

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS

Vermont

FINAL REPORT

2024

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Final Report: Vermont Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Vermont. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau (CB) to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is 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 CB, 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 Vermont are based on:

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the Vermont Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division, and submitted to the CB on March 6, 2024. 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 August 2023 State Data Profile, prepared by the CB, which provides the state's Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) compared to national performance on 7 statewide data indicators.
- The results of case reviews of 65 cases [40 foster care and 25 in-home], conducted via a CB-Led Review process at the Burlington, Rutland, and Brattleboro sites in Vermont during May 6–10, 2024, examining case practices occurring in May 2023 through May 2024.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
 - Parents
 - Child Welfare Caseworkers
 - Attorneys and Guardians Ad Litem for Children, Youth, and Parents
 - Judges/Judicial Officers
 - Child Welfare Contractors or Service Providers
 - Child Welfare Regional Management
 - Foster/Adoptive Licensing Staff

Background Information

The Round 4 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. In addition, for Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, the state's RSP on applicable statewide data indicators must be better than or no different than national performance. This determination for substantial conformity is based on the data profile transmitted to the state to signal the start of that state's CFSR. The state's RSP in subsequent data profiles will be factored into the determination of indicators required to be included in the state's Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

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. An overview of the pathways to substantial conformity for the CFSR outcomes and systemic factors is in Appendix B of the Round 4 *CFSR Procedures Manual*.

The CB made several changes to the CFSR process, items, and indicators that are relevant to evaluating performance, based on lessons learned during the third round of reviews. As such, a state's performance in the fourth round of the CFSRs may not be directly comparable to its performance in the third round.

I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Vermont 2024 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes and Systemic Factors

The CB has established high standards of performance for the CFSR based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our country's most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be considered acceptable. The high standards ensure ongoing attention to achieving positive outcomes for children and families regarding safety, permanency, and well-being. This is consistent with the CFSR's goal of promoting continuous improvement in performance on these outcomes. A state must develop and implement a PIP to address the areas of concern identified for each outcome or systemic factor for which the state is found not to be in substantial conformity. The CB recognizes that the kinds of systemic and practice changes necessary to bring about improvement in some outcome areas often take time to implement. The results of this CFSR are intended to serve as the basis for continued improvement efforts addressing areas where a state still needs to improve.

Table 1 provides a quick reminder of how case review items and statewide data indicators are combined to assess substantial conformity on each outcome:

Table 1. Outcomes, Case Review Items, and Statewide Data Indicators

Outcome	Case Review Item(s)	Statewide Data Indicators
Safety Outcome 1	Item 1	Maltreatment in foster care Recurrence of maltreatment
Safety Outcome 2	Items 2 and 3	N/A
Permanency Outcome 1	Items 4, 5, and 6	Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more Reentry to foster care in 12 months Placement stability
Permanency Outcome 2	Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11	N/A
Well-Being Outcome 1	Items 12, 13, 14, and 15	N/A

Outcome	Case Review Item(s)	Statewide Data Indicators
Well-Being Outcome 2	Item 16	N/A
Well-Being Outcome 3	Items 17 and 18	N/A

Vermont was found in substantial conformity with none of the 7 outcomes.

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

- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

CB Comments on State Performance

The Family Services Division (FSD) is Vermont's child protection entity and strives to promote the safety and well-being of children, youth, and families in Vermont. FSD sits within the Department for Children and Families (DCF), which also includes the Child Development Division, Disability Determination Services, Economic Services Division, Office of Child Support, and Office of Economic Opportunity.

In 2015, during its Round 3 CFSR, Vermont was in substantial conformity with none of the 7 outcomes and was in substantial conformity with 2 of the 7 systemic factors: Statewide Information System and Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

Vermont's Round 3 CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP) was approved on June 23, 2016, with an effective date of July 1, 2016, for a 2-year implementation period. On October 16, 2018, the CB notified the state that it had completed all the benchmarks and action steps identified in the PIP. At the end of the 18-month non-overlapping evaluation period, which ended on September 30, 2020, the CB determined that Vermont met its improvement goals.

Some overarching challenges affecting performance and practice during the Round 3 PIP and non-overlapping evaluation period included engagement with families, recruitment of foster homes, the use of kinship homes for placements, and working with the courts to define the use of, and establish practice expectations for, Conditional Custody Orders.

During Vermont's Round 3 PIP, FSD engaged with the Center for Diligent Recruitment to increase its foster home/kinship resources, and with the Capacity Building Center for States to increase its capacity to use data in identifying needed practice changes.

Vermont identified the three greatest challenges FSD has faced since the Round 3 CFSR as the continued aging of FSD's data collection systems, the reduction of service availability during and after the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, and the turnover of FSD and provider staff during that same period. Additionally, the state used a considerable amount of its resources on the homelessness crisis. All of these factors, combined, have resulted in delays in permanency and service delivery, as well as a reduction in services that are available for children and families.

Vermont's Round 4 CFSR, conducted the week of May 6–10, 2024, found that Vermont is out of conformity with all 7 outcomes as well as 6 of the 7 systemic factors: Statewide Information System, Case Review System, Quality Assurance System, Staff and Provider Training, Service Array and Resource Development, and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The state was found to be in substantial conformity with one systemic factor: Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

The highest performing outcome in Vermont's Round 4 CFSR was Well-Being Outcome 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs), with 76% of applicable cases rated as substantially achieved. For Well-Being Outcome 2, performance for in-home cases was lower than for foster care services cases, with the agency meeting the educational needs of children in 78% of the foster care cases and 70% of the in-home services cases. The absence of initial and ongoing efforts to assess educational needs and ensure appropriate service delivery for foster children were the primary reasons for the lower performance.

Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) was the lowest performing outcome, with 15% of applicable cases rated as substantially achieved. Cases reviewed for Permanency Outcome 1 appeared to lack urgency from both the agency and the court. While permanency goals in place were largely appropriate, there were significant delays in setting initial goals timely as well as in changing goals from reunification if that goal was no longer appropriate due to case circumstances. Concurrent planning was used infrequently and was often untimely, but the concurrent goals generally were appropriate when established. Certain cases reviewed suggested that when caseworkers make a timely goal change from reunification to adoption, those cases result in timely adoptions. Most adoption goals were not achieved within federal timeframes, however. The state acknowledged in its Statewide Assessment that there were observed delays in filing for termination of parental rights (TPR) within Adoption and Safe Families Act timeframes. Once a TPR petition was filed, there were observed delays in finalization of both the TPR and the resulting adoption.

Similarly, due to reunification goals remaining in place for longer than warranted, the agency did not achieve timely permanency by reunification in 8 out of the 11 applicable cases. This tracks with the state's performance on the Statewide Data Indicator for permanency within 12 months of entry, which largely displays timeliness of reunification being worse than national performance. Other contributing factors to permanency delays included the lack of timely initial and ongoing assessments of families and the resultant lack of efforts in providing needed services. The lack of efforts with fathers was more pronounced than with mothers.

The performance observed in Permanency Outcome 1 was driven by the combined actions of legal and judicial system professionals and professionals within the child welfare agency. In the cases reviewed, there were substantial delays observed in court calendaring practices. Significant amounts of time passed between the filing of TPR petitions and hearings on those petitions. Adoption finalizations also were delayed due to overcrowded dockets. Interviews revealed that the court system has struggled to recover from COVID-19-related delays as well as with addressing workforce issues in the courts, including not enough judges and clerk staffing issues. In at least one court, those matters were compounded by the prohibition of docketing cases on Fridays. There were practice differences among bench officers in the same jurisdiction that caused permanency delays, and multiple judges are hearing individual cases. Lastly, Vermont has a practice of using conditional custody orders (CCO) where children are not placed in agency custody but are often placed with a non-parental caregiver and under the supervision of the child welfare agency. In Round 3, it was noted that there was a need for consistent protocols regarding CCO. In Round 4, it appears that the use of CCO continues to cause delay in permanency and children being secure in their placements. The practice, which requires agency oversight and therefore agency resources, does not show clear benefits to families and is worth revisiting.

Another area with impact on timely permanency is placement stability. Vermont's performance on placement stability from the case reviews was 75%. Although 93% of children's current placement settings were stable, when placement changes were made, they were not planned in an effort to meet the case goals and the needs of the child. Additionally, Vermont performed worse than national performance on the Placement Stability Statewide Data Indicator and is trending in the wrong direction. Vermont's use of CCO is not a factor in the placement stability data; however, because it is another vehicle for children to be in placements outside of their homes, Vermont should examine that practice as they undertake efforts to understand the true number of times that children are moved outside of their homes, potentially creating further instability.

Well-Being Outcome 1, Families have the enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, was the second lowest performing outcome with 29% of cases rated as substantially achieved. In many of the cases applicable to Item 12, it was determined that the agency did not make concerted efforts to assess the needs of the child(ren) and parents and provide the appropriate services. Regardless of case type, performance in working with parents was lower than it was with children. Also notable was the agency's performance for fathers being lower than mothers for Sub-Item 12B, Needs Assessment and Services to Parents. However, 74% of the applicable cases were found to be a Strength in assessing the needs of the foster or pre-adoptive parents and providing appropriate services. Performance on Item 13, Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning, and Item 15, Caseworker Visits With Parents, signals a need to identify and implement practice

improvement strategies for work with parents. As noted, practices assessed in this outcome are essential to ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of the families served; therefore, it should also be a primary focus area for Vermont's PIP.

Safety Outcome 1, Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect, includes case review performance and performance on statewide data indicators. Vermont's performance on the Recurrence of Maltreatment statewide data indicator was statistically better than national performance for federal fiscal years (FFY) 2019 and 2020, no different for FFYs 2020 and 2021, and was unable to be calculated due to data quality issues for FFYs 2021 and 2022. Performance on the Maltreatment in Foster Care statewide data indicator was statistically better than national performance for all 3 years. CFSR case review performance for Item 1, Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment, was 65%. The data showed that Vermont did not respond to reports of child maltreatment timely and, in some of the applicable cases, did not consistently make face-to-face contact with the alleged victims in accordance with state policy.

Practice for the two items that comprise Safety Outcome 2, Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate, requires improvement based on this outcome's performance of 51% of applicable cases rated as substantially achieved. For Item 2, Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry into Foster Care, 46% of applicable cases were rated as a Strength. A primary reason for low performance on Item 2 was a lack of concerted efforts to provide risk- and safety-related services to prevent the child(ren) from coming into foster care. For Item 3, Risk and Safety Assessment and Management, 52% of the cases were rated as a Strength. While foster care cases had a higher percentage of Strength ratings, safety-related practice for both foster care and in-home services cases requires improvement. Areas of practice to further assess include a lack of parental engagement; inconsistent caseworker visitation in the homes/foster homes to assess risk and safety, including gaps in time between face-to-face visits; and insufficient safety planning and monitoring of safety plans. The initial assessment of risk and safety had the highest performance for both case types with 75% of applicable cases rated as a Strength. However, ongoing assessments of risk and safety were found to be lacking with 63% of foster care cases and 36% of in-home cases rated as a Strength.

In addition to initial and ongoing risk and safety assessments, safety practice improvement needs in Vermont include identifying all the risk and safety concerns present in the case and assessing all children residing in the family home. Also noted was the need to conduct more timely caseworker visits with parents and children, schedule those visits at their place of residence (or foster care home), and ensure that caseworkers have some time alone with the child. Furthermore, the CFSR revealed concerns regarding caseworkers' ability to develop appropriate safety plans to address the identified safety threats and sufficiently monitor those plans.

Child safety is of the utmost importance and should be a primary focus area of Vermont's PIP. CB recommends that Vermont identify strategies to strengthen caseworkers' ability to assess the risk and safety of children accurately and comprehensively and to develop, implement, monitor, and adjust appropriate safety plans that mitigate threats to child safety.

Of the five items comprising Permanency Outcome 2, The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children, Item 9, Preserving Connections, was the strongest area of practice with 85% of the cases rated as a Strength, followed by Item 10, Relative Placement, with 76% of cases rated as a Strength and Item 7, Placement With Siblings, with 65% of applicable cases rated as a Strength. The lowest performing items for this outcome were Item 8, Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care, at 47% and Item 11, Relationship of Child in Care With Parents, with 55% of the applicable cases rated as a Strength. The lack of concerted efforts to ensure the frequency of the child's visitation with the parents and sibling(s) contributed to Area Needing Improvement ratings. Case review data from the applicable cases showed no substantial differences between child visits with mothers, fathers, and siblings. A lack of concerted efforts to promote and maintain the child's relationship with the parents outside of the monthly visitation also affected this outcome.

Well-Being Outcome 3 assesses the agency's concerted efforts to assess and provide services to meet children's physical and dental health needs (Item 17) and mental/behavioral needs (Item 18). Only 47% of the cases were rated as substantially achieved for this outcome. Fewer in-home services cases than foster care

cases were applicable to this outcome; however, performance was worse for in-home services cases than foster care cases. Reasons that negatively affected this outcome across both case types included the lack of ongoing assessment of the children's mental and behavioral health needs and provision of services to meet identified needs. For the applicable in-home services cases, agency efforts to assess children's mental and behavioral health needs were rated lower than efforts to assess physical and dental health needs. For foster care cases, performance on assessment of physical and dental health needs was higher than on assessment of mental/behavioral needs.

Service Array is a significant systemic factor that affects safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. The case review results and stakeholder interviews indicated that accessing critical services, such as housing and transportation, in all jurisdictions of the state is difficult and that it is not easy to provide individualized services, especially for children and families with disabilities. Service Array was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the state has been slow to recover. Service providers are experiencing hiring challenges that have led to many of the agencies having significant vacancies. FSD has also lost residential beds and foster homes. This compromises FSD's ability to find appropriate placements for children requiring high levels of care as well as having foster homes for children ready to leave residential treatment. It also affects the array of services to support reunification. Accessibility of services is also an issue as there is limited public transportation available to get to services. Workforce issues within FSD have also presented problems as access to services is dependent on the caseworker's knowledge of the available services. Another significant systemic factor that affects permanency that should be a focus for Vermont is the Case Review System systemic factor, as all five items were found to be an Area Needing Improvement.

As Vermont begins to address the concerns highlighted in the CFSR, the state should build on its existing collaboration with the community partners present during the statewide assessment process. Vermont should look to further engage people with lived experience, its legal and judicial partners, and other community partners in the process of PIP development to ensure that any systemic change is meaningful across the state. Involving partners and stakeholders in a collaborative way has been shown to contribute to authentic and lasting change for those who interact with the child welfare system.

Equity Observations and Considerations

Ensuring that child welfare is serving all people equitably and with respect for all individuals is essential to the work in child welfare and is a focused priority at the Children's Bureau. To create a system that is effective and equitable for all, states must pay particular attention to variation in performance metrics because disparity in outcomes could signal inequity that should be explored and addressed. In Round 4 of the CFSR, there is a focus on using data and evidence to identify disparities in services and outcomes; understand the role that child welfare programs, policies, and practices may play in contributing to those disparities; and inform and develop systemic improvements to address them.

As noted below in the sections on Notable Changes and Observations in Performance on the Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1 data indicators during Round 4, the data for some of these statewide indicators showed the following notable performance-related information by race/ethnicity in Vermont:

- While Black or African American children are less than 2% of the state's child population, they consistently have the highest entry rates into foster care in every reporting period.
- Black or African American children have the highest rate of placement instability (moves/1,000 days).

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide the state's performance on the applicable statewide data indicators from the data profile that was transmitted to the state to signal the launch of the CFSR and performance summaries from the case review findings of the onsite review. CFSR statewide data indicators provide performance information on states' child safety and permanency outcomes. The statewide data indicators are aggregate measures calculated using information that states report to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and

Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). For general information on the statewide data indicators and their use, see the Capacity Building Center for States page, <https://capacity.childwelfare.gov/states/topics/cfsr/cfsr-data-syntax-toolkit>. For a detailed description of the statewide data indicators, see CFSR Technical Bulletin #13A, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/training-technical-assistance/cfsr-technical-bulletin-13a>. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. A summary of the state's performance for all outcomes and systemic factors is in Appendix A. Additional information on case review findings, including the state's performance on case review item rating questions, is in the state's practice performance report in Appendix B.

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

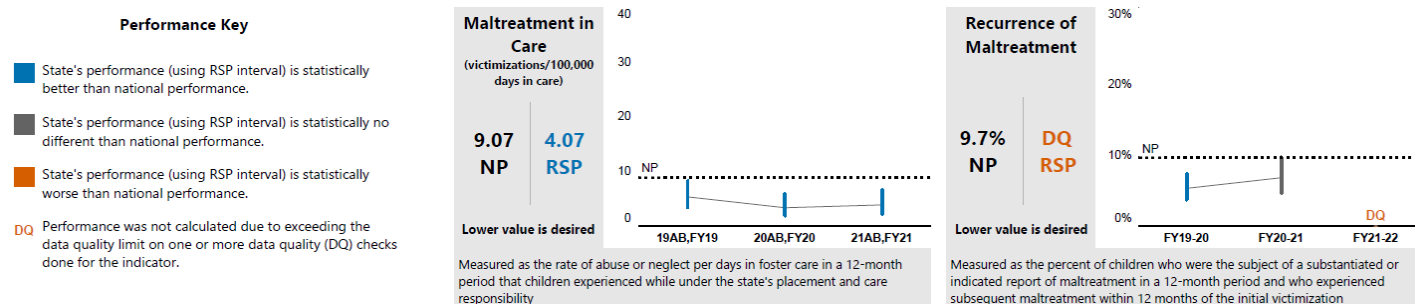
The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on two statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.

The state's policy requires that the Division of Family Services (DFS) initiate assessments or investigations within 72 hours of the time at which DFS has sufficient information to determine that the report would be accepted. Supervisors have the discretion to determine if the assessment or investigation should be commenced immediately or by the end of the day, or within 72 hours. Assessments are initiated by contacting the caregiver, and investigations are commenced by interviewing or observing the child.

Statewide Data Indicators

The chart below shows the state's performance from the August 2023 data profile that was used to determine substantial conformity for Safety Outcome 1.

Figure 1. State's Performance on Safety Outcome 1 Indicators



Case Review

Figure 2. Performance on Safety Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1:

- The state's performance on the "maltreatment in foster care" data indicator was statistically better than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "recurrence of maltreatment" data indicator was unable to be calculated due to data quality issues.
- Less than 95% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 1.

Notable Changes and Observations in Performance on the Safety Outcome 1 Data Indicators During Round 4

Table 2. Risk-Standardized Performance Compared to National Performance—Safety 1 Data Indicators

Statewide Data Indicator	Data Profile Transmitted With Statewide Assessment and Used to Determine Substantial Conformity	February 2024 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Maltreatment in Foster Care	Better	Better	No
Recurrence of Maltreatment in 12 months	Unable to be calculated due to data quality issues	Unable to be calculated due to data quality issues	Yes

All results reported below are based on the February 2024 data profile and supplementary context data and may describe performance that is different from what is depicted in Figure 1 because that is from the August 2023 data profile, which was used to determine substantial conformity.

For maltreatment in care, Vermont performs statistically better than national performance for each of the three reporting years. The following are notable observations for Vermont's maltreatment-in-care observed performance:

- Nationally, youth aged 11 to 16 years make up the largest percentage of victimizations in care, at 36% of all victimizations. In Vermont, however, this age group accounts for 50% of all victimizations in care.
- The victimization rate for the state, overall, is 2.6 victimizations per 100,000 days in care.

Vermont's data submission had data quality concerns in the most recent reporting period on the statewide data indicator for recurrence of maltreatment.

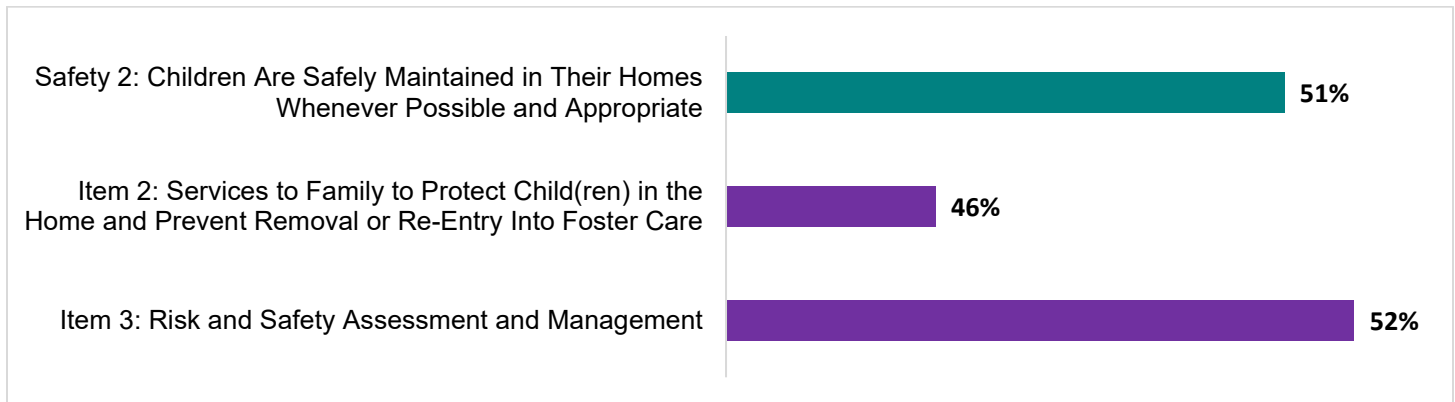
- Before the FFY 2021-2022 reporting period, there are no notable variances across age groups and racial or ethnic groups.
- Before the FFY 2021-2022 reporting period, Lamoille County accounted for the largest percentage of recurrence of maltreatment with 12.8%; the state percentage was 5.0%.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

Case Review

Figure 3. Performance on Safety Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2:

- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 2.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 3.

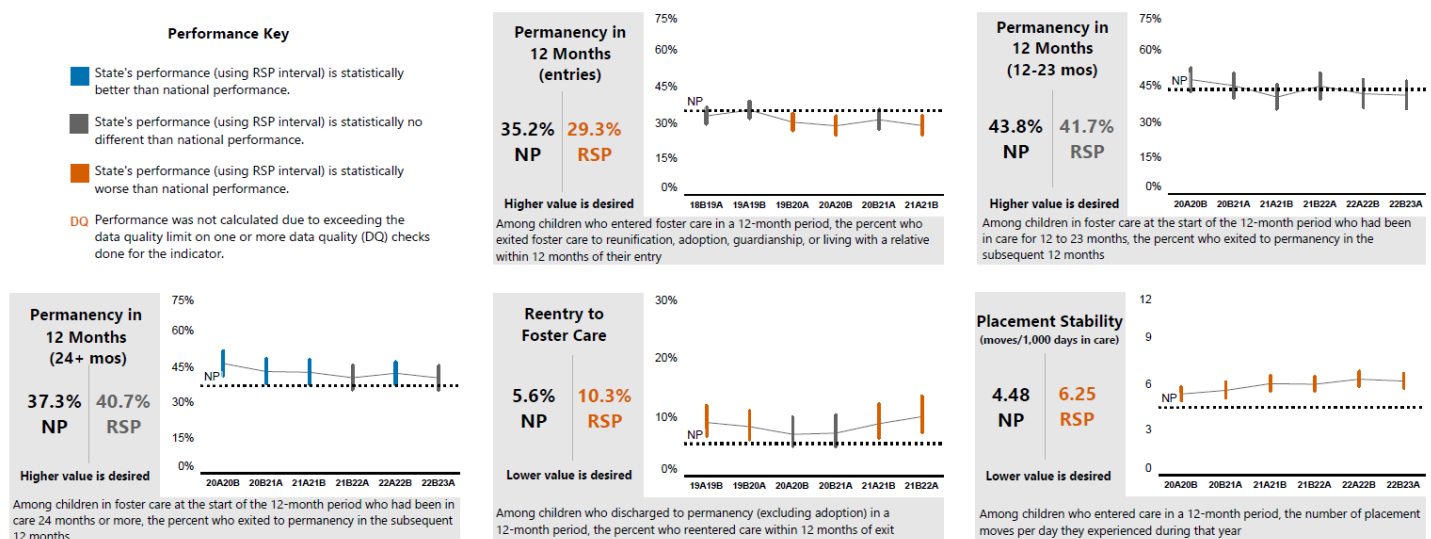
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on 5 statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6.

Statewide Data Indicators

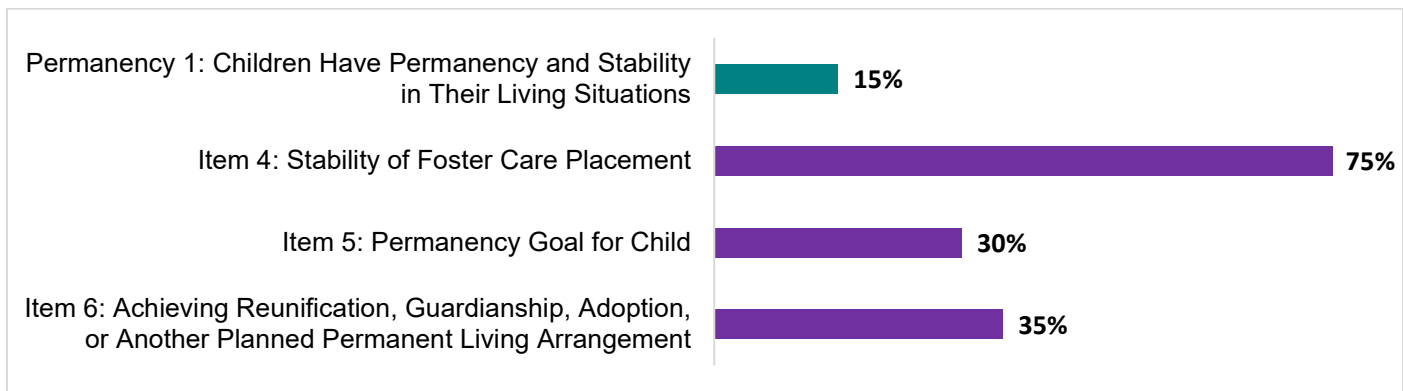
The chart below shows the state's performance from the August 2023 data profile that was used to determine substantial conformity for Permanency Outcome 1.

Figure 4. State's Performance on Permanency Outcome 1 Indicators



Case Review

Figure 5. Performance on Permanency Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1:

- The state’s performance on the “permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care” data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- The state’s performance on the “permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months” data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state’s performance on the “permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more” data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state’s performance on the “reentry to foster care in 12 months” data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- The state’s performance on the “placement stability” data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 4.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 5.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 6.

Notable Changes and Observations in Performance on the Permanency Outcome 1 Data Indicators During Round 4

Table 3. Risk-Standardized Performance Compared to National Performance—Permanency 1 Data Indicators

Statewide Data Indicator	Data Profile Transmitted With Statewide Assessment and Used to Determine Substantial Conformity	February 2024 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Permanency in 12 months for children entering care	Worse	Worse	Yes
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months	No Different	Worse	No
Permanency in 12 months for children in care	No Different	No Different	No

Statewide Data Indicator	Data Profile Transmitted With Statewide Assessment and Used to Determine Substantial Conformity	February 2024 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
24 months or more			
Reentry to foster care in 12 months	Worse	Worse	Yes
Placement stability	Worse	Worse	Yes

All results reported below are based on the February 2024 data profile and supplementary context data and may describe performance that is different from what is depicted in Figure 4 because that is from the August 2023 data profile, which was used to determine substantial conformity.

Vermont's performance for permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months has been statistically no different than national performance for all reporting periods except for the most recent reporting period, during which the state performed worse than national performance. However, Vermont's performance for permanency for 24 months or more is statistically better or no different than the national performance across all reporting periods.

- For children who are in care for up to 3 years, Vermont has a slightly higher rate of adoptions (14.4% of entries) than the national level (12.7% of entries).

On reentry to foster care, Vermont performs either statistically worse or no different than national performance across the three reporting years.

- Nationally, children aged 1 to 5 years make up the second largest percentage of reentries into care and represent 34.5% of all reentries. These children are at elevated risk of reentry in Vermont and account for 39.5% of all reentries in the state.

At the time of the statewide assessment, Vermont consistently performed statistically worse than national performance for placement stability.

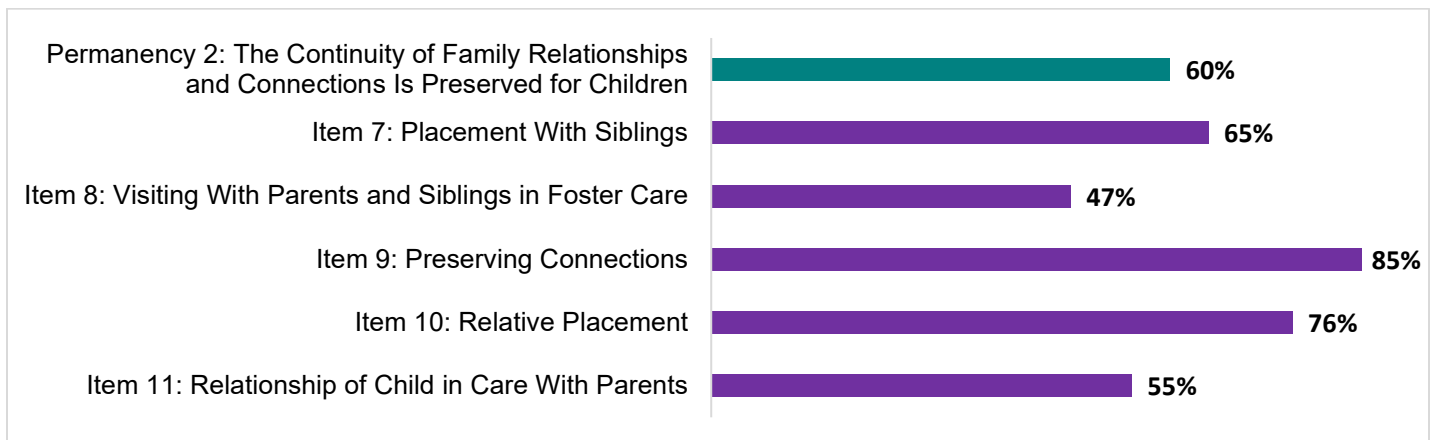
- Children with two or more races and Black or African American children have higher rates of placement moves than the state overall in the most recent reporting period. The difference is not large, but it has generally been consistent across all reporting periods.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

Case Review

Figure 6. Performance on Permanency Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2:

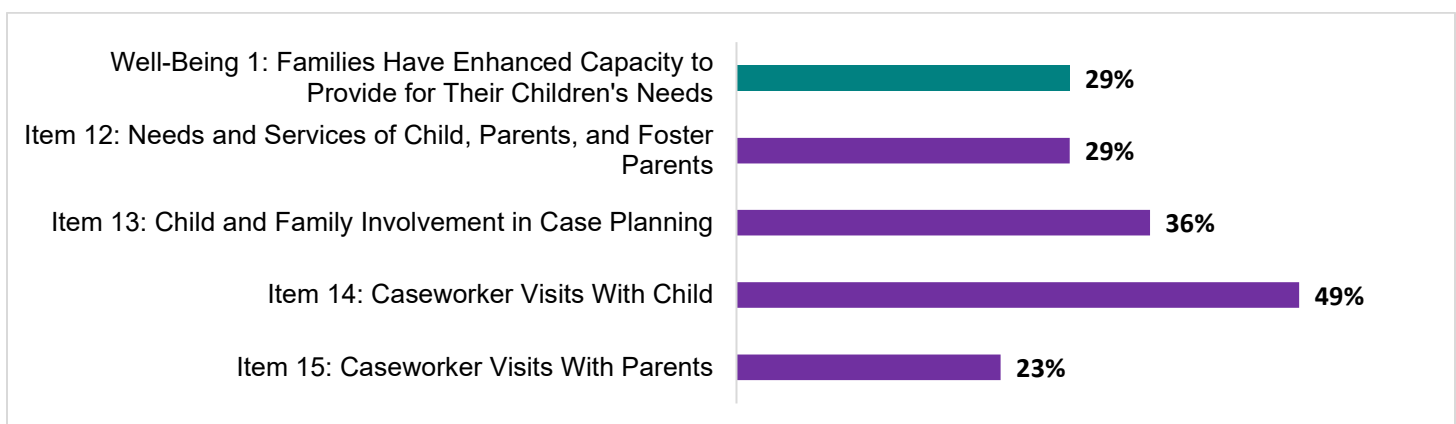
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 7.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 8.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 9.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 10.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 11.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

Case Review

Figure 7. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1:

- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.

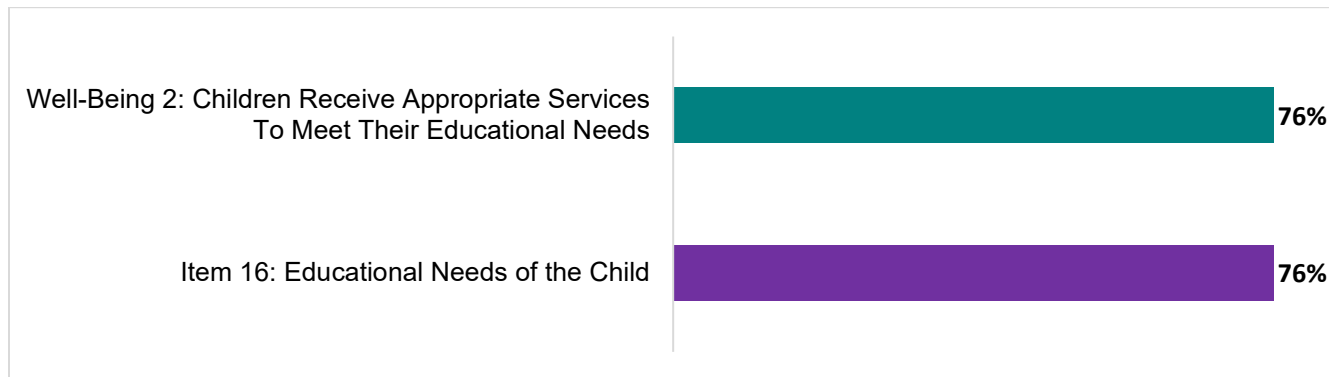
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 12.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12A.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12B.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12C.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 13.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 14.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 15.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Item 16.

Case Review

Figure 8. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2:

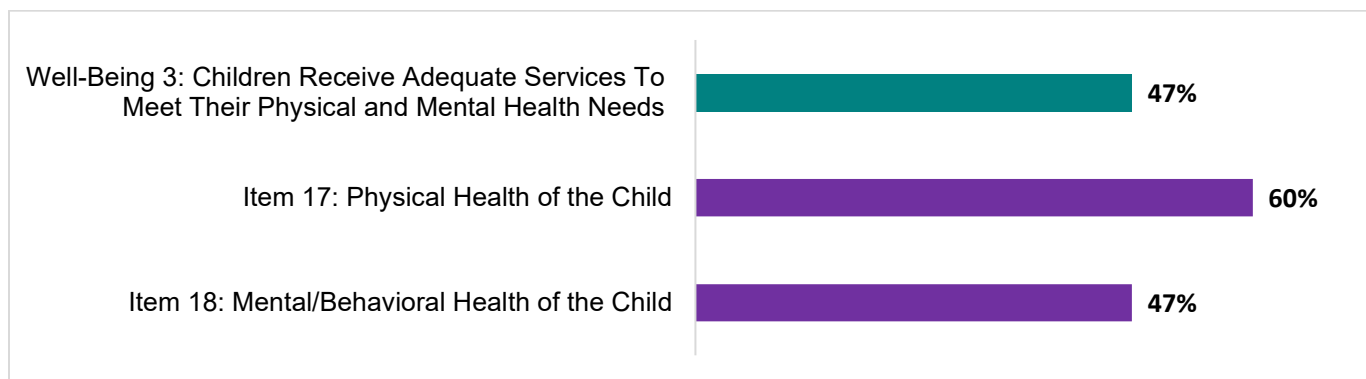
- Less than 95% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 16.

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

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

Case Review

Figure 9. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 and Supporting Items



Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3:

- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 17.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 18.

III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

The CB 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 CB 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 based on ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the CB 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 CB must find that the item is functioning as required. 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.

Statewide Information System

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Item 19.

Item	Rating
Item 19: Statewide Information System	Area Needing Improvement

Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont FSD indicated in the Statewide Assessment that location data is not readily available in its Information System (IS), which was developed in 1983. FSD also indicated that if a child is placed with a contracted agency, the IS records the name and address of the agency and not the physical location of the child. The agency reported that the only information the IS records is related to race and ethnicity. Furthermore, Vermont FSD does not record permanency goals in its IS, as they are only identified on the written case plan until the child exits custody. Vermont noted that the legal status of children in foster care is not readily available.

Case Review System

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

Items	Rating
Item 20: Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21: Periodic Reviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 22: Permanency Hearings	Area Needing Improvement
Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights	Area Needing Improvement

Items	Rating
Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Area Needing Improvement

Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont FSD did not provide any data to show that every child in placement has a written case plan that was developed jointly with the child's parents. Although FSD included information from its Quality Case Reviews, which utilize the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI), the data did not provide enough evidence to determine whether parents are involved in joint development of the case plan.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 21 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont provided data concerning the timeliness of initial periodic reviews. Vermont was unable to provide data regarding the timeliness of subsequent reviews. The data for initial and ongoing periodic reviews does not support that the reviews were timely.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 22 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont presented data indicating that initial permanency hearings were not being held in a timely manner. No data were presented on the frequency or timeliness of subsequent permanency hearings.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were held for the purpose of integrating the legal and judicial system partners.
- The data and information did not demonstrate that termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions are filed timely. Vermont also does not have a system to accurately capture exceptions and compelling

reasons for not filing TPR petitions. There was general agreement that the process of filing TPR petitions varies across counties.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- The state described the process by which it provides notice of hearings to foster parents that includes the right to be heard; however, the state does not have a data system to track whether notices for all reviews and hearings are sent to all caregivers.

Quality Assurance System

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Item 25.

Item	Rating
Item 25: Quality Assurance System	Area Needing Improvement

Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 25 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Vermont has several components of a CQI system in place, such as operating in all jurisdictions across the state, identifying strengths and needs through a case review process that uses the OSRI, and having standards to evaluate the quality of the services. However, it was not clear what the state's process is for using evidence collected through its QA activities to select, design, or evaluate implemented program improvement measures. The state described a "breakthrough series" approach that involves testing a new idea, bringing people together to discuss how implementation worked, and then sharing that information more broadly. Not all efforts or initiatives happen at a statewide level, but some occur at the local level with the hope that initiatives might spread across the state organically over time. There was no information provided that demonstrates that the state has a process for systemically implementing practice changes statewide.

Staff and Provider Training

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

Items	Rating
Item 26: Initial Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement

Items	Rating
Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement
Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Area Needing Improvement

Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 26 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- While Vermont FSD provided an overview of the initial training process, the state indicated that they do not have a way to track how many employees should have or have completed initial training. Further, Vermont is not adhering to state policy around the maximum number of cases assigned to new workers within their first 6 months of employment, which likely contributes to delays in timely completion of required initial trainings. Lastly, Vermont FSD provided no data on whether the initial training adequately prepared new workers with the skills necessary to complete their duties.

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

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont described an extensive array of trainings available to staff. At the same time, Vermont also indicated that the state does not have easily accessible data regarding staff participation in ongoing training. The agency has no requirement for annual ongoing training hours. Moreover, there is no evidence that Vermont is assessing whether the trainings are providing staff with the basic skills necessary to carry out their job duties.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 28 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont provided information on the types of trainings that are available to foster, adoptive, and kinship parents. However, from the information that the state provided, it has only been able to collect information on the completion of its Foundations Training, which is required for licensure since 2023. According to a survey conducted by Vermont, the Foundations Training does not adequately prepare foster parents to provide foster care. Vermont indicated that due to its data system's limitations, the state is unable to determine how many foster parents completed ongoing trainings, which are required for foster parents to receive a higher level of reimbursement. Further, Vermont did not present any

information on training requirements for therapeutic foster care providers, which also includes staff of state-licensed or approved facilities.

Service Array and Resource Development

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

Items	Rating
Item 29: Array of Services	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30: Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement

Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Vermont described an array of services; however, the state indicated that due to the pandemic, the availability and accessibility of those services had suffered because of staffing shortages with contracted service providers. The workforce shortage affected the availability of mental health services, especially related to crisis-specific services. It was reported that services were available across the state; however, the service array was not comprehensive. Furthermore, while services may be available, knowledge about these services tended to be caseworker-specific, and there was a lack of information regarding what may be available in each jurisdiction. Additionally, Vermont reported that the availability and accessibility of some services were contingent upon location, with those in urban areas having greater access than those in more rural areas. Vermont agreed that there were gaps in the availability of services such as housing, residential treatment, and mental health services. Availability gaps were also reported in individual and family therapy, transportation, and supervised visitation services. Further, it was reported that providers were experiencing workforce challenges that exacerbated waitlists, making services unavailable.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information were provided by Vermont for the Statewide Assessment, which indicates that there are significant gaps in the service array and individualization of services related to youth and adults with developmental disabilities. Additionally, the limitations regarding language translation of Vermont's FSD documents and trainings, and lack of language diversity in the overall service delivery system, also affects the functioning of this systemic factor item. Vermont noted challenges in meeting

the individualized needs of racially and ethnically diverse families. Also, there was concern that children were coming into custody because services were not available and there was no funding stream to meet individualized needs.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

Items	Rating
Item 31: State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Area Needing Improvement
Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength

Vermont was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

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 Annual Progress and Services Reports (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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 31 based on information from Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the Statewide Assessment, Vermont said it utilizes the expertise of its stakeholders in developing the CFSP and APSRs. However, FSD did not provide any information on how it involved stakeholders in the process (e.g., what the feedback loop was, what input was made, what the resulting changes were). Additional information was presented which suggests that FSD does not engage stakeholders in the process of developing the CFSP and APSR, and that in general, stakeholders are not consulted by the child welfare agency.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont collaborates with many federal and federally assisted programs throughout the state to ensure that the delivery of CFSP services is responsive to the needs of the community. Much of this collaboration occurs with DCF-funded programs such as the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Reach-Up Program, the Child Development Division's home visiting programs, and the FSD-funded Youth Development Program. Vermont FSD also collaborates with two Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), including Vermont's State Housing Authority and the Burlington Housing Authority, which serves the largest metropolitan area. Vermont FSD has Memoranda of Understanding with both PHAs. Additionally, Vermont's FSD collaborates with Head Start, Educational Services, and the Vermont Health Department.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

Items	Rating
Item 33: Standards Applied Equally	Area Needing Improvement
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Area Needing Improvement
Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Area Needing Improvement

Vermont was found not to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 33 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- While Vermont FSD makes some efforts to ensure that licensing standards are applied consistently, the information that FSD presented was not substantive enough to reflect a well-functioning system. The variance process in place for foster, kin, and pre-adoptive homes cannot be adequately tracked and monitored due to the state's IS. As such, the state has no way to easily determine how many waivers it is granting and to whom and, in turn, the state cannot be assured that standards are being applied consistently. The state did not highlight any systematic process by which it collectively reviews its foster homes to ensure consistency.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 34 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont FSD does not have a functioning case planning process that effectively addresses safety for children in foster and adoptive placements. Vermont licensing policy indicates that those in prospective kinship, foster, or adoptive homes are to be fingerprinted within 90 days of their application date. If fingerprinting is not completed within 90 days, the child should be removed from the home. Vermont FSD is unable to determine whether fingerprinting is completed within 90 days due to the limitations of its data system. Vermont's policy also indicates that all accepted or open child safety interventions and regulatory interventions regarding a family foster home should result in a hold on new placements. However, due to the limits of the data system, FSD is not able to track whether children are placed in a foster home that is on a temporary hold due to safety concerns.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont is just beginning to use Results Oriented Management (ROM) for data reporting to assist in its diligent recruitment efforts. The state is developing some adjustments of internal reports so that the race of foster parents who are caring for children can be easily ascertained; however, this is not yet available. Moreover, the data that Vermont presented concerning its ethnically diverse populations were generic in that the populations were identified as BIPOC (black, indigenous, and other people of color). These data were not broken down in a manner that wholly identified the needs of individual ethnic, linguistic, and racial groups.

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.

- Vermont received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the Statewide Assessment. Stakeholder interviews were not conducted per agreement with the state.
- Vermont did not provide data on whether Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children requests for home studies were completed within the 60-day timeline. It also was not clear whether there are any processes for use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements.

APPENDIX A

Summary of Vermont 2024 Child and Family Services Review Performance

I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes and Items and Performance on Statewide Data Indicators

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.

Statewide Data Indicators: For Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, the state's performance is also considered against the national performance for each statewide data indicator. State performance may be statistically better, worse, 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 CB did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

RSP (Risk-Standardized Performance) is derived from a multi-level statistical model, 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 fairer comparison of state performance against national performance.

RSP 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 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.

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	65% Substantially Achieved
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength

DATA INDICATORS FOR SAFETY OUTCOME 1

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Overall Determination	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP	RSP Interval	Data Period(s) Used
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	9.07	Better Than National Performance	Lower	4.07	2.4–6.88	21A–21B, FY21–22
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.7%	Unable to calculate due to data quality issues	Lower	DQ	DQ	FY21–22

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	51% Substantially Achieved
Item 2: Services to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	46% Strength
Item 3: Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	52% Strength

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	15% Substantially Achieved
Item 4: Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength
Item 5: Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	30% Strength
Item 6: Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or another planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	35% Strength

DATA INDICATORS FOR PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Overall Determination	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP	RSP Interval	Data Period(s) Used
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	35.2%	Worse Than National Performance	Higher	29.3%	25.7%–33.2%	21A–23A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months	43.8%	No Different Than National Performance	Higher	41.7%	36.1%–47.5%	22B–23A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	37.3%	No Different Than National Performance	Higher	40.7%	35.7%–45.9%	22B–23A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	5.6%	Worse Than National Performance	Lower	10.3%	7.6%–13.8%	21B–23A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.48	Worse Than National Performance	Lower	6.25	5.78–6.76	22B–23A

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	60% Substantially Achieved
Item 7: Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength
Item 8: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	47% Strength
Item 9: Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	85% Strength
Item 10: Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	76% Strength
Item 11: Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	55% Strength

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	29% Substantially Achieved
Item 12: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	29% Strength
Sub-Item 12A: Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	58% Strength
Sub-Item 12B: Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	24% Strength
Sub-Item 12C: Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	74% Strength
Item 13: Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	36% Strength
Item 14: Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	49% Strength
Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	23% 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	76% Substantially Achieved
Item 16: Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	76% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Not in Substantial Conformity	47% Substantially Achieved
Item 17: Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	60% Strength
Item 18: Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	47% Strength

II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The CB 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 CB 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 CB 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 CB 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	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 19: Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

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

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Item 26: Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment	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	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	Strength

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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

APPENDIX B: PRACTICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Vermont CFSR (CB-Led) 2024

The Practice Performance Report provides an aggregated summary of practice performance for all 18 items in the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI) for all approved and final cases from all the sites in the Vermont CFSR (CB-Led) and includes a breakdown of performance by case type. Please refer to the Rating Criteria section at the end of each item in the OSRI to identify which responses to questions will result in a Strength rating. For more information on the OSRI, see

<https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/resources/round-4-resources/cfsr-round-4-instruments-tools-and-guides>

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

Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment

Practice Description	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 1A) Investigations or assessments were initiated in accordance with the state's timeframes and requirements in cases.	70% (14 of 20)
(Question 1B) Face-to-face contact with the child(ren) who is (are) the subject of the report were made in accordance with the state's timeframes and requirements in cases.	60% (12 of 20)
(Question 1C) Reasons for delays in initiation of investigations or assessments and/or face-to-face contact were due to circumstances beyond the control of the agency.	12.5% (1 of 8)
Item 1 Strength Ratings	65% (13 of 20)

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

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 2A and 2B) Agency made concerted efforts to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect the children and prevent their entry or reentry into foster care.	27.27% (3 of 11)	46.15% (6 of 13)	37.5% (9 of 24)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 2A and 2B) Although the agency did not make concerted efforts to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect the children and prevent their entry into foster care, the child(ren) was removed from the home because this action was necessary to ensure the child's safety.	9.09% (1 of 11)	Not Applicable	9.09% (1 of 11)
(Questions 2A and 2B) Agency did not make concerted efforts to provide services and the child was removed without providing appropriate services.	45.45% (5 of 11)	Not Applicable	45.45% (5 of 11)
(Questions 2A and 2B) Concerted efforts were not made to provide appropriate services to address safety/risk issues and the child(ren) remained in the home.	9.09% (1 of 11)	53.85% (7 of 13)	33.33% (8 of 24)
Item 2 Strength Ratings	45.45% (5 of 11)	46.15% (6 of 13)	45.83% (11 of 24)

Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 3A1) There were no maltreatment allegations about the family that were not formally reported or formally investigated/assessed.	95% (38 of 40)	92% (23 of 25)	93.85% (61 of 65)
(Question 3A1) There were no maltreatment allegations that were not substantiated despite evidence that would support substantiation.	97.5% (39 of 40)	100% (25 of 25)	98.46% (64 of 65)
(Question 3A) The agency conducted an initial assessment that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	33.33% (1 of 3)	84.62% (11 of 13)	75% (12 of 16)
(Question 3B) The agency conducted ongoing assessments that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	62.5% (25 of 40)	36% (9 of 25)	52.31% (34 of 65)
(Question 3C) When safety concerns were present, the agency developed an appropriate safety plan with the family and continually monitored the safety plan as needed, including monitoring family engagement in safety-related services.	62.5% (25 of 40)	36% (9 of 25)	52.31% (34 of 65)
(Question 3D) There were no safety concerns pertaining to children in the family home that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	90.91% (10 of 11)	66.67% (8 of 12)	78.26% (18 of 23)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 3E) There were no concerns related to the safety of the target child in foster care during visitation with parent(s)/caregiver(s) or other family members that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	96.67% (29 of 30)	Not Applicable	96.67% (29 of 30)
(Question 3F) There were no concerns for the target child's safety in the foster home or placement facility that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	100% (40 of 40)	Not Applicable	100% (40 of 40)
Item 3 Strength Ratings	62.5% (25 of 40)	36% (9 of 25)	52.31% (34 of 65)

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

Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 4B) Placement changes for the child were planned by the agency in an effort to achieve the child's case goals or to meet the needs of the child.	25% (3 of 12)	25% (3 of 12)
(Question 4C) The child's current or most recent placement setting is stable.	92.5% (37 of 40)	92.5% (37 of 40)
Item 4 Strength Ratings	75% (30 of 40)	75% (30 of 40)

Item 5: Permanency Goal for Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 5A3) Permanency goal(s) is (are) specified in the case file.	100% (40 of 40)	100% (40 of 40)
(Question 5B) Permanency goals in effect during the period under review were established in a timely manner.	52.5% (21 of 40)	52.5% (21 of 40)
(Question 5C) Permanency goals in effect during the period under review were appropriate to the child's needs for permanency and to the circumstances of the case.	77.5% (31 of 40)	77.5% (31 of 40)
(Question 5D) Child has been in foster care for at least 15 of the most recent 22 months.	70% (28 of 40)	70% (28 of 40)
(Questions 5E) Child meets other Adoption and Safe Families Act criteria for termination of parental rights (TPR).	0% (0 of 12)	0% (0 of 12)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 5F and 5G) The agency filed or joined a TPR petition before the period under review (PUR) or in a timely manner during the PUR or an exception applied.	78.57% (22 of 28)	78.57% (22 of 28)
Item 5 Strength Ratings	30% (12 of 40)	30% (12 of 40)

Item 6: Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve reunification in a timely manner.	27.27% (3 of 11)	27.27% (3 of 11)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve guardianship in a timely manner.	0	0
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner.	23.81% (5 of 21)	23.81% (5 of 21)
(Questions 6A4 and 6C) The agency and court made concerted efforts to place a child with a goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) in a living arrangement that can be considered permanent until discharge from foster care.	85.71% (6 of 7)	85.71% (6 of 7)
(Questions 6A4 and B or 6A4 and C) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve concurrent goals. If one of two concurrent goals was achieved during the period under review, rating is based on the goal that was achieved.	0% (0 of 1)	0% (0 of 1)
Item 6 Strength Ratings	35% (14 of 40)	35% (14 of 40)

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

Item 7: Placement With Siblings

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 7A) The child was placed with all siblings who also were in foster care.	35% (7 of 20)	35% (7 of 20)
(Question 7B) When all siblings were not placed together, there was a valid reason for the child's separation from siblings in placement.	46.15% (6 of 13)	46.15% (6 of 13)
Item 7 Strength Ratings	65% (13 of 20)	65% (13 of 20)

Item 8: Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was more than once a week.	20.83% (5 of 24)	20.83% (5 of 24)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was once a week.	12.5% (3 of 24)	12.5% (3 of 24)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	4.17% (1 of 24)	4.17% (1 of 24)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	8.33% (2 of 24)	8.33% (2 of 24)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a month.	29.17% (7 of 24)	29.17% (7 of 24)
(Question 8A1) Child never had visits with mother.	25% (6 of 24)	25% (6 of 24)
(Question 8A) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the frequency of visitation between the mother and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	62.5% (15 of 24)	62.5% (15 of 24)
(Question 8C) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the mother and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	66.67% (12 of 18)	66.67% (12 of 18)
(Questions 8A and 8C) The frequency and quality of visitation between the child and mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.	58.33% (14 of 24)	58.33% (14 of 24)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was more than once a week.	20% (3 of 15)	20% (3 of 15)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was once a week.	20% (3 of 15)	20% (3 of 15)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	20% (3 of 15)	20% (3 of 15)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	0% (0 of 15)	0% (0 of 15)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a month.	20% (3 of 15)	20% (3 of 15)
(Question 8B1) Child never had visits with father.	20% (3 of 15)	20% (3 of 15)
(Question 8B) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the frequency of visitation between the father and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	66.67% (10 of 15)	66.67% (10 of 15)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8D) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the father and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	66.67% (8 of 12)	66.67% (8 of 12)
(Questions 8B and 8D) The frequency and quality of visitation between the child and father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.	60% (9 of 15)	60% (9 of 15)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was more than once a week.	23.08% (3 of 13)	23.08% (3 of 13)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was once a week.	7.69% (1 of 13)	7.69% (1 of 13)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	0% (0 of 13)	0% (0 of 13)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	23.08% (3 of 13)	23.08% (3 of 13)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than once a month.	7.69% (1 of 13)	7.69% (1 of 13)
(Question 8E1) Child never had visits with siblings in foster care.	38.46% (5 of 13)	38.46% (5 of 13)
(Question 8E) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the frequency of visitation between the child and siblings in foster care was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	53.85% (7 of 13)	53.85% (7 of 13)
(Question 8F) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the child and siblings in foster care was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	60% (6 of 10)	60% (6 of 10)
(Questions 8E and 8F) The frequency and quality of visitation with siblings in foster care was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.	46.15% (6 of 13)	46.15% (6 of 13)
Item 8 Strength Ratings	46.88% (15 of 32)	46.88% (15 of 32)

Item 9: Preserving Connections

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 9A) Concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's important connections (for example, neighborhood, community, faith, language, extended family members including siblings who are not in foster care, Tribe, school, and/or friends).	84.62% (33 of 39)	84.62% (33 of 39)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
Item 9 Strength Ratings	84.62% (33 of 39)	84.62% (33 of 39)

Item 10: Relative Placement

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 10A1) The child's current, or most recent, placement was with a relative.	37.84% (14 of 37)	37.84% (14 of 37)
(Question 10A2) The child's current or most recent placement with a relative was appropriate to the child's needs.	100% (14 of 14)	100% (14 of 14)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Identify maternal relatives.	66.67% (6 of 9)	66.67% (6 of 9)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Locate maternal relatives.	66.67% (6 of 9)	66.67% (6 of 9)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Inform maternal relatives.	77.78% (7 of 9)	77.78% (7 of 9)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Evaluate maternal relatives.	88.89% (8 of 9)	88.89% (8 of 9)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Identify paternal relatives.	87.5% (7 of 8)	87.5% (7 of 8)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Locate paternal relatives.	75% (6 of 8)	75% (6 of 8)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Inform paternal relatives.	75% (6 of 8)	75% (6 of 8)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Evaluate paternal relatives.	75% (6 of 8)	75% (6 of 8)
Item 10 Strength Ratings	75.68% (28 of 37)	75.68% (28 of 37)

Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 11A) Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive, nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.	54.17% (13 of 24)	54.17% (13 of 24)
(Question 11B) Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive, nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.	60% (9 of 15)	60% (9 of 15)
Item 11 Strength Ratings	55.17% (16 of 29)	55.17% (16 of 29)

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

Item 12: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
Item 12 Strength Ratings	32.5% (13 of 40)	24% (6 of 25)	29.23% (19 of 65)

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12A1) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the children's needs.	70% (28 of 40)	44% (11 of 25)	60% (39 of 65)
(Question 12A2) Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's needs.	61.29% (19 of 31)	40% (8 of 20)	52.94% (27 of 51)
Sub-Item 12A Strength Ratings	67.5% (27 of 40)	44% (11 of 25)	58.46% (38 of 65)

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12B1) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the mother's needs	46.67% (14 of 30)	44% (11 of 25)	45.45% (25 of 55)
(Question 12B3) Appropriate services were provided to meet the mother's needs.	37.04% (10 of 27)	41.67% (10 of 24)	39.22% (20 of 51)
(Questions 12B1 and B3) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of mothers.	36.67% (11 of 30)	40% (10 of 25)	38.18% (21 of 55)
(Question 12B2) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the father's needs.	26.09% (6 of 23)	21.05% (4 of 19)	23.81% (10 of 42)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12B4) Appropriate services were provided to meet the father's needs.	19.05% (4 of 21)	15.79% (3 of 19)	17.5% (7 of 40)
(Questions 12B2 and 12B4) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of fathers.	21.74% (5 of 23)	15.79% (3 of 19)	19.05% (8 of 42)
Sub-Item 12B Strength Ratings	24.24% (8 of 33)	24% (6 of 25)	24.14% (14 of 58)

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12C1) The agency adequately assessed the needs of the foster or pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care on an ongoing basis.	80% (28 of 35)	80% (28 of 35)
(Question 12C2) The agency provided appropriate services to foster and pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care.	68.97% (20 of 29)	68.97% (20 of 29)
Sub-Item 12C Strength Ratings	74.29% (26 of 35)	74.29% (26 of 35)

Item 13: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 13A) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the child in the case planning process.	79.31% (23 of 29)	29.41% (5 of 17)	60.87% (28 of 46)
(Question 13B) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the mother in the case planning process.	41.38% (12 of 29)	52% (13 of 25)	46.3% (25 of 54)
(Question 13C) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the father in the case planning process.	35% (7 of 20)	23.53% (4 of 17)	29.73% (11 of 37)
Item 13 Strength Ratings	41.03% (16 of 39)	28% (7 of 25)	35.94% (23 of 64)

Item 14: Caseworker Visits With Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was more than once a week.	0% (0 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was once a week.	2.5% (1 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	1.54% (1 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	12.5% (5 of 40)	8% (2 of 25)	10.77% (7 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	70% (28 of 40)	36% (9 of 25)	56.92% (37 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a month.	15% (6 of 40)	56% (14 of 25)	30.77% (20 of 65)
(Question 14A1) Caseworker never had visits with child(ren).	0% (0 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 of 65)
(Question 14A) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the child (ren) was sufficient.	82.5% (33 of 40)	48% (12 of 25)	69.23% (45 of 65)
(Question 14B) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the child(ren) was sufficient.	65% (26 of 40)	40% (10 of 25)	55.38% (36 of 65)
Item 14 Strength Ratings	62.5% (25 of 40)	28% (7 of 25)	49.23% (32 of 65)

Item 15: Caseworker Visits With Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was more than once a week.	3.45% (1 of 29)	0% (0 of 25)	1.85% (1 of 54)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was once a week.	0% (0 of 29)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 of 54)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	3.45% (1 of 29)	12% (3 of 25)	7.41% (4 of 54)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	10.34% (3 of 29)	48% (12 of 25)	27.78% (15 of 54)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a month.	58.62% (17 of 29)	36% (9 of 25)	48.15% (26 of 54)
(Question 15A1) Caseworker never had visits with mother.	24.14% (7 of 29)	4% (1 of 25)	14.81% (8 of 54)
(Question 15A2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	27.59% (8 of 29)	56% (14 of 25)	40.74% (22 of 54)
(Question 15C) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	50% (11 of 22)	54.17% (13 of 24)	52.17% (24 of 46)
(Questions 15A2 and 15C) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the mother were sufficient.	27.59% (8 of 29)	48% (12 of 25)	37.04% (20 of 54)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was more than once a week.	5% (1 of 20)	0% (0 of 16)	2.78% (1 of 36)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was once a week.	0% (0 of 20)	0% (0 of 16)	0% (0 of 36)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	5% (1 of 20)	6.25% (1 of 16)	5.56% (2 of 36)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	5% (1 of 20)	18.75% (3 of 16)	11.11% (4 of 36)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a month.	55% (11 of 20)	37.5% (6 of 16)	47.22% (17 of 36)
(Question 15B1) Caseworker never had visits with father.	30% (6 of 20)	37.5% (6 of 16)	33.33% (12 of 36)
(Question 15B2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	30% (6 of 20)	25% (4 of 16)	27.78% (10 of 36)
(Question 15D) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	42.86% (6 of 14)	30% (3 of 10)	37.5% (9 of 24)
(Question 15B2 and 15D) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the father were sufficient.	25% (5 of 20)	12.5% (2 of 16)	19.44% (7 of 36)
Item 15 Strength Ratings	18.75% (6 of 32)	28% (7 of 25)	22.81% (13 of 57)

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

Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 16A) The agency made concerted efforts to accurately assess the children's educational needs.	83.33% (30 of 36)	80% (8 of 10)	82.61% (38 of 46)
(Question 16B) The agency made concerted efforts to address the children's educational needs through appropriate services.	72.41% (21 of 29)	70% (7 of 10)	71.79% (28 of 39)
Item 16 Strength Ratings	77.78% (28 of 36)	70% (7 of 10)	76.09% (35 of 46)

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

Item 17: Physical Health of the Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 17A1) The agency accurately assessed the children's physical health care needs.	87.5% (35 of 40)	62.5% (5 of 8)	83.33% (40 of 48)
(Question 17B1) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the physical health issues of the target child in foster care.	60% (3 of 5)	Not Applicable	60% (3 of 5)
(Question 17B2) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified physical health needs.	85.29% (29 of 34)	37.5% (3 of 8)	76.19% (32 of 42)
(Question 17A2) The agency accurately assessed the children's dental health care needs.	70% (28 of 40)	100% (3 of 3)	72.09% (31 of 43)
(Question 17B3) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified dental health needs.	65.71% (23 of 35)	100% (2 of 2)	67.57% (25 of 37)
Item 17 Strength Ratings	65% (26 of 40)	37.5% (3 of 8)	60.42% (29 of 48)

Item 18: Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 18A) The agency accurately assessed the children's mental/behavioral health needs.	81.48% 22 of 27)	37.5% (6 of 16)	65.12% (28 of 43)
(Question 18B) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the mental/behavioral health issues of the target child in foster care.	73.33% (11 of 15)	Not Applicable	73.33% (11 of 15)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 18C) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified mental/behavioral health needs.	66.67% (18 of 27)	26.67% (4 of 15)	52.38% (22 of 42)
Item 18 Strength Ratings	59.26% (16 of 27)	25% (4 of 16)	46.51% (20 of 43)