to guardianship, but the child has been in out of home care for 39 months. In the other two cases rated as needing improvement, the child has not been reunified within 12 months.

Item 9. <u>Adoption</u>
In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether appropriate and timely efforts (within 24 months of the most recent entry into foster care) had been or were being made to achieve finalized adoption.

Review Findings:

- ***6 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***4 (67%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***2 (33) case was rated an area needing improvement***

Strengths: In the four cases rated as strengths, reviewers found that the agency was making or made active efforts in achieving the permanency goal of adoption in a timely manner. Adoption was to occur in the next month in one of the cases and had already occurred in another. Two of the cases had adoption as the concurrent goal.

Areas needing improvement: In the two cases rated as needing improvement, reviewers found that the agency was not making active efforts to achieve the goal of adoption or this was not an appropriate goal to meet the child's needs.

Item 10. <u>Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement</u>
Reviewers determined whether the agency had made or was making diligent efforts to assist children in attaining their goals related to other planned permanent living arrangements (Independent Living, Self-Sufficiency or Family Preservation).

***Review Findings*:**

- ***0 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***

Strengths: No cases were applicable for this item.

Areas needing improvement: No cases were applicable to this item.

P1. Outcome reviewer comments: Reviewer comments on the cases that were substantially achieved were that the children's placements were stable with no unplanned moves. The agency established permanency goals in a timely manner and were actively working with the family towards them. Reviewers noted a good job of working towards adoption in some cases. Family team meetings were occurring on a regular basis in these cases.
In the cases rated as being partially achieved, reviewers noted that placements were not stable and this correlated with a lack in permanency planning. They also saw that permanency goals were not established timely. Reviewers also noted poor documentation in the files and a lack of independent living plans in cases where it appeared to be needed.

Status of Permanency Outcome P2

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	6	67%
Partially Achieved:	3	33%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	5	36%

Item 11. Proximity of foster care placement
Reviewers were to determine whether the child's foster care setting was in close proximity to the child's parents or close relatives. Cases determined to be not applicable were those in which termination of parental rights had been completed prior to the period under review, or in which contact with parents was not considered to be in the child's best interest.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***9 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***9 (100%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***0 cases were rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In the cases rated as strengths, reviewers determined that the child's placement was in close enough proximity to their parent's home to encourage face-to-face contact between child and parent. Three of the placements were in the same community. Four other ones were within an hour's distance and reviewers did not see the distance as having a negative effect on parent-child visitation. There were two cases that were not in close proximity, but were necessary to meet the child's needs.

Areas needing improvement: No cases were found to need improvement.

Item 12. <u>Placement with siblings</u>
Reviewers were to determine whether siblings were or had been placed together and if not, was separation necessary to meet the needs (service or safety needs) of one or more of the children.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***2 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***1 (50%) case was rated as a strength***
- ***1(50%) case was rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In the case rated as a strength, reviewers determined that the child and siblings had always been placed together in the same relative home.

Areas needing improvement: In the case rated as needing improvement, reviewers determined that the child had not been placed with siblings for part of the period under review because the placement did not have room for her.

Item 13. <u>Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care</u>
In assessing this item reviewers determined whether DHHS had or was making diligent efforts to facilitate visitations between children in foster care and their parents and siblings. Reviewers also determined whether these visits typically occurred with sufficient frequency to meet the needs of the children and families. Non applicable cases were those where the child had no siblings in foster care, if the parents could not be located, and/or if visitation with the parents was considered not in the best interests of the child. Reviewers rated this item for the period under review based on the individual needs of the child and family, rather than on the DHHS policy regarding visitation. The DHHS visitation guidebook recommends a minimum of one visit every two weeks between child and parent unless it would not be in the child's best interest because the parent is the perpetrator of sever physical abuse or sexual abuse. DHHS Policy requires that siblings placed separately must have a minimum of one visit per month. Other forms of communication including phone calls and letters are strongly encouraged.

Review Findings:

- ***8 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***4 (50%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***4 (50%) cases were rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In the four cases that were rated as strengths, reviewers determined that the child was having sufficient frequency of visits to promote their relationship with parents and/or siblings. One case involved a child having visits with her siblings before they were all placed together.

Areas needing improvement: In two of the cases needing improvement, there was a lack of effort to facilitate visitation between the child and the mother. Both cases involved mothers who had recently been released from incarceration. The two other cases involved a lack of effort with involving fathers in visitation with the child in foster care. Both of these cases involved fathers who resided out of state.

Item 14. <u>Preserving connections</u>

Reviewers determined whether DHHS had or was making diligent efforts to preserve the child's primary connection and characteristics while in foster care. Reviewers had to make a professional judgment about the child's primary connections and then explore whether those connections have been preserved through case planning and service delivery.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***9 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***8 (89%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***1 (11%) case was rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In the eight cases rated as strengths, reviewers determined efforts were made to maintain the child's important connections. This included children being placed in their same communities and children having visitation with extended family members. This also allowed children to continue to attend their same schools and be involved in sports activities.

Areas needing improvement: In the case needing improvement, reviewers did not see an effort to preserve connections with extended family members when this appeared to be needed.

Item 15. <u>Relative placement</u>

Reviewers had to focus on the title IV-E provision that requires States to consider giving preference to placing the child with relatives, and determine whether the State considered such a placement and how (for example, seeking out and evaluating the child's relatives). Relatives include non-custodial parents, such as fathers not in the home, if applicable to the case. Reviewers had to determine the extent to which the agency identified relatives who had some reasonable degree of relationship with the child and with whom the child might reside. There did not need to be in the case record a formal evaluation of relatives with whom the child might reside, but for reviewers to have answered "yes" evidence must exist, through either the case documentation or the case interviews, that relatives were evaluated and considered. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if (1) the agency assessed the child's needs and determined that he/she required special services *and* (2) the agency assessed potential relative placements and determined that the relative placements did not have the capacity to meet the child's needs. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength unless no efforts were made to locate or identify relatives for placement, or placement with a family known to the child. Reviewers rated this item as not applicable if (1) the agency determined upon the child's initial entry into care that his/her needs required residential treatment services and a relative placement would be inappropriate, or (2) if relatives were unable to be identified despite the agency's diligent efforts to do so, or in situations such as abandonment in which the identity of the parents and relatives remains unknown despite efforts to identify them. Reviewers were to check not applicable if the child was placed with relatives.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***8 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***7(88%) cases were rated as strengths***
- ***1 (13%) case was rated as needing improvement***

Strengths: In four of the cases rated as strengths, reviewers determined the child is/was placed with a relative and the placement is/was stable and appropriate. In two other cases rated as strengths, the child was not placed with relatives but the agency did make efforts. In another case, the child was placed in a higher level of care before returning home and relatives would not have been appropriate.

Areas needing improvement: In the case rated as needing improvement, there was a lack of documentation to determine efforts to identify and assess relatives for placement.

Item 16. <u>Relationship of child in care with parents</u>
In assessing this item, reviewers determined if there was evidence of a strong, emotionally supportive relationship between the child in foster care and the child's parents during the period under review. Reviewers assigned a rating of Strength for this item when there was evidence of regular visitation between parent and child. Reviewers assigned a rating of Area Needing Improvement when they determined the agency had not made diligent efforts to support the child's relationship with the father or mother. A case was considered not applicable if a relationship with the child's parents was contrary to the child's safety or best interest during the period under review.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***8 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***5(63%) were rated as strengths***
- ***3 (38%) were rated as areas needing improvement***

Strengths: In the five cases rated as strengths, the agency did make efforts to promote the relationship between the child in foster care and both the mother and the father. This included: family support services and encouraging and helping with contact with a parent that was incarcerated.

Areas needing improvement: In the three cases needing improvement, there was a lack of effort by the agency in facilitating and encouraging a positive relationship between the child in foster care and their parent. Two cases involved lack of efforts with the father and one with the mother.

P2. Outcome Reviewer Comments: On the cases where the outcome was substantially achieved, reviewers noted frequent visitation between the child and their parents and siblings. Reviewers noted many relative placements and good efforts with ICWA. Proximity of foster care placements was also noted as a strength.
In the cases that were partially achieved, reviewers noted a lack of effort in locating relatives for placement and encouraging positive parent and child interaction. Poor or minimal documentation in the file was also noted in these cases.

III. WELL-BEING

Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

Status of Well-Being Outcome WB1

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	7	50%
Partially Achieved:	6	43%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	1	7%
Not Applicable:	0	0%

Item 17. Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents
In assessing item 17, reviewers were to determine whether DHHS adequately assessed the needs of children, parents and foster parents AND provided the services to meet those needs. Reviewers rated item 17 as a strength if (1) a needs assessment was conducted for the child(ren), parents, and foster parents, and (2) appropriate services were provided in relation to the identified needs of the target child in foster care cases, or for all children in in-home cases. Education and physical or mental health services to the target child were not rated for this item (these are rated in items 21, 22, and 23). Reviewers had to document whether these services were provided to parents.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***All 14 of the cases were applicable for this item***
- ***7 (50%) cases were rated as strengths. 3 were in-home cases and 4 were out-of-home.***
- ***7 (50%) cases were rated as needing improvement. 2 were in-home cases and 5 were out-of-home.***

The following is a breakdown for child, parent, and foster parent:

A. Child
Strengths: Reviewers saw needs being assessed through family team meetings, family group conferences, formal assessments, and visits. Needs identified included: positive role model, employment, social skills, sexualized behavior, and long-term living arrangement. Services provided to meet those needs included: tracker, therapist, placement provider, school, and developmental disability service coordination.

Areas needing improvement: Reviewers noted that the other children in the home were not assessed in the cases needing improvement.

B. Parents
Strengths: Reviewers saw needs being assessed through family team meetings, visits, family group conference, and family assessments. Needs identified included: housing, parenting skills, support systems, substance abuse treatment, and budgeting. Services provided included: therapy, U/A's, family support, and drug treatment.

Areas needing improvement: Reviewers saw a lack of documentation and effort in assessing the needs of one or both of the parents in these cases. They also noted a lack of family team meetings or contact with the parents in these cases.

C. Foster Parents
Strengths: Reviewers saw foster parents' needs being assessed through family team meetings, visits, and family group conferences. Needs and services identified and provided included: clothing voucher, respite, daycare, and parenting classes.

Areas needing improvement: Reviewers noted no assessment being completed for the foster parent in a case.

Item 18. <u>Child and family involvement in case planning</u>
In assessing this item reviewers were to determine whether the agency actively involved the parent(s), guardian, child(ren) and other people identified by the family in the case planning activities relevant to the current case plan. A determination of involvement in case planning required that a parent (guardian) and the child (older than 8 and not incapacitated) had actively participated in identifying the services and goals for the case plan.

***Review Findings*:**
- ***13 of the 14 of cases were applicable for this item***
- ***8 (62%) cases were rated as strengths. 3 were in-home cases and 5 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***5 (38%) cases were rated as needing improvement. 2 were in in-home cases and 3 were out-of-home cases.***

Strengths: In the cases rated as strengths, reviewers found that the family was involved in the case planning process through family team meetings and visits. A family group conference was also noted in one of the cases that had good family involvement in case planning. Reviewers noted parents and children stated during interviews that they felt their caseworker listened to their input in case planning.

Areas needing improvement: In the five cases needing improvement, reviewers saw a lack of documentation showing involvement of the parent(s) in the case planning process.

Item 19. <u>Worker visits with child</u>
Reviewers were to determine the typical pattern of visits between the worker and child and if these visits were sufficient to ensure adequate monitoring of the child's safety and well being. Reviewers were also to determine whether visits focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, and achievement of the goals.

***Review Findings*:**
- ***All 14 cases were applicable for this item***

- ***10 (71%) cases were rated as strengths. 3 were in-home cases and 7 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***4 (29%) cases were rated as needing improvement. 2 were in-home cases and 2 were out-of-home cases.***

Strengths: In the ten cases that were rated strengths, reviewers noted at least monthly contact between the child and the worker. They also saw and heard during interviews that these visits were good quality in that they discussed issues related to case planning, safety, permanency, and well-being of the child. In cases where children were too young to discuss topics around safety, permanency, and well-being, workers documented observations of the child and discussions with the parent or providers in these cases. The reviewers saw that many visits took place at the child's home or placement.

Areas needing improvement: In two of the cases needing improvement, visits took place less then monthly. In the other two cases there was no documentation of any visits between the worker and other siblings in the family home.

Item 20. <u>Worker visits with parents</u>
Reviewers were to assess whether the caseworker had sufficient face to face contact with parents to encourage attainment of their children's permanency goal while ensuring safety and well being. Cases that were considered not applicable were those when there was no plan for further involvement between the parents and the agency or the parents and the child, and the child is not in a permanent home.

***Review Findings*:**
- ***12 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***4(33%) cases were rated as strengths. 2 were in-home cases and 2 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***8 (67%) cases were rated as needing improvement. 3 were in-home cases and 5 were out of home cases.***

Strengths: In the four cases that were rated as strengths, reviewers noted monthly contact between the worker and parent. Reviewers also saw that these contacts were of sufficient quality in that pertinent information relating to the case was discussed during the visits. Examples were conversations around case planning and child/parent needs.

Areas needing improvement: The eight cases needing improvement included six cases in which fathers were not visited monthly. Reviewers also noted a lack of visit frequency with the mother in one of the cases and a lack of frequency with both parents in another case.

WB1. Outcome reviewer comments: Reviewer comments around the cases that were substantially achieved were that there was a lot of contact and involvement between the worker and the family. This included family team meetings occurring on a regular basis. The parents and the child were actively involved in case planning. The foster parents were also actively involved in the out-of-home cases. Reviewers saw good assessments of needs were being done. Many were during family team meetings or visits with the child/parent. Visits were taking place in the child's placement or parental home.

In the cases that were not achieved or partially achieved reviewers noted a lack of assessments being completed. Reviewers also saw that children, parents, and foster parents were not involved in case planning. Reviewers noted that there was poor documentation of visits in these cases.

Status of Well-Being Outcome WB2

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	10	100%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	4	29%

Item 21. Educational needs of the child
When addressing educational issues for families receiving in-home services, reviewers considered whether the educational needs are/were relevant to the reason why the agency is/was involved with the family, and whether the need to address educational issues is/was a reasonable expectation given the circumstances of the agency's involvement with the family. (If not, reviewers rated item 21 as not applicable.) Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if (1) the agency made extensive efforts to address the child's educational needs and the school system was unresponsive, especially if the problems are with a local school or jurisdiction; (2) if the child(ren)'s educational needs were assessed and addressed, including cases where the educational records were missing and the reasons why; or (3) if the agency conducted an assessment of educational issues and determined that there were no problems in that area, nor any need for educational services.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***10 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***10 (100%) cases were rated as strengths. 3 were in-home cases and 7 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***0 cases were rated as needing improvement.***

Strengths: In the ten cases that were rated as strengths for this item, it was noted that educational needs were being assessed. This was occurring either informally through family team meetings and visits or formally through an IEP. Updated school records were also in the files.

Areas needing improvement: No cases were rated as needing improvement.

WB2. Outcome reviewer comments: In the cases that were substantially achieved, reviewers noted that grades and other school reports were in the case file. They noted that referrals were being done for young children to be assessed. They also noted a youth obtaining their GED.

Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Status of Well-Being Outcome WB3;

	Total Number	**Total Percentage**
Substantially Achieved:	11	79%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	3	21%
Not Applicable:	0	7%

Item 22. Physical health of the child
When addressing health issues for families receiving in-home services, reviewers considered whether the physical health needs are/were relevant to the reason why the agency is/was involved with the family and whether the need to address physical health issues is/was a reasonable expectation given the circumstances of the agency's involvement with the family. (If not, reviewers rated this item as not applicable.) For example, if a child became known to the agency and was determined to be in need of in-home services at least partly as a result of physical abuse or sexual abuse, then it is reasonable to expect the agency to provide services to ensure that the child receives the appropriate physical health services. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the agency conducted an assessment of physical health and determined that there were no problems in that area, nor any need for physical health services.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***11 out of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***8 (73%) cases were rated as strengths. 1 was an in-home case and 7 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***3 (27%) cases were rated as needing improvement. 1 was an in-home case and 2 were out-of-home cases.***

Strengths: In the eight cases that were rated as strengths for this item, reviewers found that medical/dental needs were assessed by annual checkups and services were provided when needed. Examples of services provided were cardiac care and follow up treatment for a rash and ear infection.

Areas needing improvement: In the cases rated as needing improvement, reviewers noted that there was a lack of documentation in the files of assessments being completed.

Item 23. <u>Mental health of the child</u>
Reviewers were to determine whether during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the child(ren). Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the agency conducted an assessment of the child's mental health and determined that there were no problems in that area, nor any need for mental health services. If there was a need for services then they were offered.

***Review Findings*:**

- ***9 of the 14 cases were applicable for this item***
- ***8 (89%) cases were rated as strengths. 3 were in-home cases and 5 were out-of-home cases.***
- ***1 (11%) case was rated as needing improvement. It was an in-home case.***

Strengths: In the eight cases rated as strengths, reviewers found assessments being done on the child's mental health needs. These were done informally during family team meetings and visits or formally through evaluations, such as mental status exams. Services provided included individual and family counseling.

Areas needing improvement: In the case rated as needing improvement, reviewers noted a lack of documentation in the file. One of the children in the home had a history of self-harming behaviors and the reviewer was unable to determine if this was the child involved in counseling or if it was one of the other children in the home.

WB3. Outcome reviewer comments: On the cases that were found to be substantially achieved, the reviewers found up-to-date medical and dental records and good documentation of assessments being done informally or formally for the child's mental health. Reviewers saw therapy notes in these files. Reviewers noted workers asking about the health of young children during visits.
Reviewer comments on the cases that were not achieved were that there was lacking or minimal information in the file regarding therapy or physical health needs of the children. Reviewers also noted a lack of information regarding siblings in the in-home cases.

CSA Results

Case Sample: *Mini CFSR Review – October 2010*
Type of Review: *4th Mini CFSR* **Report Type:** *Central Service Area*
Number of Reviews: *14* **Review Period:** *October 1st, 2009 – October 31st, 2010*

PERFORMANCE ITEM RESULTS

Performance Item		Item Ratings (#)			Item Ratings (%)		
		S	ANI	N/A	S	ANI	N/A
Item 1:	Timeliness of initiating investigations	3	0	11	100%	0%	79%
Item 2:	Repeat maltreatment	2	0	12	100%	0%	86%
Item 3:	Services to family	6	0	8	100%	0%	57%
Item 4:	Risk assessment and safety management	12	2	0	86%	14%	0%
Item 5:	Foster care re-entries	2	0	12	100%	0%	86%
Item 6:	Stability of foster care placement	7	2	5	78%	22%	36%
Item 7:	Permanency goal for child	4	5	5	44%	56%	36%
Item 8:	Reunification, guardianship etc	5	3	6	63%	38%	43%
Item 9:	Adoption	4	2	8	67%	33%	57%
Item 10:	Other planned permanent living arrangement	0	0	14	0%	0%	100%
Item 11:	Proximity of foster care placement	9	0	5	100%	0%	36%
Item 12:	Placement with siblings	1	1	12	50%	50%	86%
Item 13:	Visiting with parents and siblings	4	4	6	50%	50%	43%
Item 14:	Preserving connections	8	1	5	89%	11%	36%
Item 15:	Relative placement	7	1	6	88%	13%	43%
Item 16:	Relationship of child in care with parents	5	3	6	63%	38%	43%
Item 17:	Needs and services	7	7	0	50%	50%	0%
Item 18:	Child and family involvement in case planning	8	5	1	62%	38%	7%
Item 19:	Caseworker visits with child	10	4	0	71%	29%	0%
Item 20:	Caseworker visits with parent(s)	4	8	2	33%	67%	14%
Item 21:	Educational needs of the child	10	0	4	100%	0%	29%
Item 22:	Physical health of the child	8	3	3	73%	27%	21%
Item 23:	Mental/behavioral health of the child	8	1	5	89%	11%	36%

OUTCOME RESULTS

	COUNTS (#)				PERCENTAGES (%)			
Performance Outcome	*SA*	*PA*	*NACH*	*N/A*	*SA*	*PA*	*NACH*	*N/A*
Safety 1 (Items 1-2)	3	0	0	11	100%	0%	0%	79%
Safety 2 (Items 3-4)	12	1	1	0	86%	7%	7%	0%
Permanency 1 (Items 5-10)	4	5	0	5	44%	56%	0%	36%
Permanency 2 (Items 11-16)	6	3	0	5	67%	33%	0%	36%
Wellbeing 1 (Items 17-20)	7	6	1	0	50%	43%	7%	0%
Wellbeing 2 (Item 21)	10	0	0	4	100%	0%	0%	29%
Wellbeing 3 (Items 22-23)	11	0	3	0	79%	0%	21%	0%

KEY:
N/A = Not Applicable ***PA = Partially Achieved*** ***NACH = Not Achieved***
S = Strength ***SA = Substantially Achieved*** ***ANI = Area Needing Improvement***