

QUALITY SERVICE REVIEW

Round 6

Montgomery County

April 2016



Prepared for:
Pennsylvania Office of Children, Youth and Families
Department of Public Welfare



pennsylvania
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BACKGROUND

The information provided within this report are the findings from Montgomery County Quality Service Review (QSR) which was conducted in April 2016.

The QSR is an in-depth case-based quality review process of frontline practice in specific locations and points in time. It is used for: (1) appraising the current status of a focus child/youth in key life areas, (2) status of the parent/caregiver, and (3) performance of key practices for the same child/youth and family. The review examines recent results for children/youth in protective care and their caregivers as well as the contributions made by local service providers and the system of care in producing those results.

The QSR uses a combination of record reviews, interviews, observations, and deductions made from fact patterns gathered and interpreted by trained reviewers regarding children, youth and families receiving services. The QSR Protocol provides reviewers with a specific set of indicators to use when examining the status of the child/youth and parent/caregiver and analyzing the responsiveness and effectiveness of the core practice functions. Indicators are divided into two distinct domains: child, youth and family status and practice performance.

Child, youth and family status indicators measure the extent to which certain desired conditions relevant to safety, permanence and well-being are present in the life of the child/youth and the parents/ caregivers. Changes in status over time may be considered the near-term outcomes at a given point in the life of a case. In measuring child/youth and family status, the QSR generally focuses on the most recent 30 day period, as of the review date.

Practice indicators measure the extent to which core practice functions are applied successfully by practitioners and others who serve as members of the child/youth and family team. Regardless of any change or lack of change in the status of the cases examined, these indicators generally identify the quality of the work being done within the 90 days leading up to the review.

As seen in Figure 1, the QSR instrument uses a Likert scale of 1 to 6 for each indicator, with a score of 1 representing “adverse” performance and a score of 6 representing “optimal” performance. The percentage of cases rated as “acceptable” and “unacceptable” is calculated for each indicator, with scores between 1 and 3 representing the “unacceptable” range and scores between 4 and 6 representing the “acceptable” range.

Acceptable Range: 6-4		Unacceptable Range: 3-1			
Maintenance Zone: 6-5		Refinement Zone: 4-3		Improvement Zone: 2-1	
Status is favorable. Efforts should be made to maintain and build upon a positive situation.		Status is minimum or marginal, may be unstable. Further efforts are necessary to refine the situation.		Status is problematic or risky. Quick action should be taken to improve the situation.	
6	5	4	3	2	1
Optimal Status	Substantial Status	Fair Status	Marginal Status	Poor Status	Adverse Status

Figure 1. QSR Likert Scale

METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of selecting a sample for the QSR, each county has been assigned to one of eight strata based on the number of dependent (including dependent/delinquent) children it served during federal fiscal year 2014. Montgomery County falls into missing, resulting in 15 cases being selected for review – 9 in-home cases and 6 placement cases. The in-home sample is family-based¹ and was selected for Montgomery County from a list provided by the county of families with open in-home cases on January 5, 2016. The placement sample is child-based and was selected for Montgomery County from a list provided by the county of those children in out-of-home placement on the same date. Of the 9 in-home cases selected for review, 0 required a case type change and were reviewed and rated as an out of-home case. Among the 6 out-of-home cases selected for review 0 required a case type change and were reviewed and rated as an in-home case.

The proportion of cases randomly selected, roughly 60 percent in-home and 40 percent out-of-home, closely reflect caseloads throughout the Commonwealth. For each of the in-home cases selected for review, one child was randomly selected as the “focus child” about whom reviewers were asked to rate the child-specific indicators.

Montgomery County conducted its QSR in April 2016. A total of 111 interviews were conducted, an average of 7.40 interviews per case.

¹ A “family-based” sample means that each family in the population represented a single unit that could be randomly sampled. This stands in contrast to a “child-based” sample, in which each child would represent a single unit to be sampled (meaning that a single family could be represented in the sample by multiple children).

DEMOGRAPHIC AND CASE INFORMATION

This section summarizes the demographic and case information for the cases reviewed during the Montgomery County Round 6 onsite QSR.

Case Type	#	% ²
In-Home	9	60.00 %
Out-of-Home	6	40.00 %
Total	15	100.00 %
Shared Case	0	-

Figure 2: Cases Reviewed by Case Type

Sex	#	%
Male	7	46.67 %
Female	8	53.33 %
Transgender/Transitioning	0	0.00 %
Total	15	100.00 %
Age	#	%
0 – 1	2	13.33 %
2 – 5	4	26.67 %
6 – 9	1	6.67 %
10 – 12	4	26.67 %
13 – 15	3	20.00 %
16 – 17	1	6.67 %
18 +	0	0.00 %
Total	15	100.00 %

Figure 3: Sex and Age of Focus Children/Youth

Race/Ethnicity	% ³
White/Caucasian	75.00 %
Black/African-American	12.50 %
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.00 %
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.00 %
Asian	0.00 %
Other	12.50 %
Unknown	0.00 %
Hispanic	53.85 %
Total	

Figure 4: Race and Ethnicity of Focus Children/Youth

² Throughout the report, percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

³ Percentages may not sum to 100% due to reviewers being able to select all races that apply.

Current Placement	#	%
Birth Home (Biological Mother)	3	20.00 %
Birth Home (Biological Father)	1	6.67 %
Birth Home (Both Biological Parents)	4	26.67 %
Post-Adoptive (Mother Only)	0	0.00 %
Post-Adoptive (Father Only)	0	0.00 %
Post-Adoptive (Both Parents)	0	0.00 %
Formal Kinship Foster Home	1	6.67 %
Informal Kinship Foster Home	1	6.67 %
Traditional Foster Home	5	33.33 %
Group/Congregate Home	0	0.00 %
Residential Treatment Facility	0	0.00 %
Subsidized/Permanent Legal Custodianship	0	0.00 %
Juvenile Correctional Facility	0	0.00 %
Medical/Psychiatric Hospital	0	0.00 %
Detention	0	0.00 %
Other	0	0.00 %
Total	15	100.00 %

Figure 5: Current Placement Types of Focus Children/Youth

Current Educational Placement/Situation	% ⁴	Current Educational Placement/Situation	%
N/A	7.69 %	Vocational/Technical	0.00 %
Early Intervention	0.00 %	Special Education	3.85 %
Early Learning	3.85 %	Part-time	0.00 %
Head Start	0.00 %	Full-time	15.38 %
Pre-School	3.85 %	Honor Roll	3.85 %
K-12	23.08 %	English As A Second Language	0.00 %
Public School	26.92 %	Graduated	0.00 %
Private School	0.00 %	General Equivalency Diploma (GED)	0.00 %
Home School	0.00 %	Truant	0.00 %
Charter School	0.00 %	Suspended	0.00 %
Cyber School	0.00 %	Expelled	0.00 %
Residential/Onsite	0.00 %	Dropped Out	0.00 %
Alternative Education	3.85 %	Post-Secondary Education	0.00 %
Gifted Program	0.00 %	Other	7.69 %
Advanced Placement	0.00 %		

Figure 6: Current Educational Placement/Situation of Focus Children/Youth

⁴ Percentages may not sum to 100% due to reviewers being able to select all educational placements/situations that apply.

Child/Youth Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Status	#	%
Child/Youth Has An IEP	3	20.00 %
Child/Youth Does Not Have An IEP	8	53.33 %
Child/Youth Is Not In School	4	26.67 %
Total	15	100.00 %

Figure 7: Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Status of Focus Children/Youth

Permanency Goals	Total	Appropriate		Inappropriate	
	#	#	%	#	%
Primary Permanency Goal					
Remain In The Home	9	9	100.00 %	0	0.00 %
Return Home	6	4	66.67 %	2	33.33 %
Adoption	0	0	-	0	-
Permanent Legal Custodian/Subsidized Legal Custodian	0	0	-	0	-
Placement With Fit And Willing Relative	0	0	-	0	-
Other Planned Placement Intended To Be Permanent/APPLA	0	0	-	0	-
No primary goal established	0				
Total	15	13	100.00 %	2	100.00 %
Concurrent Permanency Goal					
Return Home	0	0	-	0	-
Adoption	4	4	100.00 %	0	0.00 %
Permanent Legal Custodian/Subsidized Legal Custodian	0	0	-	0	-
Placement With Fit And Willing Relative	8	5	62.50 %	3	37.50 %
Other Planned Placement Intended To Be Permanent/APPLA	0	0	-	0	-
No Concurrent Goal Established	0				
Total	12	9	100.00 %	3	100.00 %

Figure 8: Current Permanency Goals of Focus Children/Youth & the Appropriateness of the Goals

CHILD/YOUTH AND FAMILY STATUS INDICATOR RATINGS

The Child/Youth and Family Status Domain section examines the safety, permanence and well-being of the child/youth, as well as the capacity of the child/youth’s caregivers (both familial and substitute) to provide support to that child/youth. Nine indicators are utilized, with the indicators generally focusing on the 30 days immediately prior to the on-site review. Several of the nine indicators have sub-indicators that are rated separately which then make up the overall score for each of the indicators that were previously described in the report. The percentage of cases rated as “acceptable” and “unacceptable” is calculated for each indicator, with scores between 1 and 3 representing the “unacceptable” range and scores between 4 and 6 representing the “acceptable” range.

