



Child and Family Services Reviews

Minnesota 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: Minnesota Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

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

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and submitted to the Children's Bureau on June 12, 2016. 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 Traditional Review process at Hennepin and Stearns counties, and Southwest Health and Human Services (a consortium serving Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock counties) in Minnesota, during the week of August 8, 2016.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
 - Attorneys representing the agency, Tribes, parents, and children and youth
 - Child welfare agency program managers, supervisors, and caseworkers
 - Child welfare agency state and county managers, senior managers, and administrators, including the child welfare director and the assistant commissioner
 - Court system/Court Improvement Plan representatives
 - Continuous Quality Improvement and Child Mortality Review staff
 - Foster and adoptive licensing staff
 - Foster and adoptive parents
 - Information system staff
 - Judges
 - Law enforcement

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- Parents
- Service providers
- Tribal representatives
- Youth served by the agency

In Round 3, the Children’s Bureau suspended the use of the state’s performance on 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 CFSR 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 with only 1 associated item, 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 tables presenting Minnesota’s overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Minnesota’s performance in Round 2.

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I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Minnesota 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 1 of 7 systemic factors was found to be in substantial conformity:

- Agency Responsiveness

Children's Bureau Comments on Minnesota Performance

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

A key finding of the Minnesota CFSR was that the state did not achieve substantial conformity with any of the safety, permanency, or well-being outcomes and only 1 of the systemic factors. As a result of the Governor's Task Force, Minnesota convened numerous work groups to make recommendations on how to improve the child welfare system. Although the task force is no longer in place, some of those work groups continue. The Children's Bureau saw that Minnesota believes in placement with kin and is working to ensure that children have the best possible placements to meet their cultural needs. Minnesota also strives to keep siblings together. The Children's Bureau believes the state can build upon these practice areas and address the program areas and outcomes that need improvement. Minnesota's engagement of key stakeholders who share responsibility for systemic improvement and strategic planning will be critical to the success of ongoing work.

Data provided by the state in the statewide assessment, and information collected during stakeholder interviews, indicated that larger trends may affect child welfare in Minnesota, such as a growing number of reports of maltreatment, shortage of foster homes, and lack of additional funding to address areas of concern. During the review, the Children's Bureau identified a number of cross-cutting concerns including high caseworker caseloads, lack of initial and ongoing training for caseworkers, low retention of employees, and lack of qualified service providers. These concerns, along with the larger trends, could present challenges to assuring child safety, permanency, and well-being. The Children's Bureau encourages Minnesota to consider this context in addressing the specific challenges noted in these comments and throughout the Final Report.

An insufficient array of appropriate services and service providers has negatively affected performance on some of the outcomes. Stakeholders reported a significant lack of transportation in rural Minnesota to ensure families are able to participate in visits with their children and follow through with necessary services. There is a shortage of dental providers, child psychiatric service providers to monitor the use of psychotropic medication, and licensed placement providers. Many stakeholders reported that the lack of licensed placements has left very few options for ensuring children are safe when removal is warranted, and that children are left in the homes of alleged perpetrators, or sometimes in Minnesota DHS offices until an appropriate placement is located. Shelters are often at capacity, and children are staying longer in shelter settings due to the lack of appropriate, longer-term placements.

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Stakeholders also reported a lack of organized, effective recruitment. There is no statewide recruitment plan, and it was reported that the state is not adequately informed of what counties are doing to recruit foster homes. There is also concern about Minnesota's Independent Living population, which includes children in the system who are 14 years of age and older and youth aging out of care. Those concerns include a lack of work toward identifying permanent living arrangements or connections, and providing adequate resources to assist in preparation for independence.

It appears that limited work has been done to identify and maintain connections for these children and youth or to link them with the adequate resources to prepare for independence, both before and upon entering Minnesota's extended foster care program.

