

# Quarterly Mini CFSR Review Report

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## Central Service Area 12<sup>th</sup> Quarter Review Results

This document presents the findings from the 2012 12<sup>th</sup> Quarter 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, 2011 and 2012.

The Central Service Area 12<sup>th</sup> Quarter Mini CFSR Review was conducted on October 15th through October 17th, 2012. The period under review for the onsite case review was October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 through October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. 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 point in time during the period under review. The reviews also included interviews with parents, children, Foster Parents, and Children and Family Services Specialists (CFSS) to assess items 17-20 within the review tool.

In the Central Service Area, 9 of the 14 cases were brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) because of abuse/neglect issues. Five cases were juvenile justice cases. The review was completed by 5 teams of two reviewers made up of both staff from DHHS and Contracted Providers. 100% of the cases were reviewed by the following second level reviewer: Kayl Dahlke from 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 90 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 goals 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.

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## Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes

The 12<sup>th</sup> Quarter 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 outcomes. Outcome Well-Being 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs) and Outcome Well-Being 3 (Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs) were both substantially achieved in 100 percent of the applicable cases. The Service Area achieved overall ratings of Strength (100%) for the individual indicators pertaining to Item 2 (repeat maltreatment), Item 3 (services to the family), Item 5 (foster care re-entries), Item 10 (other planned permanent living arrangement), Item 11 (proximity of foster care placement), and Item 12 (placement with siblings), Item 21 (educational needs of the child), Item 22 (physical health of the child), and Item 23 (mental/behavioral health of the child).

The lowest scoring outcomes in the Service Area were Well-Being 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs), substantially achieved in 36 percent of the cases and Permanency 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living arrangement), achieved in 38 percent of the cases. Within Well-Being 1, the lowest rated items were item 18 (child and family involvement in case planning) and item 20 (caseworker visits with parents) which were both rated as strengths in 36 percent of the cases. Within Permanency 1, the lowest rated items were item 9 (adoption), which was rated as an area needing improvement in both of the applicable cases and item 7 (permanency goal for child) which was rated a strength in 50 percent of the cases.

Other outcome ratings for the Service Area were as follows: Safety 1 (Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect) substantially achieved in 80 percent of the cases; Safety 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate) substantially achieved in 79 percent of the cases; and Permanency 2 (The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children) substantially achieved in 50 percent of the cases.

The report will only contain case details and charts for items 4 and 7, as they are the remaining priority items that Nebraska needs to address in order to pass the Federal Program Improvement Plan. Case details for the other items will be made available upon request.

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## CFSR Item & Outcome Quarterly Results

Central Service Area

- The standard federal goal for each item is 90% and each outcome is 95%
- Items 4 & 7 are highlighted in the table below because they are the only 2 CFSR items that must be addressed in 2012-2013 in order to pass the Federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP). *The State must meet the following goals in order to pass the PIP: Item 4 = 73.5% and Item 7 = 50.5%*

Report Quarter	9th Qtr 2012	10 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2012	11 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2012	12 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2012
Period Under Review	Jan 2011 to Jan 2012	Apr 2011 to Apr 2012	July 2011 to July 2012	Oct 2011 to Oct 2012
Number of Cases	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>
Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	100%	60%	75%	80%
Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment	100%	0%	100%	100%
<b>Outcome: Safety 1 (Items 1 and 2)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>80%</b>
Item 3: Services to the family to maintain in home	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Item 4: Risk and safety management</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Outcome: Safety 2 (Items 3 and 4)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>79%</b>
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	88%	100%	88%	88%
<b>Item 7: Permanency goal for the child</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Item 8: Achievement of goals (Reunification/Guardianship)	80%	100%	100%	86%
Item 9: Achievement of goal (Adoption)	80%	100%	100%	0%
Item 10: Achievement of goal (Independent Living)	100%	100%	NA	100%
<b>Outcome: Permanency 1 (Items 5-10)</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 12: Placement with siblings	100%	100%	100%	100%
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings	29%	100%	75%	50%
Item 14: Preserving connections	100%	88%	88%	88%
Item 15: Relative placement	71%	71%	60%	58%
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	43%	71%	88%	50%
<b>Outcome: Permanency 2 (Items 11-16)</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>50%</b>
Item 17: Needs and Services	50%	79%	71%	58%
Item 18: Child and Family involvement in case planning	50%	71%	86%	36%
Item 19: Caseworker visit with child	93%	100%	93%	79%
Item 20: Caseworker visit with mother/father	46%	69%	71%	36%
<b>Outcome: Well-Being 1 (Items 17-20)</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>36%</b>
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	100%	100%	83%	100%
<b>Outcome: Well-Being 2 (Item 21)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Item 22: Physical health needs of the child	91%	100%	67%	100%
Item 23: Mental/Behavioral Health Needs of the child	100%	91%	92%	100%
<b>Outcome: Well-Being 3 (Items 22 and 23)</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>100%</b>

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## Case Details for Items 4 & 7

### **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 of the fourteen cases were applicable to the Item.
  
- Eleven (78.57%) of the 14 cases were rated as a Strength. Six were out-of-home cases and 5 were in-home cases.
  
- Three (21.43%) of the 14 cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Two were out-of-home cases and one was an in-home case.

### **Strength:**

In the eleven cases rated as strengths, reviewers noted formal and informal assessments being completed. Formal assessments included: OJS evaluations, YLS assessments, and a Comprehensive Child and Adolescent Assessment. Reviewers also noted SDM assessments being utilized. These included initial assessments for safety and risk and ongoing assessments for family strengths and needs and reunification planning. Reviewers also noted informal assessments being completed during family team meetings and face-to-face contacts. Safety plans were being updated and completed before reunification when applicable.

### **Area Needing Improvement:**

In one the three cases rated as needing improvement, there were no formal or informal ongoing safety assessments completed after the initial assessment during the period under review. No assessments being done on other children in the home was noted in one of the cases. In the other case rated as needing improvement reviewers noted a safety plan not being completed before reunification when it appeared that it was needed.

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## **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 permanency goals were not changed in a timely manner to reflect current case circumstances, when it was apparent that reunification was unlikely to happen, termination of parental rights was not filed when the child had been in 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:**

- All eight out of home cases reviewed were applicable to the Item.
- Four (50.00%) of the eight cases were rated as a Strength.
- Four (50.00%) of the eight cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

### **Strength:**

There was timely implementation of primary permanency goals as well as timely permanency goal changes made to meet the child's needs. In the four cases rated as strengths for this item, the permanency goals were established within the 60 day timeframe. Reviewers found goals to be appropriate for the child's needs. Concurrent goals being established in a timely manner was also noted by reviewers in these cases.

### **Area Needing Improvement:**

In three of the cases rated as needing improvement, it was noted that the permanency goals were not established within 60 days of entry into foster care. These included goals being established in 2.5 months, 4.5 months, and 5 months. In the last cases rated as needing improvement, reviewers noted a lack of effort by the agency in joining in a motion for TPR or requesting a permanency hearing to be set to review/discuss concurrent planning.

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## Charts with Goals for Items 4 & 7