Indicator	% Acceptable	% Unacceptable
Safety: Exposure To Threats Of Harm	96.55 %	3.45 %
Family Home #1	90.00 %	10.00 %
Family Home #2	100.00 %	0.00 %
Substitute Home	100.00 %	0.00 %
School	100.00 %	0.00 %
Other Setting	100.00 %	0.00 %
Safety: Risk To Self And Others	100.00 %	0.00 %
Risk To Self	100.00 %	0.00 %
Risk To Others	100.00 %	0.00 %
Stability	72.00 %	28.00 %
Living Arrangement	66.67 %	33.33 %
School	80.00 %	20.00 %
Living Arrangement	94.44 %	5.56 %
Family Home #1	90.00 %	10.00 %
Family Home #2	100.00 %	0.00 %
Substitute Home	100.00 %	0.00 %
Permanency	80.00 %	20.00 %
Physical Health	93.33 %	6.67 %
Emotional Well-Being	93.33 %	6.67 %
Early Learning And Development	100.00 %	0.00 %
Academic Status	88.89 %	11.11 %
Pathway To Independence	0.00 %	100.00 %
Parent And Caregiver Functioning	74.36 %	25.64 %
Mother	60.00 %	40.00 %
Father	70.00 %	30.00 %
Substitute Caregiver	100.00 %	0.00 %
Other	87.50 %	12.50 %

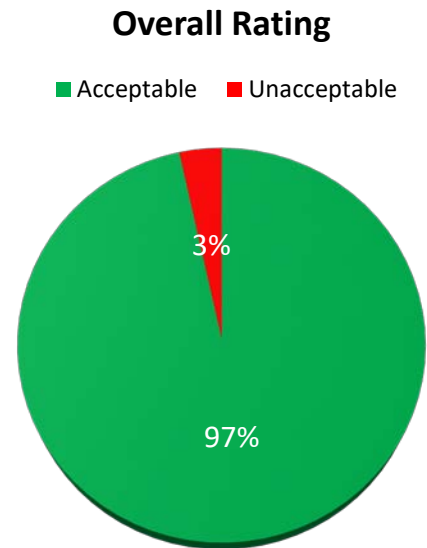
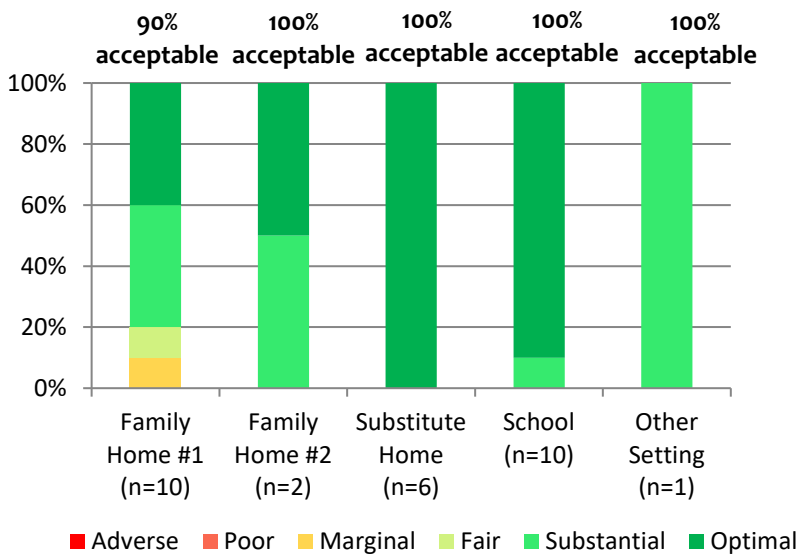
Figure 10: “Child/Youth & Family Status Domain” Ratings by Sub-Indicators

SAFETY

The following two indicators focus on the safety of the focus child/youth.

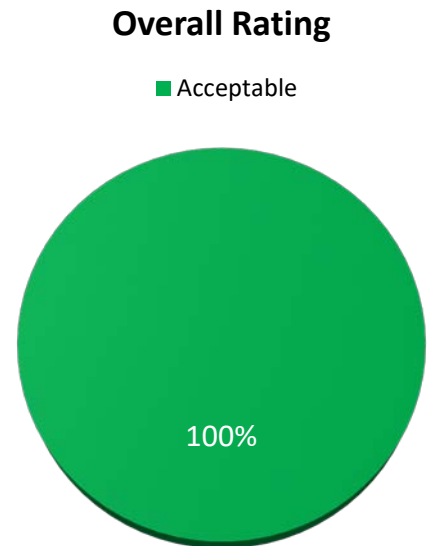
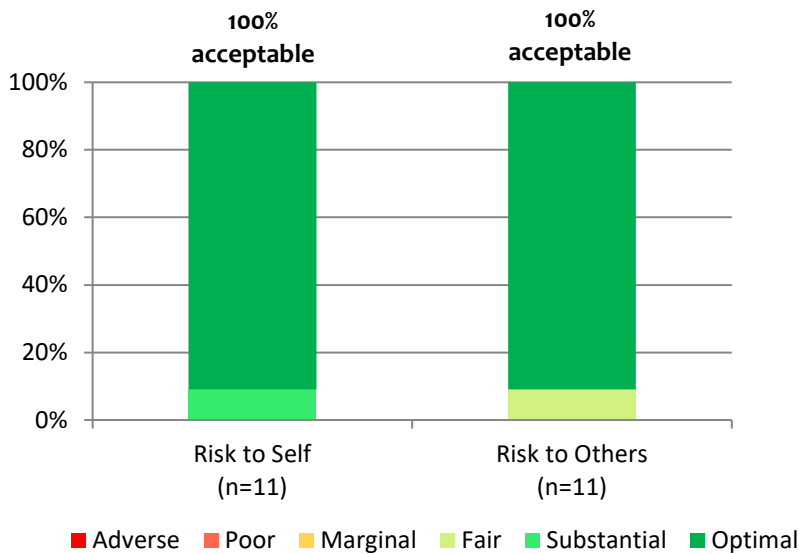
INDICATOR 1A: SAFETY FROM EXPOSURE TO THREATS OF HARM

Safety is the primary and essential factor that informs and guides all decisions made from intake through case closure. The focus is on identifying safety factors, present and/or impending danger, protective capacities and interventions with caregivers to supplement protective capacities. The first safety indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth is free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in his/her place of residence, school, and other daily settings; it also addresses whether the child/youth's parents and/or caregivers provide the attention, actions, and supports and possess the skills and knowledge necessary to protect the child/youth from known and potential threats of harm in the home, school, and other daily settings.



INDICATOR 1B: SAFETY FROM RISK TO SELF/OTHERS

Throughout development, a child/youth learns to follow rules, values, norms, and laws established in the home, school, and community, while learning to avoid behaviors and actions that can put themselves or others at risk of harm. The second safety indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth avoids self-endangerment and if the child/youth refrains from using behaviors that may put others at risk of harm. This indicator applies only to children/youth ages three or older.

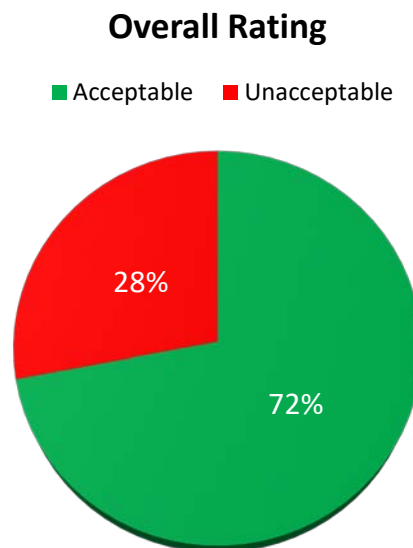
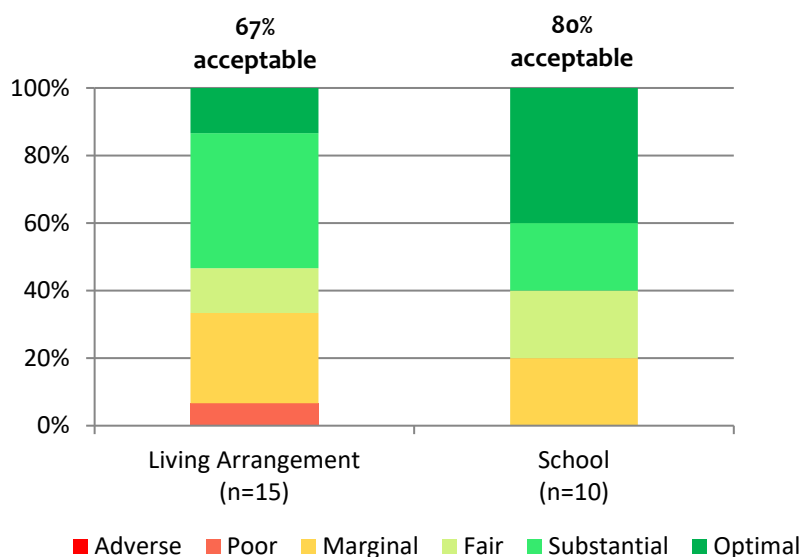


PERMANENCY

When measuring permanency, the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) only examines the circumstances for the child/youth placed in out-of-home care. Pennsylvania's QSR, however, examines the permanency needs of all children and youth, those removed from their homes as well as those who continue to live with their parents/caretakers.

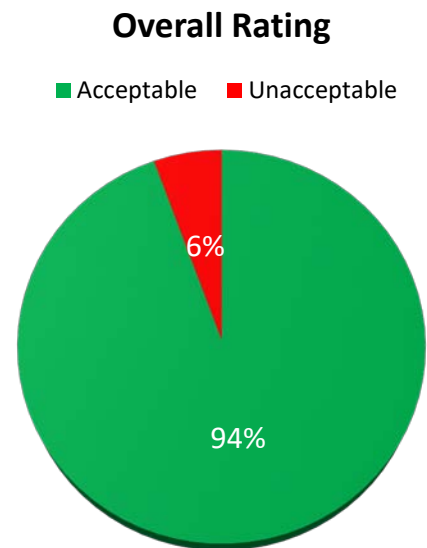
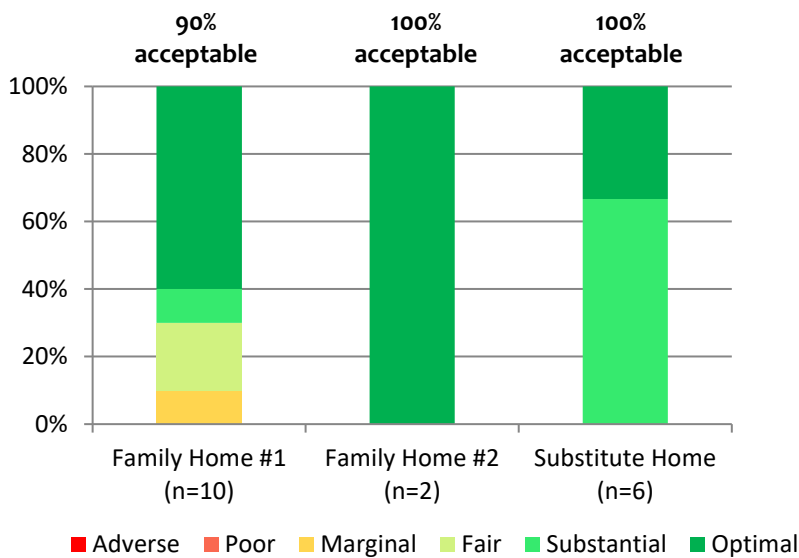
INDICATOR 2: STABILITY

Stability and continuity in a child/youth's living arrangement, school experience, and social support network is one factor that provides a foundation for normal development. Continuity in caring relationships and consistency of settings and routines are essential for a child/youth's sense of identity, security, attachment, trust, social development and sense of well-being. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth's daily living and learning arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions; their daily settings, routines, and relationships are consistent over recent times; and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption. This indicator looks retrospectively over the past 12 months and prospectively over the next six months to assess the relative stability of the child/youth's living arrangement and school settings.



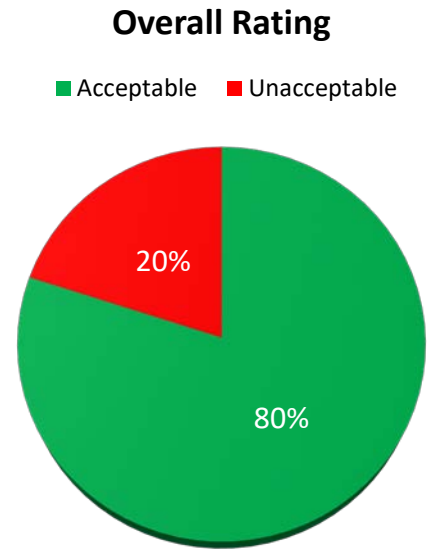
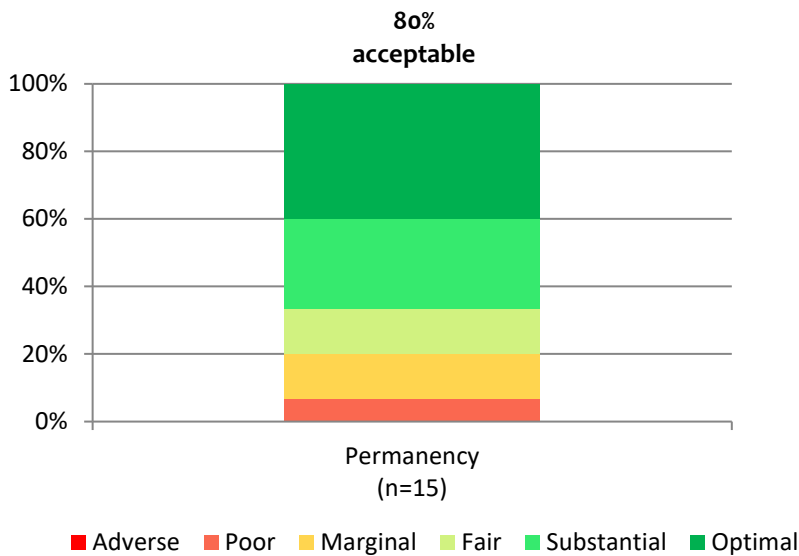
INDICATOR 3: LIVING ARRANGEMENT

The child/youth's home is the one that the individual has lived in for an extended period of time. For a child/youth that is not in out-of-home care, this home can be the home of his or her parents, informal kinship care, adoptive parents, or a guardian. For a child/youth in out-of-home care, the living arrangement can be a resource family setting or a congregate care setting. The child/youth's home community is generally the area in which the child/youth has lived for a considerable amount of time and is usually the area in which the child/youth was living prior to removal. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth, consistent with age and/or ability, is currently living in the most appropriate/least restrictive living arrangement, consistent with the need for family relationships, assistance with any special needs, social connections, education, and positive peer group affiliation. If the child/youth is in out-of-home care, the living arrangement should meet the child/youth's basic needs as well as the inherent expectation to be connected to his/her language and culture, community, faith, extended family, tribe, social activities, and peer group. This indicator evaluates the child/youth's current living situation.



INDICATOR 4: PERMANENCY

Every child/youth is entitled to a safe, secure, appropriate, and permanent home. Permanency is achieved when the child/youth is living successfully in a family situation that the child/youth, parents, caregivers, and other team members believe will endure for a lifetime. This indicator assesses the degree to which there is confidence by the child/youth, parents, caregivers or other team members that the child/youth is living with parents or other caregivers who will sustain in this role until the child/youth reaches adulthood and will continue to provide enduring family connections and supports into adulthood. Where such support is not available, the review assesses the timeliness of the permanency efforts to ensure that the child/youth will be enveloped in enduring relationships that will provide a sense of family, stability, and belonging.

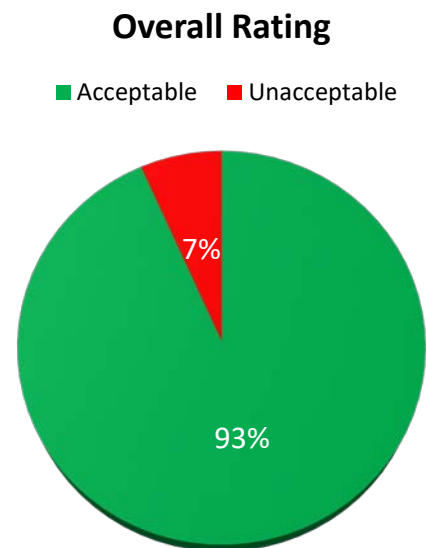
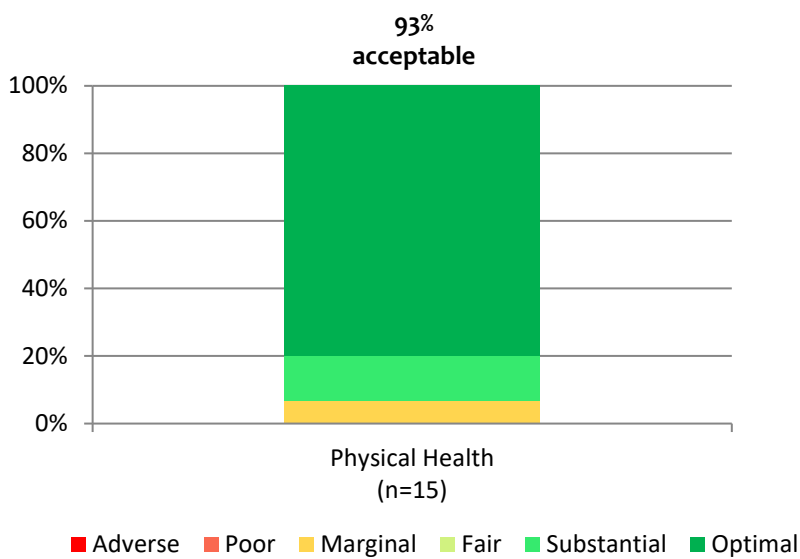


WELL-BEING

The following five indicators examine the well-being needs of the child/youth.

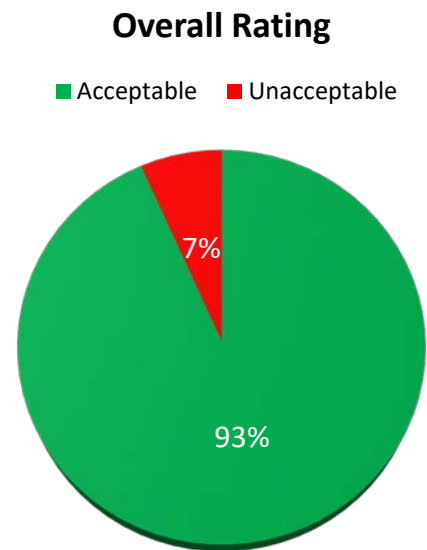
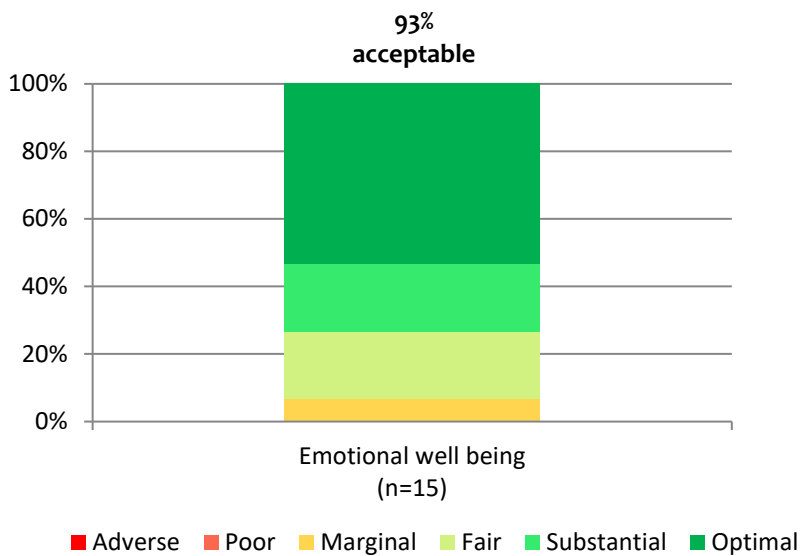
INDICATOR 5: PHYSICAL HEALTH

A child/youth should achieve and maintain their best attainable health status, consistent with their general physical condition when taking medical diagnoses, prognoses, and history into account. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth is achieving and maintaining his/her optimum health status. If the child/youth has a serious or chronic physical illness, the child/youth should be achieving his/her best attainable health status given the disease diagnosis and prognosis.



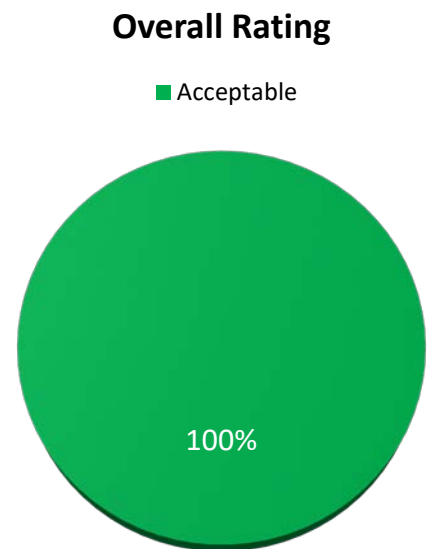
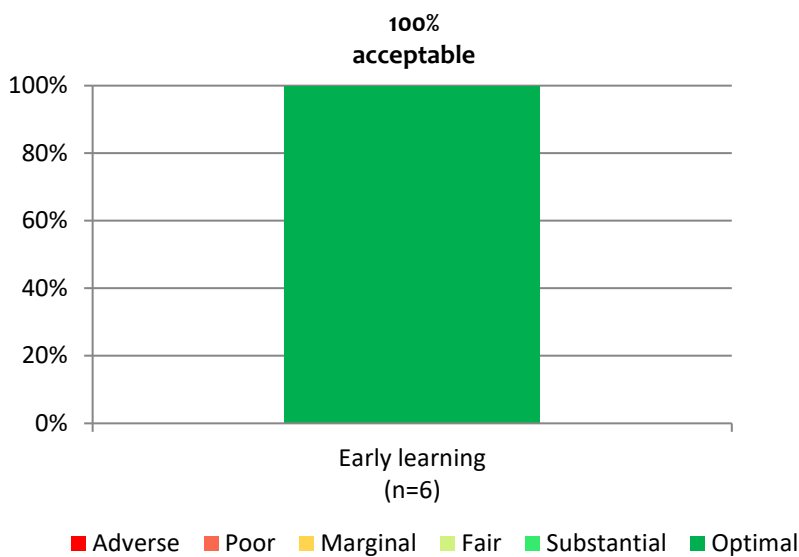
INDICATOR 6: EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Emotional well-being is achieved when an individual's essential human needs are met in a consistent and timely manner. These needs vary across life span, personal circumstances and unique individual characteristics. When these needs are met, a child/youth is able to successfully attach to caregivers, establish positive interpersonal relationships, cope with difficulties, and adapt to change. They develop a positive self-image and a sense of optimism. Conversely, problem behaviors, difficulties in adjustment, emotional disturbance, and poor achievement are often the result of unmet needs. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth, consistent with age and/or ability, is displaying an adequate pattern of attachment and positive social relationships, coping and adapting skills, and appropriate self-management of emotions and behaviors.



