



# Child and Family Services Reviews

## Pennsylvania Final Report

2017



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Children's Bureau

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# Final Report: Pennsylvania Child and Family Services Review

## INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Pennsylvania. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and (3) assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Federal law and regulations authorize the Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, to administer the review of child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSRs are structured to help states identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their child welfare practices and programs as well as institute systemic changes that will improve child and family outcomes.

The findings for Pennsylvania are based on:

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Pennsylvania Office of Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF), Department of Human Services, and submitted to the Children's Bureau on February 1, 2017. The statewide assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan
- The results of case reviews of 65 cases (40 foster care and 25 in-home cases) conducted via a State Conducted Case Review process in Butler, Centre, Lehigh, Lycoming, Mercer, Northampton, and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania between April 1, 2017, and July 20, 2017
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
  - Attorneys representing the agency and representing parents
  - County Administrators and representatives from Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators Association
  - Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
  - Child welfare agency director and senior managers
  - Child welfare agency supervisors and caseworkers
  - Foster and adoptive parents, relative caregivers, and representatives from the state foster and adoptive parent association
  - Independent Living (IL) workers
  - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) staff
  - Judges and hearing officers

## Pennsylvania 2017 CF SR Final Report

- OCYF regional staff
- Parents
- Private agency training staff
- Representatives from the courts and Court Improvement Program (CIP)
- Service providers
- State licensed/approved child care facility staff
- Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) Legal Services Initiative paralegals
- Youth served by the agency

In Round 3, the Children’s Bureau suspended the use of the state’s performance on the national standards for the 7 statewide data indicators in conformity decisions. For contextual information, Appendix A of this report shows the state’s performance on the 7 data indicators. Moving forward, the Children’s Bureau will refer to the national standards as “national performance.” This national performance represents the performance of the nation on the statewide data indicators for an earlier point in time. For the time periods used to calculate the national performance for each indicator, see 80 Fed. Reg. 27263 (May 13, 2015).

### Background Information

The Round 3 CF SR assesses state performance with regard to substantial conformity with 7 child and family outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Each outcome incorporates 1 or more of the 18 items included in the case review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on an evaluation of certain child welfare practices and processes in the cases reviewed in the state. With two exceptions, an item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90% or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies to those items. For a state to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome.

Eighteen items are considered in assessing the state’s substantial conformity with the 7 systemic factors. Each item reflects a key federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on how well the item-specific requirement is functioning. A determination of the rating is based on information provided by the state to demonstrate the functioning of the systemic factor in the statewide assessment and, as needed, from interviews with stakeholders and partners. For a state to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors, no more than 1 of the items associated with the systemic factor can be rated as an Area Needing Improvement. For systemic factors that have only 1 item associated with them, that item must be rated as a Strength for a determination of substantial conformity.

The Children’s Bureau made several changes to the CF SR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round of reviews and in response to feedback from the child welfare field. As such, a state’s performance in the third round of the CF SRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round. Appendix A provides tables presenting Pennsylvania’s overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Pennsylvania’s performance in Round 2.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

#### **Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes and Systemic Factors**

None of the 7 outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity.

The following 5 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Case Review System
- Quality Assurance System
- Staff and Provider Training
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

#### **Children's Bureau Comments on Pennsylvania Performance**

The following are the Children's Bureau's observations about cross-cutting issues and Pennsylvania's overall performance:

Pennsylvania has demonstrated its commitment to continuous quality improvement (CQI) in its child welfare program by developing a robust case review process for a state-conducted CFSR. Although the state does not have a dedicated quality assurance (QA) unit, it developed a pool of trained reviewers and a team of QA staff to review a regionally based sample of cases while continuing to conduct Quality Service Reviews (QSR) and other CQI processes. Since the Round 2 CFSR, Pennsylvania has been developing processes to ensure that statewide data and information are collected, analyzed, and used to inform strategic improvements at the local level and throughout the state. The state's collaborative partnership with the Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC) has been a key support at both the county and state levels in implementing CQI and the state-led CFSR process. The ongoing integration of CQI principles serves as a solid foundation for continuing improvement in ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in the state.

The current leadership of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF), prioritized the development of a positive collaborative child-serving network of state agencies, private providers, county children and youth agencies (CCYAs), courts, and other key partners. During stakeholder interviews, representatives from that network discussed their positive engagement by the agency. The OCYF also developed and recently implemented the Child Welfare Council, a collaboration of partners that streamlines previously disconnected groups into a single functioning entity. As a state-supervised, county-administered child welfare system, Pennsylvania's commitment to collaborative relationships with CCYAs is critical to delivering effective child welfare services and serving children and families in the state. This partnership is also necessary for the

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

development, implementation, and monitoring of a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to improve practice, address CFSR findings, and implement ongoing CQI initiatives.

Interviews with key stakeholders and case review findings highlighted significant workforce concerns in Pennsylvania, including high caseloads and low retention of staff. The state attributes the increase in the number of maltreatment reports and growth in the foster care population to various factors, including significant changes to the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL), which amended the definitions of child abuse and perpetrator, and strengthened mandated reporter requirements. The recent increase in the number of cases involving parental substance abuse is also a contributing factor. Stakeholders reported an adverse effect of these workforce issues on caseworker visits with children and parents, the timely achievement of permanency for children, and the provision of quality services to meet the needs of children and families.

Case reviews identified practices that potentially affect the safety of children. Issues included inconsistencies in the timely response to maltreatment reports and in ensuring face-to-face contact with children in accordance with state policy, and multiple reports on a family involving the same or similar circumstances. A primary concern is delays in the assignment of a worker to investigate or assess referrals of abuse and neglect. Foster care cases are much less likely than in-home cases to have timely investigations. Safety is not consistently assessed, and appropriate safety services are not routinely provided to children and families. Additionally, when a safety plan is required, it is not always implemented or effectively monitored. Often, when a timely initial safety and risk assessment is completed, comprehensive ongoing assessments are not always completed and do not address the underlying reasons for the agency's involvement with a family.

Practice areas were identified that may affect the safety of a child in the home and potentially result in a child's re-entry into foster care. In recent years, Pennsylvania has prioritized prevention of re-entry into foster care. The OCYF has been partnering with CCYAs to identify why children are entering and re-entering foster care and in developing improvement plans to address these issues. Stakeholders also identified factors that include a recent increase in parental substance abuse and a lack of services to address families' underlying needs.

Case review results identified strong practice in placing siblings together in foster care and in children receiving appropriate services to meet their educational needs. Generally, children are in stable placements. Disruptions often involve older youth with mental health and behavioral challenges. The OCYF's commitment to increasing the number of relative and kinship placements was evident in cases reviewed. Relative placements are stable and the agency assesses and provides services to meet the needs of relative caregivers. Strategies such as family finding have been implemented to increase relative placements for children entering foster care and to establish supports, and potentially permanency resources, for children. Current practice in these areas provides a positive base upon which to build improvement efforts.

Interviews with key stakeholders and case reviews confirmed that frequent permanency hearings are conducted. However, concerns were identified in ensuring that appropriate permanency goals are established and permanency achieved timely. Reunification is often continued as a goal when it is no longer appropriate. Goals are not consistently changed in a timely manner. While the state is commended for its recent statewide implementation of concurrent planning, the review found that in most cases where a concurrent goal is established, it is not consistently implemented effectively to improve the timely achievement of permanency. In some cases,

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

goals not appropriate to the circumstances of a case are established or maintained solely to meet the requirement for concurrent planning.

Stakeholders confirmed a strong collaborative partnership between the agency and courts. However, in some of the cases reviewed, frequent continuances, docket and scheduling challenges, and rescheduling of hearings did not support timely achievement of permanency. While stakeholders said that termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions are filed timely, or compelling reasons are documented in the case record, this was not evident in some of the cases reviewed. CCYAs often seek a voluntary relinquishment of parental rights as a more positive alternative. The strong partnership between the court and agency serves as a foundation for improvement efforts in this area.

Stakeholders reported that parents are not consistently engaged in case planning and services. This varied across counties and was supported in the case reviews. The lack of parental engagement across all case types was most frequently seen with non-custodial parents, most often fathers. The CFSR also showed challenges with frequency and quality of caseworker contacts with both parents, involvement of parents in case planning, and assessing parents' needs and providing services. In-home cases had lower Strength ratings than foster care cases in these items related to contact and involvement with birth parents. The engagement of incarcerated parents is particularly challenging. Several courts in the state have developed effective strategies to encourage the inclusion of incarcerated parents in court proceedings. This presents an opportunity for continued collaboration between the agency and courts.

In recent years, Pennsylvania implemented various engagement strategies to involve parents and family members in case planning and service delivery through QSR county improvement plans, court improvement program (CIP) roundtable workgroups, and evidence-based programs through the state's title IV-E waiver demonstration project. However, the case review results showed that family engagement practices are not consistently effective. Furthermore, the state provided data analysis in the statewide assessment that confirmed fathers are not consistently engaged. Lessons learned from strategies already implemented could be considered as the state develops improvement efforts to address this cross-cutting concern.

Stakeholders shared concerns regarding the availability of and access to substance abuse services and the effect this has on children and families served. Pennsylvania is encouraged to continue to assess the array of substance abuse treatment services available throughout the state and to craft targeted improvement strategies that ensure caseworkers can assess and engage families affected by substance abuse. Multiple stakeholders described challenges with Medicaid eligibility for children in care. Each county has different options for the Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO). When a child is placed across county lines, there is often a gap in services of several weeks while the child's Medicaid is transferred to the new MCO.

The requirements for foster, adoptive, and kinship parent training were identified as an area of concern. Foster parents are required to receive only 6 hours of initial and ongoing training. Key partners agree that the training does not adequately prepare foster parents to meet the needs of the children in their care. There are no training requirements for adoptive parents. While staff at residential facilities are required to have substantial initial and ongoing training, many stakeholders reported that the quality of the training is not adequate and does not prepare staff to care for the children in their facilities. Stakeholders also shared concerns with the lack of available quality foster family homes across the state.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

Pennsylvania is committed to a collaborative and transparent review of its child welfare system and to the development of effective strategies to address the findings. The state engaged in a rigorous process to accurately assess the effectiveness of child welfare services. The OCYF CQI system and willingness to share data and information with partners provides a solid foundation for program improvement efforts. The strong partnerships OCYF has established across the state provide a strong basis to extend the positive practices and address the areas of concern identified during this review.

### II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide performance summaries from the case review findings. The CFSR relies upon a case review of an approved sample of foster care cases and in-home services cases. Pennsylvania provides an alternative/differential response to, in addition to a traditional investigation of, incoming reports of child maltreatment or children in need of services. Where relevant, we provide performance summaries that are differentiated between foster care, in-home, and in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

This report provides an overview. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Details on each case rating are available to OCYF. The state is encouraged to conduct additional item-specific analysis of the case review findings to better understand areas of practice that are associated with positive outcomes and those that need improvement.

#### **Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.**

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Item 1.

##### **State Outcome Performance**

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 70% of the 30 applicable cases reviewed.

##### ***Safety Outcome 1 Item Performance***

##### **Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated, and face-to-face contact with the child(ren) made, within the time frames established by agency policies or state statutes.

State policy requires that for both General Protective Services (GPS) reports and Child Protective Services (CPS) reports, the child be seen immediately when emergency protective custody has been taken or is needed or when it cannot be determined from the report whether emergency protective custody is needed. All other CPS reports are initiated within 24 hours of receipt of the report. Priority



## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

GPS reports are initiated within 24 hours. Expedited GPS reports are initiated within 3 to 7 calendar days. General/Other GPS reports are initiated within 7 to 10 calendar days.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 70% of the 30 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

For performance on the Safety statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

### **Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.**

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

#### **State Outcome Performance**

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 69% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 73% of the 40 foster care cases, 63% of the 8 in-home services cases, and 65% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

#### **Safety Outcome 2 Item Performance**

##### **Item 2. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children's entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 45% of the 11 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 50% of the 8 applicable foster care cases, 50% of the 2 applicable in-home services cases, and 0% of the 1 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response case.

##### **Item 3. Risk and Safety Assessment and Management**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 71% of the 65 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 75% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 63% of the 8 applicable in-home services cases, and 65% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6

#### State Outcome Performance

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 23% of the 40 applicable cases reviewed.

#### Permanency Outcome 1 Item Performance

##### Item 4. Stability of Foster Care Placement

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interests of the child and consistent with achieving the child's permanency goal(s).

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 78% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

##### Item 5. Permanency Goal for Child

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 50% of the 38 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

##### Item 6. Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 38% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

For performance on the Permanency statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

#### State Outcome Performance

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 70% of the 40 applicable cases reviewed.

#### Permanency Outcome 2 Item Performance

##### Item 7. Placement With Siblings

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 7 because 91% of the 22 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

##### Item 8. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father,<sup>1</sup> and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 72% of the 32 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 50% of the 10 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation with a sibling(s) in foster care who is/was in a different placement setting was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> For Item 8, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification. The persons identified in these roles for the purposes of the review may include individuals who do not meet the legal definitions or conventional meanings of a mother and father.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

- In 77% of the 26 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 67% of the 15 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

### Item 9. Preserving Connections

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, Tribe, school, and friends.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 68% of the 38 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 10. Relative Placement

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 66% of the 38 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 11. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father<sup>2</sup> or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 74% of the 27 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 80% of the 25 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.
- In 71% of the 14 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.

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<sup>2</sup> For Item 11, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

#### State Outcome Performance

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 37% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 50% of the 40 foster care cases, 13% of the 8 in-home services cases, and 18% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

#### Well-Being Outcome 1 Item Performance

##### Item 12. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency (1) made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents,<sup>3</sup> and foster parents (both initially, if the child entered foster care or the case was opened during the period under review, and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency's involvement with the family, and (2) provided the appropriate services.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 46% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as Strength in 58% of the 40 foster care cases, 38% of the 8 in-home services cases, and 24% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

##### Sub-Item 12A. Needs Assessment and Services to Children

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 83% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.

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<sup>3</sup> For Sub-Item 12B, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable "mothers" and "fathers" for the period under review in the case.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 88% of the 40 foster care cases, 88% of the 8 in-home services cases, and 71% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### Sub-Item 12B. Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 43% of the 54 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 52% of the 29 applicable foster care cases, 38% of the 8 applicable in-home services cases, and 29% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 63% of the 52 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 43% of the 44 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of fathers.

### Sub-Item 12C. Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 78% of the 32 applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 13. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents<sup>4</sup> and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 46% of the 59 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 56% of the 34 applicable foster care cases, 25% of the 8 applicable in-home services cases, and 35% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 67% of the 43 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 67% of the 52 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 48% of the 42 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve fathers in case planning.

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<sup>4</sup> For Item 13, in the in-home cases, “Mother” and “Father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, “mother” and “father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency’s work with multiple applicable “mothers” and “fathers” for the period under review in the case.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### Item 14. Caseworker Visits With Child

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 78% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 83% of the 40 foster care cases, 75% of the 8 in-home services cases, and 71% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### Item 15. Caseworker Visits With Parents

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers<sup>5</sup> of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 41% of the 54 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 45% of the 29 applicable foster care cases, 13% of the 8 applicable in-home services cases, and 47% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 58% of the 52 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 45% of the 42 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with fathers were sufficient.

## Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Item 16.

### State Outcome Performance

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2.

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<sup>5</sup> For Item 15, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" is typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable mother and fathers for the period under review in the case.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

The outcome was substantially achieved in 91% of the 46 applicable cases reviewed.

### ***Well-Being Outcome 2 Item Performance***

#### **Item 16. Educational Needs of the Child**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children's educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 91% of the 46 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 91% of the 34 applicable foster care cases, 100% of the 2 applicable in-home services cases, and 90% of the 10 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### **Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.**

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 using the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

#### **State Outcome Performance**

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 65% of the 54 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 68% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 83% of the 6 applicable in-home services cases, and 38% of the 8 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### ***Well-Being Outcome 3 Item Performance***

#### **Item 17. Physical Health of the Child**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 71% of the 48 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.



## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 73% of the 40 foster care cases, 75% of the 4 applicable in-home services cases, and 50% of the 4 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### Item 18. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 74% of the 39 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 85% of the 26 applicable foster care cases, 80% of the 5 applicable in-home services cases, and 38% of the 8 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

## III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

For each systemic factor below, we provide performance summaries and a determination of whether the state is in substantial conformity with that systemic factor. In addition, we provide ratings for each item and a description of how the rating was determined. The CFSR relies upon a review of information contained in the statewide assessment to assess each item. If an item rating cannot be determined from the information contained in the statewide assessment, the Children's Bureau conducts stakeholder interviews and considers information gathered through the interviews in determining ratings for each item.

### Statewide Information System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 19.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

#### Statewide Information System Item Performance

### Item 19. Statewide Information System

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The statewide information system is functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CF SR Final Report

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment. Pennsylvania agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania said that the state is developing a Child Welfare Information System (CWIS) that will be able to meet this requirement, but there is not currently such a system in place. Instead, each county in Pennsylvania operates one of seven child welfare data systems. The seven systems are not integrated, which precludes statewide access to real-time, updated data on status, demographics, location, and placement goal for each child in foster care.

### Case Review System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Four of the 5 items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

#### Case Review System Item Performance

##### Item 20. Written Case Plan

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania presented data showing that sufficient parental involvement in case planning occurred in less than half of the cases reviewed. The state also provided information from the results of recent quality service reviews (QSRs) showing that parental involvement in case planning is inconsistent, especially for fathers. Stakeholders confirmed that efforts to engage parents in case planning vary across the counties, and do not consistently include parents incarcerated in facilities located outside of a county or the state.

##### Item 21. Periodic Reviews

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania explained that the state does not differentiate in its regulations between periodic reviews and permanency hearings and that all hearings include the required findings for both. The state provided recent statewide licensing data showing that periodic reviews were consistently held timely. Thirty-seven counties, which serve approximately 80% of the children in out-of-home care in the state, have adopted an expedited hearing process where cases are reviewed every 3 months.

### Item 22. Permanency Hearings

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania explained that the state does not differentiate in its regulations between periodic reviews and permanency hearings and that all hearings include the required findings for both. The state provided recent statewide licensing data showing that periodic reviews were consistently held timely. Thirty-seven counties, which serve approximately 80% of the children in out-of-home care in the state, have adopted an expedited hearing process where cases are reviewed every 3 months.

### Item 23. Termination of Parental Rights

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data in the statewide assessment and confirmed during interviews with stakeholders showed that termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions are filed in a timely manner. Stakeholders said that the Statewide Adoption Network (SWAN) Legal Services Initiative, which operates in all 67 counties and provides paralegals to assist in tracking and monitoring the required time frames, effectively contributes to the routine functioning of this practice.

### Item 24. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania provided recent data showing that resource families received notification of hearings and of their right to be heard. The state also provided recent qualitative information from interviews with resource

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

families confirming that notification of hearings and right to be heard was provided to foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers with respect to a child in their home and their right to be heard.

### Quality Assurance System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 25.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as Strength.

#### Quality Assurance System Item Performance

##### Item 25. Quality Assurance System

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The quality assurance system is functioning statewide to ensure that it (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania described five separate processes that function to evaluate the quality of child welfare services statewide. The state plays a key role in working with each county to review the results of these processes, support development and implementation of improvement plans, and monitor practice improvements. The results are reviewed with key stakeholder groups that oversee monitoring for Pennsylvania's CQI efforts and provide technical assistance to counties to support systemic and practice improvements at the statewide level. Additionally, information gathered assists in identifying systemic issues on the local and statewide levels and informs county and/or state training needs.

### Staff and Provider Training

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. Two of the items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### *Staff and Provider Training Item Performance*

#### **Item 26. Initial Staff Training**

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania explained that initial staff training is provided through the state's collaboration with the Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC) with sufficient frequency. Although staff are required to complete 126 hours within 18 months of hire, data provided in the statewide assessment showed that the average time for completion of the training is less than 6 months. The CWRC comprehensive training evaluation process demonstrated that initial training provides the basic skills and knowledge new child welfare staff need for their positions. The state provided annual county licensing data that showed staff are consistently meeting requirements for initial training.

