

GENERAL FINDINGS FROM THE FEDERAL CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) is a results-oriented, comprehensive monitoring review system designed to assist States in improving outcomes for children and families who come into contact with the nation's public child welfare systems. It was developed and implemented by the Department of Health and Human Services (the Department) in response to the mandate of the Social Security Amendments of 1994 to promulgate regulations for reviews of States' child and family services.

The CFSR process incorporates three key phases. In the first phase, each State engages in a comprehensive self-assessment of its child welfare system (including an assessment of State data provided by Federal data systems) and submits the findings (in a Statewide Assessment Report) to the Department for review. In the second phase, the Department conducts an extensive onsite assessment of each State involving three sites within the State as well as the State child welfare agency. This assessment incorporates reviews of child welfare foster care and in-home services cases and interviews or focus groups with parents, children (when appropriate), foster and adoptive parents, private service providers, child welfare agency caseworkers and supervisors, State and local child welfare agency administrators, and a range of other stakeholders at local and State levels. In the third phase, the State develops a program improvement plan (PIP) to address areas identified as needing improvement as a result of the State's self-assessment and of the findings of the onsite review. The Department provides extensive technical assistance in developing and implementing each State's PIP and monitors progress on an ongoing basis over the 2-year PIP implementation period.

As of April 2004, every State in the nation (including Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia) had participated in the first two phases of the CFSR. The States included in each year's CFSR are presented in the table below. Currently, all States are actively engaged in the third phase—i.e., developing and/or implementing a PIP to enhance outcomes pertaining to children's safety, permanency, and well-being. As of July 2004, the Department had approved 37 PIPs and States were in various stages of developing PIPs, with many nearing completion. Three States completed the 2-year PIP implementation process. Because the CFSR process is designed to promote continuous quality improvement, when PIP implementation is completed, the CFSR assessment phases begin anew.

States Participating in Child and Family Service Reviews in Fiscal Years 2001-2004

FY 2001 (N = 17)	FY 2002 (N = 15)	FY 2003 (N = 13)	FY 2004 (N = 7)
Arizona	Alabama	Hawaii	Maryland
Arkansas	Alaska	Iowa	Mississippi
Delaware	California	Idaho	Missouri
District of Columbia	Colorado	Illinois	Nevada
Florida	Connecticut	Kentucky	New Jersey
Georgia	Michigan	Louisiana	Rhode Island
Indiana	Montana	Maine	Washington
Kansas	Nebraska	New Hampshire	
Massachusetts	Ohio	Puerto Rico	
Minnesota	Oklahoma	South Carolina	
New Mexico	Pennsylvania	Utah	
New York	Tennessee	Virginia	
North Carolina	Texas	Wisconsin	
North Dakota	West Virginia		
Oregon	Wyoming		
South Dakota			
Vermont			

The Department analyzes information from the first two phases of the CFSR process to determine whether a State is in substantial conformity with seven outcomes and seven systemic factors. Substantial conformity means that the State has met Federal criteria established for an outcome or systemic factor. The seven outcomes assessed in the CFSR pertain to children’s safety, permanency, and well-being and incorporate 23 indicators or “items.” The seven outcomes are the following:

- Safety Outcome 1 – Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect
- Safety Outcome 2 – Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible
- Permanency Outcome 1 – Children have permanency and stability in their living situations
- Permanency Outcome 2 – The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved
- Well Being Outcome 1 – Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs
- Well Being Outcome 2 – Children receive services to meet their educational needs
- Well Being Outcome 3 – Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs

The systemic factors assessed through the CFSR address aspects of State child welfare agency operations that are relevant to achieving the desired outcomes for children and families. The systemic factors pertain to the following: (1) the Statewide information system; (2) the case review system; (3) training for child welfare staff, foster parents, and adoptive parents; (4) the quality assurance system; (5) the service array; (6) the responsiveness of the agency to the community; and (7) the licensing, recruitment, and retention of foster and adoptive parents.

This report presents key findings of the analyses of State performance on the seven outcomes and systemic factors. The primary purposes of the report are (1) to provide a national picture of child welfare performance with respect to achieving the outcomes assessed through the CFSR; and (2) to enhance an understanding of the practices and procedures that are related to achieving these outcomes.

Analyses were conducted at both the State and case levels. The State-level analyses examine performance on the various outcomes and indicators across States and as a function of characteristics of a State's case sample. The State-level analyses also provide information regarding State performance on the systemic factors and variations in case ratings as a function of performance on systemic factors. The case-level analyses provide a description of the children in the CFSR cases and examine relationships between demographic characteristics and outcome achievement. The case-level analyses also examine factors associated with strengths or areas needing improvement with respect to achieving desired outcomes.

For some of the analyses, information relevant to States reviewed during the first year of the CFSR implementation (FY 2001) is excluded because it is not comparable to information from States reviewed in subsequent years (FY 2002-2004). This is due to several changes made to the CFSR review process based on lessons learned during the first implementation year. A key difference is that beginning with the FY 2002 reviews, a centralized data base was developed for entering case review and stakeholder interview information. In addition, the case review and stakeholder interview instruments were revised to permit collection of specific types of information. Consequently, there is much information about cases in the FY 2002 through FY 2004 States that is not available on the cases reviewed in the FY 2001 States. Throughout the report, the exclusion of information from FY 2001 States in an analysis is noted where relevant, and differences in findings that may be attributed to changes in the CFSR process are identified.

I. STATE-LEVEL DATA ANALYSES

The State-level data analyses were designed to address the following questions:

- How did the States perform on the CFSR outcomes and indicators?
- What are the common challenges that States experience with regard to performance on the outcomes and indicators?
- How did the States perform on the systemic factors and indicators?
- What are the common challenges that States experience with regard to performance on the systemic factors and indicators?
- What are the relationships between performance on systemic factors and performance on outcomes and indicators?
- Does State performance vary as a function of the characteristics of the cases included in the case review sample?

The following sections provide information relevant to each of these questions.

How did States perform on the CFSR outcomes and indicators?

States were assessed with respect to whether they achieved substantial conformity with each of the seven outcomes. To receive a rating of “substantial conformity” for any outcome, at least 90 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must have been rated as having “substantially achieved” that outcome. In addition, for a State to be considered in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, it was necessary for the State also to meet the national standards for specified outcome measures. The following are the outcome measures for which CFSR national standards were established:

- **Maltreatment recurrence.** Of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during the first 6 months of the period under review, 6.1 percent or fewer children had another substantiated or indicated report within 6 months of the first report (Safety Outcome 1).
- **Incidence of child abuse and/or neglect of children in foster care.** Of all children in foster care in the State during the period under review, 0.57 percent or fewer were the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff member (Safety Outcome 1).
- **Exits from foster care to reunification.** Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 76.2 percent or more were reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from the home (Permanency Outcome 1).
- **Incidence of re-entry into foster care.** Of all children who entered foster care during the period under review, 8.6 percent or fewer re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode (Permanency Outcome 1).
- **Exits from foster care to a finalized adoption.** Of all children who exited foster care to a finalized adoption during the year under review, 32 percent or more exited foster care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from the home (Permanency Outcome 1).
- **Placement stability within 12 months of entry into foster care.** Of all children who have been in foster care for less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from the home, 86.7 percent or more have had no more than 2 placement settings (Permanency Outcome 1)

Table I-1 presents the findings with respect to how States performed on the outcomes and indicators. The table provides the number and percent of States (including FY 2001 States) achieving substantial conformity with the 7 outcome measures, the number and percent receiving a rating of “Strength” on the 23 indicators, and the number and percent meeting the national standard for specific measures during the “data year” that the CFSR took place.

Table I-1: Number (%) of States Achieving Substantial Conformity with the 7 Outcome Measures, Number (%) Receiving a Rating of "Strength" on the 23 Indicators, and the Number (%) Meeting National Standards

Outcomes and Indicators	Number(%) Achieving Substantial Conformity	Number(%) Receiving a Rating of "Strength"	Number (%) Meeting National Standards*
Safety Outcome 1-Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	6 (11.5)		
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations		21 (40.4)	
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment		17 (32.7)	17 (32.7)
Safety Outcome 2 - Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible	6 (11.5)		
Item 3: Services to prevent removal		21 (40.4)	
Item 4: Risk of harm		17 (32.7)	
Permanency Outcome 1- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	0		
Item 5: Foster care re-entry		26 (50.0)	26 (50.0)
Item 6: Stability of foster care placements		5 (9.6)	14 (26.9)
Item 7: Permanency goal for child		5 (9.6)	
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship and placement with relatives (for FY 02-04). Independent living services (for FY 2001)		12 (23.1)	19 (36.5)
Item 9: Adoption		6 (11.5)	15 (28.8)
Item 10: Other planned living arrangement		17 (32.7)	
Permanency Outcome 2 - The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	7 (13.5)		
Item 11: Proximity of placement		49 (94.2)	
Item 12: Placement with siblings		36 (69.2)	
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care		16 (30.8)	
Item 14: Preserving connections		21 (40.4)	
Item 15: Relative placement		21 (40.4)	
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents		21 (40.4)	
Well Being Outcome 1 - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	0		
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents		1 (1.9)	
Item 18: Child/family involvement in case Planning		5 (9.6)	
Item 19: Worker visits with child		13 (25.0)	
Item 20: Worker visits with parents		7 (13.5)	
Well Being Outcome 2 - Children receive services to meet their educational needs	16 (30.8)		
Item 21: Educational needs of child		16 (30.8)	
Well Being Outcome 3 - Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs	1 (1.9)		
Item 22: Physical health of child		20 (38.5)	
Item 23: Mental health of child		4 (7.7)	

*Meeting the national standard for maltreatment in foster care was part of the assessment of substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. However, there was no specific item corresponding to maltreatment in foster care because the incidence is very low and it was determined that cases selected for the sample would rarely involve maltreatment in foster care.

As shown in the table, only a small percentage of States achieved substantial conformity with any of the seven outcomes, and no State achieved substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1 or Well Being Outcome 1. Also shown in table I-1, the items (indicators) that were most likely to be rated as a Strength across States were those that pertained to Permanency Outcome 2—i.e., The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved. The items that were least likely to be rated as a Strength pertained to assessing and meeting service needs (item 17), meeting children’s mental health needs (item 23), stability of the foster care placement (item 6), permanency goal for child (item 7), and child and family involvement in case planning (item 18).

Although only a few States achieved substantial conformity with the outcomes, it is important to note that there was an extensive range across States in the percentage of cases rated as substantially achieved. Many States performed very close to the level required for substantial conformity while many other States performed at a much lower level. Table I-2 provides the medians and ranges for the percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved a CFSR outcome (this analysis includes all States).

Table I-2: Median and Range for the Percentage of Cases Across States Rated as Having Substantially Achieved a CFSR Outcome (FY 2001- FY 2004 CFSR States)

Outcomes	Median Percentage of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved Across States	Range of Percentage of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved Across States
Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	85.8	62.0-100
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	80.8	48.0-93.5
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	50.9	7.1-92.0
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	77.3	37.9-94.3
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	60.0	18.0-86.0
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs	83.0	64.7-100
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs	69.9	51.2-92.1

As shown in the table, the median performance for Safety Outcomes 1 and 2 and for Well Being Outcome 2 was less than 10 percentage points lower than the required 90 percent. In addition, the variation in performance (i.e., the difference from the lowest to the highest State) on these outcomes across States ranged from 35.3 percent for Well Being Outcome 2 to 45.5 percent for Safety Outcome 2. In contrast, the median performance for Permanency Outcome 1 and Well Being Outcome 1 was considerably lower than the 90 percent required for substantial conformity. Similarly, variation in performance across States on these outcomes was extensive, ranging from a 68 percent difference between the lowest and highest State for Well-Being Outcome 1 to an 85 percent difference for Permanency Outcome 1.

It also is important to note that some States met the criteria for substantial conformity with regard to 90 percent of cases having substantially achieved a particular outcome but were determined to be “not in substantial conformity” with the outcome because they did not meet the national standards for the measures associated with that outcome. For Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, it was necessary for a State to meet both the national standards for the outcome measures and the case review criteria to achieve substantial conformity with the outcome.

What are the challenges that States share with regard to performance on the outcomes and indicators?

During the implementation of the CFSR process, it became apparent that many States experience similar challenges in their efforts to ensure the safety, permanency, and well being of children who come into contact with the child welfare system. To identify these challenges, a content analysis was conducted of the CFSR Final Reports for the 35 States participating in a CFSR from FY 2002 to FY 2004. States participating in a CFSR in FY 2001 were not included in this analysis because the Final Reports for that year did not use the same format with regard to content requirements as reports in subsequent years. The content analysis focused on identifying challenges that were common across the 35 States for specific indicators. A challenge was considered a “common challenge” if it was relevant to approximately one-third of the 35 participating States (or 12 States).

Common challenges pertaining to safety indicators

Table I-3 presents the common challenges identified for the four safety indicators. As shown in the table, one common challenge pertains to conducting risk and safety assessments that are sufficiently comprehensive to capture underlying family problems that might contribute to child maltreatment. Other common challenges pertain to providing sufficient services to children and parents when children remain in their own homes, monitoring participation in services, and determining on an ongoing basis whether the family situation has altered enough to reduce risk of harm to the child.

Table I-3: Common Challenges Identified with Respect to CFSR Safety Indicators and Number of States for which Concerns were Relevant - FY 2002-2004 CFSR States

Safety Indicators	Common Challenges	# (%) of States N = 35
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports that are not designated “high priority” or “emergency” are not being routinely investigated in accordance with established timeframes. 	12 (34)
Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maltreatment allegations on families with open child welfare cases are not being reported as new allegations and therefore there is no formal assessment of the validity of the allegation. 	16 (46)
Item 3: Services to families to protect children in their homes and prevent removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency risk and safety assessments often are not sufficiently comprehensive to capture underlying family issues that may contribute to maltreatment, such as substance abuse, mental illness, and domestic violence. 	22 (63)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agency is not consistent in providing services to ensure children’s safety while they remain in their own homes (either prior to or after reunification). 	18 (51)
Item 4: Risk of harm to child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agency is not consistent in providing sufficient services to address risk of harm to children, particularly in the in-home services cases. 	22 (63)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agency does not consistently monitor families to assess service participation and change in risk factors. 	20 (57)

Also shown in table I-3, the CFSR found that in 16 (46%) of the 35 States, maltreatment allegations received on a family that is already being served by the child welfare system are not consistently reported as new allegations. Often, if the allegation is made to a central intake system, it is referred to the caseworker who is currently handling the case as an “information” referral rather than being screened for a possible investigation. In other situations, the caseworker may receive an allegation from an outside reporter and decide to address the report directly with the family rather than going through a formal investigation or assessment process. In a few States, this practice is supported by State policy. However, in most States, this practice was noted to be a violation of State policy. This finding creates concerns regarding the accuracy of the State’s data pertaining to maltreatment recurrence, since these allegations would not be included in the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.

Common challenges relevant to permanency indicators

The common challenges found for the permanency indicators are presented in table I-4. Items 10, 11, 12, and 16 are not included in the table either because there were insufficient common concerns or the relevant information was captured in other items. As shown in the table, a key challenge for many States is having a sufficient number and type of placement options to ensure that a child’s out-of-home placement is based on appropriateness rather than availability. Many States also are experiencing challenges in implementing concurrent planning on a consistent basis.

Table I-4: Common Challenges Identified with Respect to CFSR Permanency Indicators and Number of States for which Concerns were Relevant (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Permanency Indicators	Common Challenges	# (%) of States N = 35
Item 5: Re-entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency does not have sufficient and/or adequate post-reunification services. 	13 (37)
Item 6: Stability of foster care placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency shelters frequently are used for initial placements and as "temporary" placements after a disruption occurs, even for young children. 	18 (51)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a scarcity of appropriate placement options for children with developmental disabilities or with severe behavior problems. 	19 (54)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency does not consistently provide services to foster parents to prevent placement disruptions. 	21 (60)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little matching of placements. Placements tend to be based on availability rather than on appropriateness. 	21 (60)
Item 7: Permanency goal for child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A case goal of long-term foster care often is established without thorough consideration of the options of adoption or guardianship. 	15 (43)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concurrent planning efforts are not being implemented on a consistent basis when appropriate. 	26 (74)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The goal of reunification often is maintained for too long a period of time before reconsideration. 	24 (69)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is not filing for termination of parental rights in a timely manner and reasons for not filing are not provided in the case files. 	12 (34)
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship and permanent placement with relatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is not consistent in its efforts to provide the services to parents or ensure parents' access to the services necessary for reunification. 	18 (51)
Item 9: Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is not consistent with regard to conducting adoption home studies or completing adoption-related paperwork in a timely manner. 	17 (49)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appeals process for TPR decisions is extremely lengthy. 	12 (34)
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is not consistent in its efforts to ensure sufficient visitation among siblings in foster care. 	18 (51)
Item 14: Preserving connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is not consistent in its efforts to ensure that children's connections to extended family are being preserved while children are in foster care. 	19 (54)
Item 15: Relative placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency is not consistent with regard to seeking paternal relatives as potential placement resources for children entering foster care. 	19 (54)

Common challenges relevant to child well-being indicators

The common challenges identified for States with regard to the seven child well-being indicators are presented in table I-5.

Table I-5: Common Challenges Identified with Respect to Specific Child Well Being Indicators and Number of States for which Challenges were Relevant - FY 2002-2004 CFSR States

Well Being 1 Indicators	Common Challenges	# (%) of States N=35
Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents	• The agency is not consistent in providing appropriate services to meet the identified needs of children and parents.	31 (89)
	• The agency is not consistent in conducting adequate assessments to determine the needs of children, parents, and/or foster parents.	30 (86)
	• The agency is not consistent in providing services to support foster parents or relative caretakers.	20 (57)
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	• Fathers are not sufficiently involved in case planning.	35 (100)
	• Children (age appropriate) are not sufficiently involved in case planning.	35 (100)
	• Mothers are not sufficiently involved in case planning.	35 (100)
Item 19: Worker visits with child	• The frequency of face-to-face contacts between workers and children is not consistently sufficient to ensure children's safety and well being.	27 (77)
	• When establishing face-to-face contact with children, workers are not consistently focusing on issues pertinent to case planning and achieving goals.	14 (40)
Item 20: Worker visits with parents	• The frequency of face-to-face contacts between workers and parents is not consistently sufficient to ensure children's safety and promote attainment of case goals.	34 (97)
	• The agency does not make concerted efforts to establish contact with fathers, even when fathers are involved in their children's lives.	13 (37)
	• When establishing face-to-face contacts with parents, workers are not consistently focusing on issues pertaining to case planning and achieving case goals.	14 (40)
Well Being 2 & 3 Indicators	Common Challenges	# (%) of States
Item 21: Educational needs of the child	• Many children in foster care experienced multiple school changes as a result of placement changes.	20 (57)
	• The agency is not consistent in providing services to meet children's needs with respect to identified education-related problems.	18 (51)
Item 22: Physical health of the child	• The number of dentists/doctors in the State willing to accept Medicaid is not sufficient to meet the need.	27 (77)
	• The agency is not consistent in providing children with preventive health and/or dental services.	14 (40)
	• The agency is not consistent in conducting adequate, timely health assessments.	13 (37)
Item 23: Mental health of the child	• There is a lack of mental health services for children.	25 (71)
	• The agency is not consistent in conducting mental health assessments.	24 (69)

As shown in the table, many States are encountering challenges in their efforts to provide services that are sufficient to meet the identified needs of children and their parents, involve parents and children in the case planning process, and establish sufficient face-to-face contact between agency caseworkers and the children and parents in their caseloads. Often the ability to address these challenges is hindered by the large caseloads carried by child welfare caseworkers.

How did States perform on the systemic factors and indicators?

As noted previously, the CFSR assesses State performance on 7 systemic factors and 21 indicators. States are rated on a scale from 1 to 4 for each systemic factor. The criteria for rating each factor are specified in the CFSR Procedures Manual, which is available on the Children's Bureau's website. States are determined to be "in substantial conformity" with the factor if they receive a rating of 3 or 4. They are determined to be "not in substantial conformity" if they receive a rating of 1 or 2. Each of the 21 indicators (items) incorporated in the factors is rated as a "Strength" or an "Area Needing Improvement."

Table I-6 presents the findings with respect to State performance on the systemic factors and indicators. As shown in the table, most States were in substantial conformity with the systemic factors of Statewide Information System; Agency Responsiveness to the Community; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention. However, within the latter systemic factor, only 38 percent of the States received a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to recruiting foster and adoptive parents that reflect children's racial and ethnic diversity. The indicators that were determined to be a Strength for almost all States pertained to having the necessary standards in place for foster family and child care institutions and conducting the necessary background checks.

Only a few States were found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System, with 6 of the 52 States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator of case plan development and joint planning with parents. For the most part, States were determined to need improvement in their efforts to involve parents in the case planning process on a consistent basis. However, the majority of States were found to have implemented a 6-month case review process that operates in a consistent and timely manner.

Less than one-half of the States achieved substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array. Within this factor, only 9 States received a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to the accessibility of services in all jurisdictions. However, more than one-half of the States were found to be effective in individualizing services to meet the unique needs of children and families.

Table I-6: Number and Percent of the 52 “States” Achieving Substantial Conformity for the 7 Systemic Factors and Number and Percent Receiving a Rating of "Strength" for the 22 Indicators (FY 2001 – 2004 CFSR States)

Systemic Factors	Number (%) Achieving Substantial Conformity	Number (%) Rated as “Strength”
IV. Statewide Information System	45 (87)	
Item 24: System can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals of children in foster care		45 (87)
V. Case Review System	13 (25)	
Item 25: Process for developing a case plan and for joint case planning with parents		6 (12)
Item 26: Process for 6-month case reviews		42 (81)
Item 27: Process for 12-month permanency hearings		26 (50)
Item 28: Process for seeking TPR in accordance with ASFA		22 (42)
Item 29: Process for notifying caregivers of reviews and hearings and for opportunity for them to be heard		26 (50)
VI. Quality Assurance System	35 (67)	
Item 30: Standards to ensure quality services and ensure children’s safety and health		44 (85)
Item 31: Identifiable QA system that evaluates the quality of services and improvements		31 (60)
VII. Training	34 (65)	
Item 32: Provision of initial staff training		34 (65)
Item 33: Provision of ongoing staff training that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge.		27 (52)
Item 34: Provision of training for caregivers and adoptive parents that addresses the necessary skills and knowledge		38 (73)
VIII. Service Array	23 (44)	
Item 35: Availability of services		25 (48)
Item 36: Accessibility of services in all jurisdictions		9 (17)
Item 37: Ability to individualize services to meet unique needs		30 (58)
IX. Agency Responsiveness to the Community	49 (94)	
Item 38: Engages in ongoing consultation with critical stakeholders in developing the CFSP		46 (88)
Item 39: Develops annual progress reports in consultation with stakeholders		40 (77)
Item 40: Coordinates services with other Federal programs		45 (87)
X. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention	43 (83)	
Item 41: Standards for foster family and child care institutions		51 (98)
Item 42: Standards are applied equally to all foster family and child care institutions		43 (83)
Item 43: Conducts necessary criminal background checks		50 (96)
Item 44: Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect children’s racial and ethnic diversity		21 (40)
Item 45: Uses cross-jurisdictional resources to find placements		47 (90)

What are the challenges to State performance on the systemic factors and indicators?

To understand the common challenges that States experience with respect to their systemic factors, a content analysis was conducted of the CFSR Final Reports for the 35 States participating in a CFSR from FY 2002 to FY 2004. A “common challenge” was one that was relevant to approximately one-third of the 35 participating States (or 12 States).

Table I-7 presents the common challenges relevant to State performance on the systemic factors. As shown in the table, many States experience similar challenges with regard to the systemic factors. The most common challenge pertains to involving the family, particularly the father and older children, in developing the case plan. This concern was identified in the onsite review of all States participating in CFSR from FY 2002 to FY 2005. Another common challenge pertains to providing foster parents with the opportunity to be heard in court hearings and reviews involving the children in their care. Stakeholders interviewed during the onsite reviews noted that (1) some judges are unclear on how to permit foster caretakers an opportunity to be heard in reviews and hearings pertaining to children in their care, and how to treat their input; (2) many foster parents are intimidated by court hearings or are hesitant to speak in front of biological parents; (3) court hearings may require the foster parent to be present for many hours and the agency usually does not provide child care; and (4) some caseworkers and legal staff actively discourage foster parents from attending.

Most of the 35 States participating in a CFSR in FY 2002-2004 were determined to have insufficient mental health assessment and treatment services to meet the needs of children in the child welfare system. Many States also lacked other key services for children, particularly specialized foster care for children with behavioral or emotional problems, medically fragile children, and adolescents. States also were found to have insufficient services for parents, particularly substance abuse assessment and treatment services and mental health services. Finally, a key challenge in many States is that there are not enough doctors and dentists who are willing to accept the State’s Medicaid reimbursement level. A critical concern identified by a large number of States pertained to the lack of dentists willing to accept the State’s level of Medicaid reimbursement. Consequently, children in the child welfare system often do not get the services they need.

Table I-7: Common Challenges Identified with Respect to the Systemic Factor Indicators (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Systemic Factors	Common Challenges	# (%) of States N=35
IV. Statewide Information System		
Item 24: System can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals of children in foster care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency workers are not entering information on a timely basis, which raises concerns about accessibility of accurate information at any given time. 	15 (43)
V. Case Review System		
Item 25: Process for developing a case plan and for joint case planning with parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents, particularly fathers, and/or children, are not routinely involved in the development of the case plan. 	34 (97)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case plans are boilerplate and are not addressing the individualized needs of families and children. 	11 (31)
Item 26: Process for 6-month case reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case reviews are not sufficiently comprehensive to be effective in moving children toward permanency. 	11 (31)
Item 27: Process for 12-month permanency hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanency hearings are not held in a timely manner on a consistent basis, due primarily to a practice of granting continuances and/or to overburdened court dockets. 	19 (54)
Item 28: Process for seeking TPR in accordance with ASFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency and/or court are inconsistent with regard to seeking TPR in accordance with the provisions of ASFA. 	27 (77)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many judges are reluctant to terminate parental rights either because adequate services have not been provided to parents or because an adoptive family has not been identified. 	19 (54)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are delays in attaining TPR because of crowded court dockets and/or a lengthy appeals process. 	21 (60)
Item 29: Process for notifying caregivers of reviews and hearings and for opportunity for them to be heard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster parents are not consistently informed about upcoming hearings and/or case reviews. 	26 (74)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster parents are not always given the opportunity to be heard in court hearings. 	31 (89)
VI. Quality Assurance System		
Item 31: Identifiable QA system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no statewide quality assurance system in place. 	12 (34)
VII. Training		
Item 32: Provision of initial staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial training provided to new workers does not adequately prepare them for the job. 	17 (49)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New caseworkers may receive caseloads before participating in or completing training. 	18 (51)
Item 33: Provision of ongoing staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency staff participation in ongoing training is limited due to heavy caseloads or lack of funds to pay for additional training. 	20 (57)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is insufficient training regarding cultural competency and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). 	11 (31)

Table I-7: Common Challenges (continued)

VIII. Service Array		
Item 35: Availability of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health assessment and treatment services are not sufficient to meet children’s needs. 	31 (89)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are an insufficient number of doctors and dentists (particularly dentists) willing to accept Medicaid. 	22 (63)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other key services for parents are lacking (e.g., substance abuse assessment and treatment, child care, respite care, transportation, domestic violence services, home-based services, housing, and post-reunification services). 	30 (86)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other key services for children are lacking (e.g., specialized foster care for specific populations and independent living services). 	33 (94)
Item 36: Accessibility of services across all jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are fewer services in rural areas than in urban areas and transportation to access services is limited. 	25 (71)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are waiting lists for services in many areas of the State, particularly substance abuse treatment services and family preservation services. 	24 (69)
Item 37: Ability to individualize services to meet unique needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a lack of culturally appropriate services to meet the needs of diverse populations. 	18 (51)
IX. Agency Responsiveness to the Community		
Item 38: Engages in ongoing consultation with stakeholders in developing the CFSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for greater collaboration and cooperation between the agency and external stakeholders (e.g., the Courts, Mental Health, Tribes, School Systems). 	15 (43)
X. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention		
Item 44: Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families that reflect children’s racial and ethnic diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a shortage of foster homes, particularly homes for (1) adolescents, (2) juvenile sexual offenders, (3) children with special needs, and (4) large sibling groups. 	14 (40)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for more culturally diverse homes (e.g., Native American, African American, Hispanic). 	22 (63)
Item 45: Uses cross-jurisdictional resources to find placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICPC is a slow process and the agency is hesitant to rely on Interstate placements (e.g. placements with relatives) 	15 (43)

What is the relationship between performance on systemic factors and performance on outcomes and indicators?

Analyses were conducted to examine the potential relationships between State performance on the systemic factors and State performance on outcomes and indicators. Because of the changes in the CFSR assessment instruments after FY 2001, States participating in a CFSR in FY 2001 are not included in these analyses. All possible inter-relationships were examined for those systemic factors for which there was sufficient variation in State performance to establish comparison groups. The systemic factor of Case Review System was not included because there were only two FY 2002 – 2004 CFSR States that were determined to be in substantial conformity with this factor. In contrast, the systemic factors of Statewide Information System, Agency

Responsiveness to the Community, and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention were not included in the analyses because almost all of the FY 2002-2004 CFSR States achieved substantial conformity with these factors.

The analyses resulted in the significant findings presented below. The level of significance established for this analysis was a probability (p) equal to or less than .01 that the observed difference could have happened by chance. In actuality, many of the probability levels exceeded .001.

The following results were found with respect to State performance on the systemic factor of **Service Array**.

- States determined to be “in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Service Array had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved Well Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs) than did States determined to be “not in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Service Array (t = 3.64; p = .001).
- States determined to be “in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Service Array had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) than did States determined to be “not in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of service array (t = 3.19; p = .003).

These findings suggest that having sufficient services throughout the State and being able to individualize services to meet the unique needs of children and families is related to achieving outcomes pertaining to enhancing a family’s capacity to provide for the needs of their children and ensuring the permanency and stability of the living situations for children in foster care.

The following results were found with respect to performance on the systemic factor of **Quality Assurance System**.

- States determined to be “in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs) than did States determined to be “not in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. (t = 4.241; p = .0001).
- Although performance with regard to Quality Assurance System was not significantly related to performance on other outcomes at the established probability level of .01, the relationship between performance on this systemic factor and performance on Safety Outcome 1 (Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect) and Well-Being Outcome 3 (Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs) approached significance at this level and achieved significance at the p = .05 level. These findings are the following:
 - States that were determined to be “in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System had a higher percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved Safety Outcome 1 than did States determined to be “not in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System (t = 2.317; p = .027).

- States that were determined to be “in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System had a higher percentage of cases rated as having achieved Well-Being Outcome 3 than did States determined to be “not in substantial conformity” with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System ($t = 2.36, p = .024$).

These findings suggest that States that have established a Statewide Quality Assurance System to continually assess various aspects of child welfare agency performance and child and family outcomes are more likely than other States to be able to enhance a family’s capacity to provide for the needs of their children. These States also may be somewhat more likely than other States to protect children known to the child welfare system from abuse and neglect and to ensure that the children’s physical and mental health needs are being met.

The following results were found with respect to States performance on specific indicators pertaining to the systemic factor of **Case Review System** that are assumed to be directly related to permanency. This includes the 6-month reviews (item 26), the 12-month permanency hearings (item 27), and procedures to seek termination of parental rights (TPR) in accordance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (item 28).

The implementation of frequent case reviews (at least every 6 months) was found to be significantly associated with ongoing efforts to enhance the family’s capacity to provide for their children’s needs (Well-Being Outcome 1). Frequent case reviews also were found to be significantly associated with efforts to achieve adoptions in a timely manner. However, frequent case reviews were not found to be associated with efforts to achieve reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner. The specific significant findings were the following:

- States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to 6-month case reviews (item 26) had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved Well-Being Outcome 1 than did States receiving a rating of Area Needing Improvement for the indicator of 6-month reviews ($t = 3.05; p = .004$).
- States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to 6-month case reviews had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as a Strength for the indicator pertaining to timely adoption (item 9) than did States rated as an Area Needing Improvement for the indicator of 6-month reviews ($t = 2.721; p = .009$).

The implementation of 12-month permanency hearings on a consistent basis (item 27) was not related to performance on the child outcomes, but was found to be significantly associated with efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner. The specific finding was the following:

- States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to 12-month permanency hearings (item 27) had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as a Strength for the indicator pertaining to adoption than did States receiving a rating of Area Needing Improvement on item 27 ($t = 2.982; p = .005$).

Seeking TPR on a consistent basis in accordance with the provisions of ASFA (item 28) was found to be significantly associated with the attainment of permanency for children in a timely manner. It is interesting to note that performance on this indicator was not only significantly associated with efforts to achieve adoptions in a timely manner but also with efforts to achieve

reunifications, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner. Specific significant findings were the following:

- States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to procedures for seeking TPR in accordance with the provisions of ASFA (item 28) had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as having substantially achieved Permanency Outcome 1 than did States receiving a rating of Area Needing Improvement for this indicator ($t = 4.18$, $p = .0001$).
- States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to procedures for seeking TPR in accordance with the provisions of ASFA (item 28) had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as a Strength for the indicator pertaining to adoption (item 9) than did States receiving a rating of Area Needing Improvement on item 28 ($t = 3.001$; $p = .004$).
- States receiving a rating of Strength for the indicator pertaining to procedures for seeking TPR in accordance with the provisions of ASFA (item 28) had a significantly higher percentage of cases rated as a Strength for the indicator pertaining to reunification, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives than did States receiving a rating of Area Needing Improvement on item 28 ($t = 3.209$; $p = .003$).

Does State performance vary as a function of the characteristics of the children included in the case review sample?

Because of the extensive variation across States with regard to the characteristics (i.e., age, race/ethnicity, gender, and reason for opening of a child welfare case) of the children in the State's foster care case sample, analyses were conducted to determine whether overall State performance on the outcomes and indicators varied as a function of differences in these characteristics. Most of the analyses include only foster care cases (for FY 2001 – 2004 CFSR States) because those cases involved a specific target child whose characteristics could be identified. Ratings for the in-home cases were based on all children in the family and therefore there was no target child to specify with respect to age, race/ethnicity, or gender. However, the analyses with respect to primary reason for case opening included all cases in the State's sample.

Variations with regard to children's age

The States' foster care samples differed considerably with respect to the ages of the children both at entry into foster care and at the start of the period under review (the time period selected for each State on which outcome and indicator ratings are based). For example, the percentage of children in the State foster care case sample who were age 13 or older at the start of the period under review ranged from 9.7 to 70.0. The percentage of children in the State foster care sample who were younger than age 6 at the start of the period under review ranged from 3.4 to 56.0.

Analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between a State's foster care sample with respect to age and a State's performance on the permanency outcomes and indicators. A probability level equal to or less than .01 was established for "significance." No significant relationship was found between the percentage of adolescents (age 13 and older) in a State's case sample and that State's performance on the CFSR outcomes. However, a significant relationship was found between the percentage of children in a State's foster care sample who were younger than age 6 at the time of entry into foster care and the State's performance on

Safety Outcome 2. States with higher percentages (relative to other States) of children in the sample who were younger than age 6 at the time of entry into foster care tended to have a lower percentage of cases (relative to other States) rated as having substantially achieved Safety Outcome 2 (Spearman's rho = -.44, p = .001).

Variations with regard to the race/ethnicity of the children

Correlational analyses were conducted to assess whether a State's performance on the CFSR outcomes varied as a function of the percentage of cases in the State's foster care sample in which the child was White. The percentage of the case sample in each State that included children who are White ranged from 0 to 93.5. However, no relationship was found between the percentage of White children in the State's foster care sample and the State's ratings for the outcomes.

Variations with regard to gender

An analysis was conducted to assess whether States' performance on the permanency outcomes varied as a function of gender. The samples ranged from 32 percent female to 64 percent female. However, no relationship was found between the percent of cases in a State sample in which the children are female and the State's rating for any of the outcomes.

Variations with regard to reason for case opening

A key issue raised during the CFSR implementation concerned State variation with respect to child welfare cases being opened because of child behavior rather than because of child abuse or neglect. In some States, cases are opened in the child welfare system as a result of the child's behavior (i.e., child in need of supervision, child is delinquent, or child has substance abuse problem), while in other States the child welfare system does not handle these types of cases, or handles these types of cases only rarely. The percentage of cases that were opened as a result of child behavior ranged considerably across States from 0 cases to 48 percent of cases.

Several stakeholders suggested that this variation would have critical implications for State performance on the outcomes and indicators. However, the analyses conducted to assess the relationship between the percentage of cases in a State that were opened due to child behavior and a State's performance on the CFSR outcomes resulted in non-significant findings for all outcomes. In addition, the correlations (Spearman's rho) were quite small, with several of them approaching zero.

These findings suggest that the variation in the characteristics of the children in a State's foster care sample did not appear to have a significant impact on outcome ratings. The one exception was that States with a low percentage of children in the sample who entered foster care when they were younger than age 6 tended to have higher ratings for Safety Outcome 1 than States with a high percentage of children in the sample who entered foster care when they were younger than age 6.

II. CASE-LEVEL ANALYSES: CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS

This section of the report presents key findings from the analyses of information pertaining to the specific cases reviewed during the onsite CFSR. Some of the analyses include cases reviewed during the FY 2001 CFSR. However, as noted previously, because of changes made in the case review instrument after the FY 2001 reviews, many of the analyses exclude cases reviewed during the FY 2001 CFSR. The inclusion or exclusion of FY 2001 cases is noted for each analysis.

The case-level data analyses examined the following questions:

- What are the key characteristics of the CFSR cases?
- What are the relationships among case characteristics?
- What are the case ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators?
- What are the relationships between case characteristics and case ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators?
- What are the relationships among item and outcome ratings?

What are the key characteristics of the CFSR cases?

The tables in this section provide information regarding the characteristics of the CFSR cases. The following case characteristics are presented for all 52 “States” (this includes the 50 States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia):

- Type of case (i.e., foster care or in-home services).
- Reason for case opening.
- Age of child at entry into foster care.
- Age of child in foster care at the start of the CFSR period under review.
- Race/ethnicity of child.
- Gender of child in foster care.
- Permanency goal of child in foster care.
- Type of CFSR site (i.e., largest urban site or other site).

Type of case

CFSR cases included 1,477 cases in which children were in foster care at some time during the CFSR period under review. There also were 1,092 “in-home” cases. These are cases that were open child welfare cases at some time during the CFSR period under review, the child remained in the home, and no children in the family were in foster care during the period under review.

Reason for case opening

For each case, reviewers were asked to note all problems relevant to the family’s involvement with the child welfare agency and to identify the one problem that was the primary reason for opening a child welfare case. The primary reasons why a child welfare agency case was opened are presented in table II-1. As shown in the table, the most frequently cited primary reasons for case opening were neglect, physical abuse, and substance abuse by parents. These three reasons accounted for 60 percent of all cases.

Table II-1: Number and Percent of Primary Reasons for Case Opening (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Primary Reason	Number	Percent
Neglect (not including Medical Neglect)	851	33.1
Physical Abuse	402	15.6
Substance Abuse by the Parent(s)	303	11.8
Sexual Abuse	211	8.2
Child's Behavior	159	6.2
Abandonment	95	3.7
Child in Juvenile Justice System	89	3.5
Domestic Violence in the Child's Home	74	2.8
Medical Neglect	74	2.8
Mental/Physical Health of Parent	73	2.8
Mental/Physical Health of the Child	40	1.6
Emotional Maltreatment	35	1.4
Substance Abuse by Child	10	.4
Other	153	6.0
Total	2569	100

A factor analysis of reasons for case opening resulted in the identification of four factors that accounted for almost all reasons. These four factors comprise the following “reason categories”:

- ***Child's behavior.*** This factor includes the following “reasons for opening a child welfare case:”
 - Child in juvenile justice system
 - Child's behavior
 - Substance abuse by child
- ***Parent's behavior, not including child abuse.*** This factor includes the following “reasons for opening a child welfare case.”
 - Substance abuse by parents
 - Abandonment
 - Domestic violence in the child's home
 - Neglect (not including medical neglect)
- ***Family's mental and physical well-being.*** This factor includes the following “reasons for opening a child welfare case:”
 - Mental/physical health of child
 - Mental/physical health of parent
 - Medical neglect
- ***Child abuse.*** This factor includes the following “reasons for opening a child welfare case.”
 - Physical abuse
 - Emotional maltreatment
 - Sexual abuse

Table II-2 presents the number and percent of cases included in each of these reason categories.

Table II-2. Number and Percent of Cases Included in Each of the Four Reason Categories (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Reason for Case Opening Category	Number of Cases	Percent of Cases
Child's behavior	258	10.7
Parent's behavior (excluding child abuse but including neglect)	1323	54.8
Family's mental and physical well-being (including medical neglect)	187	7.7
Child abuse	648	26.8
Total (excluding "other")	2416	100

As shown in table II-2, parent's behavior (other than physical, emotional, or sexual abuse) as a reason for case opening accounted for over one-half of all cases. Child abuse as a reason for case opening accounted for slightly more than one-fourth of all cases. However, in 11 percent of all cases, the primary reason for opening a child welfare case was the child's behavior.

Race/ethnicity of children

Information pertaining to the race/ethnicity of children included in the sample is provided in table II-3. As shown in the table, most of the children in the CFSR sample were White (non-Hispanic) or Black (non-Hispanic). As noted in section I, however, the percentage of children in the case sample who were white (non Hispanic) and non-white varied considerably across States.

Table II-3. Number and Percent of Children by Race/Ethnicity (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
White (non Hispanic)	1121	43.6
Black (non Hispanic)	729	28.4
Hispanic	219	8.5
Two or more races	217	8.4
Alaska Native/American Indian	118	4.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	44	1.7
Missing information	121	4.7
Total	2569	100

Age of children

Information pertaining to the ages of children was available for foster care cases only. There was no specified target child for the in-home services cases because they were rated on the basis of all children in the family. Age of child was examined with respect to age at entry into foster care and age at the start of the CFSR period under review.

Table II-4 provides the number and percent of children in five age groupings at entry into foster care and at the start of the CFSR period under review. As shown in the table, slightly over 70 percent of the children in the sample entered foster care when they were younger than age 13, while the remainder entered as adolescents. At the start of the period under review, more than one-third of the children in the sample were adolescents (i.e. age 13 and older).

Table II-4: Number and Percent of Children by Age of Entry into Foster Care and at the Start of the CFSR Period under Review (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Age Grouping	Number (%) at Entry into Foster Care*	Number (%) at Start of the PUR
Younger than 6 years	546 (37.0)	437 (29.6)
6 years but not yet 10 years	304 (20.6)	286 (19.4)
10 years but not yet 13 years	206 (13.9)	225 (15.2)
13 years but not yet 16 years	249 (16.9)	334 (22.6)
16 years and older	83 (5.6)	188 (12.7)
Information missing	89 (6.0)*	7 (0.5)
Total	1477	1477

*Many cases from reviews conducted in FY 2001 were recorded as having missing information for this variable

Gender of children

Information on gender was available only for foster care cases because in-home cases frequently involved more than one child. For the 1,477 foster care cases (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States), 698 were identified as male (47.3%) and 598 were identified as female (40.5%). For 12.3 percent of the foster care cases (n=181), the gender of the child was not identified in the case review instrument and could not be ascertained by the child's name.

Children's permanency goals

Information on permanency goals was available only for foster care cases reviewed in FY 2002 through FY 2004 because the information was not recorded on a routine basis in the FY 2001 case review instruments. Table II-5 provides the number and percent of children with various permanency goals at the time of the onsite review.

Table II-5: Number and Percentage of Children with Various Permanency Goals (FY 2001 – 2004 CFSR States)

Permanency Goal	Number	Percent
Adoption	316	32.7
Reunification	336	34.8
Guardianship/Permanent Placement with Relative	94	9.8
Emancipation	75	7.8
Long-Term Foster Care	113	11.7
Concurrent plan	25	2.6
No specified permanency goal	5	.5
Total	964	

As shown in the table, most children had permanency goals of adoption and reunification. However, almost one-fifth of the children had “permanency goals” of emancipation or long-term foster care.

What are the relationships among case characteristics?

Analyses were conducted to examine potential relationships among case characteristics. The following relationships were examined:

- Reason for case opening and type of case.
- Race/ethnicity of children and type of case.
- Age at entry into foster care and reason for case opening.
- Age at the start of the CFSR period under review and permanency goals.

Reason for case opening by type of case

Table II-6 presents the data pertaining to type of case and the reason for case opening. This analysis includes cases reviewed from FY 2001 through FY 2004. Reason for case opening was found to vary significantly as a function of type of case (Chi Square = 29.96; p < .0001). Child abuse as a reason for case opening occurred more frequently in the in-home case sample (32.2%) than it did in the foster care case sample (22.9%). In contrast, parent’s behavior (excluding child abuse but including neglect) as a reason for case opening occurred more frequently in the foster care case sample (57.9%) than it did in the in-home case sample (50.4%).

Table II-6: Categories of Reason for Case Opening by Type of Case (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Factor (Reason for Case Opening)	Number (%) of In-Home Cases	Number (%) of Foster Care Cases
Child’s behavior	93 (9.1)	165 (11.9)
Parent’s behavior (excluding child abuse but including neglect)	517 (50.4)	806 (57.9)
Family’s mental and physical well-being (including medical neglect)	85 (8.3)	102 (7.3)
Child abuse	330 (32.2)	318 (22.9)
Total (excluding “other”)	1025	1391

Race/ethnicity of children by type of case

Table II-7 presents the race/ethnicity of children by type of case. This analysis includes all cases reviewed from FY 2001 through FY 2004 for which race/ethnicity information was provided in the case review instrument. As shown in the table, race/ethnicity of child was found to vary significantly as a function of type of case (Chi Square = 34.02; p < .0001). Specifically, Black children and Alaska Native/American Indian children were more likely to be in the foster care case sample than in the in-home case sample.

Table II-7. Number and Percent of Race/Ethnicity of Children by Type of Case (2001-2004 CFSR States)

Race/Ethnicity	Number (%) of In-Home Cases	Number (%) of Foster Care Cases	Total
White (non Hispanic)	494 (47.9)	627 (44.3)	1121
Black (non Hispanic)	275 (26.6)	454 (32.1)	729
Hispanic	106 (10.3)	113 (8.0)	219
Two or more races	97 (9.4)	120 (8.5)	217
Alaska Native/American Indian	31 (3.0)	87 (6.1)	118
Asian/Pacific Islander	29 (2.8)	15 (1.1)	44
Total	1032 (100)	1416 (100)	2448

Age at entry into foster care and reason for case opening.

Table II-8 presents information pertaining to the age of the child at the time of entry into foster care and the reason for case opening. The analyses include data from States participating in a CFSR from FY 2002 through FY 2004. Cases reviewed during the FY 2001 CFSR do not have comparable information on a consistent basis. As shown in the table, the primary reason for case opening varies significantly as a function of the child's age at the time of entry into foster care (Chi Square (9) = 230.33; $p < .0001$). In general, the percentage of cases opened as a result of parents' behaviors tends to decrease with increasing age, while the percentage of cases opened as a result of the child's behavior increases with increasing age. The percentage of cases opened because of the mental/physical health of the family did not differ as a function of age. The percentage of cases opened because of child abuse increased from the younger than 6 to the 6 to 9 year older age group and then declined with increasing age. The most significant decline occurred from the 10-12 year old age group to the adolescent age group.

Table II-8. The Relationship between the Reason for Case Opening and the Age of the Child at Entry into Foster Care (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Primary Reason for Case Opening	Age at Entry into Foster Care				Total
	Younger than 6	6 – 9 years	10 – 12 years	13 and older	
Child's behavior	3 (1%)	10 (5%)	14 (11%)	89 (41%)	116
Parent's behavior (includes neglect but not child abuse)	262 (68%)	117 (58%)	69 (54%)	75 (34%)	523
Mental/physical health of family	33 (9%)	12 (6%)	10 (8%)	12 (5%)	67
Child abuse	85 (22%)	63 (31%)	34 (27%)	42 (19%)	224
Total	383	202	127	218	930

Age at start of the CFSR period under review and the child's permanency goal

Table II-9 presents children's permanency goals at the time of the onsite review as a function of the child's age at the start of the period under review. As shown in the table, permanency goals varied significantly as a function of the child's age at the start of the period under review (Chi Square = 335.63; $p < .0001$). In general, the percentage of cases with a permanency goal of

adoption decreased with increasing age, while the percentage of cases with permanency goals of emancipation/long-term foster care increased with increasing age. There was no substantial difference among age groups with regard to the percentage of children with a permanency goal of reunification. In addition, although very few children under the age of 6 had a permanency goal of guardianship/permanent placement with relatives, the percentage of cases with this goal increased considerably for the 6 through 9 year old children.

