



Child and Family Services Reviews

District of Columbia

Final Report

2016



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: District of Columbia Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the District of Columbia. 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 the District of Columbia are based on:

- The statewide assessment prepared by the District of Columbia's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), and submitted to the Children's Bureau on March 25, 2016. The statewide assessment is the District'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 Traditional Review process in the District of Columbia, during the week of June 26, 2016
- Interviews and focus groups with District stakeholders and partners, which included:
 - Attorneys representing the agency, parents, and children and youth
 - Child care facility staff
 - Child welfare agency caseworkers and supervisors
 - Child welfare agency director, senior managers, and program managers
 - Contract caseworkers and supervisors
 - Foster and adoptive licensing staff
 - Foster and adoptive parents and relative caregivers
 - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) staff
 - Information system staff
 - Judges
 - Parents

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- Placement managers
- Recruitment and retention staff
- Representatives from the courts and the Court Improvement Project
- Representatives from the court monitor
- Service providers
- Training staff
- 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 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 CFSR assesses state¹ 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 CFSR 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 CFSRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round. Appendix A provides

¹ For purposes of the CFSR and this Final Report, the District of Columbia is included in the term “state.”

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tables presenting District of Columbia's overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about District of Columbia's performance in Round 2.

I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

District of Columbia 2016 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 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Statewide Information System
- Quality Assurance System
- Staff and Provider Training
- Service Array and Resource Development
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Children's Bureau Comments on District of Columbia Performance

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

Several strengths were identified and consistently reflected in stakeholder interviews and cases reviewed during the District of Columbia's CFSR. As reported in the statewide assessment, the District devoted significant time and resources in the past several years to initiatives and infrastructure projects, which were successful in improving the education and health care of children served.

The District of Columbia developed a comprehensive education strategy to ensure that all foster children in the District have access to an educational program appropriate to their age and abilities that is designed to meet their individual needs. Many of these efforts are ongoing. Some strong practices have been implemented, as seen in the CFSR, including the availability of educational specialists who assist and support caseworkers with educational matters such as attendance, enrollment, assessments, specialized educational services, tutoring, transportation, and post-secondary education. An early education specialist designated to promote healthy development is available to assist foster parents with identifying and securing appropriate child care. The CFSA has developed a strong relationship with the school system to provide the agency access to enrollment information and standardized test scores for children. This enables workers to monitor educational progress and offer tutoring and mentoring services when needed. School stability is routinely discussed during removal team meetings. In addition, an education specialist attends every child's 30-day case planning meeting to identify and resolve any educational issues, including those related to school stability. Children were able to

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remain in their home schools when they were placed in foster care and were provided appropriate educational services to meet their needs due in part to these activities, which positively affected a number of cases reviewed during the CFSR.

The Healthy Horizons Assessment Center was established as an onsite 24-hour medical screening clinic for children entering or exiting foster care and for children changing placements while in foster care. Upon entry into foster care, children receive a medical screening to identify health issues requiring attention, including chronic conditions, infectious or communicable diseases, hygiene and nutritional problems, substance abuse, and developmental or mental health concerns, and to detect signs of abuse or neglect. The District of Columbia uses a mobile dental van operated by the Children's National Medical Center to provide timely evaluations. Access to quality health and dental care assessments resulted in strong performance ratings for the assessment of physical and dental health care needs during the CFSR. However, in some cases there was a lack of follow-through with services to meet the identified needs.

Preserving sibling relationships often lessens the emotional trauma of removal. The CFSR showed that the District of Columbia is committed to locating placements that enable siblings to remain together and, when this is not possible, workers facilitate regular contact between siblings.

While the CFSR found many key practices that positively affected outcomes, several safety issues were identified. One significant issue was found with the family assessment cases. In 2014, the District implemented a differential response approach to reports of abuse or neglect. The differential response to accepted hotline reports allows for a family assessment rather than a formal Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation for low and moderate-risk cases with no immediate safety concerns. The District has a well-defined process for the family assessment approach; however, in the cases reviewed there is a lack of fidelity to established policy and protocol and to assuring the safety of children. The CFSR identified concerns in the areas of timely response to reports of abuse or neglect, the provision of safety services, and the assessment of safety and risk to children in these cases. The differential response cases consistently reflected more safety challenges than other in-home and foster care cases reviewed.

Another safety-related issue identified during the CFSR is the lack of comprehensive assessments in all case types. Initial formal and informal safety and risk assessments, although often completed, are not always comprehensive. The focus of these assessments is often only on specific issues confronting a family and do not appear to consider the family system's functioning holistically, or the underlying issues contributing to the challenges faced by the family or child. Ongoing assessments are not completed regularly, and assessments are not consistently completed at case closure. When safety concerns are present, safety plans are not always developed or routinely monitored.