The review identified areas of concern pertaining to assessing and managing safety and risk. Minnesota has a two-tiered response system depending on the type of child maltreatment report. Reviewers found that in some reports, including reports received on open cases, a response is not initiated timely or as required by state policy. Because the child welfare agency is not available for night and weekend coverage in some counties, law enforcement handles these investigations—including interviews and placement of children—and the agency is not involved until the next business day. There were also concerns that the state is not seeing all of the victims in maltreatment reports. The Children's Bureau urges the state to address these risk and safety concerns for children.

Stakeholders expressed concerns about caseworker training. There is a large number of new caseworkers, and depending on the waiting list and geographical location of the new worker, completing initial training can take up to 6 months. During that time, the caseworker is actively managing a caseload. The state and counties also face challenges in ensuring that all workers (private and county), irrespective of program type (Child Protection, Children's Mental Health, Parent Support Outreach Program [PSOP], and Juvenile Justice), receive adequate initial and ongoing training, and that the quality of the training is not sufficient for staff to gain the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties.

The Children's Bureau is concerned about Minnesota's PSOP cases. A PSOP case is a voluntary case that is opened by the agency and the county to provide support to a family. For a family to be eligible for this service, the children in the family must be 10 years of age or younger. During the review, the Children's Bureau found variability in how these cases are managed depending on the county and the provider. Minnesota often contracts with private agencies to manage these cases. Many cases are left open for long periods of time without services being provided to the family, without ongoing assessments, and without being assessed before case closure. The Children's Bureau urges the state to address these challenges and to evaluate the PSOP cases to ensure appropriate services for all families and children.

The review found that parents and caregivers are not always engaged in casework efforts. Engaging and working with relevant parents and caregivers is critical to maintaining safety, achieving permanency, maintaining connections for children, and promoting well-being. The review results indicated that the state needs to improve efforts to engage and work with parents; it was noted that parents are often not involved in the case planning process and case plans are not individualized. The review also showed that the state is challenged to ensure that the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and parents are sufficient to meet family needs, and that the assessment of children's needs for services is not always adequate.

Throughout the review, there was concern about lack of communication among caseworkers, supervisors, providers, and foster parents. In some cases, individuals are not aware of the permanency goal and the focus of the work with the family. This lack of

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communication affects goal setting and timely achievement of goals, which ultimately influences permanency outcomes for children. There were also concerns that contracted caseworkers often do not have consistent communication with the state agency to ensure that cases are progressing.

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. Minnesota provides an alternative/differential response 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 Minnesota Department of Human Services. 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

Minnesota is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 55% of the 29 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.

Minnesota policy defines initiation of a report of child maltreatment report as face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim (or first attempt to conduct face-to-face contact with the child). The time frame for making face-to face contact is determined by the allegations within the report. Reports alleging substantial child endangerment or sexual abuse must be initiated within 24 hours of receipt of the report. Reports that do not include allegations of substantial child endangerment or sexual abuse are initiated within 5 days of receipt of the report. Agencies are required to assess and ensure child safety when subsequent reports are received on open investigations or assessments.

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- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 55% of the 29 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

Minnesota is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 43% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 43% of the 40 foster care cases, 43% of the 21 in-home services cases, and 50% of the 4 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 50% of the 28 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 37% of the 19 applicable foster care cases, 86% of the 7 applicable in-home services cases, and 50% of the 2 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 43% of the 65 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 43% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 43% of the 21 applicable in-home services cases, and 50% of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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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

Minnesota is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 25% 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).

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 65% 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 68% 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 50% 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.

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State Outcome Performance

Minnesota is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 63% 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 88% of the 24 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,¹ and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 67% of the 36 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 67% of the 12 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 74% of the 34 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 79% of the 14 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.

¹ 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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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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 84% 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 69% of the 35 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 father² or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 54% of the 35 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 68% of the 34 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 50% 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.

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

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

² 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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The outcome was substantially achieved in 34% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 38% of the 40 foster care cases, 19% of the 21 in-home services cases, and 75% of the 4 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,³ 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 38% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as Strength in 40% of the 40 foster care cases, 29% of the 21 in-home services cases, and 75% of the 4 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

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

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 62% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 65% of the 40 foster care cases, 52% of the 21 in-home services cases, and 75% of the 4 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 43% of the 61 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

³ 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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- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 44% of the 36 applicable foster care cases, 33% of the 21 applicable in-home services cases, and 75% of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 54% of the 59 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

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 72% 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 parents⁴ and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 40% of the 62 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 46% of the 37 applicable foster care cases, 29% of the 21 applicable in-home services cases, and 50% of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 58% of the 38 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 66% of the 59 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 41% of the 44 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 55% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.

⁴ 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 14 was rated as a Strength in 63% of the 40 foster care cases, 38% of the 21 in-home services cases, and 75% of the 4 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 fathers⁵ of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 36% of the 61 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 36% of the 36 applicable foster care cases, 29% of the 21 applicable in-home services cases, and 75% of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 53% of the 59 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 39% of the 44 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

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 70% 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

⁵ 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 70% of the 46 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 77% of the 30 applicable foster care cases, 46% of the 13 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 3 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

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 41% of the 59 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 28% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 60% of the applicable 15 in-home services cases, and 100% of the applicable 4 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 48% of the 48 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 43% of the 40 foster care cases, 67% of the 6 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 2 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 56% of the 45 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 48% of the 27 applicable foster care cases, 57% of the 14 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 4 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

Minnesota 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed in the stakeholder interviews showed that while Minnesota's information system has the capacity to collect and report information related to the status, location, demographic characteristics, and goals for placement of every child who is (or within the immediate preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care, the state provided no information or data to support that the system is actually functioning as intended. The statewide assessment did not include an analysis of a sample of cases that demonstrates the information in the system is accurate or entered timely. Based on information collected during stakeholder interviews, there are varying expectations around data entry, with many stakeholders indicating that they have up to 30 days to enter locations/placements. Additionally,

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not all Tribes or juvenile justice staff have access to the statewide information system, which creates delays in entering the required elements into the system.

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

Minnesota 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment. Minnesota agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- In the statewide assessment, Minnesota presented data regarding case plans that were reviewed for the past few years. These data demonstrated that a significant portion of parents were not well engaged in developing case plans jointly.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the stakeholder interviews.
- Stakeholders reported that periodic reviews occur every 60 to 90 days. Both the state agency and the court have systems in place to track the reviews. Stakeholders explained that the state holds frequent Permanency Progress Review hearings that include all the required provisions of periodic reviews. Stakeholders provided varied information regarding who participates in periodic reviews and stated that participation in periodic reviews may differ by county.

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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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that permanency hearings are occurring at least every 12 months, but usually more frequently, and that hearings include the necessary components. A system is in place to track the hearings. Absent parents are invited to all hearings once they have been located.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information collected from stakeholders showed that termination of parental rights (TPR) filings are completed timely and in accordance with the required provisions. The agency and the court monitor data related to the length of time children are in care (the most recent 15 of 22 months) with processes in place to ensure timely filing. Minnesota generally files for TPR even when exceptions are present and petitions the court for dismissal based on the exceptions.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment. Minnesota agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- The statewide assessment included data from a survey of foster parents and caretakers noting that although there have been improvements in recent years, a large number reported not receiving notice. The survey also found that the vast majority of caretakers reported that they were not afforded the right to be heard during hearings and reviews.

Quality Assurance System

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

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State Systemic Factor Performance

Minnesota is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders shows that Minnesota's Quality Assurance (QA) System is not fully functioning statewide. The state's system collects data from multiple sources, but it lacks several required components that are necessary to demonstrate effective functioning across the state. The state agency provides the counties with information and data, including the results of MnCFSRs, but follow-up is inconsistent and does not ensure that statewide challenges are addressed and adjustments to practice and policy are made. The state works with counties on improvement plans based on MnCFSR results but often does not return to complete another MnCFSR for several years, making continuous improvement difficult. There is no clear information on how the gathered data are applied to support statewide change. Stakeholders noted that the QA system has not become part of the agency culture, and that internal stakeholders, such as field staff, lack an understanding of or involvement in the QA system.

