



# Child and Family Services Reviews

## Tennessee Final Report 2017



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

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# Final Report: Tennessee Child and Family Services Review

## INTRODUCTION

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

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Department of Children's Services (DCS) and submitted to the Children's Bureau on February 1, 2017. The statewide assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan
- The results of case reviews of 75 cases (40 foster care and 35 in-home) conducted via a State Conducted Case Review process in all 12 regions in Tennessee between April 1, 2017, and September 30, 2017
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
  - Attorneys representing the agency, parents, and children and youth
  - Child welfare agency commissioner, senior managers, and program managers
  - Child welfare agency supervisors and case workers
  - Community Advisory Board
  - Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) staff
  - Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
  - Foster and adoptive parents and relative caregivers
  - Foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention staff
  - Foster Care Review Board
  - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) staff
  - Information systems staff
  - Judges

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- Other state agencies receiving federal funding
- Parents
- Service providers
- State licensed/approved child care facility staff
- 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 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 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 tables presenting Tennessee’s overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Tennessee’s performance in Round 2.

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### I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

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

The following 1 of the 7 outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity:

- Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect

The following 4 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Statewide Information System
- Quality Assurance System
- Staff and Provider Training
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

#### Children's Bureau Comments on Tennessee Performance

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

A key finding of the review was Tennessee's commitment to continuous quality improvement (CQI) as evidenced by its functioning Quality Assurance System. The Children's Bureau believes that ongoing development and integration of CQI activities, including improved engagement with key stakeholders, will serve as a solid foundation for implementing effective improvement strategies in the Program Improvement Plan (PIP). While the core components of a QA system are in place in the state, Tennessee recognizes the need to more effectively utilize data and information to inform improvement strategies that support better practice outcomes. Tennessee conducted its own case reviews for the CFSR and has decided to replace its ongoing case review process with the CFSR Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions, which will further enhance the state's capacity to evaluate case practice, identify strengths and needs of the system, and target practice improvements. The Children's Bureau acknowledges the work that the state has put in to develop the capacity to conduct these reviews and integrate them into the state's ongoing CQI processes.

The Children's Bureau's evaluation of systemic factor functioning also found that the state has been adequately monitoring nearly all the required systems through various data collection processes. The state has ensured that it is meeting licensing standards, training requirements, and some of the case review requirements. While having strong processes in place to monitor and evaluate systemic functioning is a strength to build on, the Children's Bureau also notes an opportunity for the state to consider, in partnership with key stakeholders, why these key systems are not producing the positive effects on practice outcomes that might be expected. For example, further evaluation with court partners is needed to determine why timely periodic reviews and permanency hearings are not promoting improved permanency outcomes. In addition, discussions with workers, supervisors, and foster parents about their ability

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to transfer skills learned in training to their work with children and families would also help uncover barriers to achieving positive outcomes.

Tennessee demonstrated strong performance in Safety Outcome 1, which was found to be in substantial conformity. The state's focus on monitoring timely responses to reports of child maltreatment to ensure child safety is commended. In contrast to this strong practice, case review findings revealed significant concerns with all other outcome areas. While improvements are needed in both foster care and in-home cases, the data showed poorer performance across outcomes in the in-home cases. Since Tennessee has done focused work through In Home Tennessee to enhance the service array and engagement of families, further assessment is needed to determine what strategies should be employed to ensure improvements in this practice area.

The review revealed concerns regarding the lack of quality assessments of risk and safety, which will have cross-cutting implications for permanency and well-being outcomes as well. Concerns with quality risk and safety assessment were noted in initial investigations and assessments, as well as in ongoing assessments throughout the life of the case. As a result, identified safety concerns were not adequately addressed by the agency through effective service delivery, and adequate safety plans were not developed and monitored. In almost three-quarters of the in-home cases where safety concerns were identified, concerted efforts were not made to provide appropriate safety-related services to safely maintain those children in the home. For foster care cases, risk and safety assessments often focused only on the target child while siblings remained in the home.

Another cross-cutting practice issue identified through the reviews is inadequate worker visits. The lack of frequent, quality visits with both children and parents had a negative effect on multiple outcome areas, including safety. The most typical frequency of worker visits with parents was less than once per month. In in-home cases, home visits did not always include all the caregivers in the home. In several cases, there were significant gaps in home visits and a lack of any indication that the agency case manager met privately with children.

In assessing the state's performance in permanency outcomes, reviewers noted primary concerns with agency and court efforts to achieve timely permanency. Several factors may be contributing to this, including ineffective implementation of concurrent planning and inadequate work with parents to assess needs, engage them in case planning, and provide tailored services. While concurrent goals were established in many of the cases reviewed, often work toward achieving the identified case plan goals was sequential in nature. This could be affecting the timely filing for termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions as well. Efforts to find suitable permanent placements through relative searches, diligent recruitment, and the use of cross-jurisdictional resources may also be improved through the effective implementation of concurrent planning, which promotes early searches for permanent families. With respect to the agency's work with parents, information in the statewide assessment and from stakeholder interviews confirmed case review findings showing that parents are not consistently engaged in case planning, and that tailored services are not always provided to families. Substance abuse by parents and child behavioral concerns were the two most prominent reasons for agency involvement in the cases reviewed. Careful consideration of how the agency can best engage and serve families with these needs may be warranted.

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Another key practice area affecting permanency and well-being outcomes is parent-child and sibling visitation. Case review findings revealed that visitation with parents and siblings was not of sufficient frequency or quality in most cases. In most cases, children did not have weekly visitation with parents. Stakeholders stated that parental incarceration, lack of transportation options, and distance to the child's placement were barriers to more frequent parent visitation. Focused efforts on ensuring that children's connections are preserved through visitation and other means will promote improved engagement of families, and support the achievement of well-being and permanency outcomes.

The Children's Bureau encourages the state to evaluate implementation of its Child and Family Team (CFTM) meetings to determine how improvements in concurrent planning, family engagement, assessment and service provision, and preserving connections could be made through the CFTM process.

Lastly, as part of the CFSR, a small sample of juvenile justice cases was reviewed. In most of those cases, the agency did not adequately assess the parent's needs or provide needed services. The youth's needs were adequately assessed and met in less than half of the cases. In case discussions, the state noted concerns about having adequate placement resources for some juvenile justice youth. Further analysis of state performance in juvenile justice cases statewide would be helpful in determining whether targeted strategies for this population would be warranted in the PIP.

## 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. Tennessee 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 DCS. 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**

Tennessee is in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 95% of the 37 applicable cases reviewed.

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

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

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

State policy requires that accepted reports be assigned one of three priority response times. Reports assigned for a Priority 1 response are initiated by face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim within 24 hours of the intake creation date and time. Reports assigned for a Priority 2 response are initiated by face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim within 2 business days of the intake creation date and time. Reports assigned for a Priority 3 response are initiated by face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim within 3 business days of the intake creation date and time.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 1 because 95% of the 37 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**

Tennessee is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 23% of the 75 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 30% of the 40 foster care cases, 18% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 47% of the 30 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.



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- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 73% of the 11 applicable foster care cases, 46% of the 13 applicable in-home services cases, and none of the 6 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 23% of the 75 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 30% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 18% of the 28 applicable in-home services cases, and none of the 7 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

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

#### State Outcome Performance

Tennessee is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 33% 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).

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 60% 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 59% of the 39 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 48% 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

Tennessee is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 28% of the 39 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 86% of the 22 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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

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

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

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- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 38% of the 32 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 18% of the 11 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 47% of the 30 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 52% 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 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 31% of the 39 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 43% of the 28 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 48% of the 31 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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

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- In 55% of the 31 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 22 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

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 15% of the 75 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 15% of the 40 foster care cases, 18% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

#### Well-Being Outcome 1 Item Performance

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

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 16% of the 75 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as Strength in 15% of the 40 foster care cases, 21% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

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Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 45% of the 75 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 55% of the 40 foster care cases, 39% of the 28 in-home services cases, and 14% of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 21% of the 68 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 21% of the 33 applicable foster care cases, 25% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 26% of the 66 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 21% of the 61 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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 48% of the 31 applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength.

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

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 41% of the 73 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 53% of the 38 applicable foster care cases, 36% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

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- In 59% of the 54 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 49% of the 65 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 45% of the 58 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 44% of the 75 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 55% of the 40 foster care cases, 39% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

### Item 15. Caseworker Visits With Parents

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 29% of the 68 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 33% of the 33 applicable foster care cases, 32% of the 28 in-home services cases, and none of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 35% of the 65 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 33% of the 58 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with fathers were sufficient.

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

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### **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**

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 55% of the 53 applicable cases reviewed.

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

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

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 55% of the 53 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 62% of the 39 applicable foster care cases, 40% of the 10 applicable in-home services cases, and 25% of the 4 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**

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 33% of the 67 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 28% of the 40 applicable foster care cases, 48% of the 23 applicable in-home services cases, and none of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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### **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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 59% of the 54 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 65% of the 40 foster care cases, 55% of the 11 applicable in-home services cases, and none of the 3 applicable 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 33% of the 57 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 35% of the 37 applicable foster care cases, 38% of the 16 applicable in-home services cases, and none 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**

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



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### ***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.

- Tennessee 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 collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state's statewide information system, Tennessee Family and Child Tracking System (TFACTS), captures all required data elements. The state provided data and information that verified information was recorded for the majority of children. The state has various monitoring systems in place to ensure that all key data elements are entered timely and accurately.

### **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**

Tennessee is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Two 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.

- Tennessee 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 described how the state uses Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM) to develop case plans with families and showed that the state's case plan document includes the required provisions. Data provided in the statewide assessment showed that the state is not consistently engaging parents in the development of case plans and parents are not always participating in CFTMs. The state's qualitative review data also found concerns with parental engagement, especially fathers. Stakeholders confirmed this information and said that the state needed to improve efforts to locate absent fathers. Stakeholders also said that one of the barriers to ensuring parental engagement was worker turnover.

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### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information in the statewide assessment and confirmed during interviews with stakeholders showed that periodic reviews occur for most of the children in foster care no less frequently than once every 6 months by the court or the Foster Care Review Boards (FCRB). Some jurisdictions conduct reviews every 3 months and others conduct reviews every 5 months.

### Item 22. Permanency Hearings

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Tennessee presented recent data in the statewide assessment showing that permanency hearings were held timely for the majority of foster care and juvenile justice cases. Most stakeholders agreed that permanency hearings are held timely.

### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that TPR petitions were not filed timely and a compelling reason not to file was not documented for most cases. Stakeholders said that barriers included workers providing insufficient information to support the filing of the TPR petition and being uncertain about what constitutes a compelling reason and how to document it.

### 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.

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- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Tennessee described the process for providing notification to foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers and foster parents confirmed that they are routinely notified of hearings. However, data in the statewide assessment that foster parents in juvenile justice cases were notified less often than foster parents in child welfare cases. Stakeholders reported that foster parents can always be heard at Foster Care Review Board hearings; however, foster parents are not always afforded the right to be heard in court hearings. Stakeholders said that there may be some confusion about the status of foster parents based on a new court rule that prohibits outside parties from attending hearings.

### 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

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

#### Quality Assurance System Item Performance

##### Item 25. Quality Assurance System

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 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 has a quality assurance (QA) system that is operating in all 12 regions of the state that includes all the components of a functioning QA system. Strengths and needs of the child welfare system are identified through qualitative and quantitative data collection. There are processes in place to evaluate and implement program improvements. Stakeholders confirm that the state collects relevant data through various QA review processes. While the state has a QA system in place, there are opportunities to enhance the system in the areas of developing and implementing strategies and action plans targeted at improving outcomes.

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### 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

Tennessee is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. All 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that all workers receive initial training in a timely manner and the training is effective in preparing them for their jobs. The state tracks compliance with initial training that new hires receive before they assume a caseload. Training evaluation survey results showed that most training participants felt that the training better prepared them to serve children. Stakeholders reported that initial training is adequate and that on-the-job training and peer mentoring are very helpful supports for new staff.

##### Item 27. Ongoing Staff Training

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

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

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

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- Data and information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that most case managers and supervisors receive ongoing training timely. The agency has a system in place to track and monitor ongoing training. Training evaluation survey results showed that ongoing training is effective and that staff training needs are adequately met. Stakeholders confirmed the effectiveness of ongoing training and said that training staff meets frequently with CQI/QA staff to identify training needs based on CQI data.

### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that DCS, provider agency foster parents, and provider agency staff meet initial and ongoing training requirements. Although the state acknowledges concerns with the data collection process for monitoring ongoing training hours for DCS foster parents, stakeholders said that staff and resource workers monitor ongoing training. The state has a process for evaluating foster parent training needs and has been responsive in providing targeted training to meet identified needs. Stakeholders said that the training provided is adequate in preparing foster parents and provider staff with the skills and knowledge they need.

## 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

Tennessee 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.

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- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state does not have an adequate array of services accessible to children and families. In addition to the service needs identified by the state, stakeholders reported significant service gaps for substance abuse treatment and mental health services for parents and youth, resulting in extensive waitlists. Other service gaps include parenting classes, anger management treatment, domestic violence treatment, sex-offender treatment, housing, transportation, in-home services, and services for families with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Gaps in services for youth include behavioral health treatment beds and intensive outpatient services. Trauma-informed services, resources for children with autism, and acute and intensive treatment for youth are also needs. In rural areas of the state, many services are not locally available, and there is a lack of public transportation. Stakeholders also reported barriers for parents who do not have insurance, particularly for accessing mental health and substance abuse treatment, and in-home services. Although services might be readily available in some parts of the state, workers are unaware of them and therefore are not linking families with the services. Stakeholders said that in areas of the state where community advisory boards are in place and functioning well, they have been very effective in developing needed services and responding to service barriers.

### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state does not ensure that services can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families. The state acknowledged concerns with the adequacy of the assessments completed through the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) and the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST) that are used to inform case plans and services for families. Some stakeholders shared this concern. Using CFTMs to ensure individualization has not been happening consistently statewide. Stakeholders reported that many services are generic and do not meet the unique needs of families. Specific concerns were noted regarding a lack of services for Spanish-speaking families. While stakeholders confirmed that translation services via phone are available, stakeholders questioned the adequacy of that in ensuring effective interpretation when working with families. Stakeholders also said that the phone service is not available for all language needs in each county.

### 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.

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### State Systemic Factor Performance

Tennessee is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. One of the items 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.

- Tennessee 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 ensure active engagement and ongoing consultation with all of its key stakeholders in developing the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP. Some internal and external stakeholders described ways in which they have provided input into the state's strategic planning efforts. However, key groups such as youth, foster parents, birth parents, and the courts are not meaningfully engaged in a consistent manner. The state recognizes that there are opportunities to better integrate the CFSP and APSR into its strategic planning process and has recently begun efforts to do this and to enhance the state's engagement of stakeholders.

#### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Tennessee provided examples of how the state coordinates services or benefits with other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population. Stakeholders described how services are coordinated with the Department of Health, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Department of Human Services. An initiative to bring several federally funded state agencies together in a "single team/single plan" to coordinate services and treatment options for families is being piloted through the Multi Agency Collaborative, comprising Commissioners from 6 or 7 federally funded state agencies. Although service coordination is occurring in various ways and additional improvements are underway, stakeholders reported that some barriers exist at the worker level regarding coordinating a family's access to some

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basic services and forms of aid, including Temporary Aid to Needy Families, Child Support, and Medicaid. These barriers add steps to the referral process, which sometimes delays access to services.

### 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

Tennessee 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state is ensuring 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. DCS developed an internal infrastructure to provide oversight and ensure compliance with IV-E eligibility and DCS safety requirements for all DCS and contract agency foster homes and contract agency congregate and residential direct care staff. Monitoring processes and tracking mechanisms are in place for all resource homes to ensure that standards are being met.

##### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.



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- Data and information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances for agency and provider resource homes and direct care staff. The agency has policies and procedures in place and operating to ensure that all children are safe in their foster and adoptive placements. The Resource Eligibility Team (RET) monitors compliance and tracks criminal and child abuse and neglect background checks. Stakeholders said that background checks are completed accurately and timely.

### 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.

- Tennessee 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 the state does not have a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in foster care. Although each of the 12 DCS Service Regions has active recruitment and retention plans, the plans do not include targeted recruitment strategies based on the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the regions.

### 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.

- Tennessee received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that although the state is effectively utilizing cross-jurisdictional resources to support the permanent placement of waiting children through registration on AdoptUsKids, diligent family searches, and child-specific recruitment efforts, there are concerns with the timeliness of the state's response to requests by other states to complete home studies. Data from a recent time period showed that slightly more than a third of the requests for home studies from other states were completed within the 60-day time frame. TN has border agreements with 4 states, and placements made with those states are completed more timely.

## Appendix A

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

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

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

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

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Safety Outcome 1</b> Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	In Substantial Conformity	95% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 1</b> Timeliness of investigations	Strength	95% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Safety Outcome 2</b> Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	23% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 2</b> Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	47% Strength
<b>Item 3</b> Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	23% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Permanency Outcome 1</b> Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	33% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 4</b> Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	60% Strength
<b>Item 5</b> Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	59% Strength
<b>Item 6</b> Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	48% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Permanency Outcome 2</b> The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	28% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 7</b> Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	86% Strength
<b>Item 8</b> Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement†	38% Strength
<b>Item 9</b> Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	31% Strength
<b>Item 10</b> Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	43% Strength
<b>Item 11</b> Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement†	48% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 1</b> Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	15% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 12</b> Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	16% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12A</b> Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	45% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12B</b> Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	21% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12C</b> Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	48% Strength
<b>Item 13</b> Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	41% Strength
<b>Item 14</b> Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	44% Strength
<b>Item 15</b> Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	29% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 2</b> Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	55% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 16</b> Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	55% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 3</b> Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	33% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 17</b> Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	59% Strength
<b>Item 18</b> Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	33% Strength

## II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

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

### STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Statewide Information System</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 19</b> Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

### CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

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

### QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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

### STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

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

## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

### SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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

### AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

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

## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

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

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

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

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

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.1%	Lower	7.1%	6.6–7.7%	FY14–FY15
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	10.37	9.03–11.91	15A–15B, FY15

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



## Appendix A: Summary of Tennessee 2017 CFSR Performance

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	43.7%	42.4%–44.9%	13B–16A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	49.3%	47.1%–51.5%	15B–16A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	38.4%	36.3%–40.4%	15B–16A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	8.4%	7.3%–9.6%	13B–16A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	5.25	5.11–5.39	15B–16A

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

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

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

## Appendix B Summary of CFSR Round 2 Tennessee 2008 Key Findings

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

### Identifying Information and Review Dates

General Information
Children's Bureau Region: 4
Date of Onsite Review: August 25–29, 2008
Period Under Review: April 1, 2007, through August 29, 2008
Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued: March 4, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: June 1, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: April 1, 2010

### Highlights of Findings

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

## Appendix B: Tennessee 2008 CFSR Key Findings

### State's Conformance With the National Standards

Data Indicator or Composite	National Standard	State's Score	Meets or Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of maltreatment recurrence (data indicator)	94.6 or higher	92.9	Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.2	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	119.4	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	136.7	Meets Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	152.4	Meets Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	85.9	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

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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: Tennessee 2008 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	Area Needing Improvement
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	Area Needing Improvement
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	Not Applicable
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	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

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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	Area Needing Improvement
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	Strength
Item 34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength
Item 35. Array of Services	Strength
Item 36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
Item 37. Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement
Item 38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength

## Appendix B: Tennessee 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Area Needing Improvement
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