

Reviewer Brief: Understanding the Federal Expectations for Rating Cases

Purpose

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI) is the only official instrument to be used in rating a case for CFSR determinations of substantial conformity. This reviewer brief gives those participating in the CFSRs a brief overview of the practices that may lead to a Strength rating in a case and the expectations or special considerations that should be given to particular case circumstances in evaluating the item ratings for a case. The OSRI contains questions, applicability notes, instructions, and definitions that provide more detailed information.

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

Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment (Item 1)

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

Strength Rating Defined

- All investigations and/or assessments during the PUR were initiated timely (within state policy guidelines).
- Timely face-to-face contact with children occurred on all investigations and/or assessments during the PUR (within state policy guidelines).
- OR, if policy guidelines could not be met, it was due to circumstances beyond the control of the agency.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Circumstances beyond the control of the agency may include:

- Other agencies (such as law enforcement) causing delays.
- Child/family not located despite documented efforts to locate them.

If the state has a policy that allows for exceptions to the face-to-face contact timeframes when the child is in the hospital (or other specific circumstances), reviewers should rate the item based on the state's policy requirements.

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

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

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children's entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

Strength Rating Defined

- In cases where safety and/or risk concerns were present, appropriate services were provided to or arranged for families (including any services for alternative caregivers) with the explicit goal of (1) addressing the case-specific safety concerns of the child(ren) and/or risk of child abuse/neglect, and (2) doing so within a timeframe needed to prevent a child's entry into foster care and/or re-entry after a reunification.
- OR, if safety and/or risk-related services were not provided or arranged for, this was because the safety concerns and/or reasons associated with the risk of child abuse/neglect warranted immediate removal of the child.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

This item is solely focused on rating the provision of appropriate services to the family to address safety and/or risk concerns in the home.

For in-home services and foster care cases, consider an alternative caregiver arrangement as a safety plan (not a safety service), and determine whether appropriate services were provided to the alternative caregiver in an effort to support, implement, maintain, or supplement a safety plan in order to ensure the safety of a child and prevent the removal or re-entry into foster care. Any safety plan in place during the PUR will be assessed in Item 3.

Concerted efforts, for the purposes of Item 2, refers to facilitating a family's access to appropriate services within a timeframe aimed at preventing a child's entry into foster care and/or re-entry after a reunification.

Risk and Safety Assessment and Management (Item 3)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

Strength Rating Defined

- During the PUR, the agency conducted initial and/or ongoing assessments of all children in the family, unless the timeframe and circumstances did not warrant ongoing assessments.
- The assessments were of good quality, accurately identifying risk and safety concerns, and they occurred at key junctures of the case.
- If safety concerns were identified during the PUR, the agency adequately addressed concerns and/or responded by developing and monitoring appropriate safety plans that ensured the child(ren)'s safety.
- There were no recurring maltreatment and/or recurring safety concerns within 6 months of a report substantiated and/or handled by an alternative response during the PUR.
- Additionally, for foster care cases, there were no safety concerns related to visitation with parents, family members, or related to the child's foster care placement during the PUR that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Consider worker visitation practices (Caseworker Visits With Child [Item 14] and Caseworker Visits With Parents [Item 15]) when assessing this item. Although a rating on this item does not need to be consistent with the ratings on caseworker visits, consider whether the frequency and quality of worker visits with children and/or parents supported quality assessments of risk and safety.

Documentation of completed assessments in a case record alone is not enough to make a determination that this item could be rated as a Strength. Reviewers must also determine the quality of assessments, assess whether there were any concerns present during the period under review, and evaluate whether the agency responded appropriately to any concerns.

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

Stability of Foster Care Placement (Item 4)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the PUR were in the best interests of the child and consistent with achieving the child's permanency goal(s).

Strength Rating Defined

- A child experienced only one placement setting during the PUR, and that placement is stable.

- OR, the child's current placement is stable and every placement made for the child during the PUR was based on the needs of the child and/or to promote the accomplishment of case goals.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

None.

Permanency Goal for Child (Item 5)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

Strength Rating Defined

- The child's permanency goal(s) was/were documented in the case file (unless the child has been in foster care for less than 60 days).
- Permanency goal(s) during the PUR were established timely (assess timeliness by considering the length of time in foster care and the circumstances of the case).
- Permanency goal(s) during the PUR were appropriate for the child's needs and considering the circumstances of the case.
- Requirements were met (as applicable) under the Adoption and Safe Families Act (whether a termination of parental rights petition was filed at any point prior to the PUR, or was filed in a timely manner during the PUR if the child reached his or her 15th month in foster care during the PUR).

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Although this item is not focused on *achievement* of permanency goals, it does require the reviewer to consider whether the agency was appropriately planning for permanency for the child *since removal from the home* and to assess the impact of those efforts during the PUR. The item is rated based on goals in place during the PUR, but reviewers must also document and consider how long the child was in foster care before a goal was established in determining the timely establishment and appropriateness of the goals.

For example, in the case of a child who had been in foster care with a goal of reunification for several years before the PUR and the goal is changed to adoption at some point during the PUR, the agency's continuation of the reunification goal during the PUR would be considered inappropriate and the establishment of the adoption goal would not be considered timely.

The foster care entry date is defined as either the date of a judicial finding that the child has been subject to abuse or neglect, or 60 days after the child was removed from the home, whichever is earlier. This date is used to calculate whether a child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months; however, timely establishment of initial permanency goal(s) uses the date on which the child was removed from the home.

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

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the PUR to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or another planned permanent living arrangement.

Strength Rating Defined

- During the PUR, the agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve timely permanency for the child.
- OR, for children with the goal of "another planned permanent living arrangement," during the PUR, the agency and court made concerted efforts to place the child in a living arrangement that could be considered permanent until discharge from foster care.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Generally, "timely achievement" is considered to have occurred within 12 months for the goal of reunification, within 18 months for the goal of guardianship, or within 24 months for the goal of adoption. While the focus of this item is on assessing the efforts that were made to achieve permanency rather than on meeting the specific timeframes noted for each goal, determine whether the barriers noted in the case are significant enough to consider the item an area needing improvement despite the suggested timeframes. For example, if a child was reunified at the 12th month, but could have been reunified sooner had certain concerted efforts been made, the item could be rated as an Area Needing Improvement if the additional efforts by the agency and court were reasonable to expect. Similarly, if a child did not achieve adoption within 24 months, but the agency and court had been making concerted efforts to achieve the goal of adoption despite circumstances beyond their control that caused a delay, the item could be rated as a Strength.

Concerted efforts toward achieving permanency may include:

- Actively and effectively implementing concurrent planning. Specifically, this means actively working on a second permanency goal simultaneously such that there is progress made to have that second goal for permanency achieved quickly.
- If the goal is reunification, regularly assessing the safety of the home and family to which the child is to return. This includes utilizing appropriate safety plans and safety-related services to allow reunification to occur timely and safely rather than waiting until all risk and safety concerns are fully resolved before reunification occurs.
- Ensuring appropriate services are provided in a timely manner for parents seeking to achieve reunification.
- In cases of adoption, conducting mediation with the child's parents, as appropriate, to work toward obtaining voluntary terminations and avoiding lengthy court trials.
- Considering open adoptions when in the child's best interests.

- Addressing any concerns a child, youth, or prospective adoptive family may have about adoption through specific discussions or counseling.
- Conducting searches for absent parents and relatives early on and periodically throughout the case.
- Establishing paternity early on in cases, as applicable.
- Initiating child-specific recruitment efforts to identify permanent placements.
- Ensuring that permanency hearings are held timely and thoroughly address the issues in the case and the child's need for permanency.
- Ensuring that home studies or other legal processes required to finalize permanency happen timely.
- Finalizing the permanency of a placement for youth with a goal of another planned permanent living arrangement through written agreements.

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

Placement With Siblings (Item 7)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

Strength Rating Defined

During the PUR, siblings in foster care are placed together unless separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings. If separation was necessary, the circumstances are reconsidered over time to determine whether separation needs to continue.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts to place siblings together may include:

- Asking the children/family about potential placement resources who may accept a sibling group (e.g., relatives and/or fictive kin) and following up with searches and assessments.
- Searching for resource homes that can accommodate the sibling group.
- For cases where valid reasons for separation exist, reconsidering those reasons periodically and/or providing any services or making arrangements to support the eventual placement of the siblings together.

Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care (Item 8)

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

Strength Rating Defined

- During the PUR, the child had visitation with parents/caregivers and siblings (as applicable) that was of good quality and at a frequency that promoted continuity in their relationships.

If, during the PUR, frequent visitation with the mother or father was not possible (for example, due to incarceration in a facility where visitation is not feasible, or if the parent lives in another state), determine whether there are documented concerted efforts to promote other forms of contact between the child and the mother or father, such as telephone calls or letters, in addition to facilitating visits when possible and appropriate.

- Frequency of visits is determined based on the child's needs and the circumstances of the case and not solely on state policy or resource availability.
- Decisions about supervision during visits, location, length, etc., are made in a way that supports a positive visitation experience for the child and ensures quality interactions with parents/siblings.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts to ensure frequent, quality visitation may include:

- Creating a visitation plan with the family that outlines details for frequency, location, duration, etc.
- Facilitating the most frequent visitation possible while ensuring the child's safety.
- Engaging relatives or kin in supporting visitation by providing transportation or assisting with supervision.
- Providing transportation services for parents and children to attend visits.
- Assessing the feasibility and appropriateness of visitation in prison facilities and alternative forms of contact as needed for incarcerated parents.
- Discussing visitation with parents/child to assess whether frequency and quality are meeting their needs.

Preserving Connections (Item 9)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, kin, Tribe, school, and friends.

Strength Rating Defined

- During the PUR, the child's important connections (neighborhood, community, faith, language, extended family members—including siblings who are not in foster care—kin, Tribe, school, and friends) that they had before entering care were identified and maintained.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts to preserve connections may include:

- Having discussions with the child and family, or others who are familiar with the child, to identify the child's most important connections.
- Considering any Tribal connections, including Tribes that may not be federally recognized, and ensuring participation in Tribal activities in which the child had been involved before entering foster care.
- Making efforts to maintain the child in the same school if it is in the child's best interests to do so.
- Ensuring that the child has visits or contact with extended family members and siblings who are not in foster care and with whom the child has a previous relationship (unless the target child is a newborn/infant).
- Placing the child in a foster home that is located in the same community they lived in previously.
- Taking the child to any religious activities the child used to attend or connecting the child to a faith community with which the child identifies .
- Providing information to foster parents about the child's cultural heritage and any cultural needs or preferences that should be maintained.

Relative Placement (Item 10)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

Strength Rating Defined

- Unless the child required a specialized placement that precluded placement with relatives, or the identity of relatives is unknown despite concerted efforts to locate them:

- During the PUR, the child was placed with relatives and the placement was appropriate to the child's needs.
- OR, concerted efforts were made to identify, locate, inform, and evaluate paternal and maternal relatives as potential placement resources for the child, as appropriate, during the PUR.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts to identify, locate, inform, and evaluate relatives as placement resources may include:

- Asking the child and parents/caregivers about relatives.
- Sending letters to relatives to inform them of the child's status in foster care and need for placement.
- Conducting home studies of relatives.
- For cases where the identity or whereabouts of the parents/caregivers are unknown and therefore relatives are unknown, documented evidence that the agency made a sufficient inquiry into the parents or caregivers' identity, location, and status. Agencies are expected to use viable sources of information such as parent locator services, case files, and central registries. In some situations, posting a legal advertisement in a newspaper might be a reasonable approach if other methods have failed to yield results, as would contacting the parents at their last known addresses or phone numbers.
- For cases that have been opened for some time, if concerted efforts were made before the PUR, evidence that any relatives who were previously ruled out were reconsidered (if appropriate) during the PUR.

Relationship of Child in Care With Parents (Item 11)

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

Strength Rating Defined

Concerted efforts were made during the PUR to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and the parents/caregivers from whom he or she was removed by encouraging and facilitating activities and interactions that went beyond just arranging for visitation.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts may include:

- Encouraging a parent’s participation in school-related activities, doctor’s appointments for the child, engagement in after-school activities, or hobbies.
- Providing or arranging transportation so parents can participate in activities with the child.
- Providing opportunities for therapeutic situations to strengthen the relationship.
- Encouraging foster parents to serve as mentors/role models for parents.
- Encouraging/facilitating communication with parents who do not live near the child and/or are unable to have frequent face-to-face visitation.