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

Minnesota is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. None of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

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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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that availability of initial training is often limited, resulting in new workers carrying full caseloads for several months before receiving training. Due to caseload responsibilities, the worker's attendance is often interrupted and training is sometimes difficult to complete. Stakeholders commented that the training did not fully provide the skills and knowledge needed to do the job. Some stakeholders reported that completion of training is not adequately tracked by the state. The state has different training requirements for child welfare, children's mental health, and juvenile justice staff, and stakeholders are often unable to explain the requirements. Staff working with children and families in the juvenile justice system does not have adequate training in family-centered practice in child welfare even though many of these families have abuse and neglect concerns.

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 staff⁶ that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that Minnesota does not have a statewide tracking system in place for ongoing training for child protection staff, children's mental health staff, juvenile justice staff, and contracted staff. Information in the statewide assessment indicated that each county is responsible for monitoring the training. Stakeholders expressed confusion regarding annual requirements for ongoing training for staff. They also expressed that the training does not fully address the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their duties.

⁶ "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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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.

- Minnesota 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 the staff and provider training system is not functioning statewide. The training does not adequately address the skills and knowledge base trainees need to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adoptive children. While the state has a statewide training system, the counties are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the foster parents receive adequate training. The state was unable to demonstrate that the training is consistent from county to county.

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

Minnesota 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.

- Minnesota 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 confirmed in stakeholder interviews showed significant gaps in the service array and extensive wait lists due to the limited pool of qualified service providers across the state and limited transportation and housing services. There are gaps in services to address substance abuse, mental health issues, child

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psychological/psychiatric needs, in-home needs, and support for youth aging out of the system. There is no process in place to address or assess services statewide. All of the stakeholders interviewed confirmed a lack of resources statewide.

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.

- Minnesota 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 confirmed in stakeholder interviews showed that services are not always individualized to meet the unique cultural or linguistic needs of the populations they serve. Stakeholders reported that services are often “one-size-fits-all,” and that there are not enough providers to meet the needs of families whose first language is not English. The use of interpreters and interpreting services limits and often reduces the quality of the interventions. Moreover, the state is challenged in individualizing services to accommodate the developmental needs of children and the particular needs of parents.

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

Minnesota is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. One item in this systemic factor was 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement 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 does not effectively engage and consult with stakeholders pursuant to the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP and APSR. Stakeholder interviews revealed uncertainty as to whether a process of including stakeholders exists or if this lack of

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engagement and consultation is a response to the Governor's Task Force. Many stakeholders reported not being involved or consulted. Some reported involvement in the Task Force work groups, but in some work groups no final outcomes are achieved and no recommendations are made, or the stakeholders are not provided with that information. Tribal stakeholders reported that at times the state requests their participation without adequate notice and that more Tribal representatives should be invited to ensure adequate representation.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment described various programs for which the state coordinates federal funding to bolster services to children and families in the areas of health, education, and collaborative efforts with the courts and law enforcement agencies. In addition, stakeholders reported that the state's use of Medicaid to support mental health services through the school system and county agencies has resulted in the state's having one of the largest school mental health service programs in the country.

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

Minnesota 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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

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- The statewide assessment provided information on licensing standards and the state's processes for ensuring that standards are applied equally across the state. The Licensing Division of DHS enforces those standards. The state has clear policy related to variances or waivers, and a process to ensure the policy is followed for foster care placements. Stakeholders confirmed that the state tracks and addresses variances and that waivers are not issued when there are safety concerns. The Licensing Division directly licenses all residential child care facilities and monitors those facilities on an ongoing basis.

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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 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 complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances for licensing and approving foster care and adoptive placements. The state has a process in place to address the safety of children in placement and requires completion of a background check before a child is placed in a home. The state maintains a tracking system for criminal background checks and has a process in place for variances. The state ensures that staff members of residential child care facilities undergo background checks when they are initially employed, and it monitors staff daily through the use of a statewide system.

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.

- Minnesota 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 interviews with stakeholders showed that Minnesota has a severe shortage of foster homes for all children, especially for African American and Native American children. Areas of the state have shown an increasingly diverse population, but Minnesota has not adequately assessed the need. The state has not completed a regular review of data on the characteristics of children in foster care compared with the characteristics and availability of foster placements. Moreover, the state has no formal process for using data to inform its diligent recruitment plan. Stakeholders expressed the need for a statewide recruitment plan to match the population of children for whom homes are needed. Local counties and private agencies are responsible for their own recruitment and retention efforts.

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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.

- Minnesota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment. Minnesota agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that while Minnesota explores and uses cross-jurisdictional resources for children in care, the state does not meet the requirements for responding to Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) cases. Additionally, the state does not have statistical information about cross-county placements of children.

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 2016 CFSR Performance

**Appendix A
Summary of Minnesota 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	55% Substantially Achieved
Item 1 Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	55% 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	43% Substantially Achieved
Item 2 Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	50% Strength
Item 3 Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	43% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 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	25% Substantially Achieved
Item 4 Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength
Item 5 Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	68% Strength
Item 6 Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	50% 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	63% Substantially Achieved
Item 7 Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 8 Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	67% Strength
Item 9 Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	84% Strength
Item 10 Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	69% Strength
Item 11 Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	54% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 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	34% Substantially Achieved
Item 12 Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	38% Strength
Sub-Item 12A Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	62% Strength
Sub-Item 12B Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	43% Strength
Sub-Item 12C Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	72% Strength
Item 13 Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	40% Strength
Item 14 Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	55% Strength
Item 15 Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	36% 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	70% Substantially Achieved
Item 16 Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	70% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 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	41% Substantially Achieved
Item 17 Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	48% Strength
Item 18 Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	56% 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	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 19 Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21 Periodic Reviews	Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 22 Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 23 Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 24 Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 25 Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 26 Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 2016 CFSR Performance

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Item 27 Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 28 Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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

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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 32 Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Minnesota 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 and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 34 Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	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	Area Needing Improvement

III. Performance on Statewide Data Indicators⁷

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	8.0%	7.1%–9%	FY14–5
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	7.09	5.97–8.42	15A–15B, FY15

⁷ 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 Minnesota 2016 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 entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	56.5%	55.2%–57.8%	13A–15B
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	43.7%	41.1%–46.4%	15A–15B
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	23.7%	21.6%–25.9%	15A–15B
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	15.7%	14.4%–17.1%	13A–15B
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	4.10	3.97–4.23	15A–15B

* **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.

Appendix B: Minnesota 2007 CFSR Key Findings

Appendix B Summary of CFSR Round 2 Minnesota 2007 Key Findings

The Children's Bureau conducted a CFSR in Minnesota 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: 5
Date of Onsite Review: September 24–28, 2007
Period Under Review: April 1, 2006, through September 28, 2007
Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued: May 5, 2008
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: August 4, 2008
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: January 1, 2010

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 five of the seven systemic factors.

Appendix B: Minnesota 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	95.3	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.63	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	116.0	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	98.8	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	106.2	Does Not Meet Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	83.2	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: Minnesota 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	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Achieved Substantial Conformity

Appendix B: Minnesota 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	Area Needing Improvement
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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 13. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
Item 14. Preserving Connections	Area Needing Improvement
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: Minnesota 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	Area Needing Improvement
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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30. Standards Ensuring Quality Services	Strength
Item 31. Quality Assurance System	Strength
Item 32. Initial Staff Training	Strength
Item 33. Ongoing Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement
Item 34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength
Item 35. Array of Services	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
Item 37. Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix B: Minnesota 2007 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength
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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength