

Quarterly Mini CFSR Review Report

Southeast Service Area 12th Quarter Review Results

This document presents the findings from the 2012 12th Quarter Mini Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the Southeast 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 Southeast Service area 12th Quarter Mini CFSR Review was conducted on October 22nd through October 25th, 2012. The period under review for the onsite case review was October 1st, 2011 through October 1st, 2012. The findings were derived from file reviews of 14 cases (10 foster care and 4 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, Children and Family Services Specialists (CFSS) to assess items 17-20 within the review tool.

In the Southeast Service Area, 7 of the 14 cases were brought to the attention of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) because of abuse/neglect issues. Three cases were brought to the attention of DHHS through the child's behavior, and four cases were because the child was involved in the juvenile justice system. 13 of the 14 cases were from the Lincoln office and 1 case was from the Beatrice office.

The review was completed by 4 teams of two reviewers made up of staff from the DHHS QA Unit. 100% of these cases was reviewed by the following second level reviewers: Jeff Watson and Jarrod Walker, DHHS QA Supervisors.

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

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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 12th Quarter Mini CFSR identified several areas of high performance in the Southeast Service Area with regard to achieving desired outcomes for children. The Southeast Service Area did not achieve substantial conformity with any of the CFSR outcomes for the 12th Quarter Mini CFSR. The Service Area did achieve overall ratings of Strength (100%) for the individual indicators pertaining to 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. In this round, Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment, Item 3: Services to family to protect children in the home and prevent removal or reentry into foster care, and Item 21: Educational needs of the child were above 80%.

The mini CFSR review also identified key areas of concern with regard to achieving outcomes for children and families. Concerns were identified with regard to Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, which was substantially achieved in 0% of the reviewed cases. The lowest ratings within this outcome were Item 18: Child and Family involvement in case planning which was rated as a strength in 7.14% of the 14 applicable cases and Item 20: Caseworker visits with parents, which was rated as a strength in 8.33% of the 12 applicable cases.

Concerns were also identified with regard to Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations, which was substantially achieved in 20.0% of reviewed cases. The lowest ratings within this outcome were for Item 7: Permanency goal for child, Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives, and Item 9: Adoption, all which were rated as a Strength in 50.0% of the cases in which they were applicable.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs, was another area of concern for this review period. The outcome was substantially achieved 33.3% of the time in reviewed cases. Within Well-Being Outcome 3, the lowest rating was for Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of the child, which rated as a strength 44.4% of the time.

A table with results is attached for your review. 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

Southeast Service Area

- The standard federal goal for each item is 90% and 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	9 th Qtr 2012	10 th Qtr 2012	11 th Qtr 2012	12 th Qtr 2012
Period Under Review	Jan 2011 to Jan 2012	Apr 2011 to Apr 2012	June 2011 to June 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	60%	71%	100%	85%
Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment	0%	100%	100%	67%
Outcome: Safety 1 (Items 1 and 2)	40%	86%	100%	71%
Item 3: Services to the family to maintain in home	78%	56%	86%	83%
Item 4: Risk and safety management	36%	21%	36%	79%
Outcome: Safety 2 (Items 3 and 4)	36%	21%	36%	79%
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	100%	NA	100%	100%
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	75%	71%	88%	70%
Item 7: Permanency goal for the child	25%	14%	13%	50%
Item 8: Achievement of goals (Reunification/Guardianship)	71%	40%	83%	50%
Item 9: Achievement of goal (Adoption)	50%	67%	17%	50%
Item 10: Achievement of goal (Independent Living)	50%	0%	N/A	100%
Outcome: Permanency 1 (Items 5-10)	13%	14%	0%	20%
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	100%	80%	100%	100%
Item 12: Placement with siblings	100%	67%	67%	100%
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings	25%	40%	14%	29%
Item 14: Preserving connections	63%	57%	38%	60%
Item 15: Relative placement	50%	57%	57%	50%
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	57%	40%	43%	29%
Outcome: Permanency 2 (Items 11-16)	25%	43%	13%	40%
Item 17: Needs and Services	29%	50%	21%	7%
Item 18: Child and Family involvement in case planning	29%	31%	15%	7%
Item 19: Caseworker visit with child	36%	21%	29%	14%
Item 20: Caseworker visit with mother/father	7%	17%	15%	8%
Outcome: Well-Being 1 (Items 17-20)	21%	29%	14%	0%
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	89%	50%	50%	80%
Outcome: Well-Being 2 (Item 21)	89%	50%	50%	80%
Item 22: Physical health needs of the child	80%	40%	40%	50%
Item 23: Mental/Behavioral Health Needs of the child	64%	60%	67%	44%
Outcome: Well-Being 3 (Items 22 and 23)	62%	50%	27%	33%

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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.
- 11 (78.57%) of the 14 cases were rated as a Strength.
 - 8 of the 11 cases rated as a strength were foster care cases and 3 were in home cases.
 - 5 of the 11 cases rated as a strength because safety assessments and safety plans were updated as needed. All of the cases rated as a strength because formal and/or informal assessments of safety and risk were done during the period under review.
- 3 (21.43%) of the 14 cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement.
 - All 3 cases rated as an area needing improvement were foster case cases.
 - 2 of the cases rated as an area needing improvement had ongoing safety and risk assessments completed as needed, but all 3 cases did not have safety plans completed or updated as needed by the agency.

Strength:

- Informal assessments of safety during contacts.
- Youth Level of Service indexes were completed in Juvenile Justice Cases.
- Safety Assessments and safety plans were updated as needed.

Area Needing Improvement:

- Ongoing Safety Assessments were not completed as needed.
- Safety Assessment was not completed prior to reunification.
- Safety Plans were not completed and/or not updated as needed by the Agency.
- Safety Plans were not monitored by the Agency.

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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 ten out of home cases reviewed were applicable to the Item.
- 5 (50.0%) of the 10 cases were rated as a Strength.
 - In all 5 cases, timely implementation of primary permanency goals and timely permanency goal changes were appropriate to meet the child's needs. The agency also adhered to specified Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) guidelines in these cases.
- 5 (50.0%) of the 10 cases were rated as an Area Needing Improvement.
 - 4 of the cases rated as an area needing improvement did not have case plan goals completed within the appropriate timeframes.
 - 1 of the cases did not follow the time frames for the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) proceedings and had no documented exceptions as to why this was not filed timely.

Strength:

- Timely implementation of primary permanency goals as well as timely permanency goal changes that were appropriate to meet the child's needs.

Area Needing Improvement:

- Primary and concurrent case plan goals were not completed within timeframes.
- TPR filings did not occur within the specified time frames and no exceptions existed.

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Charts with Goals for Items 4 & 7