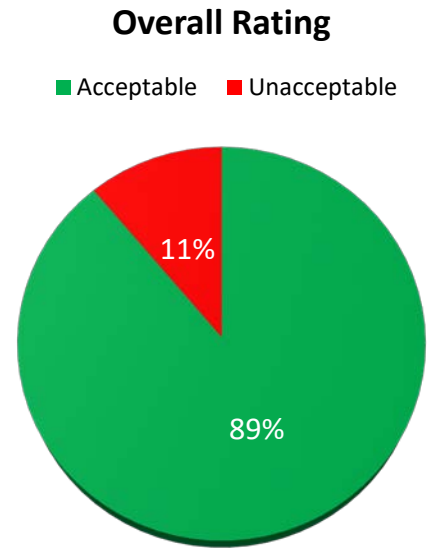
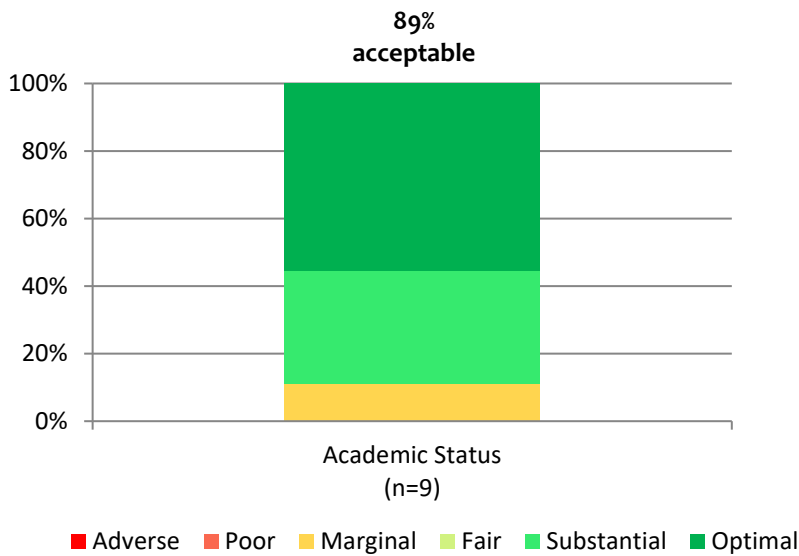
INDICATOR 7A: EARLY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

From birth, a child progresses through a series of stages of learning and development. The growth during the first eight years is greater than any subsequent developmental stage. This offers a great potential for accomplishment, but it also creates vulnerabilities if the child's physical status, relationships, and environments do not support appropriate learning, development, and growth. These developmental years provide the foundation for later abilities and accomplishments. Significant differences in children's abilities are also associated with social and economic circumstances that may affect learning and development. This indicator assesses the degree to which the young child's developmental status is commensurate with the child's age and developmental capacities; and whether or not the child's developmental status in key domains is consistent with age and/or ability-appropriate expectations. This indicator applies only to children under the age of eight years and not attending school.



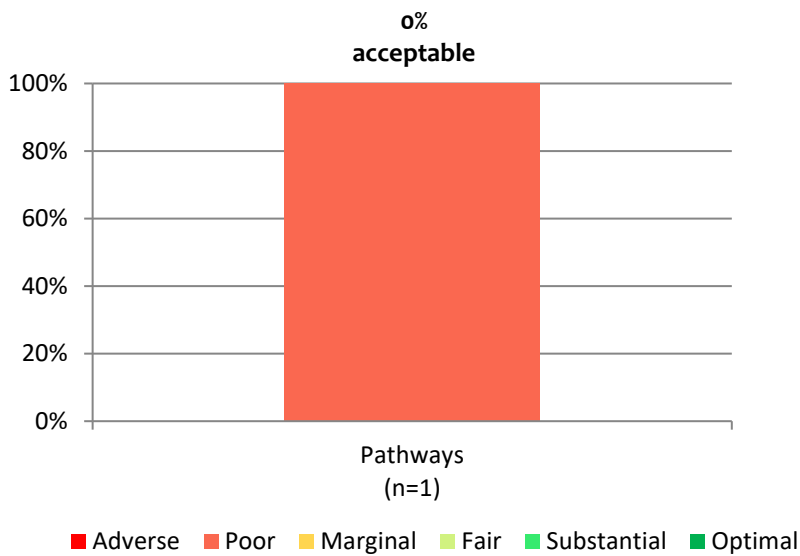
INDICATOR 7B: ACADEMIC STATUS

A child/youth is expected to be actively engaged in developmental, educational, and/or vocational processes that will enable him or her to build skills and functional capabilities at a rate and level consistent with his/her age and abilities. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth is regularly attending school; is placed in a grade level consistent with age or developmental level; is actively engaged in instructional activities; is reading at grade level or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) expectation level; and is meeting requirements for annual promotion and course completion leading to a high school diploma or equivalent. This indicator applies to a child/youth eight years or older or attending school.

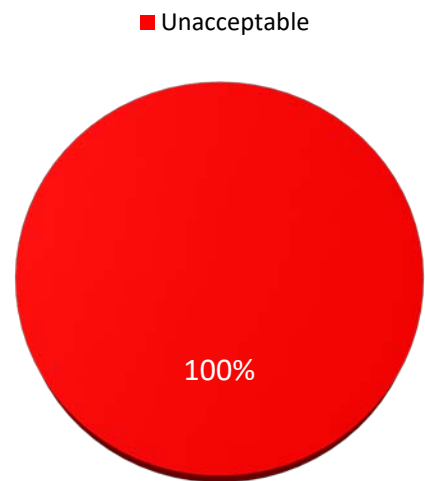


INDICATOR 8: PATHWAY TO INDEPENDENCE

The goal of assisting youth is to build the capacities that will enable them to live safely and function successfully and independently, consistent with their ages and abilities, following the conclusion of youth services. This indicator assesses the degree to which the youth is gaining the skills, education, work experience, connections, relationships, income, housing, and necessary capacities for living safely and functioning successfully independent of the agency's services, and is developing long-term connections and informal supports that will support him/her into adulthood. This indicator applies to any youth who is age 16 or older and it looks at outcomes beyond formal independent living services.



Overall Rating

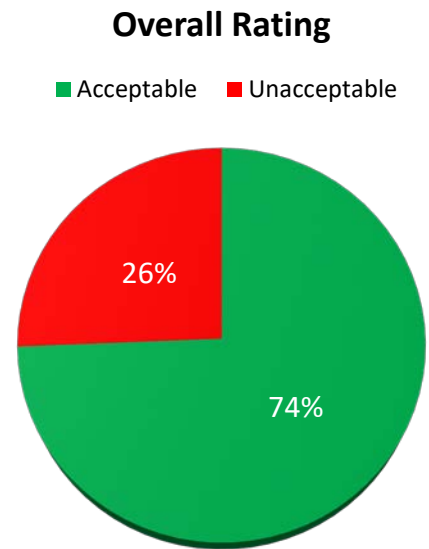
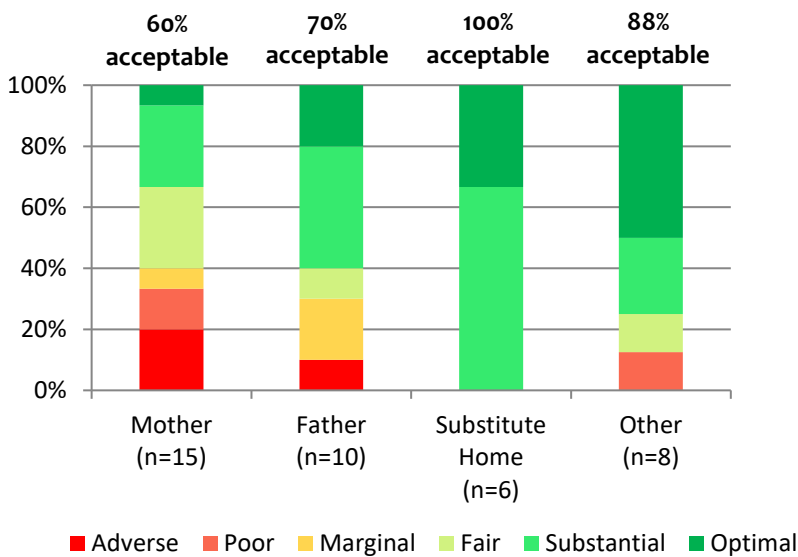


PARENT/CAREGIVER FUNCTIONING

The following indicator evaluates the capacity of the child/youth’s caregivers (both familial and substitute) to provide support to the child/youth.

INDICATOR 9: PARENT/CAREGIVER FUNCTIONING

Parents/caregivers should have and use the necessary levels of knowledge, skills, and situational awareness to provide their child/youth with nurturance, guidance, age-appropriate discipline, and supervision necessary for protection, care, and normal development. Understanding the basic developmental stages that a child/youth experiences, as well as awareness of relevant milestones, expectations, and appropriate methods for shaping behavior are key to parental capacity to support their child/youth’s healthy growth and learning. This indicator assesses the degree to which the parent(s), other significant adult(s) and/or substitute caregiver(s), is/are willing and able to provide the child/youth with the assistance, protection, supervision, and support necessary for daily living. If added supports are required in the home to meet the needs of the child/youth and assist the parent(s) or caregiver(s), those added supports should also meet the child/youth’s needs.



PRACTICE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR RESULTS

The Practice Performance Domain section examines the twelve indicators used to assess the status of core practice functions. These indicators generally focus on the past 90 days from the date of the on-site review, unless otherwise indicated. The percentage of cases rated as “acceptable” and “unacceptable” is calculated for each indicator, with scores between 1 and 3 representing the “unacceptable” range and scores between 4 and 6 representing the “acceptable” range.

Indicator	% Acceptable	% Unacceptable
Engagement efforts	76.92 %	23.08 %
Child/youth	90.91 %	9.09 %
Mother	80.00 %	20.00 %
Father	50.00 %	50.00 %
Substitute caregiver	100.00 %	0.00 %
Other	75.00 %	25.00 %
Role & voice	71.43 %	28.57 %
Child/youth	77.78 %	22.22 %
Mother	73.33 %	26.67 %
Father	45.45 %	54.55 %
Substitute caregiver	100.00 %	0.00 %
Other	75.00 %	25.00 %
Teaming	80.00 %	20.00 %
Formation	86.67 %	13.33 %
Functioning	73.33 %	26.67 %
Cultural awareness & responsiveness	80.95 %	19.05 %
Child/youth	86.67 %	13.33 %
Mother	80.00 %	20.00 %
Father	75.00 %	25.00 %
Assessment & understanding	81.25 %	18.75 %
Child/youth	93.33 %	6.67 %
Mother	86.67 %	13.33 %
Father	50.00 %	50.00 %
Substitute caregiver	100.00 %	0.00 %
Long-term view	73.33 %	26.67 %
Child/youth & family planning process	80.85 %	19.15 %
Child/youth	93.33 %	6.67 %
Mother	86.67 %	13.33 %
Father	54.55 %	45.45 %
Substitute caregiver	83.33 %	16.67 %
Planning for transitions & life adjustments	71.43 %	28.57 %
Efforts to timely permanence	71.43 %	28.57 %
Efforts	73.33 %	26.67 %
Timeliness	66.67 %	33.33 %
Intervention adequacy & resource	73.33 %	26.67 %

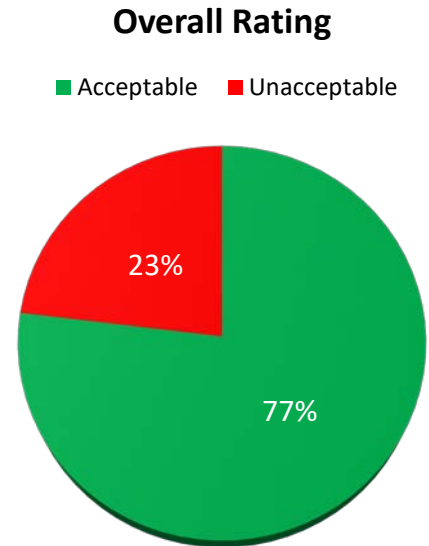
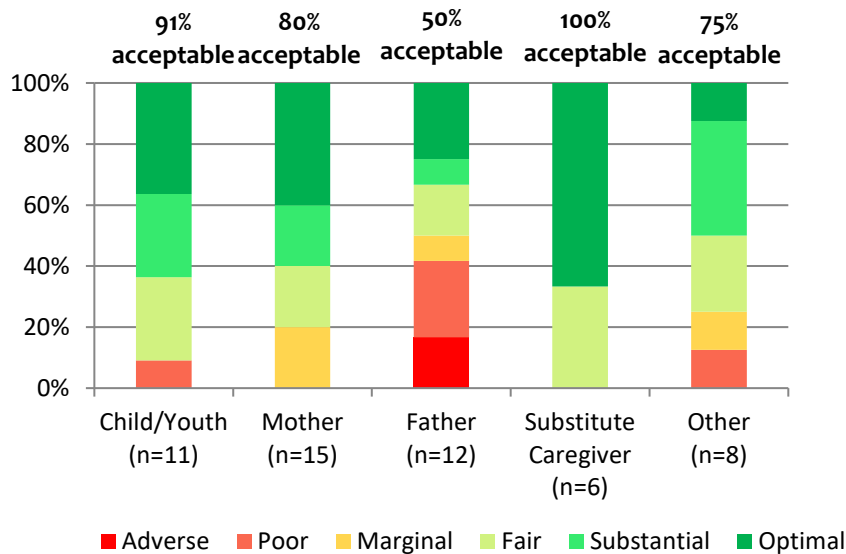
Indicator	% Acceptable	% Unacceptable
availability		
Adequacy	66.67 %	33.33 %
Availability	80.00 %	20.00 %
Maintaining family relationships	60.00 %	40.00 %
Mother	71.43 %	28.57 %
Father	28.57 %	71.43 %
Siblings	57.14 %	42.86 %
Other	100.00 %	0.00 %
Tracking & adjusting	80.00 %	20.00 %
Tracking	73.33 %	26.67 %
Adjusting	86.67 %	13.33 %

Figure 16: "Practice Performance Domain Ratings" QSR Results

INDICATOR 1A: ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

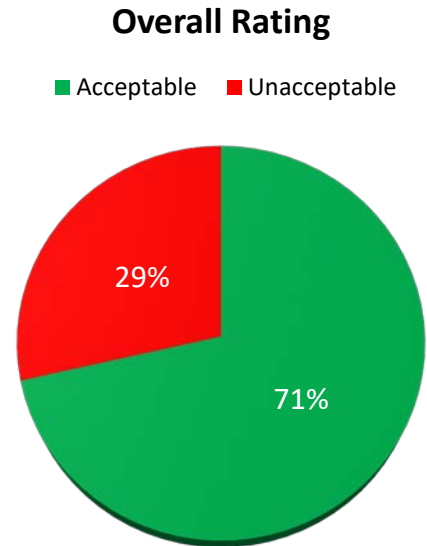
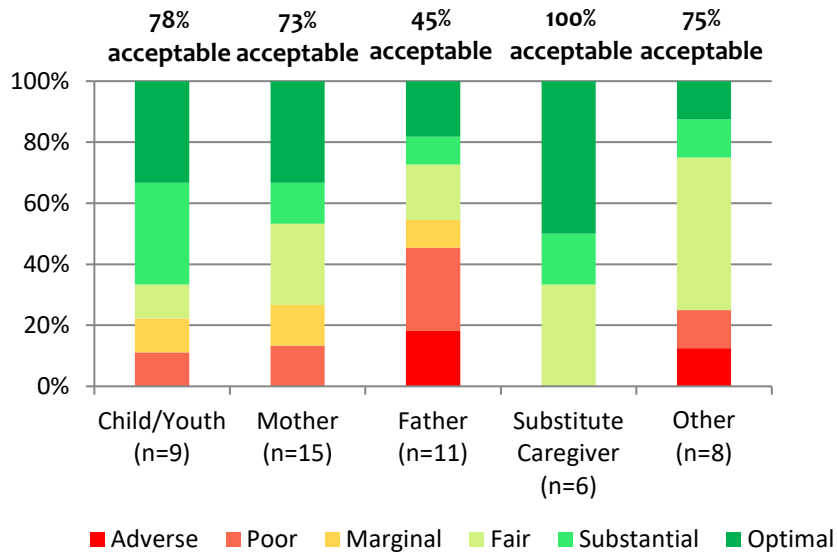
For this indicator the central focus is on the diligence shown by the team in taking actions to find, engage, and build a rapport with the child/youth and families and overcoming barriers to families' participation. This indicator assesses the degree to which those working with the child/youth and his/her family (parents and other caregivers) are:

- Finding family members who can provide support and permanency for the child/youth;
- Developing and maintaining a culturally competent, mutually beneficial trust-based working relationship with the child/youth and family;
- Focusing on the child/youth and family's strengths and needs;
- Being receptive, dynamic, and willing to make adjustments in scheduling and meeting locations to accommodate family participation in the service process, including case planning; and
- Offering transportation and childcare supports, where necessary, to increase family participation in planning and support efforts.



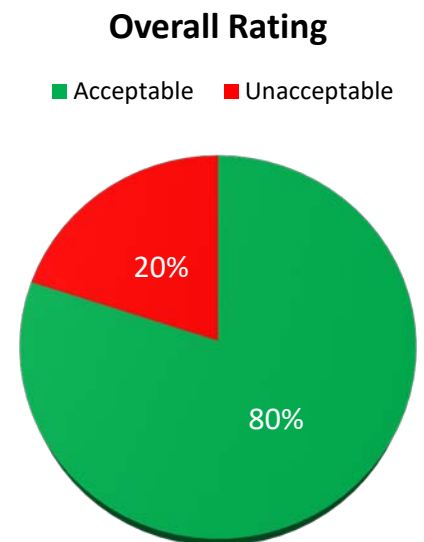
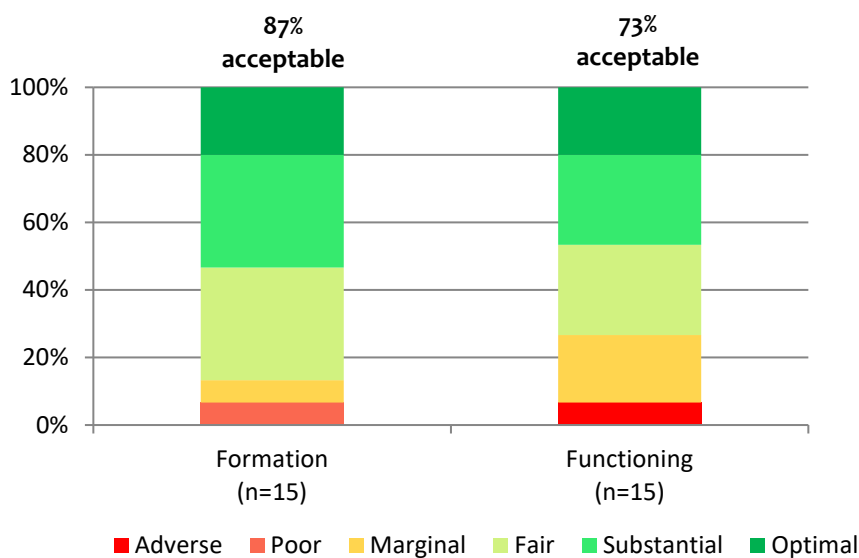
INDICATOR 1B: ROLE & VOICE

The family change process belongs to the family. The child/youth and family should have a sense of personal ownership in the plan and decision process. Service arrangements should build on the strengths of the child/youth and family and they should reflect their strengths, views and preferences. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth, parents, family members, and caregivers are active, ongoing participants (e.g., having a significant role, voice, choice, and influence) in shaping decisions made about the child/youth and family strengths and needs, goals, supports, and services.



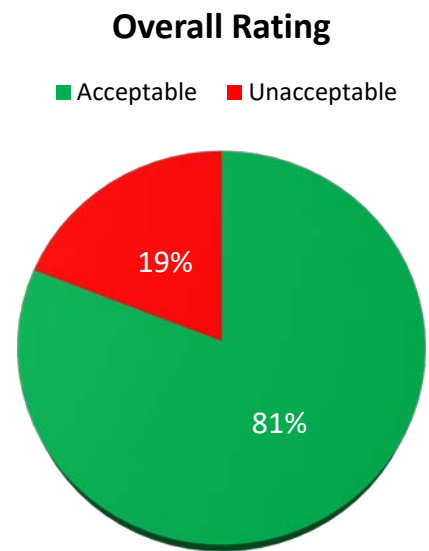
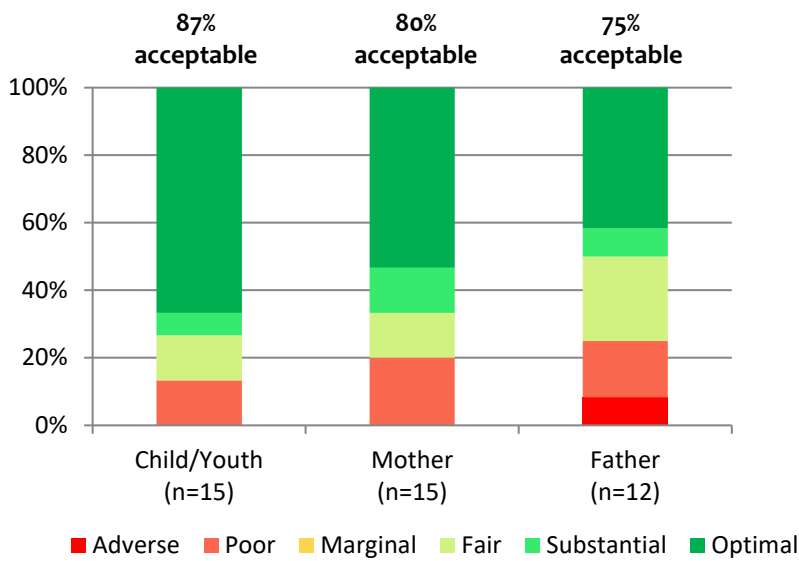
INDICATOR 2: TEAMING

This indicator focuses on the formation and functional performance of the family team in conducting ongoing collaborative problem solving, providing effective services, and achieving positive results with the child/youth and family. This indicator assesses the degree to which appropriate team members have been identified and formed into a working team that shares a common “big picture” understanding and long-term view of the child/youth and family. Team members should have sufficient professional knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness to work effectively with the child/youth and family. Members of the team should demonstrate a pattern of working together effectively to share information, plan, provide, and evaluate services for the child/youth and family. This indicator examines and evaluates the formation of the team, and the functioning of the team as two separate components.



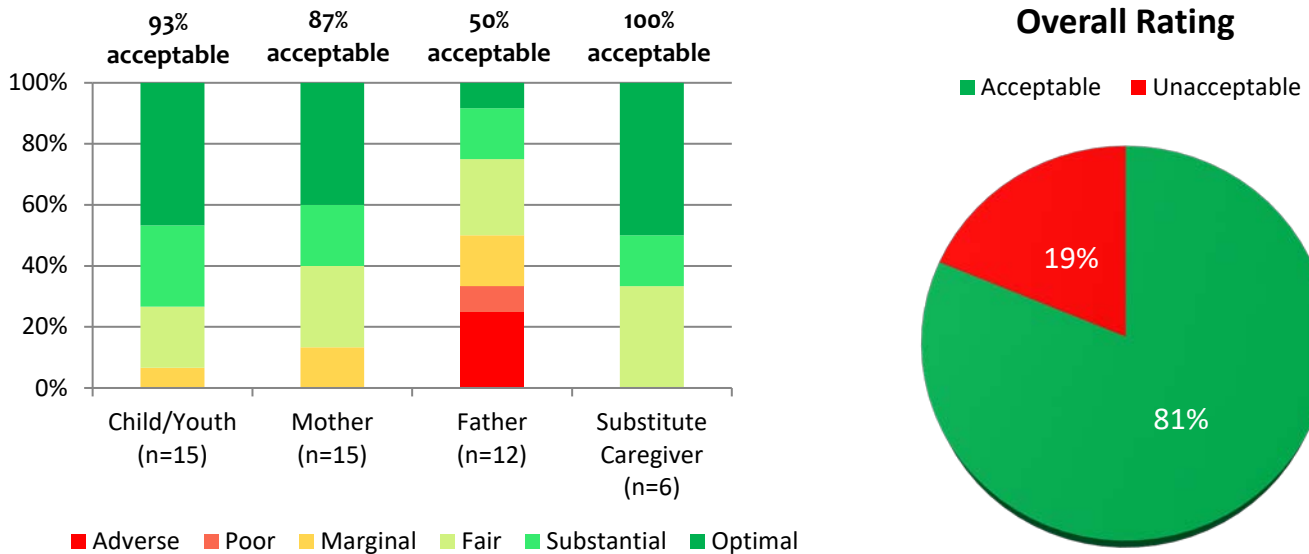
INDICATOR 3: CULTURAL AWARENESS & RESPONSIVENESS

Making cultural accommodations may involve a set of strategies used by practitioners to individualize the service process to improve the “goodness-of-fit” between family members and providers who work together in the family change process. The term “culture” is broadly defined; here, focus is placed on whether the child/youth’s and family’s culture has been assessed, understood, and accommodated. This indicator assesses the degree to which any significant cultural issues, family beliefs, and customs of the child/youth and family have been identified and addressed in practice (e.g., culture of poverty, urban and rural dynamics, faith and spirituality and youth culture). It examines if the natural, cultural, or community supports, appropriate for this child/youth and family, are being provided; and, if necessary, supports and services provided are being made culturally appropriate via special accommodations in the engagement, assessment, planning, and service delivery processes in use among the child/youth and family.



INDICATOR 4: ASSESSMENT & UNDERSTANDING

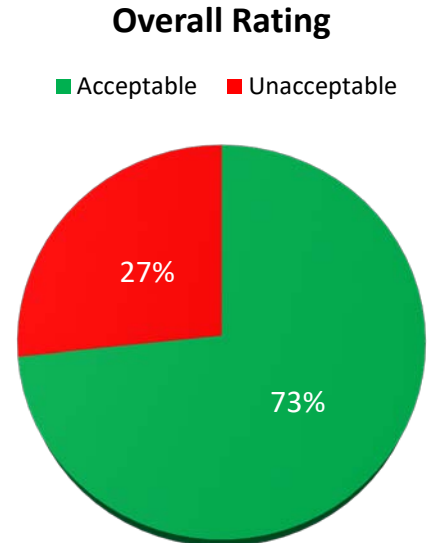
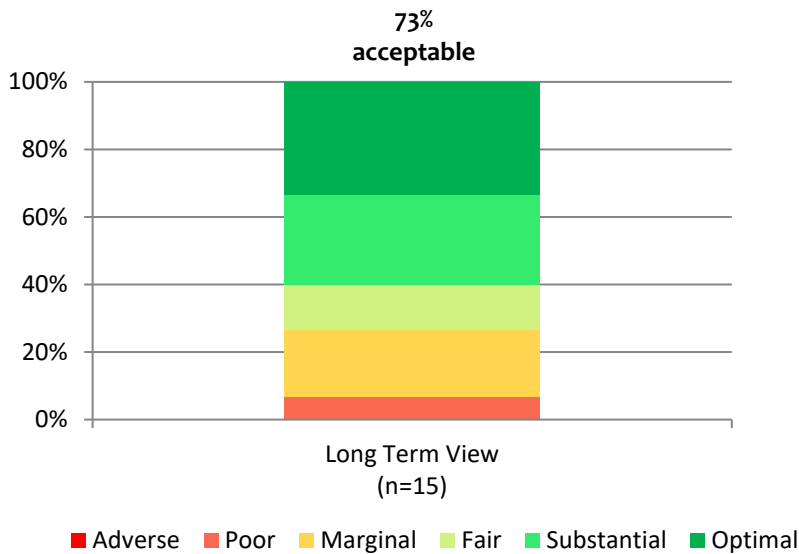
Assessment involves understanding the core story of the child/youth and family and how the family reached its present situation. This story provides a framework for the family's history and is supplemented by the assessment/evaluation of the child/youth and family's current situation, environment, and support networks. This indicator assesses the degree to which the team has gathered and shared essential information so that members have a shared, big picture understanding of the child/youth's and family's strengths and needs based on the underlying issues, safety threats/factors, risk factors, protective capacities, culture, hopes and dreams. It assesses the development of an understanding of what changes must take place in order for the child/youth and family to live safely together, achieve timely permanence, and improve the child/family's well-being and functioning. The team's assessment and understanding of the child/youth and family situation should evolve throughout the family change process, and ongoing assessments of the child/youth and family situation should be used to better understand what modifications in planning and intervention strategies are needed to achieve sustainable, safe case closure.



INDICATOR 5: LONG-TERM VIEW

Having a long-term view of a better life enables the child/youth, family, and those helping them to see both the next steps forward and the end-points on the horizon that provide a clear vision of the pathway ahead. This indicator focuses on the specification and use of the capacities and conditions that must be attained by the child/youth and family (birth, adoptive, or guardianship) to achieve stability, adequate functioning, permanency, and other outcomes necessary to achieve their desired improvements and goals. This indicator assesses the degree to which there is a guiding strategic vision shared by the family team, including the parents and child/youth, which describes:

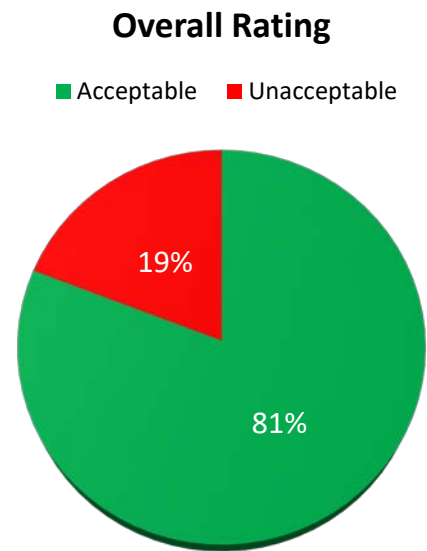
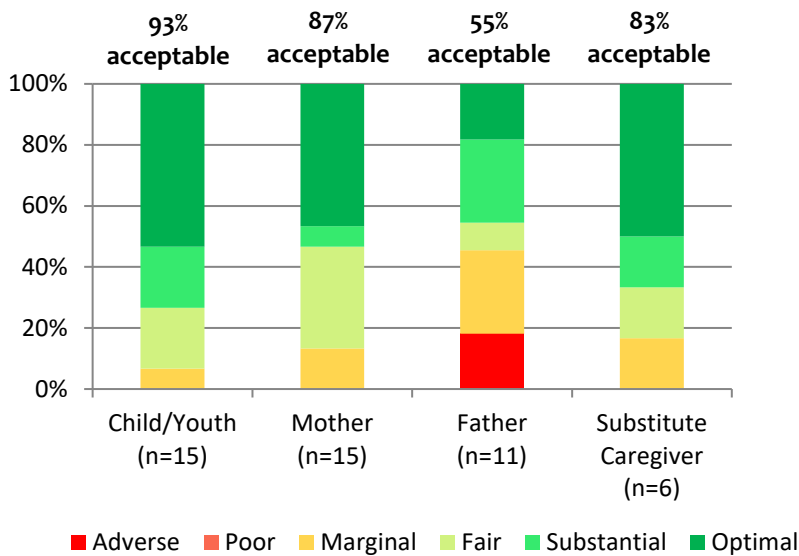
- The purpose and path of interventions for achieving safe case closure;
- The capacities and conditions necessary for safe case closure; and
- The family's knowledge and supports to sustaining those capacities and conditions following safe case closure with child welfare intervention.



INDICATOR 6: CHILD/YOUTH & FAMILY PLANNING PROCESS

Planning is an ongoing team-based process for specifying and organizing intervention strategies and directing resources toward the accomplishment of defined outcomes set forth in the long-term view for the child/youth and family. This indicator assesses:

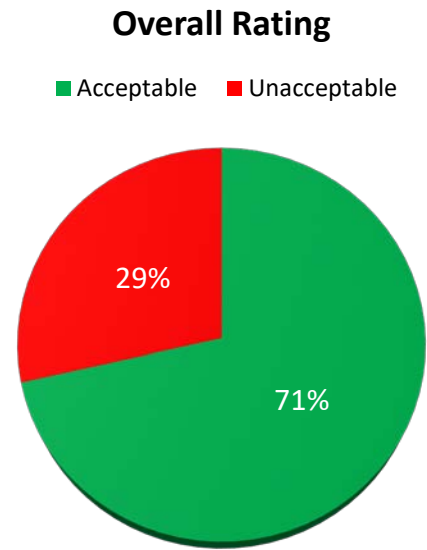
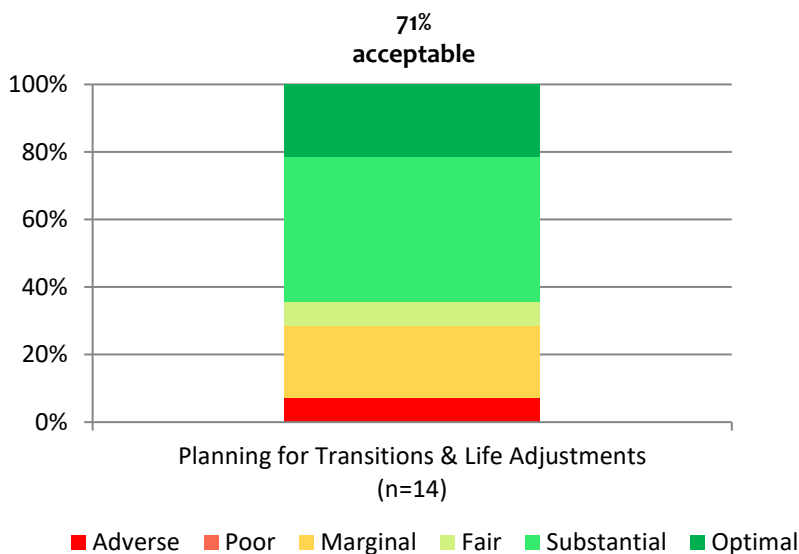
- The degree to which the planning process is individualized and matched to the child/youth’s and family’s present situation, preferences, near-term needs and long-term view for safe case closure; and
- Provides a combination and sequence of strategies, interventions, and supports that are organized into a holistic and coherent service process providing a mix of services that fits the child/youth’s and family’s evolving situation so as to maximize potential results and minimize conflicts and inconveniences.



INDICATOR 7: PLANNING FOR TRANSITIONS & LIFE ADJUSTMENTS

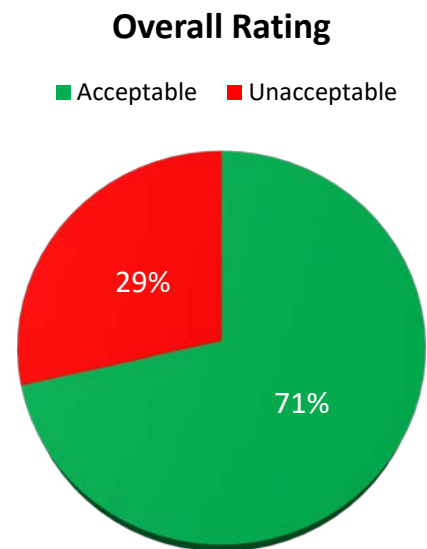
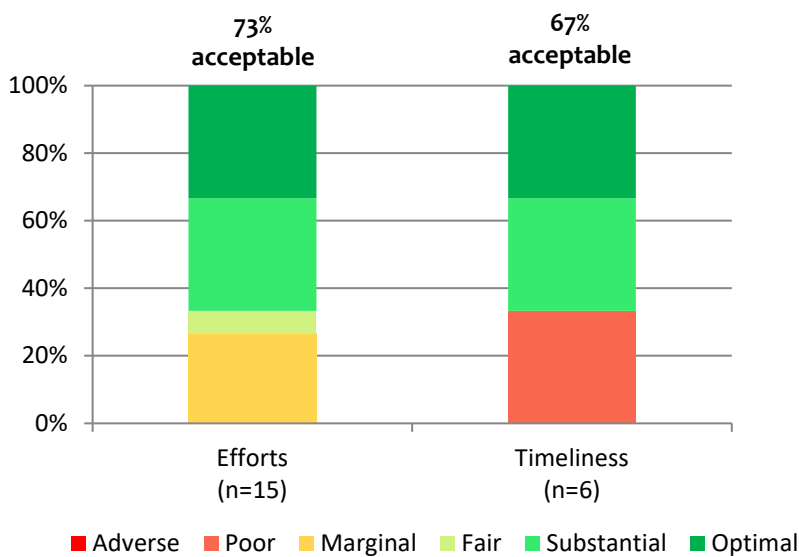
A child/youth and family move through several critical transitions over the course of childhood and adolescence. Well-coordinated efforts in assisting the child/youth through significant transitions are essential for success. This indicator assesses the degree to which the current or next life change transition for the child/youth and family is being planned, staged, and implemented to assure a timely, smooth, and successful adjustment after the change occurs. Plans and arrangements should be made to assure a successful transition and life adjustment in daily settings. Well-planned follow-along supports should be provided during the adjustment period to ensure that successes are achieved in the home or school situation.

Alternative timeframes are used for the ratings in this indicator. This indicator looks retrospectively over the past 90 days and prospectively over the next 90 days to assess the planning and transitioning through a significant life change and adjustment process of the child/youth and family.



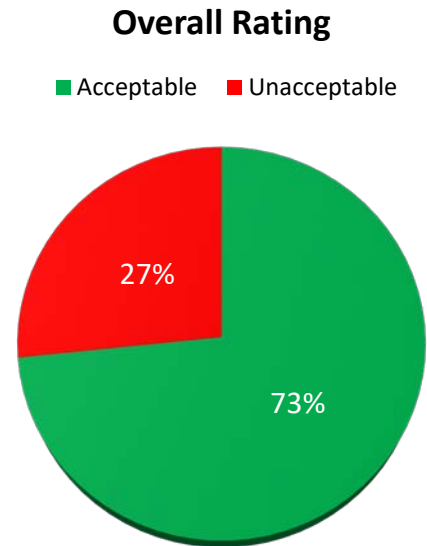
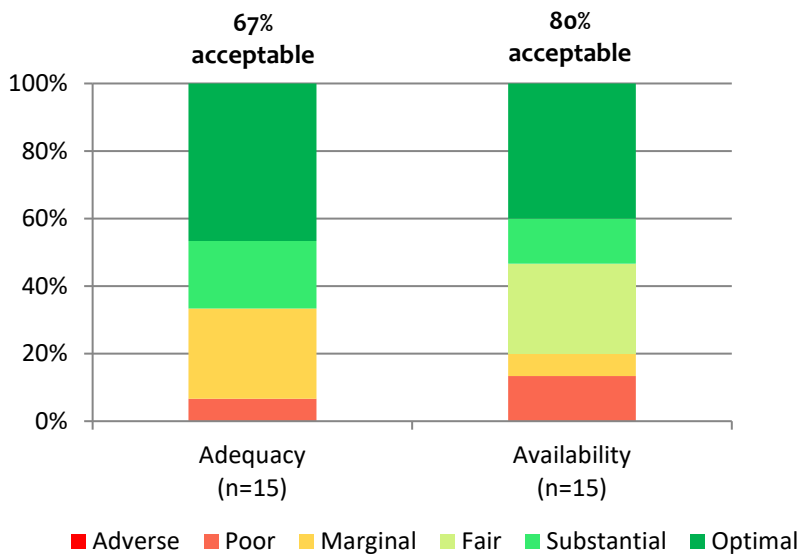
INDICATOR 8: EFFORTS TO TIMELY PERMANENCE

Conditions for timely permanence define requirements that have to be met in order for the child/youth to have a forever family with necessary supports to sustain the relationship once protective supervision ends. This indicator examines the pattern of diligent actions and the sense of urgency demonstrated by assigned team members. This indicator assesses the degree to which current efforts by system agents for achieving safe case closure (consistent with the long-term view) show a pattern of diligence and urgency necessary for timely attainment of permanence with sustained adequate functioning of the child/youth and family following cessation of protective supervision. This indicator looks at both efforts and timeliness. The “efforts” for achieving permanence are assessed for both out-of-home and in-home cases; however, the “timeliness” of achieving permanence is rated for out-of-home cases only and includes specific timeframes which reviewers must consider.



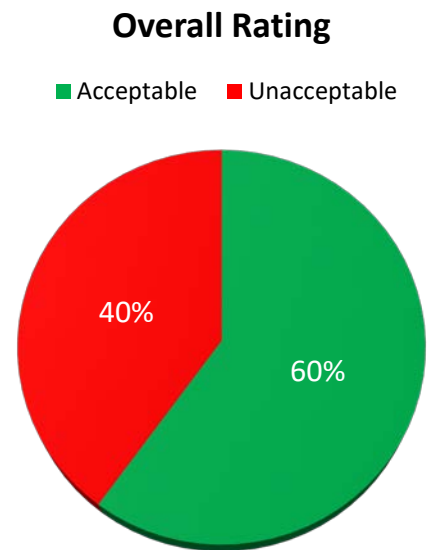
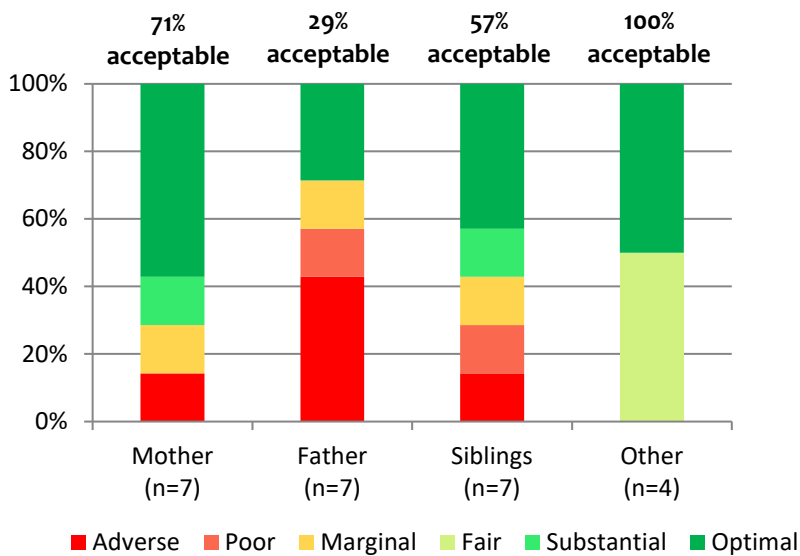
INDICATOR 9: INTERVENTION ADEQUACY & RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

To be adequate, the intensity and consistency of service delivery should be commensurate with that required to produce sustainable and beneficial results for the child/youth and family. An adequate, locally available array of services must exist in order to implement the intervention and support strategies planned for the child/youth and family. This indicator assesses the degree to which planned interventions, services, and supports being provided to the child/youth and family have sufficient power and beneficial effect to meet near-term needs and achieve the conditions necessary for safe case closure defined in the long-term view. Resources required to implement current child/youth and family plans should be available on a timely, sufficient, and convenient local basis.



INDICATOR 10: MAINTAINING FAMILY CONNECTIONS

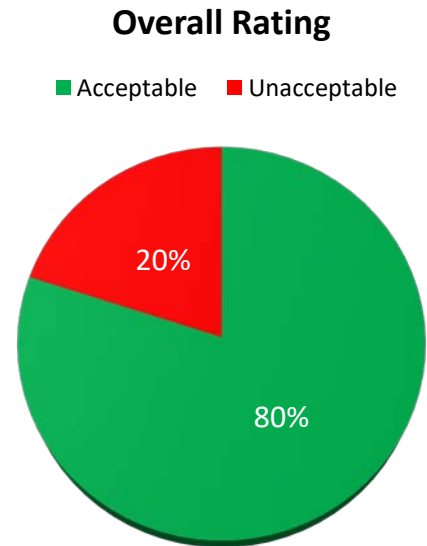
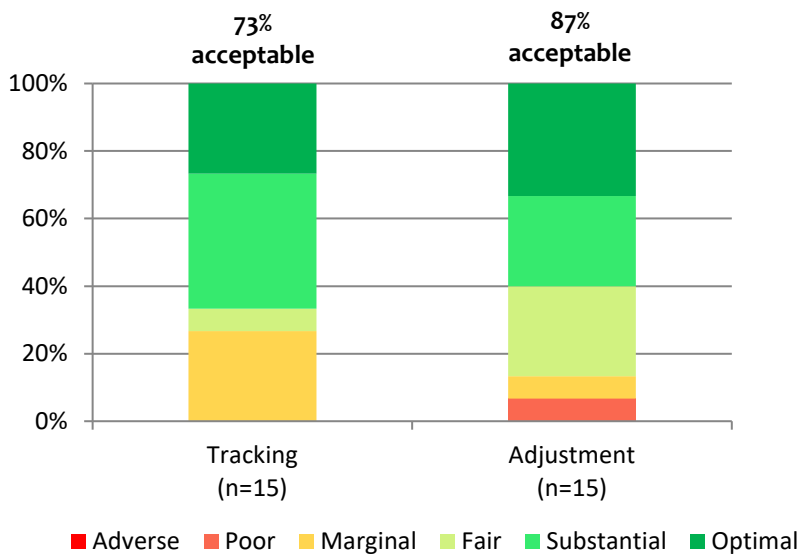
This indicator measures the quality of relationships between the child/youth and his/her family members and other important people in the child/youth's life. The quality of these relationships depends on opportunities for positive interactions; emotionally supportive, mutually beneficial connections; and engaging in nurturing exchanges with one another. When this occurs, it promotes the preservation of families and the successful reunification of the child/youth and his/her parents. This indicator assesses the degree to which interventions are building and maintaining positive interactions and providing emotional support between the child/youth and his/her parents, siblings, relatives and other important people in the child/youth's life, when the child/youth and family members are temporarily living away from one another.



INDICATOR 11: TRACKING & ADJUSTING

An ongoing examination process should be used by the team to track service implementation, check progress, identify emergent needs and problems, and modify services in a timely manner. This indicator assesses the degree to which:

- The team routinely monitors the child/youth's and family's status and progress, interventions, and results and makes necessary adjustments;
- Strategies and services are evaluated and modified to respond to changing needs of the child/youth and family; and
- Constant efforts are made to gather and assess information and apply knowledge gained to update planned strategies to create a self-correcting service process that leads to finding what works for the child/youth and family.



APPENDIX A: RATINGS LOGIC

Acceptable Range: 6-4		Unacceptable Range: 3-1			
Maintenance Zone: 6-5		Refinement Zone: 4-3		Improvement Zone: 2-1	
Status is favorable. Efforts should be made to maintain and build upon a positive situation.		Status is minimum or marginal, may be unstable. Further efforts are necessary to refine the situation.		Status is problematic or risky. Quick action should be taken to improve the situation.	
6	5	4	3	2	1
Optimal Status	Substantial Status	Fair Status	Marginal Status	Poor Status	Adverse Status
The best of most favorable status presently attainable for this individual in this area (taking age and ability into account). The individual is continuing to do great in this area. Confidence is high that long-term needs or outcomes will be or are being met in this area.	Substantially and dependably positive status for the individual in this area with an ongoing positive pattern. This status level is generally consistent with eventual attainment of long-term needs or outcomes in this area. Status is good and likely to continue.	Status is at least minimally or temporarily sufficient for the individual to meet short-term needs or objectives in this area. Status has been no less than minimally adequate at any time over the past 30 days, but may be short-term due to changing circumstances, requiring change soon.	Status is mixed, limited or inconsistent and not quite sufficient to meet the individual's short-term needs or objectives now in this area. Status has been somewhat inadequate at points in time or in some aspects over the past 30 days. Any risks may be minimal.	Status is and may continue to be poor and unacceptable. The individual's status has been substantially limited or inconsistent, being inadequate at some or many moments in time or in some essential aspect(s). Any risks may be mild to serious.	The individual's status in this area is poor, unacceptable and worsening. Any risks of harm, restriction, separation, regression, and/or other poor outcomes may be substantial and increasing.

APPENDIX B: RAW DATA BY SUB-INDICATOR

Montgomery County Round 6 Raw Data by Sub-Indicator	Ratings							Total Applicable (N)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA	
Exposure to Harm (Family Home #1)	0	0	1	1	4	4	5	10
Exposure to Harm (Family Home #2)	0	0	0	0	1	1	13	2
Exposure to Harm (Home - Substitute Home)	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	6
Exposure to Harm (School)	0	0	0	0	1	9	5	10
Exposure to Harm (Other Settings)	0	0	0	0	1	0	14	1
Risk to Self	0	0	0	0	1	10	4	11
Risk to Others	0	0	0	1	0	10	4	11
Stability: Living Arrangement	0	1	4	2	6	2	0	15
Stability: School	0	0	2	2	2	4	5	10
Living Arrangement (Family Home #1)	0	0	1	2	1	6	5	10
Living Arrangement (Family Home #2)	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	2
Living Arrangement (Substitute Home)	0	0	0	0	4	2	9	6
Permanency	0	1	2	2	4	6	0	15
Physical Health	0	0	1	0	2	12	0	15
Emotional Well-Being	0	0	1	3	3	8	0	15
Early learning and development	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	6
Academic status	0	0	1	0	3	5	6	9
Pathway to independence	0	1	0	0	0	0	14	1
Caregiver Functioning (Mother)	3	2	1	4	4	1	0	15
Caregiver Functioning (Father)	1	0	2	1	4	2	5	10
Caregiver Functioning (Substitute Caregiver)	0	0	0	0	4	2	9	6
Caregiver Functioning (Other)	0	1	0	1	2	4	7	8
Engagement Efforts (Child/Youth)	0	1	0	3	3	4	4	11
Engagement Efforts (Mother)	0	0	3	3	3	6	0	15
Engagement Efforts (Father)	2	3	1	2	1	3	3	12
Engagement Efforts (Substitute Caregiver)	0	0	0	2	0	4	9	6
Engagement Efforts (Other)	0	1	1	2	3	1	7	8
Role & Voice (Child/Youth)	0	1	1	1	3	3	6	9
Role & Voice (Mother)	0	2	2	4	2	5	0	15
Role & Voice (Father)	2	3	1	2	1	2	4	11
Role & Voice (Substitute Caregiver)	0	0	0	2	1	3	9	6
Role & Voice (Other)	1	1	0	4	1	1	7	8
Team Formation	0	1	1	5	5	3	0	15
Team Functioning	1	0	3	4	4	3	0	15
Cultural Awareness (Child/Youth)	0	2	0	2	1	10	0	15

Montgomery County Round 6 Raw Data by Sub-Indicator	Ratings							Total Applicable (N)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA	
Cultural Awareness (Mother)	0	3	0	2	2	8	0	15
Cultural Awareness (Father)	1	2	0	3	1	5	3	12
Assessment/Understanding (Child/Youth)	0	0	1	3	4	7	0	15
Assessment/Understanding (Mother)	0	0	2	4	3	6	0	15
Assessment/Understanding (Father)	3	1	2	3	2	1	3	12
Assessment/Understanding (Substitute Caregiver)	0	0	0	2	1	3	9	6
Long-term view	0	1	3	2	4	5	0	15
Planning (Child/Youth)	0	0	1	3	3	8	0	15
Planning (Mother)	0	0	2	5	1	7	0	15
Planning (Father)	2	0	3	1	3	2	4	11
Planning (Substitute Caregiver)	0	0	1	1	1	3	9	6
Transition & life adjustment	1	0	3	1	6	3	1	14
Efforts for timely Permanency (Efforts)	0	0	4	1	5	5	0	15
Efforts for timely Permanency (Timeliness)	0	2	0	0	2	2	9	6
Intervention Adequacy	0	1	4	0	3	7	0	15
Resource Availability	0	2	1	4	2	6	0	15
Maintaining Connections (Mother)	1	0	1	0	1	4	8	7
Maintaining Connections (Father)	3	1	1	0	0	2	8	7
Maintaining Connections (Siblings)	1	1	1	0	1	3	8	7
Maintaining Connections (Other)	0	0	0	2	0	2	11	4
Tracking	0	0	4	1	6	4	0	15
Adjusting	0	1	1	4	4	5	0	15