The lack of engagement of parents, more often fathers, affects practice in multiple areas, including parental needs assessment and service provision, case planning, and visitation with the caseworker. Although family team meetings are a routine practice for the District of Columbia, the CFSR did not find evidence that these meetings serve as a forum to actively engage parents in jointly developing their case plans. While involvement in case planning is an issue for both parents, case review results show that the agency is more challenged with engaging fathers. Parental involvement in case planning is more problematic when a parent is incarcerated. Although the District of Columbia has made efforts to emphasize the importance of father involvement and to identify approaches to encourage fathers' participation, improved outcomes from these efforts are not evident in the cases reviewed.

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Achieving permanency was found to be a challenge in a significant number of cases reviewed during the CFSR. In some cases, there is a failure to change a child's permanency goal when appropriate. Other cases show that the services needed to achieve the permanency goal, such as housing assistance, are not provided. The court's practice of extending the time for parents to reunify or declining to terminate parental rights was identified as a barrier to timely achievement of permanency in several other cases reviewed. Concurrent planning, if used effectively, could possibly have moved cases toward permanency much sooner.

Timely filing of termination petitions, or documenting compelling reasons not to file, were identified as significant concerns in the District of Columbia's statewide assessment. The findings from the cases reviewed reinforce the conclusion that timely filing of TPR petitions is not consistently occurring. An agency practice affecting the functioning of this requirement is that in many cases CFSA does not file motions for termination of parental rights (TPR) when a child has been in care 15 out of 22 months but waits until the child's goal is changed to adoption and an adoptive family is identified, which can sometimes be several years from the date the child entered care. The court then integrates the termination into adoption proceedings.

With regard to placement stability, many children in the cases reviewed during the CFSR were considered to be stable in their placements. Relative placements and the support available through the Foster Parent Support Unit (FPSU) were shown in several cases to support placement stability. When placement instability was identified during the CFSR, it usually involved youth with significant behavioral, mental health, or substance abuse issues.

In both the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews, the CB learned of the strong retention rate for foster parents due to the matching process, relative placements, and the efforts of the FPSU. The private agencies are active participants in recruiting and licensing foster parents with CFSA. There is no single recruitment plan outlining the coordination of efforts. Due to the small geographic area of the District of Columbia, the lack of collaboration among agencies results in overlapping recruitment efforts. And, absent a single recruitment plan, it is not possible to ensure that recruitment efforts are focused on families reflecting the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing homes.

More generally, the District of Columbia's child welfare program is responsive to staff and stakeholders' ideas for program improvement initiatives. However, it appears that initiatives are often developed independently of other projects and without consideration for potential overlap with or integration into existing programs. This has resulted in staff not always being aware of new initiatives or new services. Also, because of the multitude of services available, more attention should be placed on the coordination and monitoring of services provided to the family so that families are not overburdened or overwhelmed.

CFSA is a dynamic and evolving child welfare agency. It has demonstrated creativity in developing initiatives to meet the changing needs of families and children who become involved in the child welfare system. CFSA has a solid infrastructure and commitment to improved practice, including its recent emphasis on trauma-informed practice and an enhanced process for assessments. The agency is well-positioned to creatively build on its promising practices to improve outcomes in the areas found by the CFSR to need more attention.

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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. The District of Columbia 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 the CFSA. 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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 73% of the 26 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.

District policy requires that all CPS investigations commence as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after the receipt of the report, and that the initial phase of the investigation be completed within 2 hours in cases where there is an imminent safety concern and 24 hours when there is not an imminent safety concern. This includes face-to-face contact with all children in the family, completion of risk and safety assessments, and interviews with caregivers and the reporter. Differential response allows for an alternative response to accepted Hotline reports on alleged child abuse and neglect referrals, with a 5-day response time for initiating a family assessment referral.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 73% of the 26 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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

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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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 55% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 60% of the 40 foster care cases, 58% of the 19 in-home services cases, and 17% of the 6 in-home services alternative/differential response case.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 72% of the 25 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 86% of the 14 applicable foster care cases, and 55% of the 11 applicable in-home services cases. No in-home services alternative/differential response cases were applicable for assessment.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 55% of the 65 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 60% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 58% of the 19 applicable in-home services cases, and 17% of the 6 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.

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State Outcome Performance

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 20% 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).

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 68% 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 55% of the 40 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 30% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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

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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

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

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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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 7 because 96% of the 23 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,² and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 56% of the 25 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 80% 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.
- In 78% of the 23 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 36% of the 11 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.

² 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.

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- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 85% of the 40 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 64% of the 39 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 father³ or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 65% of the 23 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 78% of the 23 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 55% of the 11 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.

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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 17% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 18% of the 40 foster care cases, 21% of the 19 in-home services cases, and 0% of the 6 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

³ 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.

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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,⁴ 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 18% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as Strength in 18% of the 40 foster care cases, 21% of the 19 in-home services cases, and 17% of the 6 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

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

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 74% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 78% of the 40 foster care cases, 68% of the 19 in-home services cases, and 67% of the 6 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 16% of the 57 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 13% of the 32 applicable foster care cases, 21% of the 19 applicable in-home services cases, and 17% of the 6 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

⁴ 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.

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- In 45% of the 56 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 14% of the 43 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

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 58% of the 40 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 parents⁵ and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 40% of the 63 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 42% of the 38 applicable foster care cases, 42% of the 19 applicable in-home services cases, and 17% of the 6 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 65% of the 43 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 63% of the 54 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 24% of the 37 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve fathers in case planning.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 71% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 80% of the 40 foster care cases, 63% of the 19 in-home services cases, and 33% of the 6 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

⁵ 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.

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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 fathers⁶ of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 31% of the 55 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 30% of the 30 applicable foster care cases, 37% of the 19 applicable in-home services cases, and 17% of the 6 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 56% of the 54 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 22% of the 37 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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 80% of the 51 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

⁶ 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.

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the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 80% of the 51 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 89% of the 37 applicable foster care cases, 62% of the 13 applicable in-home services cases, and 0% of the 1 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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 47% of the 58 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 53% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 31% of the applicable 13 in-home services cases, and 40% of the applicable 5 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 70% of the 53 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 68% of the 40 foster care cases, 78% of the 9 applicable in-home services cases, and 75% 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 41% of the 37 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 48% of the 23 applicable foster care cases, 33% of the 12 applicable in-home services cases, and 0% of the 2 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

- The District of Columbia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and obtained during stakeholder interviews showed that the District of Columbia's information system is functioning to identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for every child in foster care. CFSA has a process in place to address the difficulty it has had in meeting the 24-hour time frame for documenting placement change information in the system and employs numerous data quality checks to ensure that the system contains reliable and current data.

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.

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State Systemic Factor Performance

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Three 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed during interviews with stakeholders showed that although case plans are in place and that Family Team Meetings are used to engage families in case planning, CFSA has had challenges in joint development of plans with parents. In particular, the District of Columbia is not consistently making efforts to engage fathers and incarcerated parents in case planning.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information from the statewide assessment and confirmed during stakeholder interviews showed that the District of Columbia ensures that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months by the court, as all of the hearings within the District of Columbia's case review process, regardless of the type, generally cover the same requirements and include those federal requirements for periodic reviews. Often, more than one periodic review is held between the dispositional hearing and the child's first permanency hearing.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment.

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- The statewide assessment presented data from the Court Improvement Program, the District of Columbia's information system, and qualitative data, all demonstrating that permanency hearings are consistently held as required across the District and within the required time frames.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment. The District agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- The statewide assessment presented qualitative data and data from the Court Improvement Project showing that the District of Columbia does not routinely file motions to terminate parental rights when a child has been in care for 15 of the most recent 22 months and that appropriate compelling reasons not to file at the time are not included in the case record. CFSA files a petition for TPR within 45 days of the child's permanency goal becoming adoption, unless the parent has consented to the adoption, the parent has relinquished his or her rights, or the prospective adoptive parent has filed an adoption petition.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the District of Columbia has a process in place to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing with respect to the child. Information collected during focus groups and presented in the statewide assessment supported that caregivers' right to be heard is functioning.

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

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

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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) is 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that CFSA has a multifaceted Quality Assurance system that reviews individual cases and analyzes data to evaluate whether or not the District is providing the services necessary to the children and families served by the CFSA and to determine progress toward meeting established goals and objectives. The QA system is able to identify strengths and needs and evaluate implemented program improvement measures. The Office of Agency Performance within CFSA has established scorecards and data dashboards that show practice performance related to specific measurable standards. In addition, the Center for the Study of Social Policy monitors the District on more than 100 standards as part of the LaShawn Consent Decree.

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

The District of Columbia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. Three of the items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the vast majority of new hires complete the 80 hours of required pre-service training within 90 days of hire and before being assigned cases. In addition, the training incorporates skill-building

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opportunities for new staff through specific on-the-job activities designed to use the knowledge learned in the classroom. Information provided in the statewide assessment also showed that the majority of staff surveyed believe the training provides them with the necessary skills to perform their jobs.

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 staff⁷ that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the District of Columbia has an in-service training program requiring caseworkers to complete 30 hours of in-service training, and requiring supervisors and program managers to complete 24 hours of in-service training after supervisors complete the required 40 hours of pre-service Art of Supervision training. Data provided during stakeholder interviews showed that the vast majority of staff completes their annual in-service training requirements. Survey information also indicated that staff members believe that the training they receive is relevant and applicable to their job 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.

- District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders shows that CFSA and licensed child placing agencies (CPAs) require 30 hours of pre-service training and 30 hours of in-service training for foster and adoptive parents every 2 years. While CPAs may elect to provide their own training, all foster and adoptive parents may attend training offered by CFSA's Child Welfare Training Academy. Data provided in the statewide assessment showed that

⁷ "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.

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foster and adoptive parents are routinely meeting this requirement. Stakeholders interviewed said group home and residential facility staff are meeting the 40-hour training requirement. Stakeholders also said that the training prepares caregivers and staff 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

The District of Columbia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. Both of the items in this systemic factor were 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews showed that the District of Columbia has a wide array of services to address the identified needs of the children and families served by CFSA. Continuous expansion of services both for families whose children remain in the home and for those who need out-of-home care has allowed CFSA to provide specialized services, including mentoring services to youth; nurse care managers to children with serious medical concerns; addiction recovery specialists for parents requiring additional assistance; school-based programs to help teen parents stay in school; and providing home visitation services to teen parents. When a service is not readily available, CFSA often developed the service. A minority of stakeholders noted that there could still be some work needed to address the availability and accessibility of housing and timeliness and quality of mental health services.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

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- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews showed that CFSA workers could be innovative to ensure that children and families receive appropriate services to meet their individual needs. Interviews with stakeholders described how staff work with children's teams to develop creative solutions to service delivery problems. In addition, the District of Columbia provided mini-grants to the Community Collaboratives to develop services lacking in specific areas of the city. A flexible spending account allows Collaboratives to meet the concrete needs of families.

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

The District of Columbia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Both 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The statewide assessment reported that only a select group of agency partners and stakeholders actually provides input directly on the CFSP or APSR. However, information gathered during the stakeholder interviews showed that CFSA consults with a wide array of partners in developing, implementing, and evaluating programs which are then reported in the CFSP and APSR. CFSA makes extensive efforts to include service providers, partner agencies, the courts, and advocates in workgroups and planning activities. Youth have a growing voice in the processes CFSA has designed to gather input, as can be seen by the implementation of a Youth Ombudsman in recent years as well as the establishment of two youth advisory boards. However, while efforts have been made to engage birth parents, some stakeholders said that more could be done to ensure that these direct users of the services and activities provided by CFSA have more say in the direction of the District's child welfare system.

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.

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- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the District of Columbia has developed strong relationships with federally funded partner agencies in an effort to better coordinate services for children and families. Longstanding endeavors as well as new initiatives have been designed by the CFSA and its partner agencies to increase program capacity, expand the service array, simplify the referral and eligibility processes, better coordinate services, and improve access.

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

The District of Columbia is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. Two 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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the District of Columbia is functioning statewide to ensure that all providers meet the same licensing requirements, including requirements that allow for waivers and variances on a case-by-case basis. The District of Columbia has contracted with private child placing agencies in the state of Maryland to ensure that foster homes for children placed in Maryland, who are in the custody of the District of Columbia, are compliant with District regulations. A single manager in CFSA reviews all applications for an original license to operate a youth residential facility or independent living program. All licensing and monitoring staff use the same tool for every provider to further ensure compliance with requirements.

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

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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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that CFSA monitors and tracks compliance with federal criminal background check requirements, including fingerprinting, for all foster family homes and facility staff. The statewide assessment provided information on the efficiencies and dependability of the CFSA's use of LiveScan technology to maximize the availability of resources for children requiring placement. The centralization of this function provides uniform application. However, because only CFSA has the authority to fingerprint foster parents, prospective staff members of contracted congregate care facilities cannot use the LiveScan process and must go through law enforcement. This is less efficient. The District ensures ongoing safety planning for children in foster care by conducting continued criminal background checks and monitoring results so that appropriate action is taken.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews showed that the foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is not functioning. Private child placing agencies manage the cases of and provide care for approximately half of the children under the custody of the District and are required to recruit their own foster homes. The CFSA and these agencies do not coordinate recruitment activities. Although discussion has occurred about the benefits of making coordinated multi-agency District-wide recruitment efforts, no action has been taken. The District of Columbia's 2015 recruitment plan used data to target recruitment to specific geographic areas, sibling groups, and LGBTQ youth. During interviews, stakeholders revealed that although data demonstrate a need to recruit Spanish-speaking foster homes, recruitment efforts are not specifically targeted to the growing Hispanic population.

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.

- The District of Columbia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

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- Data and information provided in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the District of Columbia conducts some child-specific recruitment across state lines using AdoptUSKids, Wednesday's Child, and the Heart Gallery. However, stakeholders said that these efforts are limited and more than 80 percent of adoptions are by foster parents. The District does not appear to use data to best identify which children could benefit from referrals to cross-jurisdictional resources or the effectiveness of the use of adoption exchanges. Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed in interviews with stakeholders showed that the District is challenged in meeting the requirement to complete ICPC home studies for families within the required time frames. Home studies for less than half of the requests received are completed within 60 days of receipt. While efforts are being made to decrease the time needed to approve a home, the agency's internal deadline of 100 days exceeds the requirement.

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

**Appendix A
Summary of District of Columbia 2016 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
Safety Outcome 1 Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	Not in Substantial Conformity	73% Substantially Achieved
Item 1 Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	73% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 2 Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	55% Substantially Achieved
Item 2 Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	72% Strength
Item 3 Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	55% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 1 Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	20% Substantially Achieved
Item 4 Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	68% Strength
Item 5 Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	55% Strength
Item 6 Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	30% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 2 The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	70% Substantially Achieved
Item 7 Placement with siblings	Strength	96% Strength
Item 8 Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	56% Strength
Item 9 Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	85% Strength
Item 10 Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	64% Strength
Item 11 Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 1 Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	17% Substantially Achieved
Item 12 Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	18% Strength
Sub-Item 12A Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	74% Strength
Sub-Item 12B Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	16% Strength
Sub-Item 12C Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	58% Strength
Item 13 Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	40% Strength
Item 14 Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	71% Strength
Item 15 Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	31% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 2 Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	80% Substantially Achieved
Item 16 Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	80% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3 Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	47% Substantially Achieved
Item 17 Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	70% Strength
Item 18 Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	41% 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
Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 19 Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Case Review System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 20 Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21 Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 22 Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 23 Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24 Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment	Strength

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment	In Substantial Conformity
Item 25 Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment	Strength

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 26 Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 27 Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Strength

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Item 28 Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Service Array and Resource Development	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 29 Array of Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 30 Individualizing Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

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

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 33 Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 34 Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 35 Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36 State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

III. Performance on Statewide Data Indicators⁸

The state's performance is considered against the national standard 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	12.4%	10.8%–14.1%	FY13–14
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	Excluded due to Data Quality****	Excluded due to Data Quality	14A–14B, FY14
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	Excluded due to Data Quality	Excluded due to Data Quality	12B–15A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	42.9%	36.7%–49.3%	14B–15A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	32.3%	28.6%–36.2%	14B–15A

⁸ 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 A: Summary of District of Columbia 2016 CFSR Performance

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	Excluded due to Data Quality	Excluded due to Data Quality	12B–15A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	3.29	2.89–3.75	14B–15A

* **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.

Appendix B: District of Columbia 2007 CFSR Key Findings

Appendix B Summary of CFSR Round 2 District of Columbia 2007 Key Findings

The Children's Bureau conducted a CFSR in the District of Columbia in 2007. 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

General Information
Children's Bureau Region: 3
Date of Onsite Review: June 25–29, 2007
Period Under Review: April 1, 2006, through June 25, 2007
Date Final Report Issued: January 30, 2008
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: February 25, 2008
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: January 1, 2009

Highlights of Findings

Performance Measurements
A. The State met the national standards for one of the six standards.
B. The State achieved substantial conformity for none of the seven outcomes.
C. The State achieved substantial conformity for all of the seven systemic factors.

Appendix B: District of Columbia 2007 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	94.7	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.66	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	97.8	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	90.7	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	115.3	Does Not Meet Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	98.5	Does Not Meet 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: District of Columbia 2007 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	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Achieved 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: District of Columbia 2007 CFSR Key Findings

Key Findings by Item

Outcomes

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

Appendix B: District of Columbia 2007 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	Area Needing Improvement
Item 19. Caseworker Visits With Child	Area Needing Improvement
Item 20. Caseworker Visits With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21. Educational Needs of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
Item 22. Physical Health of the Child	Strength
Item 23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

Systemic Factors

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

Appendix B: District of Columbia 2007 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Strength
Item 40. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength
Item 41. Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions	Strength
Item 42. Standards Applied Equally	Strength
Item 43. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
Item 44. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Strength
Item 45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength