

FINAL REPORT

1st Mini Children and Family Service Review

Central Service Area

(February 1st, 2nd, and 3rd 2010)

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

This document presents the finding from the 1st 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 mini CFSR review was conducted on February 1st to February 3rd 2010. The period under review for the onsite case review was January 1st, 2009 through January 25th, 2010. The findings were derived from file reviews of 14 cases (8 foster care and 6 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, CFS specialists, and other service providers to assess items 17-20 within the review tool.

In the Central Service Area, eight of the 14 cases were brought to the attention of DHHS for juvenile justice services. The cases were from the following area offices: Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, and Broken Bow.

The review was completed by 5 teams of two reviewers made up of both staff from DHHS and Out of Home Reform providers (Boys and Girls Home). 100% of the cases were reviewed by the following second level reviewer: Kayl Dahlke

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 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 1st Mini CFSR identified several areas of high performance in the Central Service Area with regard to achieving desired outcomes for children. The service area did not achieve substantial conformity with any of the seven CFSR outcomes, although 92 percent for Well-Being 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs) was very close. The service area did achieve overall ratings of Strength for the individual indicators pertaining to services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care (item 3), foster care reentry (item 5), placing children in close proximity to their parents (item 11), placement with siblings (item 12), and physical health of child (item 22). 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 Outcome 1, (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) which was substantially achieved in only 25 percent of the cases reviewed. Within Permanency Outcome 1, Central Service area's lowest rating was for item 9 (adoptions), which was rated as a Strength in 0 percent of the 2 applicable cases reviewed.

In addition, concerns were identified with regard to Permanency Outcome 2 (The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children), which was also substantially achieved in 25 percent of the cases reviewed. Within Permanency Outcome 1, Central Service area's lowest ratings were for items 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care), which was rated a strength in 14 percent of the cases reviewed and item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents), which was rated a strength in 29 percent of the cases reviewed.

Many concerns were identified with regard to Well-Being Outcome 1 (families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs), which was substantially achieved in only 8 percent of the cases reviewed. The lowest ratings were for item 20 (caseworker visits with parent(s)), which was rated as a Strength in only 8 percent of the cases reviewed; item 18 (child and family involvement in case planning), which was rated as a Strength in only 8 percent of the cases reviewed; and item 17 (needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents) which was rated as a strength in 14 percent of the cases reviewed.

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:	0	0%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	1	100%
Not Applicable:	13	93%

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: One of the 14 cases was applicable for this item. 0 cases were rated as strengths, 1 was rated an area needing improvement, and 13 were not applicable.

Areas needing improvement: For the case rated as an area needing improvement there was no initial assessment found in the file to determine timeliness for the investigation.

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: No cases were applicable for this item. 0 cases were rated as strengths, 0 cases were rated as areas needing improvement, and 14 were not applicable.

S1. Outcome reviewer comments: Reviewers had no overall comments here as only one case was applicable for this outcome and it was rated not achieved due to lack of information regarding an intake. There was no initial assessment in the file.

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

Status of Safety Outcome S2

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	10	71%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	4	29%
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: Six of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 6 cases were rated as strengths, 0 as area needing improvement, and 8 were not applicable.

Strengths: In two of the cases, services were provided throughout the period under review and the child remained in the home. In three of the cases, services were provided but the child was removed due to their behavior not being able to be maintained in the home. In one case the child was removed due to their behavior and was later placed back in the family home with services. Most of the applicable cases were OJS. Examples of services included are tracker, electronic monitor, random urinalysis testing, and attending AA meetings. There were no cases found to be needing improvement on this item.

Item 4. Risk of harm to child

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. Ten were rated as strengths, 4 were rated as an area needing improvement, and 0 were not applicable.

Strengths: In eight of the cases found to be strengths, the agency conducted ongoing or initial risk assessments. These included YLS and OJS assessments in four cases. In two of the cases reviewed it was noted that there was no risk of maltreatment.

Areas needing improvement: In the four cases found to be needing improvement there were not sufficient risk assessments completed. These included two cases where there were other children in the home that were not assessed and one case in which there were safety concerns for a child during visits due to a lack of supervision.

S2. Outcome Review Comments: On the cases that were rated as being substantially achieved reviewers commented that there were many services in place to prevent removal, many good assessments were completed, assessments were being completed on children in higher levels of care and before case closings, and there were no safety concerns for the child.

On the cases that were rated not achieved, reviewers comments included that needs of the child or other children in the home were not addressed, needs of the father and efforts to involve him or include information on him were not addressed or included.

II. PERMANENCY

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

Status of Permanency Outcome P1

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	2	25%
Partially Achieved:	6	75%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	6	43%

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: Three of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 3 cases were rated as strengths, 0 were rated as area needing improvement, and 11 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the three cases that were rated as strengths services were provided to prevent removal, but child was removed because of their behaviors. Services provided included individual counseling, respite, and family team meetings. No cases were found to need improvement on this item.

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: Eight of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 5 were rated as strengths, 3 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 6 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the three of the cases rated as strengths the child remained in the same stable foster placement during the entire period under review. The other two cases rated as strengths included children that had a placement change due to their needs.

Areas needing improvement: In two of the cases rated needing improvement the child had unexpected placement disruptions due to their behavior. In the other case rated as needing improvement the child was placed in Independent Living and then had to return to agency based foster care one day later due to lack of planning by the agency. Reviewers noted that in the case file that there was documentation that the child had made comments that he was scared to go out on his own. Reviewers also did not think that the child had enough of a support system set up to make him successful.

Item 7. Permanency goal for child

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: Eight of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 5 were rated as strengths, 3 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 6 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the five cases that were rated as strengths it was noted that permanency goals were established in a timely manner.

Areas needing improvement: In the three cases needing improvement the permanency goals were appropriate but weren't established in a timely manner. This included two cases that took six months to establish a permanency plan.

Item 8. Reunification, Guardianship or Permanent Placement with Relatives

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: Five of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 4 cases were rated as strengths, 1 was rated as an area needing improvement, and 9 were not applicable.

Strengths: In four of the cases rated as strengths the agency was making efforts to achieve the permanency goal of reunification or the child was reunified during the period under review. In the other case rated as a strength, the child was in a guardianship home that had done a previous guardianship with the child's sibling.

Areas needing improvement: In the case needing improvement the child has been in care since 2003 and has a permanency goal of guardianship. Reviewers did not believe this goal appeared to be realistic.

Item 9. Adoption

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: Two of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 0 were rated as strengths, 2 were rated as area needing improvement, and 12 were not applicable.

Areas needing improvement: In one of the cases rated as needing improvement the adoption took 28 months to complete. This appeared to be due to delays in paperwork getting completed, including background checks and finger print results. In the other case, reviewers found no documented efforts of working towards the concurrent goal of adoption. There were no cases that were found to have strengths for this item.

Item 10. Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement

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: Three of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 2 were rated as strengths, 1 was rated as an area needing improvement, and 11 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the two cases rated as strengths the agency was making efforts to help the youth achieve their planned permanent living arrangement. This included referring to the PALS program and receiving independent living skills at their current placement.

Areas needing improvement: In the case rated as needing improvement reviewers did not find that the agency make concerted efforts to prepare the youth for independent living. There was also confusion on this case as to what the actual plan was, independent living or self sufficiency.

P1. Outcome reviewer comments: Reviewer comments on the cases that were substantially achieved were that the children’s placements were stable and goals were actively being worked on. In the cases rated as not being achieved reviewers noted that placements were not stable and this correlated with a lack in permanency planning.

Status of Permanency Outcome P2

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	2	25%
Partially Achieved:	6	75%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	8	43%

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: Seven out of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 7 were rated as strengths, 0 were rated as needing improvement, and 7 were not applicable.

Strengths: In four of 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. In the other three cases rated as strengths the child’s

placement was not in close proximity but was necessary based on the child's treatment needs. There were no cases found to be needing improvement for this item.

Item 12. Placement with siblings

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: One out of the 14 cases was applicable for this item. 1 was rated a strength, 0 were rated as needing improvement, and 13 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the one case that was rated a strength, 3 of the 4 siblings were placed together, the other child's behavior did not allow for them to also be placed there. Reviewers found that there were efforts to place all the siblings together. There were no cases found to be needing improvement for this item.

Item 13. Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care

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 severe 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: Seven of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 1 was rated a strength, 6 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 7 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the one case that was rated a strength the child was seeing their mother and siblings on a weekly basis. This included overnight visits. The father had relinquished his rights.

Areas needing improvement: The six cases needing improvement included five cases in which no efforts were made for visitation between the child and father and one case in which no efforts were made for visitation between child and the mother.

Item 14. Preserving connections

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: Eight of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 3 were rated as strengths, 5 were areas needing improvement, and 6 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the three cases rated as a strength efforts were made to maintain the child's important connections. This included a case in which the child was placed in the same community and was able to continue attending the same church and youth group and also a case in which connections were maintained with extended family even though the child was placed in a higher level of care.

Areas needing improvement: In the five cases needing improvement there was a lack of information on what the child's connections were. In two of the cases reviewers found no information on maintaining connections with the child's siblings who remained in the home.

Item 15. Relative placement

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: Six out of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 3 were rated as strengths, 3 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 8 were not applicable.

Strengths: In one of the cases rated as a strength the child was placed with a relative who later adopted. In the other two cases rated as strengths the agency did make concerted efforts to evaluate relatives as potential placements. In one of the cases the relative did not desire placement but continues to be part of the child's team.

Areas needing improvement: In two of the cases rated needing improvement no efforts were made to identify maternal or paternal relatives. In the other case needing improvement no efforts were made to identify paternal relatives.

Item 16. Relationship of child in care with parents

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: Seven of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 2 were rated as strengths, 5 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 7 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the two 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, including having a foster mom act as a mentor to the mother and providing gas vouchers to parents so they could attend the child's appointments.

Areas needing improvement: The five cases needing improvement included 4 cases in which there were no efforts made to promote the relationship of the child in care and the father and one case in which efforts were not made with either the father or the mother. In these cases reviewers noted that the parent did not appear to be involved in the cases or their whereabouts were said to be unknown but there was a general lack of documentation to show active efforts in locating or trying to involve them.

P2. Outcome Reviewer Comments: On the cases where the outcome was substantially achieved reviewers noted that the child had a good relationship with at least one of the parents, the foster placements were within an hour of the child's family, and regular visitation with a parent was occurring. Reviewers also commented that family connections were good in some cases and poor in others. They also saw that some files had genograms in them while others did not. In the cases that were found to be partially achieved reviewers commented on a major lack of involving or locating fathers. Some of the files stated that the father's whereabouts were unknown or he was not involved in the case, but reviewers did not find that active efforts were made to locate him or to try and involve him in the case. They also saw a lack of effort in determining if ICWA was applicable in some of the 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
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Substantially Achieved:	1	8%
Partially Achieved:	10	71%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	3	21%
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 fourteen cases were applicable for this item. 2 were rated as strengths, 12 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 0 were not applicable.

A. Child

Strengths: In ten out of the fourteen cases reviewers felt that the child's needs were assessed and services were provided to meet these needs. Reviewers saw needs being assessed informally through family team meetings and also in a more formal manner such as OJS or YLS evaluations. Services provided included individual therapy, tracker, drug screenings, social skills, and independent living skills.

Areas needing improvement: The four cases that needed improvement included three cases in which there were no assessments completed and one case in which reviewers saw needs for drug counseling, social skills, and mentoring services that were not provided.

B. Parents

Strengths: One out of the thirteen applicable cases for parents to be assessed was rated a strength. Reviewers saw that needs were assessed informally through family team meetings in this case. Services provided included individual therapy and IFP.

Areas needing improvement: Twelve out of the thirteen applicable cases for parents needs to be assessed were rated areas needing improvement. Reviewers saw a general lack in assessing the needs of the parents. This included five cases in which neither parent was assessed for their needs, five cases in which the father's needs were not assessed, and two cases in which the mother's needs were not assessed. Reviewers noted a lack of effort in locating or trying to involve the father in many of the cases.

C. Foster Parents

Strengths: Two out of the three applicable cases for assessing foster parents needs were rated as strengths. One of these cases was an ICPC adoption case. The foster parents stated that they had a lot of questions regarding how they were going to have child's medical and daycare needs met. They also had questions regarding Medicaid. They said that having the ICPC worker get answers and advocate for them was very helpful. In the other cases the foster parents were assessed and no needs were identified.

Areas needing improvement: In the case needing improvement the worker had stated that the foster parents could use some parenting education but this service was never provided. The foster parents felt that if they would have had more support the child would not have had to be placed in a higher level of care.

Item 18. Child and family involvement in case planning

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: Thirteen out of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 1 case was rated a strength, 12 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 1 was not applicable.

Strengths: In the one case that was rated a strength the child and the mother both were actively involved in the case planning process through family team meetings. The father had relinquished his parental rights. The child was involved in case planning in six of the cases.

Areas needing improvement: The cases needing improvement included 8 cases in which there was a lack of effort to involve the father in case planning, 2 cases in which there was a lack of effort to involve the mother, and 3 cases in which there was a lack of effort to involve either parent. Reviewers again noted that much of this was due to lack of active efforts to locate or involve a parent in cases where the file says their whereabouts are unknown or they are not actively involved in the case. During an interview with a child she stated that she was asked for her input in case planning but nobody listened to what she had to say.

Item 19. Worker visits with child

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 fourteen cases were applicable for this item. 10 were rated as strengths, 4 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 0 were not applicable.

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 or permanency and were private. Other times workers would meet privately before or after a family team meeting. The reviewers saw that many visits took place at the child's home or placement.

Areas needing improvement: The four cases needing improvement included 3 cases in which the quality of the visits was lacking and 1 case in which the frequency and quality of the visits were insufficient. Reviewers noted that in one of these cases none of the visits took place at the child's placement.

Item 20. Worker visits with parents

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 the permanency objective was something other than reunification or family preservation.

Review Findings: Thirteen out of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 1 was rated a strength, 12 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 1 was not applicable.

Strengths: In the one case that was rated a strength reviewers noted at least monthly contact between the worker and both the mother and father. Reviewers also saw that these visits were of sufficient quality in that pertinent information relating to the case was discussed during the visits.

Areas needing improvement: The twelve cases needing improvement included 5 cases in which there was insufficient visitation with the father, 3 cases with insufficient visitation with the mother, and 4 cases in which there was insufficient visitation with both the mother and father.

WB1. Outcome reviewer comments: Reviewer comments around the case that was substantially achieved was that there was a lot of contact and involvement between the worker and the family. Assessments were also completed and services provided in this case. Reviewers also saw team meetings occurring in some of the cases, which helped with discussing progress of the child or parent in regards to case plan goals. In the cases that were partially or not achieved the reviewers saw a lack of the agency trying to assess or involve the parents, mainly fathers, at all. Reviewers commented that the case file would say the father's whereabouts were unknown or he was not involved in the child's life but there was no active efforts shown in the file in regards to this. There was one case in which the worker said the father's whereabouts were unknown but the child said that the father visits him often at the foster home. A lack in assessing other children in the home was also noted by reviewers in two of the cases. Reviewers also saw poor communication with the foster parents in two of the cases. Poor documentation was also brought up in some of the cases.

Status of Well-Being Outcome WB2

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	12	92%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	1	8%
Not Applicable:	1	8%

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: Thirteen of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 12 were rated as strengths, 1 was an area needing improvement, and one was not applicable.

Strengths: In the twelve cases that were strengths for this item it was noted that educational needs were assessed and services were provided to the child when needed. Updated school records were also in the files.

Areas needing improvement: In the case needing improvement reviewers had no information on the younger children in the home and whether they had educational needs that needed to be addressed.

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 also saw needs being addressed informally through family team meetings and formally through MDT meetings at the school. Services provided included IEPs, day treatment, getting help with truancy problems, and receiving 1:1 help with schoolwork. Reviewers also saw good communication between the worker and placement provider with the school.

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:	10	71%

Partially Achieved:	2	14.5%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	2	14.5%
Not Applicable:	0	0%

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: Ten of the 14 cases were applicable for this item. 10 were rated as strengths, 0 were rated needing improvement, and 4 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the ten cases that were rated as strengths for this item reviewers found that medical/dental needs were assessed and services were provided when needed. Reviewers found that checkups were up to date and in the file. Some of the services provided included glasses, dental work, and ongoing monitoring of a child with a seizure disorder. There were no cases rated as needing improvement.

Item 23. Mental health of the child

Reviewers were to determine if the child is/was in foster care, was an initial formal mental health screening or assessment provided upon the most recent entry into foster care (or within the timeframe specified in the State's guidelines, if applicable). Reviewers checked not applicable if the child was not in foster care or if the State has no guidelines and there were no indications that a screening or assessment was needed. 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.

Review Findings: All fourteen cases were applicable to this item. 10 were rated as strengths, 4 were rated as areas needing improvement, and 0 were not applicable.

Strengths: In the ten cases rated as strengths there was found to be assessments done on the child's mental health needs. These were done informally during family team meetings or formally through evaluations. Some services provided included individual counseling, family therapy, drug/alcohol counseling, and day treatment.

Areas needing improvement: In two of the cases needing improvement, there were no assessments done on the child or on the other children in the home. In another case a youth

needed drug/alcohol counseling but it was never provided. There was also a case where reviewers were unable to determine if counseling continued once the child returned home.

WB3. Outcome reviewer comments: Reviewers commented on the cases that were found to be substantially achieved that there was a good documentation in the file of how needs were assessed and what services were provided to help with these needs. Medical and dental checkups were also in the files.

Reviewer comments on the cases that were partially or not achieved included that there seemed to be a disruption in services in one of the cases when the case manager changed and that the children's needs were not assessed or addressed sufficiently. In one case the worker thought that the child was receiving mental health services when they actually weren't.

CSA Results

Case Sample: *Mini CF SR Review – January 2010*

Type of Review: *1st Mini CF SR*

Report Type: *Central Service Area*

Number of Reviews: *14*

Review Period: *January 1st, 2009 – January 25th, 2010*

2010

PERFORMANCE ITEM RESULTS

Performance Item		Item Ratings (#)			Item Ratings (%)		
		S	ANI	N/A	S	ANI	N/A
Item 1:	Timeliness of initiating investigations	0	1	13	0%	100%	93%
Item 2:	Repeat maltreatment	0	0	14	0%	0%	100%
Item 3:	Services to family	6	0	8	100%	0%	57%
Item 4:	Risk assessment and safety management	10	4	0	71%	29%	0%
Item 5:	Foster care re-entries	3	0	5	100%	0%	79%
Item 6:	Stability of foster care placement	5	3	0	62.5%	37.5%	43%
Item 7:	Permanency goal for child	5	3	0	62.5%	37.5%	43%
Item 8:	Reunification, guardianship etc	4	1	9	80%	20%	64%
Item 9:	Adoption	0	2	12	0%	100%	86%
Item 10:	Other planned permanent living arrangement	2	1	11	67%	33%	79%
Item 11:	Proximity of foster care placement	7	0	7	100%	0%	50%
Item 12:	Placement with siblings	1	0	13	100%	0%	93%
Item 13:	Visiting with parents and siblings	1	6	7	14%	86%	50%
Item 14:	Preserving connections	3	5	8	37.5%	62.5%	43%
Item 15:	Relative placement	3	3	8	50%	50%	57%
Item 16:	Relationship of child in care with parents	2	5	7	29%	71%	50%
Item 17:	Needs and services	2	12	0	14%	86%	0%
Item 18:	Child and family involvement in case planning	1	12	1	8%	92%	7%
Item 19:	Caseworker visits with child	10	4	0	71%	29%	0%
Item 20:	Caseworker visits with parent(s)	1	12	1	8%	92%	7%
Item 21:	Educational needs of the child	12	1	1	92%	8%	7%
Item 22:	Physical health of the child	10	0	4	100%	0%	29%
Item 23:	Mental/behavioral health of the child	10	4	0	71%	29%	0%

OUTCOME RESULTS

Performance Outcome	COUNTS (#)				PERCENTAGES (%)			
	SA	PA	NA	N/A	SA	PA	NACH	N/A
Safety 1 (Items 1-2)	0	0	1	13	0%	0%	100%	93%
Safety 2 (Items 3-4)	10	0	4	0	71%	0%	29%	0%
Permanency 1 (Items 5-10)	2	6	0	0	25%	75%	0%	0%

Permanency 2 (Items 11-16)	2	6	0	0	25%	75%	0%	0%
Wellbeing 1 (Items 17-20)	1	10	3	0	8%	71%	21%	0%
Wellbeing 2 (Item 21)	12	0	1	1	92%	0%	8%	7%
Wellbeing 3 (Items 22-23)	10	2	2	0	71%	14.5%	14.5%	0%

KEY:

N/A = Not Applicable

S = Strength

Improvement

PA = Partially Achieved

SA = Substantially Achieved

NACH = Not Achieved

ANI = Area Needing