Table II-9. Children’s Permanency Goals by Age at Start of Period Under Review (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Permanency Goal	Age at Start of Period Under Review				
	Younger than 6	6 – 9 years	10 – 12 years	13 and older	Total
Adoption	151 (54%)	81 (49%)	46 (33%)	25 (7%)	303
Reunification	109 (39%)	51 (31%)	52 (38%)	121(36%)	333
Guardianship/Permanent placement with relative	14 (5%)	27 (16%)	16 (12%)	36 (11%)	93
Emancipation	0	1 (1%)	0	74 (22%)	75
Long-term foster care	4 (1%)	5 (3%)	23 (17%)	81 (24%)	113
Total	278	165	137	337	917

What are the case ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators?

Ratings for outcomes and indicators are provided for the 35 States participating in a CFSR from FY 2002 to FY 2004. Case ratings for outcomes were examined with respect to whether the outcome was determined to be “substantially achieved” or “not substantially achieved.” The category of “not substantially achieved” includes ratings of “partially achieved” and “not achieved.” Ratings for indicators (items) are either a “Strength” or an “Area Needing Improvement.”

Table II-10 provides information pertaining to ratings for the CFSR outcomes. As shown in the table, more than one-half of the cases reviewed in FY 2002 through FY 2004 were determined to have “Not Substantially Achieved” Permanency Outcome 1 and Well-Being Outcome 1. However, over three-fourths of the cases reviewed were determined to have “Substantially Achieved” Safety Outcomes 1 and 2 and Well-Being Outcome 2.

Table II-10: Number and Percentage of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved and Not Substantially Achieved* on Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Outcomes	Number (%) of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved and Not Substantially Achieved*		Total
	Substantially Achieved	Not Substantially Achieved	
Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	1304 (83.6)	255 (16.3)	1559
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	1231 (76.5)	378 (23.5)	1609
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	429 (44.5)	536 (55.5)	965
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	688 (71.6)	273 (28.4)	961
Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	837 (48.2)	898 (51.8)	1735
Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs	1102 (84.2)	207 (15.8)	1309
Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs	1123 (68.8)	509 (31.2)	1632

*Not substantially achieved includes ratings of “partially achieved” and “not achieved.”

Table II-11 presents the ratings for the indicators (items) for each outcome. As shown in the table, more than three-fourths of the cases were rated as a Strength for the items relevant to Safety Outcomes 1 and 2. Similarly, the majority of cases were rated as a Strength for the indicators relevant to Permanency Outcome 2, Well-Being Outcome 2, and Well-Being Outcome 3. However, less than 70 percent of cases were rated as a Strength for four of the six indicators pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1, and only 36.4 percent of cases were rated as a Strength for the indicator pertaining to adoption (item 9). In addition, less than 60 percent of the cases were rated as a Strength for three of the four indicators pertaining to Well-Being Outcome 1.

Table II-11: Number and Percent of Applicable Cases Rated as Strength and Area Needing Improvement (ANI) on the CFSR Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Indicators (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Indicators	Number (%) Rated as Strength and ANI	
	Strength	ANI
Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect		
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations (N = 712)	537 (75.4)	175 (24.6)
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment (N = 1510)	1397 (92.5)	113 (7.5)
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate		
Item 3: Services to prevent removal (N = 1047)	841 (80.3)	206 (19.7)
Item 4: Risk of harm (N = 1602)	1267 (79.1)	335 (20.9)
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations		
Item 5: Foster care re-entry (N = 311)	265 (85.2)	46 (14.8)
Item 6: Stability of foster care placements (N = 962)	731 (76.0)	231 (24.0)
Item 7: Permanency goal for child (N = 964)	659 (68.4)	305 (31.6)
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship and placement with relatives (N = 461)	296 (64.2)	165 (35.8)
Item 9: Adoption (N = 330)	120 (36.4)	210 (63.6)
Item 10: Other planned living arrangement (N = 202)	135 (66.8)	67 (33.2)
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved		
Item 11: Proximity of placement (N = 765)	722 (94.4)	43 (5.6)
Item 12: Placement with siblings (N = 595)	510 (85.7)	85 (14.3)
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care (N = 821)	600 (73.1)	221 (26.9)
Item 14: Preserving connections (N = 948)	755 (79.6)	193 (20.4)
Item 15: Relative placement (N = 891)	664 (74.5)	227 (25.5)
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents (N = 742)	552 (74.4)	190 (25.6)
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs		
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents (N=1735)	1022 (58.9)	713 (41.1)
Item 18: Child/family involvement in case Planning (N = 1706)	989 (58.0)	717 (42.0)
Item 19: Worker visits with child (N = 1733)	1148 (66.2)	585 (33.8)
Item 20: Worker visits with parents (N = 1572)	882 (56.1)	690 (43.9)
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs		
Item 21: Educational needs of child (N = 1309)	1104 (84.3)	205 (15.7)
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs		
Item 22: Physical health of child (N = 1427)	1190 (83.4)	237 (16.6)
Item 23: Mental health of child (N = 1324)	939 (70.9)	385 (29.1)

What are the relationships between case characteristics and ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators?

Analyses were conducted to examine potential relationships between case characteristics and ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators. Relationships were determined to be significant when the probability level was equal to or less than .01. The relationships examined were the following:

- The relationship between type of case and outcome and item ratings.
- The relationship between age of child and ratings for select CFSR outcome and indicators.
- The relationship between reason for case opening and ratings for select CFSR outcomes and indicators.
- The relationship between race of child and ratings for select CFSR outcomes and indicators.
- The relationships between and among outcome and indicator ratings.

Outcome and indicator ratings by type of case

Table II-12 presents the percent of cases rated as substantially achieved for each of the seven outcomes for both types of cases. Chi-square tests resulted in the finding that ratings for each outcome vary significantly as a function of type of case. In-home cases were significantly less likely than foster care cases to be rated as having substantially achieved each outcome.

Table II-12: Percent of In-home and Foster Care Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved for Safety and Well Being Outcomes (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Outcomes	% Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved	
	In-Home	FC
Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect*	41.8	58.2
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate*	40.0	60.0
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs*	37.5	62.5
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs*	31.9	68.1
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs*	38.0	62.0

*Significant at $p < .0001$

Table II-13 presents the percentage of cases rated as a Strength for each of the items relevant to both in-home and foster care cases.

Table II-13: Percent of In-home and Foster Care Cases Rated as Strength for Safety and Well Being Indicators (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Indicators	% Cases rated as Strength	
	In-Home	Foster Care
Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect		
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations (Not Significant)	73.9	77.4
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment (Not Significant)	90.9	93.8
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate		
Item 3: Services to prevent removal (Not Significant)	81.0	78.9
Item 4: Risk of harm (significant at $p = .0001$)	70.9	85.7
Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs		
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents (significant at $p=.0001$)	52.2	64.2
Item 18: Child/family involvement in case Planning (significant at $p=.0001$)	51.0	63.7
Item 19: Worker visits with child (significant at $p=.0001$)	59.4	71.7
Item 20: Worker visits with parents (Not Significant)	53.1	59.0
Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs		
Item 21: Educational needs of child (significant at $p=.0001$)	75.8	89.1
Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs		
Item 22: Physical health of child (significant at $p=.003$)	79.1	85.4
Item 23: Mental health of child (significant at $p=.0001$)	62.0	76.8

Analyses of the relationship between ratings for indicators and type of case resulted in the following findings.

- Foster care cases were significantly more likely than in-home cases to be rated as a Strength for the indicator of “risk of harm to child” (item 4) (Chi Square = 52.57; $p < .0001$). This is likely due to the rating of this indicator as a Strength if the reviewer determines that the child was placed in foster care to reduce risk of harm.
- Foster care cases were significantly more likely than in-home cases to be rated as a Strength for items 17, 18, and 19 pertaining to Well Being Outcome 1 ($p < .0001$ for all items), but not for item 20 (worker visits with parents). As shown in the table, ratings of Strength for the item pertaining to worker visits with parents were relatively infrequent for both in-home and foster care cases.
- Foster care cases were significantly more likely than in-home cases to be rated as a Strength for item 21 (educational needs of child) (Chi Square = 40.41; $p < .0001$).
- Foster care cases were significantly more likely than in-home cases to be rated as a Strength for item 22 (physical health of child) (Chi Square = 9.00; $p = .003$).
- Foster care cases were significantly more likely than in-home cases to be rated as a Strength for item 23 (mental health of the child) (Chi Square = 33.62; $p < .0001$).

Outcome and indicator ratings by age of child

Analyses were conducted to examine potential relationships between age of the child at the start of the period under review and case ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators.

Table II-14 presents the number and percent of cases rated as having “substantially achieved” or “not substantially achieved” Permanency Outcome 1 across five age groups. Ratings for Permanency Outcome 1 varied significantly as a function of the child’s age at the start of the period under review (Chi Square (4) = 33.33, $p < .0001$). Cases involving children who were younger than age 6 at the start of the period under review were more likely to be rated as having substantially achieved Permanency Outcome 1 than cases involving children in any of the other age groups. Cases involving children age 6-9 and age 10-12 were less likely than cases involving adolescents to be rated as having substantially achieved this outcome.

Table II-14: Ratings for Permanency Outcome 1 by Age of Child at Start of Period under Review (2002-2004 CFSR States)

Ratings for Permanency Outcome 1	Younger than 6	6 – 9 years	10 – 12 years	13 – 15 years	16 – 18 years	Total
Substantially achieved	164 (55%)	69 (39%)	38 (27%)	106 (46%)	47 (45%)	424
Not substantially achieved	134 (45%)	108 (61%)	103 (73%)	125 (54%)	58 (55%)	528
Total	298	177	141	231	105	952

Because anecdotal information obtained during many of the CFSRs suggested that placement stability is more difficult to achieve for adolescents than it is for younger children, a separate analysis was conducted on the relationship between the child’s age at the start of the CFSR period under review and ratings for the indicator of placement stability (item 6). These data are presented in table II-15.

Table II-15: Ratings for Stability of Foster Care Placement by Age of Child at Start of Period Under Review (FY 2002-2204 CFSR States)

Ratings for Stability of Foster Care Placements	Age at Start of Period Under Review					Total
	Younger than 6	6 – 9 years	10 – 12 years	13 – 15 years	16 – 18 years	
Strength	246 (83%)	140 (79%)	104 (74%)	149 (65%)	80 (78%)	719
Area Needing Improvement	52 (17%)	37 (21%)	36 (26%)	82 (35%)	23 (22%)	230
Total	298	177	140	231	103	949

The analysis resulted in a finding that ratings for placement stability varied significantly as a function of the child’s age (Chi Square (4) = 24.87; $p = .0001$). The percentage of cases rated as a Strength for placement stability decreased with increasing age up to age 16. Cases in which children were age 16 through 18, however, were as likely to be rated as a Strength for placement stability as cases in which children were younger than age 6 or 6 to 9 years old. This may be due to the older children being placed in residential or treatment facilities for most of the period under review.

Anecdotal information from the CFSRs also suggested that establishing appropriate permanency goals for children in a timely manner is easier for younger children than it is for adolescents. Table II-16 presents the number and percent of cases rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement for this indicator (item 7).

Table II-16: Ratings for Establishing Appropriate Permanency Goals in a Timely Manner (item 7) by Age of Child at Start of Period under Review (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Ratings for Permanency Goal	Age at Start of Period Under Review					Total
	Younger than 6	6 – 9 years	10 – 12 years	13 – 15 years	16 – 18 years	
Strength	239 (80%)	118 (67%)	78 (55%)	151 (65%)	66 (63%)	652
Area Needing Improvement	59 (20%)	58 (33%)	63 (45%)	80 (35%)	39 (37%)	299
Total	298	176	141	231	105	951

Ratings for item 7 were found to vary significantly by age of child at the start of the period under review (Chi Square = 33.07; $p < .0001$). For this item, ratings of Strength tended to decrease with increasing age up to age 13. Cases involving adolescents were as likely to be rated as a Strength for this item as cases involving 6- 9 year olds, but not as likely as cases involving children younger than age 6. The percentage of cases rated as a Strength for this indicator was lowest for the age group 10 to 12 years and highest for the age group of “younger than 6.”

An examination of the relationships between children’s age at the start of the CFSR period under review and ratings on other outcomes and indicators did not result in significant findings (at the level of p equal to or less than .01). However, the association between ratings for item 20 (worker contact with parents) and age of child at the start of the period under review approached significance (Chi Square = 12.31; $p = .015$). These data are provided in table II-17. As shown in the table, the percentage of cases rated as a Strength for this indicator decreased continuously with increasing age.

Table II-17: Ratings for Worker Visits with Parents by Age of Child at Start of Period under Review (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Ratings for Permanency Goal	Age at Start of Period Under Review					Total
	Younger than 6	6 – 9 years	10 – 12 years	13 – 15 years	16 – 18 years	
Strength	176 (66%)	92 (61%)	62 (57%)	97 (53%)	42 (49%)	469
Area Needing Improvement	90 (34%)	59 (39%)	47 (43%)	87 (31%)	43 (51%)	326
Total	266	151	109	184	85	795

Outcome and indicator ratings by reason for case opening

Analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between the reason categories for case opening and ratings for the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. No significant relationships were found between reason for case opening and case ratings for Safety Outcomes 1 and 2; Permanency Outcome 2; or Well Being Outcomes 1, 2, or 3. However, ratings of substantial achievement for Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) varied significantly as a function of reason for opening a foster care case (Chi square = 17.07; $p = .001$). Table II-18 presents the data for this relationship.

Table II-18: Number and Percent of Cases Rated “Substantially Achieved” and “Not Substantially Achieved” for Permanency Outcome 1 by Reason for Case Opening (FY 2002-2004 CFSR States)

Primary Reason for Case Opening	Number (%) Substantially Achieved	Number (%) Not Substantially Achieved	Total
Child’s behavior	71 (61.2)	45 (38.8)	116
Parent’s behavior (includes neglect but not abuse)	212 (40.5)	312 (59.5)	524
Mental/physical health of family	27 (40.3)	40 (59.7)	67
Child abuse	101 (45.1)	123 (54.9)	224
Total	411	520	931

As shown in the table, cases opened for reasons of child behavior were more likely to be rated as having “substantially achieved” Permanency Outcome 1 than cases opened for other reasons. In contrast, cases opened for all other reasons were more likely to be rated as “not substantially achieved” than as “substantially achieved.”

Outcome and indicator ratings by child’s race/ethnicity

Analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between children’s race/ethnicity and case ratings for the CFSR outcomes and indicators. No significant association was found between a child’s race/ethnicity and ratings for Safety Outcome 1, Safety Outcome 2, Permanency Outcome 2, and Well-Being Outcome 2. However, a significant association was found between a child’s race/ethnicity and ratings for Permanency Outcome 1 (Chi Square = 17.403; p = .004). These data are presented in table II-19 and include foster care cases reviewed from FY 2001 through FY 2004 for which information on race/ethnicity was provided in the case review instrument.

Table II-19: Number and Percent of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved for Permanency Outcome 1 by Race/Ethnicity of the Child (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Race/Ethnicity	Number (%) rated as Substantially Achieved	Number (%) rate as not Substantially Achieved	Total
Alaska Native/Native American	43 (49)	44 (51)	87
Asian/Pacific Islander	7 (47)	8 (53)	15
Black (non-Hispanic)	213 (47)	241 (53)	454
Hispanic	64 (57)	49 (43)	113
White (non-Hispanic)	371 (59)	256 (41)	627
Two or more races	62 (52)	57 (48)	119
Total	760 (54)	655 (46)	1415

As shown in the table, cases involving children who are White (Non Hispanic) and children who are Hispanic were more likely to be rated as having substantially achieved Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) than were cases involving children who are Alaska Native/Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Black (non-Hispanic).

A significant association also was found between case ratings for Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs) and the child’s race/ethnicity (Chi Square = 15.084, p = .01). These data are presented in table II-20 and include all cases reviewed from FY 2001 through FY 2004 for which information on race/ethnicity was provided in the case review instrument.

Table II-20: Number and Percent of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved for Well-Being Outcome 1 by Race/Ethnicity of the Child (FY 2001 – 2004 CFSR States)

Race/Ethnicity	Number (%) rated as Substantially Achieved	Number (%) Rated as Not Substantially Achieved	Total Number
Alaska Native/Native American	57 (48)	61 (52)	118
Asian/Pacific Islander	14 (32)	30 (68)	44
Black (non-Hispanic)	399 (55)	330 (45)	729
Hispanic	110 (50)	109 (50)	219
White (non-Hispanic)	636 (57)	485 (43)	1121
Two or more races	122 (56)	95 (44)	217
Total	1338 (55)	1110 (45)	2448

As shown in the table, cases involving children who are White, Black, or of “two or more races” were significantly more likely to be rated as having substantially achieved Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to meet children’s needs) than were cases involving children who are Alaska Native/Native American or Asian/Pacific Islander. The percentage of cases involving children who are Alaska Native/ Native American or Asian/Pacific Islander that were rated as “not substantially achieved” was greater than the percentage rated as “substantially achieved.”

Finally, a significant association was found between the child’s race/ethnicity and ratings for Well-Being Outcome 3 (Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs) (Chi-Square = 16.11; p = .007). The data for this relationship are provided in table II-21.

Table II-21: Number and Percent of Cases Rated as Substantially Achieved for Well-Being Outcome 3 by Race/Ethnicity of the Child (FY 2001-2004 CFSR States)

Race/Ethnicity	Number (%) Rated as Substantially Achieved	Number (%) Rated as Not Substantially Achieved	Total
Alaska Native/Native American	76 (69)	34 (31)	110
Asian/Pacific Islander	27 (63)	16 (37)	43
Black (non-Hispanic)	459 (66)	234 (34)	693
Hispanic	139 (67)	69 (33)	208
White (non-Hispanic)	789 (74)	273 (26)	1062
Two or more races	146 (69)	64 (31)	210
Total	1636 (70)	690 (30)	2326

As shown in the table, cases involving White children were significantly more likely to be rated as having substantially achieved Well Being Outcome 3 than were cases involving children of all other races/ethnicity.

Outcome ratings as a function of type of CFSR site

The CFSR onsite review process involved three sites in each State. One of the sites in each State was the State's most populous city or county (largest population sites). The other sites included in the onsite review varied widely with respect to population size from very rural sites to metropolitan/suburban sites. An analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the type of CFSR site (i.e., "largest population sites" and "smaller population sites") and ratings for the CFSR outcomes. No relationship was found between type of CFSR site and ratings for Safety Outcome 1, Safety Outcome 2, Permanency Outcome 1, Permanency Outcome 2, and Well-Being Outcome 2. However, a significant association was found between type of site and performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 ($t = 2.41$; $p = .01$) and Well-Being Outcome 3 ($t = 2.72$, $p = .008$). Cases in the "smaller population sites" were significantly more likely to be rated as having achieved Well-Being Outcomes 1 and 3 than were cases in the "largest population sites." These findings suggest that although sites with smaller populations may not have as many services available for families, they may have developed strategies for maximizing the resources that are available.

What are the relationships between and among outcome and item ratings?

Correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relationships between and among outcome and item ratings with respect to the following issues:

- The item and outcome ratings associated with achieving permanency in a timely manner.
- The item and outcome ratings associated with achieving placement stability for children in foster care.
- The item and outcome ratings associated with achieving safety for children.
- The relevance of caseworker contacts with children and parents for attainment of positive outcomes.

Item and outcome ratings associated with achieving permanency in a timely manner

Analyses were conducted to examine the ratings associated with Permanency Outcome 1. Because of changes in this outcome based on lessons learned after the FY 2001 CFSR implementation, the analyses do not include FY 2001 cases. Ratings for Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) were found to be significantly associated with all of the indicators of Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs). The general finding was that children's permanency and stability in their living situations is associated with provision of services to children and families (item 17 – Chi Square = 39.29; $p < .0001$), involvement of children and parents in case planning (item 18 – Chi Square 25.31, $p < .0001$), frequent contact between caseworkers and children (item 19 – Chi Square = 13.44; $p < .0001$) and frequent contact between caseworkers and parents (Chi Square = 35.57; $p < .0001$).

In addition, ratings for Permanency Outcome 1 also were found to be significantly associated with ratings for item 23 (Mental health of child) (Chi Square = 7.29; $p = .007$). Thus, greater permanency and stability in living situations was associated with having mental health service needs assessed and addressed in an adequate manner. Ratings for Permanency Outcome 1 were not related to ratings for item 21 (Educational needs of child) or item 22 (Physical health of child).

Analyses also were conducted regarding the item and outcome ratings associated with efforts to achieve the permanency goals of reunification, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner (item 8), and the permanency goal of adoption in a timely manner (item 9). Ratings of Strength

for item 8 were significantly associated (at a probability level of .01 or better) with ratings of Strength for the following items:

- Placement stability (item 6) (Chi Square = 17.40; $p < .0001$)
- Placement with relatives (item 15) (Chi Square = 8.51; $p = .004$)
- Visits between children and parents and siblings in foster care (item 13) (Chi Square = 26.299; $p < .0001$).
- Assessment of needs and provision of services (item 17) (Chi Square = 28.39; $p < .0001$).
- Family involvement in case planning (item 18) (Chi Square = 27.86, $p < .0001$)
- Worker contacts with children (item 19) Chi Square = 7.49; $p = .006$) and
- Worker contacts with parents (item 20) (Chi Square = 35.14, $p < .0001$).

The strongest association (based on the size of the Chi Square) was between item 8 and item 20 (Worker visits with parents). Other strong associations were between item 8 and item 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care), item 17 (Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents), item 18 (Child/family involvement in case planning), and item 6 (Placement stability). These findings suggest that achieving permanency with respect to reunification, guardianship, and/or permanent placement with relatives is most closely associated with frequent agency and child contact with parents and provision of services to meet the needs of children and parents.

In contrast to ratings for item 8, ratings for achieving adoption in a timely manner (item 9) were not significantly associated (at the probability level equal to or greater than .01) with any of the other outcome indicators except item 17 (Needs/services to child, parents, and foster parents) (Chi Square = 9.48, $p = .002$). When child was in an adoptive placement, ratings for this item addressed whether services were provided to adoptive parents.

In addition to these findings, ratings for Permanency Outcome 2 were found to be significantly associated with ratings for items 17 through 23, all at a level of $p = .01$ or better.

Item ratings associated with achieving placement stability

Although there were significant relationships between item ratings and the overall rating for Permanency Outcome 1, further analyses were conducted to identify the items associated specifically with placement stability (item 6), which is an indicator of Permanency Outcome 1. As noted previously, ratings for item 6 are significantly associated with ratings for item 8 (reunification, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives). Ratings for item 6 also were found to be significantly associated with ratings for item 15 (Relative placement – Chi Square = 16.54; $p < .0001$), item 17 (Needs/services of child, parents and foster parents – Chi Square = 19.99; $p < .0001$), item 18 (Child/family involvement in case planning – Chi Square = 19.95; $p < .0001$), and item 20 (Worker visits with parents – Chi Square = 16.03; $p < .0001$).

In addition, significant associations were found between ratings for item 6 and ratings for items pertaining to meeting educational needs (item 21), physical health needs (item 22), and mental health needs (item 23). With regard to these findings, it may be that placement stability enhances the probability of children having their educational, physical, and mental health needs assessed and addressed as appropriate.

Item ratings associated with achieving safety.

Analyses were conducted to examine possible relationships between ratings for Safety Outcome 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible) and ratings for well-being indicators and the indicators for Safety Outcome 1 (Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect). Safety Outcome 2 includes the indicators of item 3 (Services to prevent removal) and 4 (Risk of harm). The relationship between ratings for these items was highly significant (based on the size of the Chi Square) (Chi Square = 347.56, $p < .0001$.) Because of this similarity, comparisons were conducted for ratings on Safety Outcome 2 and ratings for all seven of the well-being outcome indicators. A rating of substantial achievement for Safety Outcome 2 requires either that both item 3 and item 4 are rated as a Strength or that one is rated as a Strength and the other is Not Applicable.

The strongest association (based on the size of the Chi-Square) was found for the relationship between ratings for Safety Outcome 2 and ratings for item 17 (Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents – Chi Square = 270.67; $p < .0001$). Very strong associations (based on the size of the Chi Square) also were found for the relationship between ratings for Safety Outcome 2 and ratings for item 18 (Child/family involvement in case planning – Chi Square = 131.68; $p < .0001$); item 19 (Worker visits with children – Chi Square = 128.04; $p < .0001$), and item 20 (Worker visits with parents – Chi Square = 107.78; $p < .0001$).

With regard to safety, a significant association also was found between item 1 (Timeliness of investigation) and items 3 (Services to prevent removal) (Chi Square = 10.34; $p = .001$).

Item ratings associated with caseworker visits with children and parents

Ratings for item 19 (Worker visits with children) were found to be significantly associated with ratings for many of the other items. The strongest association (based on the size of the Chi Square) was between ratings for item 19 and ratings for item 20 (Worker visits with parents - Chi Square = 555.53; $p = .0001$). For this association, 91 percent of the cases rated as a Strength for item 20 also were rated as a Strength for item 19. The size of this association suggests that when workers make concerted efforts to establish frequent contact with the children in their caseloads, they often make the same effort to establish frequent contact with the parents.

Very strong associations (based on the size of the Chi-Square) also were found between ratings for item 19 and ratings for item 4 (Risk of harm – Chi-Square = 135.54; $p = .0001$), item 17 (Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents – Chi-Square = 215.83), and item 18 (Child/family involvement in case planning – Chi-Square=240.94). Highly significant relationships, although not as strong, also were found between ratings for item 19 and ratings for the following items.

- Item 3—Providing services to prevent removal (Chi-Square = 68.203 $p = .0001$)
- Item 7—Establishing an appropriate permanency goal for the child in a timely manner (Chi-Square = 11.27, $p = .001$)
- Item 8—Achieving permanency goals of reunification, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives in timely manner (Chi-Square = 7.495, $p = .006$)
- Item 13—Visits with parents and siblings in foster care (Chi-Square = 47.15: $p = .0001$).
- Item 15—Seeking relatives as potential placement options (Chi-Square = 8.57; $p = .003$)
- Item 21—Meeting children’s educational needs (Chi Square = 75.17; $p = .0001$)
- Item 22—Meeting children’s physical health needs (Chi-Square = 56.70; $p = .0001$)
- Item 23—Meeting children’s mental health needs (Chi-Square = 94.46; $p = .0001$)

As would be expected based on the relationship between ratings for item 19 and 20, ratings for item 20 (Worker visits with parents) were found to be significantly associated with ratings for all of the items associated with item 19. However, ratings for item 20 also were associated with ratings for item 6— Placement Stability (Chi-Square (1) = 16.03; p = .0001). As with item 19, ratings for item 20 were not associated with either adoption (item 9) or proximity of placement (item 11).

What are the findings with regard to agency efforts to work with both mothers and fathers?

An analysis was conducted to assess agency efforts to work with both fathers and mothers in the cases reviewed. Table II-22 provides the data comparing efforts to work with mothers and fathers across several variables.

Table II-22: Number and Percent of Cases in which Caseworkers were Found to Work with Mothers and with Fathers or to Seek Maternal and Paternal Relatives

Variable for Mothers and Fathers	Number of Applicable Cases*	Percent of Cases
Seeking relatives as potential placement resources (Chi-Square = 218.43, p = .0001)	763	100
Maternal relatives sought	598	78
Paternal relatives sought	485	64
Assessing needs for services (Chi-Square = 421.60, p = .0001)	1052	100
Mother’s needs assessed	792	75
Father’s needs assessed	627	60
Providing services to parents (Chi-Square = 384.43, p = .001)	995	100
Mother provided with services	714	72
Father provided with services	563	57
Involving parents in case planning (Chi-Square = 353.94, p = .0001)	930	100
Mother involved in case planning	622	67
Father involved in case planning	462	50
Worker contact (face-to-face)with parents (Chi-Square = 70.6, p = .001)	941	100
Worker contacted mother at least once a month	524	56
Worker contacted father at least once a month	294	31

*The number of applicable cases refers to the cases for which both mothers and fathers were known and for which seeking relatives, assessing needs and providing services was appropriate. For example, cases in which the father was not known or cases in which contact with father or mother was not feasible or appropriate would not be included in this table.

As shown in the table, when it was appropriate for the agency to work with both parents, they were far more likely to work with mothers than with the fathers. For each variable, a chi-square test revealed that there was a significant association between working with mothers in some way (or seeking maternal relatives) and working with fathers. Fathers were significantly more likely to be included in the process if mothers were. If mothers were not included, fathers were not likely to be included.