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

Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents (Item 12)

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

Strength Rating Defined

- Concerted efforts were made during the PUR to accurately and comprehensively assess the needs of the children, parents/caregivers, and foster parents initially (for cases that were opened during the PUR) and periodically on an ongoing basis (as needed) to update assessment information relevant to ongoing case planning.
 - Assessment of needs for the children includes needs related to social/emotional development but does not include education, physical health, or mental/behavioral health (including substance abuse).
 - Assessment of needs for parents/caregivers refers to a determination of what the parents need to provide appropriate care and supervision and to ensure the safety and well-being of their children.
 - Assessment of needs for foster parents refers to a determination of what the foster parents need to provide appropriate care and supervision to the child in their home.
- Concerted efforts were made during the PUR to provide appropriate services to the children, parents, and foster parents that were matched to needs identified in assessments.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts to locate parents may include:

- Contacting the parents at the last known addresses or phone numbers.
- Using the federal parent locator service; reviewing case files/central registries.
- Asking relatives about, and making efforts to contact, any identified relatives.
- Asking the children's current/previous schools for parent information.
- Posting a legal advertisement in a newspaper (after all other search methods have been exhausted).

Concerted efforts to assess needs may include:

- Conducting formal assessments through a contracted provider or another agency.
- Conducting informal but thorough assessments using interviews with the child, family, and service providers.
- Spending adequate time engaging with the child, parents, and foster parents to gain an in-depth understanding of their needs.
- Using screening and assessment tools to assess specific issues such as domestic violence, substance use issues, cognitive abilities, or parenting skills..

Concerted efforts to provide appropriate services may include:

- Ensuring that services are matched to the parents' and child (ren)'s specific needs and are culturally appropriate.
- Ensuring availability of services by removing or addressing any barriers to participation, such as waitlists or scheduling conflicts.
- Ensuring accessibility of needed services by providing for transportation.
- Monitoring service participation to ensure that treatment goals are being achieved and progress is made.

Reviewers should not rate a parent/caregiver for this item if, during the entire PUR, the case file documented that it was not in the child's best interests to involve the parent in case planning. In such a situation, the item questions are not applicable. This would include cases in which there are ongoing safety threats that could emotionally or physically re-traumatize the child and that cannot be mitigated by the agency or other interventions. Typically, both the agency and court are involved in making this determination.

Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning (Item 13)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

Strength Rating Defined

During the PUR, concerted efforts were made to actively involve the children (if age and developmentally appropriate) and parents/caregivers in case planning activities.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Concerted efforts to engage families in case planning may include:

- Having age and developmentally appropriate discussions with children and explaining case plans in language they understand.
- Ensuring children understand permanency goals and changes made to goals.
- Discussing family strengths and needs with children and parents.
- Evaluating other case plan goals and progress in services with both children and parents.
- Ensuring that case planning meetings are arranged based on the family's availability and are utilized to engage the family in case planning discussions.

Caseworker Visits With Child (Item 14)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

Strength Rating Defined

During the PUR, the caseworker visited the child(ren) (for in-home cases, all children in the home must be visited) frequently enough to adequately assess their safety, promote timely achievement of case goals, and support their well-being. The visits were of good quality, with discussions focusing on the child(ren)'s needs, services, and case plan goals. The child(ren) were visited alone, and the length and location of visits was conducive to open, honest, and thorough conversations.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Typically, visit frequency must be at least monthly for a Strength rating unless there is substantial justification for less frequent visits. The frequency of visits necessary to ensure the child's safety, permanency, and well-being is not set based on compliance with state policy requirements regarding casework contacts or visits with the child but rather on the child's needs and the circumstances of the case.

Caseworker Visits With Parents (Item 15)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

Strength Rating Defined

During the PUR, the caseworker visited the parents frequently enough to monitor their progress in services, promote timely achievement of case goals, and effectively address their child(ren)'s safety, permanency, and well-being needs. The visits were of good quality, with discussions focusing on the parent's and child(ren)'s needs, services, and case plan goals. The length and location of visits were conducive to open, honest, and thorough conversations.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

Typically, visit frequency must be at least monthly for a Strength rating, unless there is substantial justification for less frequent visits, which could vary depending on the circumstances of the case. For example, for parents who are incarcerated, efforts should be made to arrange face-to-face contact; however, this may not be permitted or viable in a facility that is out of state. A similar situation would be parents who live out of state. In lieu of face-to-face visits, the agency's efforts to maintain monthly communication with the parent via phone calls, video calls, and/or letters should be considered when determining substantial justification for less than monthly face-to-face visits.

If the case goal is not to place the child with that parent permanently, monthly face-to-face contact is not always required for a Strength rating, and frequency should be determined based on the circumstances of the case and the needs of the child(ren).

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

Educational Needs of the Child (Item 16)

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

Strength Rating Defined

Concerted efforts were made during the PUR to assess the children's educational needs initially (if the case was opened during the PUR) or on an ongoing basis and to provide appropriate services to address needs.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

In-home cases are only applicable for this item if (1) educational issues are relevant to the reason for the agency's involvement with the family and/or (2) it is reasonable to expect that the agency would address educational issues given the circumstances of the case.

If the case is a foster care case, the questions should be answered only for the target child in foster care, even if the child was reunified during the PUR and there are other children in the home.

The focus of this item is on agency efforts, even if those efforts were not fully successful due to factors beyond the agency's control.

Concerted efforts to assess needs may include:

- An educational assessment included in the comprehensive needs assessment.
- Having an educational assessment conducted by the school.
- Conducting an informal assessment based on interviews with the child, parents/caregivers, and/or foster parents.

Special considerations to provide services may include:

- Advocating for services on behalf of the child (by the caseworker and/or foster parents).
- Ensuring services are:
 - Tailored to the specific needs of the child(ren);
 - Accessible to the child (considering waitlists, transportation, and hours available); and
 - Monitored and adjusted, as needed, to ensure that educational goals are being achieved and progress is made.

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

Physical Health of the Child (Item 17)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs.

Strength Rating Defined

- During the PUR, the children's physical health and dental needs were accurately assessed initially (if the case was opened during the PUR) and on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the PUR), and any needed services were provided.

- In addition, for foster care cases, if the child was prescribed medication for physical health issues, the agency provided appropriate oversight for appropriate use and monitoring of medications.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

In-home cases are only applicable for this item if (1) physical health issues were relevant to the reason for the agency's involvement with the family, and/or (2) it is reasonable to expect that the agency would address physical health issues given the circumstances of the case.

For foster care cases, the questions should be answered only for the target child in foster care, even if the child was reunified during the PUR and there are other children in the home.

Special considerations to provide services include:

- Ensuring services are:
 - Tailored to the specific needs of the child(ren)
 - Culturally appropriate, with providers who can speak the language of the child
 - Accessible to the child (considering waitlists, transportation, and hours available)
 - Provided in a setting that is the most effective and responsive to needs
 - Monitored and adjusted, as needed, to ensure that treatment goals are being achieved and progress is made

Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child (Item 18)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the PUR, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children.

Strength Rating Defined

- During the PUR, the children's mental and/or behavioral health needs were accurately assessed initially (if the case was opened during the PUR) and on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the PUR), and any needed services were provided.
- In addition, for foster care cases, if the child was prescribed medication for mental health issues, the agency provided appropriate oversight for appropriate use and monitoring of medications.

Concerted Efforts Required and/or Special Considerations in Rating

- For a child in foster care, if the child had mental/behavioral issues before the PUR that were adequately addressed and there were no remaining needs during the PUR, the case should be rated as Not Applicable.

- For foster care cases, question A should be answered only for the target child in foster care, even if the child was reunified during the PUR and there are other children in the home.
- In-home cases are only applicable for this item if (1) mental/behavioral health issues were relevant to the reason for the agency's involvement with the family, and/or (2) it is reasonable to expect that the agency would address mental/behavioral health issues given the circumstances of the case.

Special considerations to provide services include:

- Ensuring services are:
 - Tailored to the specific needs of the child(ren)
 - Culturally appropriate, with providers who can speak the language of the child(ren)
 - Accessible to the child(ren) (considering waitlists, transportation, and hours available)
 - Provided in a setting that is the most effective and responsive to needs
 - Monitored and adjusted, as needed, to ensure that treatment goals are being achieved and progress is made