

From: Dickinson, Nancy [NDICKINSON@ssw.umaryland.edu]
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To: ACF CBComments
Subject: Comments on CFSR Federal Register Notice

1. How could ACF best promote and measure continuous quality improvement in child welfare outcomes and the effective functioning of systems that promote positive outcomes for children and families?

Research has documented the negative impact of child welfare worker turnover on children, youth and families, including:

- Delay in timely investigations (U.S. GAO, 2003)
- Significantly longer stays in foster care (Ryan et al., 2006)
- Higher rates of foster care re-entry (Hess, Folaran, & Jefferson, 1992)
- Recurrence of child maltreatment (NCCD, 2006)

Other research has shown that child welfare workers with social work degrees achieve better outcomes with children, youth and families (Leung, 2010; Barbee et al., 2009).

It is very important that workforce data be included with any measures of child welfare outcomes, so that, over time, the contributions of workforce and agency characteristics to outcomes can be examined broadly. Workforce data should include:

- Length of worker involvement with any one case
- Length of worker tenure in child welfare position
- Worker education, specifically BSW, MSW, or non-social work BA or MA
- Workload

- Agency turnover and vacancy rates for worker, supervisory and management positions
- Supervisory/worker ratios

Thanks for this opportunity to comment.

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