#### **Item 27. Ongoing Staff Training**

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff<sup>6</sup> that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania described its process for ensuring that ongoing training requirements are met and that all staff receive an individual training needs assessment with an individual training plan. The state provided data to show that staff are consistently meeting requirements related to ongoing training hours across the state. The state also provided information from training evaluations to confirm the effectiveness of the training in providing the skills and knowledge necessary to enable agency staff to fulfill their responsibilities.

#### **Item 28. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training**

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

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<sup>6</sup> "Staff," for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP. "Staff" also includes direct supervisors of all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that Pennsylvania requires only 6 hours of pre-service training for prospective foster parents, including 3 hours on child abuse reporting and 3 hours on prudent parent standards. The state does not have a statute or regulation regarding the number of training hours required for prospective adoptive parents. Although most county and child-placing agencies require 20 to 30 hours of pre-service training for prospective adoptive parents, there is no statewide mandate to ensure that resource parents receive training in the skills and knowledge needed to meet their responsibilities. Staff at licensed child care facilities receive 40 hours of initial training before unsupervised contact with children; however, stakeholders expressed concerns about the quality of training and whether it addresses the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties.

### Service Array and Resource Development

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. None of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

#### *Service Array and Resource Development Item Performance*

##### Item 29. Array of Services

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The service array and resource development system is functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP: (1) services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, (2) services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, (3) services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and (4) services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that although there are several strengths in Pennsylvania's service array, such as post-adoption services and independent living services, there are also many challenges. Barriers to service availability and accessibility include waiting lists; lack of transportation and housing; a lack of cross-county Medicaid resources; high provider staff turnover; a lack of culturally competent services, significantly for Spanish-speaking families; and a lack of providers in rural areas. Stakeholders reported a lack of high-quality, trauma-informed services, particularly in residential treatment facilities and by Medicaid providers.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### Item 30. Individualizing Services

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The service array and resource development system is functioning statewide to ensure that the services in Item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that not all counties in Pennsylvania have sufficient resources or flexible funding to address the specialized needs of children and families. Flexible funding is limited and stakeholders reported that requests for funding are often denied. Although the Family Court may order the provision and funding of a service, this does not routinely occur.

### Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Both of the items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

#### *Agency Responsiveness to the Community Item Performance*

### Item 31. State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that, in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state engages in ongoing consultation with multiple stakeholder groups, including youth, foster parents, county administrators, and the courts, in the agency's strategic planning efforts related to the CFSP and APSR. Stakeholders participate in Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Council and its various work groups. Stakeholders believe that their input is heard, valued, and incorporated into policy, planning, and practice initiatives. Several stakeholder groups also described routine data-sharing and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to address common needs and goals.

## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### Item 32. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania provided several examples of how the state coordinates services and benefits provided under the CFSP with other federal programs, including ongoing relationships with the state Medicaid office and the state Office of Income Maintenance. The statewide assessment also described how OCYF and CCYAs collaborate with agencies that provide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and county agencies that provide housing and heating assistance. The OCYF has an ongoing relationship with the agency that administers Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds and early intervention programs. The OCYF uses MOUs or interagency agreements with other governmental agencies to assist in the coordination of federal benefits serving the same children and families.

### Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Pennsylvania is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. Three of the four items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

#### *Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Item Performance*

### Item 33. Standards Applied Equally

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed during interviews with stakeholders showed that standards are routinely applied equally statewide. Stakeholders described the processes used by licensing agencies for resource homes and child care institutions for reviewing homes and facilities based on a standard statewide tool and said these processes, including supervisory review, ensure the consistency of application of standards statewide.



## Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report

### Item 34. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania provided recent data showing that the state consistently complies with criminal background check requirements. Stakeholders reported several processes for ensuring the ongoing safety of children in foster and congregate care placements. These processes included caseworkers assessing safety monthly during home visits, full disclosure of children's history and background to ensure the placement can meet the child's needs, and an investigation process that occurs through the OCYF Regional Office staff or Bureau of Human Services Licensing for licensed child care facilities. If an alleged perpetrator of maltreatment is in the home or facility, the child is removed pending the outcome of the investigation.

### Item 35. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Strength for Item 35 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Pennsylvania described how the state relies on two databases to inform its diligent recruitment process. The data allow the state to target efforts to ensure the diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive parents who reflect the diversity of the children in need of placement across the state. This process also ensures that other needs are addressed, such as recruitment of potential families for large sibling groups or recruitment based on varying demographics in different regions in the state.

### Item 36. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.

- Pennsylvania received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that approximately two-thirds of the time, Pennsylvania did not timely complete ICPC requests within the required time frames. Stakeholders said that

## **Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Final Report**

barriers to timely completion include challenges in obtaining interstate criminal background checks and a lack of staff resources to complete home studies. In the statewide assessment, the state provided information on the state's use of the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange (PAE) and the AdoptUSKids website to locate adoptive families for waiting children.

## Appendix A

### Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 Child and Family Services Review Performance

#### I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes and Items

**Outcome Achievement:** Outcomes may be rated as in substantial conformity or not in substantial conformity. 95% of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

**Item Achievement:** Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement. For an overall rating of Strength, 90% of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of Item 1 and Item 16) must be rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies.

#### SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Safety Outcome 1</b> Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	Not in Substantial Conformity	70% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 1</b> Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	70% Strength

#### SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Safety Outcome 2</b> Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	69% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 2</b> Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	45% Strength
<b>Item 3</b> Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	71% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

### PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Permanency Outcome 1</b> Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	23% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 4</b> Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
<b>Item 5</b> Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	50% Strength
<b>Item 6</b> Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	38% Strength

### PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Permanency Outcome 2</b> The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	70% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 7</b> Placement with siblings	Strength	91% Strength
<b>Item 8</b> Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	72% Strength
<b>Item 9</b> Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	68% Strength
<b>Item 10</b> Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	66% Strength
<b>Item 11</b> Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement†	74% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 1</b> Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	37% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 12</b> Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	46% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12A</b> Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	83% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12B</b> Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	43% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12C</b> Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
<b>Item 13</b> Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	46% Strength
<b>Item 14</b> Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
<b>Item 15</b> Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	41% Strength

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 2</b> Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	91% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 16</b> Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	91% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 3</b> Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	65% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 17</b> Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	71% Strength
<b>Item 18</b> Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	74% Strength

## II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The Children’s Bureau determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the 7 systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The Children’s Bureau determines substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined on the basis of ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the Children’s Bureau must find that no more than 1 of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the Children’s Bureau must find that the item is functioning as required.

### STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Statewide Information System</b>	Statewide Assessment	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 19</b> Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

### CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Case Review System</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 20</b> Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 21</b> Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 22</b> Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 23</b> Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 24</b> Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment	Strength

### QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Quality Assurance System</b>	Statewide Assessment	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 25</b> Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment	Strength

### STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Staff and Provider Training</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 26</b> Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 27</b> Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 28</b> Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

### SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Service Array and Resource Development</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 29</b> Array of Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 30</b> Individualizing Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

### AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Agency Responsiveness to the Community</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 31</b> State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 32</b> Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment	Strength



## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

### FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 33</b> Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 34</b> Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 35</b> Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 36</b> State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

### III. Performance on Statewide Data Indicators<sup>7</sup>

The state's performance is considered against the national performance for each statewide data indicator and provides contextual information for considering the findings. This information is not used in conformity decisions. State performance may be statistically above, below, or no different than the national performance. If a state did not provide the required data or did not meet the applicable item data quality limits, the Children's Bureau did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.1%	Lower	Excluded due to Data Quality****	Excluded due to Data Quality	FY14–FY15
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	Excluded due to Data Quality	Excluded due to Data Quality	15A–15B, FY15
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	36.2%	35.2%–37.2%	13B–16A

## Appendix A: Summary of Pennsylvania 2017 CFSR Performance

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	38.5%	37%–40.1%	15B–16A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	30.8%	29.5%–32.1%	15B–16A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	16.3%	15%–17.6%	13B–16A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	3.66	3.57–3.75	15B–16A

\* Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) is derived from a multi-level statistical model and reflects the state's performance relative to states with similar children and takes into account the number of children the state served, the age distribution of these children and, for some indicators, the state's entry rate. It uses risk-adjustment to minimize differences in outcomes due to factors over which the state has little control and provides a more fair comparison of state performance against national performance.

\*\* 95% Confidence Interval is the 95% confidence interval estimate for the state's RSP. The values shown are the lower RSP and upper RSP of the interval estimate. The interval accounts for the amount of uncertainty associated with the RSP. For example, the CB is 95% confident that the true value of the RSP is between the lower and upper limit of the interval.

\*\*\* Data Period(s) Used for State Performance: Refers to the initial 12-month period and the period(s) of data needed to follow the children to observe their outcomes. The FY or federal fiscal year refers to NCANDS data, which spans the 12-month period October 1 – September 30. All other periods refer to AFCARS data. "A" refers to the 6-month period October 1 – March 31. "B" refers to the 6-month period April 1 – September 30. The 2-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

\*\*\*\*Excluded Due to Data Quality: Identifies when performance was not calculated due to the state failing one or more data quality checks for this indicator.

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<sup>7</sup> In October 2016, the Children's Bureau issued Technical Bulletin #9 (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/cfsr-technical-bulletin-9>), which alerted states to the fact that there were technical errors in the syntax used to calculate the national and state performance for the statewide data indicators. The syntax revision is still underway, so performance shown in this table is based on the 2015 Federal Register syntax.

## Appendix B

### Summary of CFSR Round 2 Pennsylvania 2008 Key Findings

The Children’s Bureau conducted a CFSR in Pennsylvania in 2008. Key findings from that review are presented below. Because the Children’s Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a state’s performance in the third round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round.

#### Identifying Information and Review Dates

<b>General Information</b>
<b>Children’s Bureau Region:</b> 3
<b>Date of Onsite Review:</b> July 28–August 1, 2008
<b>Period Under Review:</b> April 1, 2007, through August 1, 2008
<b>Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued:</b> February 25, 2009
<b>Date Program Improvement Plan Due:</b> May 26, 2009
<b>Date Program Improvement Plan Approved:</b> June 30, 2010

#### Highlights of Findings

<b>Performance Measurements</b>
A. The state met the national standards for <b>four</b> of the <b>six</b> standards.
B. The state achieved substantial conformity with <b>none</b> of the <b>seven</b> outcomes.
C. The state achieved substantial conformity with <b>five</b> of the <b>seven</b> systemic factors.

## Appendix B: Pennsylvania 2008 CFSR Key Findings

### State's Conformance With the National Standards

Data Indicator or Composite	National Standard	State's Score	Meets or Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of maltreatment recurrence (data indicator)	94.6 or higher	97.0	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.76	Meets Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	85.2	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	106.1	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	135.5	Meets Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	102.4	Meets Standard

### State's Conformance With the Outcomes

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

## Appendix B: Pennsylvania 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

### State's Conformance With the Systemic Factors

Systemic Factor	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Statewide Information System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Achieved Substantial Conformity

## Appendix B: Pennsylvania 2008 CFSR Key Findings

### Key Findings by Item

#### Outcomes

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
2. Repeat Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
3. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-entry Into Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	Area Needing Improvement
5. Foster Care Re-entries	Area Needing Improvement
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	Area Needing Improvement
7. Permanency Goal for Child	Area Needing Improvement
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Permanent Placement With Relatives	Area Needing Improvement
9. Adoption	Area Needing Improvement
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	Area Needing Improvement
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	Strength
12. Placement With Siblings	Area Needing Improvement
13. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
14. Preserving Connections	Area Needing Improvement
15. Relative Placement	Area Needing Improvement
16. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
17. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents	Area Needing Improvement
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	Area Needing Improvement
19. Caseworker Visits With Child	Area Needing Improvement
20. Caseworker Visits With Parents	Area Needing Improvement

## Appendix B: Pennsylvania 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
21. Educational Needs of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
22. Physical Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

### **Systemic Factors**

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
24. Statewide Information System	Area Needing Improvement
25. Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
26. Periodic Reviews	Strength
27. Permanency Hearings	Strength
28. Termination of Parental Rights	Area Needing Improvement
29. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Strength
30. Standards Ensuring Quality Services	Strength
31. Quality Assurance System	Strength
32. Initial Staff Training	Strength
33. Ongoing Staff Training	Strength
34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength
35. Array of Services	Strength
36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
37. Individualizing Services	Strength
38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength
39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Strength
40. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength

## Appendix B: Pennsylvania 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
41. Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions	Strength
42. Standards Applied Equally	Strength
43. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
44. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength