CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS

Montana

FINAL REPORT

2025

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

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Final Report: Montana Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

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

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the Montana Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) and submitted to the CB on June 3, 2025. 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 2024 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 Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula in Montana during August 4–8, 2025, examining case practices occurring during August 2024 through August 2025.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
  - Attorneys for the agency
  - Attorneys for children/youth
  - Attorneys for parents
  - Child welfare agency caseworkers
  - Child welfare agency supervisors
  - Child welfare agency senior leadership
  - Child welfare agency managers and regional managers
  - Community partners
  - Foster and adoptive parents
  - Foster and adoptive parent licensing staff
  - Judges
  - Parents
  - Tribal child welfare staff
  - Youth

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

Montana 2025 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

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

Montana was found in substantial conformity with 1 of the 7 outcomes:

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

The following 3 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

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

CB Comments on State Performance

The DPHHS includes 12 divisions within the executive branch of Montana's government. The CFSD is one of the divisions and is part of the human services core practice area responsible for administering the federal title IV-B and IV-E programs. CFSD provides protective services for children who are abused, neglected, or abandoned. Its responsibilities include investigating reports of child maltreatment, supporting family preservation and reunification, preventing domestic violence, and arranging alternative placements for children such as foster care, kinship care, guardianship, or adoption.

In CFSR Round 3, Montana participated in a Traditional Review (CB-led) in 2017. The review found that the state's child welfare system was not in substantial conformity with federal requirements in all 7 outcome areas and all 7 systemic factors. Montana's Round 3 CFSR PIP was approved on January 13, 2020, with a 2-year implementation period beginning February 1, 2020. The CB determined that the state successfully completed all required PIP strategies and achieved the associated measurement goals for 6 of the 7 outcomes. The measurement goal for Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) was not achieved and a withholding penalty in federal financial participation was imposed.

Montana's Round 4 CB-Led Review found that Montana was not in substantial conformity with the following 6 out of 7 outcomes. Safety Outcome 1 (Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect); Safety Outcome 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate); Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations); Permanency Outcome 2 (The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved); Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs); and Well-Being Outcome 3 (Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs). Montana also was determined not to be in substantial conformity with the following 4 of 7 systemic factors: Statewide Information System, Case Review System, Service Array and Resource Development, and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The state was in substantial conformity with 1 outcome, Well-Being Outcome 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs), and with 3 systemic factors: Quality Assurance, Staff and Provider Training, and Agency Responsiveness to the Community.

The highest performing outcome based on case review performance during the Round 4 CFSR was Well-Being Outcome 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs). This outcome was substantially achieved in 100% of applicable cases. The agency consistently used formal and informal methods to assess educational needs, demonstrated strong collaboration with school systems, and provided or arranged for appropriate services to address the identified needs.

The next highest performing outcome was Permanency Outcome 2 (The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children) with 88% of applicable cases rated as substantially achieved. Permanency Outcome 2 consists of 5 items that collectively evaluate how effectively family relationships and connections are preserved for children in foster care. The strongest performing item in Permanency Outcome 2 was Item 9 (Preserving Connections), with 95% of applicable cases showing efforts to maintain children's connections to extended family, kin, Tribe, faith, school, and community—reflecting a strong practice area. Item 10 (Relative Placement) also performed well, with 90% of applicable cases rated positively. Sixteen children were placed with relatives, and in most other cases, efforts were made to locate and assess maternal and paternal relatives as potential placement options. Montana also performed well on Item 7 (Placement With Siblings), which assesses whether children in foster care were placed with their siblings unless there was a valid reason for separation, and Item 8 (Visiting With Parents and Siblings), which assesses whether there were frequent, quality visits between children and their parents and children with their siblings who were placed separately. Both items were rated as Strengths in 88% of the applicable cases reviewed. Item 11, which assesses efforts to support children's relationships with their parents beyond visitation, was an Area Needing Improvement as 71% of applicable cases were rated positively. Inconsistent involvement of parents in medical appointments, school events, and other activities negatively affected performance on this item. CFSD is well-positioned to strengthen parent-child relationships beyond visitation by building on the other strong practices identified within this outcome.

Safety Outcome 1 (Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect) includes case review performance and performance on two statewide data indicators. Montana's RSP on the two safety statewide indicators—Maltreatment in Foster Care and Recurrence of Maltreatment—is consistently statistically worse than national performance. While the state's performance on Recurrence of Maltreatment has improved over the past 3 reporting years, performance on Maltreatment in Foster Care has remained relatively the same. CFSR case review performance for Item 1 (Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment) was 82%. For the cases not rated as a Strength, the review found that Montana did not always initiate investigations in a timely manner or make timely face-to-face contact with alleged victims, as required by state policy.

Evaluation of performance for Safety Outcome 2 identified some important areas for improvement. Case practice related to the 2 items comprising Safety Outcome 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate) found 75% 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), 87% of applicable cases were rated as a Strength. Strength ratings for this item were due largely to the agency's consistent efforts to provide risk- and safety-related services to prevent foster care entry, the use of Family Support Team (FST) meetings, and the appropriate removal of children when necessary to ensure their safety and protection. Item 3 (Risk and Safety Assessment and Management) was rated as a Strength in 75% of cases. There were differences in performance for in-home cases compared with foster care cases. 73% of the foster care cases were rated as a Strength versus 80% of the in-home cases. The difference in case performance across the two case types was seen across all the areas of practice assessed within Item 3. For foster care cases, the greatest need for improvement was in the development, updating, and monitoring of safety plans, with 60% rated as a Strength. Initial assessments in applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength in 64% of cases and ongoing assessments in 75%. In contrast, in-home services cases performed better with 100% of the applicable cases rated as a Strength for safety plan development and monitoring, 85% for initial assessments, and 80% for ongoing assessments. While in-home cases had a higher percentage of Strength ratings, risk and safety practices in both case types require improvement. Areas needing further review include the consistency and quality of initial and ongoing risk and safety assessments; the frequency and effectiveness of caseworker visits to homes and foster homes; monitoring and updating safety plans; and the adequacy of risk and safety determinations at case closure. Key areas for improvement include maintaining regular, face-to-face contact with children and parents to accurately assess safety concerns and updating assessments during key case transitions, such as reunification or placement changes. Child safety is paramount and should remain a central focus of Montana's PIP. The CB recommends that Montana develop strategies to enhance caseworkers' ability to assess the risk and safety of children in a timely, accurate, and

comprehensive manner, as well as to create, implement, monitor, and adjust effective safety plans that directly address and mitigate identified safety concerns for children in foster care.

Permanency Outcome 1 assesses whether children in foster care experience stable and permanent living arrangements. This was Montana's lowest performing outcome, with 40% of foster care cases rated as substantially achieved. For Item 4 (Placement Stability), 85% of children had one stable placement or planned move during the review period, which is a positive finding. Children who experienced unplanned moves were placed in temporary placements, had mental health or behavioral needs requiring a different placement, or had a foster parent who could no longer care for the child due to personal reasons or was not a long-term permanent placement option. In nearly 70% of applicable foster care cases, permanency goals, and concurrent goals, if applicable, were established in a timely manner and aligned with the child's needs and case circumstances, which are case practices examined in Item 5. In several cases, these goals were reviewed regularly and updated appropriately, moving from reunification to more suitable options such as guardianship, adoption, or Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA). However, in other cases, adoption or guardianship goals were established late, or reunification remained the goal despite clear indicators—such as lack of parental progress or unknown whereabouts—that it was no longer appropriate. Nearly half of the children had concurrent permanency goals including combinations such as reunification with guardianship, adoption, or APPLA. In most cases, these concurrent goals were established on the day of removal or within 3 months. For a few children, the initial concurrent goal of adoption or guardianship was later revised to a more appropriate goal, while in other cases, adoption was initially selected when guardianship would have been more suitable. The case review did not identify any policy or practice barriers, suggesting opportunities to explore factors that support timely permanency planning.

In 60% of foster care cases reviewed, the agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve timely permanency (Item 6). Efforts generally addressed both primary and concurrent permanency goals. In most cases in which reunification was the sole goal, parents were actively engaged, promptly connected to necessary services, and demonstrated progress in addressing the issues that led to the child's removal. However, in several cases, there was limited effort toward achieving the concurrent goal. Additional factors contributing to delays in timely permanency included delayed filing and service of termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions, late paternity establishment, court scheduling challenges, delayed appointment of attorneys for children, the agency's need to request hearing dates, and delays in filing guardianship petitions or making timely referrals to the adoption unit. CFSD may consider building on its established partnerships with legal and judicial professionals to examine policies and practices that may hinder timely permanency and to identify strategies for addressing these barriers.

Permanency Outcome 1 also includes performance on 5 permanency statewide data indicators. Montana consistently performs statistically better than national performance on achieving permanency within 12 months for children entering foster care. For the most recent reporting period, the state performed statistically no different than the nation on achieving permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months and 24 months or more. The state's performance on the other 2 permanency indicators, reentry to foster care and placement stability, was also statistically no different than national performance for the past 2 reporting periods. While Montana will not be required to address the permanency statewide data indicators in its PIP, the state is encouraged to explore differences in performance across sub-populations described in the sections that follow on notable changes and observations for Permanency Outcome 1 to inform development of strategies and target areas of focus. For example, Montana has the second highest foster care entry rate in the nation and the third highest percentage of children entering foster care who exit to permanency within 12 months of removal. In addition, American Indian/Alaska Native children are overrepresented in the Montana foster care population, and the percentage increases with longer lengths of stay. The wide variation in county performance across the indicators may provide an opportunity to learn and build on what's working well.

Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have the enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs) was rated as substantially achieved in 75% of applicable cases. For Item 12, the agency's performance on Sub-Item 12B (Needs Assessment and Services to Parents) affected the rating for the Outcome and showed that concerted efforts to assess and address parental needs were inconsistent. Overall, the agency demonstrated stronger performance in working with mothers than with fathers. Case reviews found that the agency's performance

regarding assessing the needs of and providing services to fathers was 70%, lower than mothers at 83%. In 92% of applicable cases, a Strength rating was given for effectively assessing the needs of foster or pre-adoptive parents and providing them with appropriate services. Practice was also notably strong for Sub-Item 12A (Needs Assessment and Services to Children), which received a 91% Strength rating. Additionally, 84% of applicable cases received a Strength rating for child and family involvement in case planning. For Item 14 (Caseworker Visits With Children), the frequency and quality of visits were found to be sufficient in 88% of cases reviewed. Item 15 (Caseworker Visits With Parents) was rated as a Strength in 75% of applicable cases. Findings indicated a need to identify and implement strategies for improving practices related to the frequency and quality of visits with parents. As noted, assessment and services for parents, particularly fathers; actively engaging fathers in the case planning process; and caseworker visits with parents are the practice areas in need of improvement.

Well-Being Outcome 3 assesses the agency's concerted efforts to assess and provide services to meet children's physical, including dental, and mental health needs. This outcome includes Item 17 (Physical Health of the Child) and Item 18 (Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child). Seventy-five percent of the applicable cases were rated as substantially achieved for this outcome. Although fewer in-home services cases were applicable compared to foster care cases, performance was notably higher for in-home services cases with 87% of cases substantially achieving the outcome compared to 70% for foster care cases. For Item 17, in-home services cases received a 100% Strength rating compared to 85% for foster care cases. For Item 18, practice for in-home services cases was also stronger with 78% of cases reviewed rated as a Strength compared to 74% of foster care cases. Factors that negatively affected this outcome across both case types included inconsistent service provision following assessments and unmet service needs. However, case reviews also identified strengths, including good communication with system partners and thorough assessments when conducted.

Service Array and Resource Development is a systemic factor that directly influences safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families. Findings from interviews and case reviews revealed ongoing barriers to service access and follow-through, particularly in meeting families' individualized needs in some areas of the state. While Montana has made progress in expanding service options, continued efforts are needed to ensure services are not only available but also consistently timely, accessible, and responsive across all regions of the state. Addressing these challenges through data-informed strategies and strong quality assurance practices—such as data analysis, performance monitoring, and feedback loops—and intentional, ongoing collaboration with agency and community partners will be critical to improving outcomes for children and families throughout Montana.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention is a systemic factor that affects the state's ability to ensure timely, stable, and appropriate placements for children in foster care. Case review findings, the Statewide Assessment, and stakeholder interviews indicate that Montana places a strong emphasis on kinship and fictive kin placements. However, challenges remain in recruitment planning, use of data, and cross-jurisdictional permanency efforts. Currently, demographic data on children in care are not consistently used to guide recruitment of foster and adoptive families, limiting targeted efforts. Efforts by child-placing agencies are also not fully integrated into the state's recruitment planning process. Additionally, the state experiences delays in completing Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) requests, which often are not completed within the required 60-day timeframe, potentially delaying permanency for children. Montana partners with national and local organizations, such as Wendy's Wonderful Kids, Child Bridge, and A Waiting Child, to support recruitment and permanency efforts. However, there are limited available data on the effectiveness of these initiatives and how they are used to expand access to adoptive homes across jurisdictions.

As Montana works to address the concerns highlighted in the CFSR, the state can build on the exceptional agency work observed in a large percentage of the cases reviewed—34% of the cases reviewed were rated as in Substantial Conformity for all applicable outcomes, with strengths including the agency's demonstrated collaboration with educational systems, successful engagement with foster and pre-adoptive parents, and commitment to cross-system partnerships through engagement efforts like the FSTs. These strengths offer a strong foundation for Montana's PIP to drive targeted, sustainable improvements. Priority strategies should include enhancing the quality and timeliness of risk and safety assessments, improving the frequency and

quality of caseworker visits with parents and children, and increasing meaningful engagement, particularly with fathers. Addressing service access barriers is also critical to ensure all families receive timely, individualized, and culturally responsive support.

In addition to case practice improvements, Montana can address several systemic challenges. Key concerns identified in the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews include antiquated infrastructure in the Statewide Information System, limited tracking mechanisms within the Case Review System, and insufficient data to support effective foster and adoptive parent recruitment.

- Statewide Information System: The system cannot reliably provide or verify accurate data on the status, demographics, location, or placement goals of children in foster care.
- Case Review System: Documentation did not consistently show joint development of case plans with parents, timely 6-month periodic reviews, or compliance with federal timelines for permanency hearings and TPR petitions. The state also lacks mechanisms to track these processes or ensure timely caregiver notifications.
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention: Montana does not currently collect or use sufficient data to inform recruitment strategies. Cross-jurisdictional placement resources are underutilized, and ICPC requests are not consistently completed within required timeframes.

By leveraging its existing strengths and addressing persistent challenges through coordinated, data-driven, and community-engaged strategies, Montana can make meaningful progress toward ensuring safety, permanency, and well-being for all children and families served by its child welfare system.

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 National Child Welfare Center for Innovation and Advancement page, https://ncwcia.childwelfare.gov/. 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.

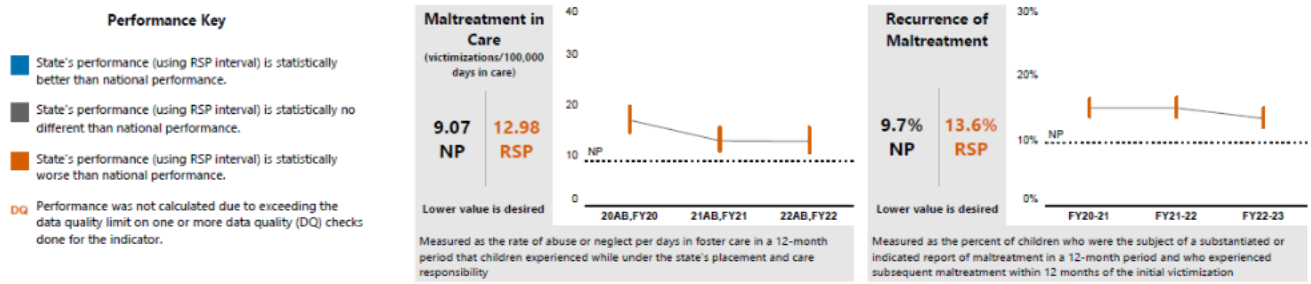
The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on two statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.

The state's policy provides CFSD with four different timeframes when initiating investigations based upon the priority level assigned to the report by Central Intake staff. Initiation is defined as face-to-face contact with the child. Priority 1 reports must be initiated within 24 hours. Priority 2 reports must be initiated within 72 hours. Priority 3 reports must be initiated within 10 days. For reports assigned for a Priority 4 response, CPS staff has a full 60 days to fully investigate, including completing face-to-face contact with the alleged victim and other children that may be associated with the nature of the alleged maltreatment in the report.

Statewide Data Indicators

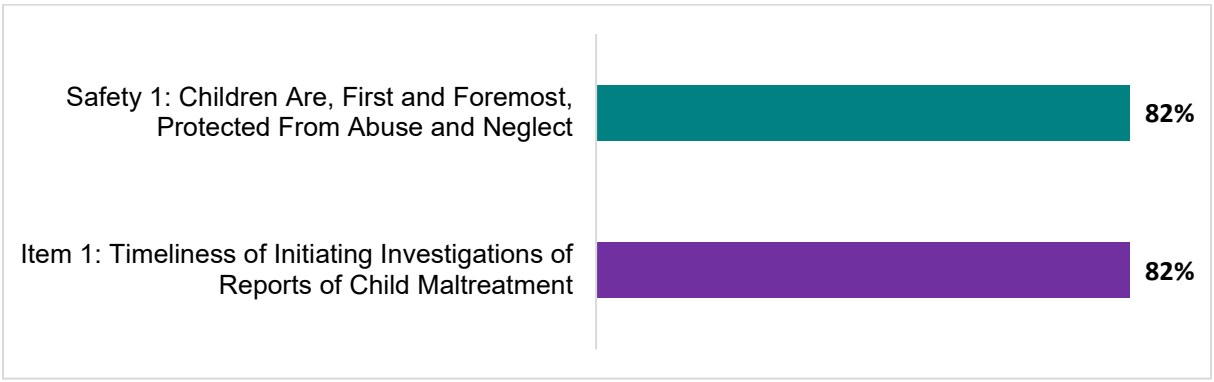
The chart below shows the state's performance from the August 2024 data profile that signaled the start of the statewide assessment process and was used to determine substantial conformity for Safety Outcome 1.

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



Case Review

Figure 2. Performance on Safety Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Montana 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 worse than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "recurrence of maltreatment" data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- 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 2025 Profile	August 2025 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Maltreatment in Foster Care	Worse	Worse	Worse	Yes

Statewide Data Indicator	Data Profile Transmitted With Statewide Assessment and Used to Determine Substantial Conformity	February 2025 Profile	August 2025 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Recurrence of Maltreatment in 12 months	Worse	Worse	Worse	Yes

All results reported here are based on the August 2025 data profile and supplementary context data and may describe performance that is different from Figure 1 because that is from the August 2024 data profile, which was transmitted with the Statewide Assessment and used to determine substantial conformity.

Montana consistently performed statistically worse than national performance on the statewide data indicator for maltreatment in care. The total number of days children in Montana were in foster care decreased over the last 3 reporting years, as did the number of victimizations, 24% and 21%, respectively. Fluctuations across sub-groups is largely attributed to the relatively small number of children experiencing maltreatment in care—fewer than 95 victimizations in the most recent reporting year—but there are a few notable observations:

- Children aged 6 to 10 years comprise the greatest percentage (34%) of all victimizations in care and tend to experience the highest rates of maltreatment per 100,000 days in foster care, with rates around 12 to 13 victimizations per 100,000 days in foster care over the last 3 reporting years (FY 2021–2023). Nationally, the greatest number of victimizations and highest rates of maltreatment in care are for children aged 11 to 16 years.
- While performance fluctuated by race over the last 3 reporting years, children of two or more races[1] and White children consistently experienced victimization rates higher than the state (approximately 10 to 12 victimizations or more per 100,000 foster care days across reporting years) compared to children of other races.[2]
- Over the last four reporting years, most of the state's victimizations in care occurred in four counties:[3] Yellowstone, Cascade, Missoula, and Lewis and Clark counties. Of these four counties, Yellowstone County consistently had a lower rate of maltreatment in care. Lake, Roosevelt, Silver Bow, and Glacier Counties all have a greater number of total days in care but lower rates of maltreatment in care than Missoula and Lewis and Clark counties.

Montana consistently performs statistically worse than national performance on the statewide data indicator for recurrence of maltreatment. However, performance has improved over the last 3 reporting years, with a 20% decrease from 11.7% (FY 2021–2022) to 9.4% (FY 2023–2024). The number of initial substantiated or indicated maltreatment reports and the number of children experiencing recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months also substantially decreased over the last 3 reporting years, by 18% and 34%, respectively.

[1] While disaggregated data for two or more races and Hispanic categories are not available for every statewide data indicator, data for foster care entry rates and permanency in 12-month indicators show that a substantial percentage—more than three-quarters—of children in the two-or-more-races category are American Indian and White, along with one or more other races.

[2] Comparison limited to races/ethnicities that comprise more than 1% of the measured population and a pattern of higher rates than the state across reporting years FY 2020–2023.

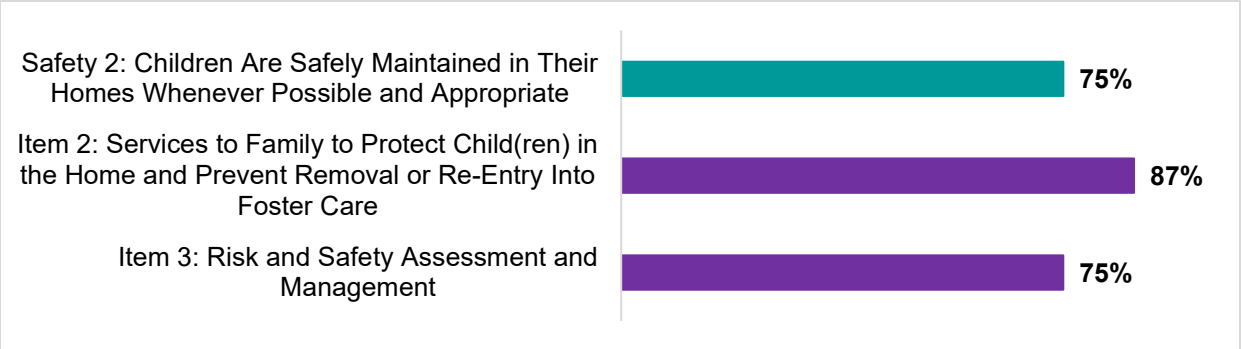
[3] County performance reflects the assigned local agency or county responsible for a child in foster care or adoption, which may or may not be the child's county of residence.

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



Montana 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.

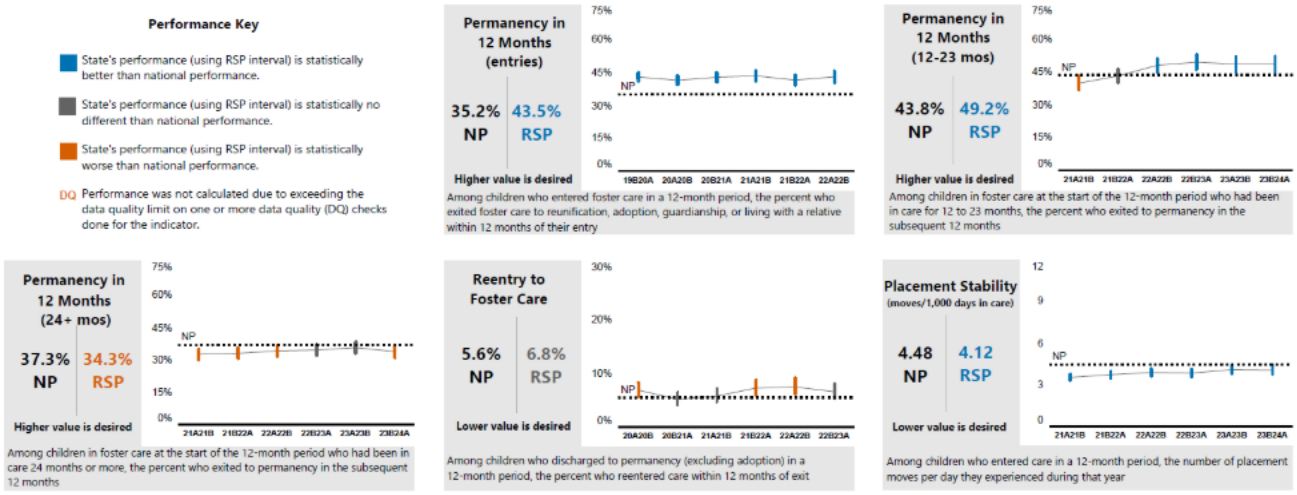
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

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

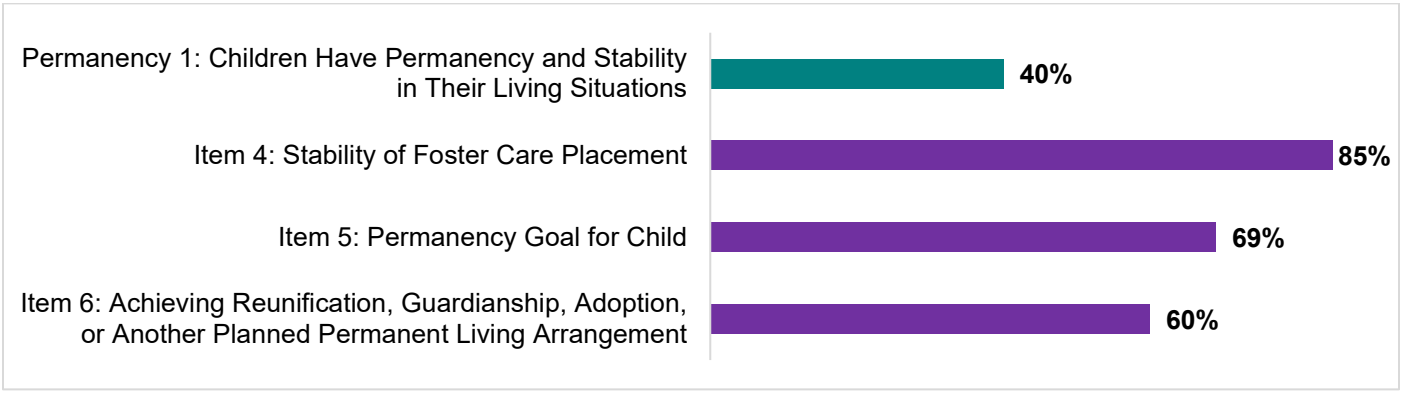
The chart below shows the state's performance from the February 2025 data profile that signaled the start of the statewide assessment process and was used to determine substantial conformity for Permanency Outcome 1.

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



Case Review

Figure 5. Performance on Permanency Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



Montana 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 better 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 better 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 worse than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "reentry to foster care in 12 months" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "placement stability" data indicator was statistically better 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 2025 Profile	August 2025 Profile	Inclusion in PIP?
Permanency in 12 months for children entering care	Better	Better	Better	No
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months	Better	No Different	No Different	No
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	Worse	Worse	No Different	No
Reentry to foster care in 12 months	No Different	No Different	No Different	No
Placement stability	Better	No Different	No Different	No

All results reported here are based on the August 2025 data profile and supplementary context data and thus may describe performance that is different from what is depicted in Figure 1 because that is from the August 2024 data profile, which was transmitted with the Statewide Assessment and used to determine substantial conformity.

Montana consistently performs statistically better than national performance on the statewide data indicator for permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care. State performance incrementally improved over the past 4 reporting periods, and the number of children entering care and exiting to permanency decreased by approximately 25%.

- The foster care entry rate is an important component of assessing performance on permanency in 12 months for children entering care and is one of the factors that is used to calculate Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP).
- Montana has the second highest foster care entry rate in the nation. While Montana's FY 2024 entry rate (5.6 per 1,000 children in the population) has decreased 25% overall from the rate in FY 2020 (7.6 per 1,000 children), it is high relative to national rates (a range of 2.3 to 2.6 per 1,000 children) for the last 4 reporting years.
- The percentage of children entering foster care that exit to permanency within 12 months of removal in Montana is the third highest in the country. Montana's performance for FY 2023 was 50% in comparison to national performance for the same period of 35%.,
- American Indian/Alaska Native children are overrepresented in the Montana foster care population. They comprise about 9% of the general child population but 22% of the foster care entries. The foster care entry rate for American Indian children (single race) in Montana is 14.4 per 1,000 children for FY 2024, which is more than 2.5 times higher than the state's entry rate and more than 6 times higher than the national foster care entry rate.
- The high foster care entry rates for American Indian children are important to consider, as these children experience a low percentage of exits to permanency during their first year in care. Their percentage of exits within 12 months of entry has fluctuated, with a notable increase in the most recent

reporting year compared to the previous year—from 23% to 36%. The state's performance for comparison ranged from 46% to 50% for the last 3 reporting years.

- As with the nation, children removed as infants in Montana enter foster care at much higher rates than children in other age groups, and they exit to permanency within 12 months of entry at the lowest percentage relative to children in other age groups.[4] Montana's foster care entry rate for infants (22 entries per 1,000 children in the population) is nearly 4 times higher than the state's entry rate for all age groups (5.6 per 1,000 child population) and 2.5 times higher than the national entry rate for infants (8.8 per 1,000 child population). The percentage of infants in Montana exiting to permanency within 12 months of entry ranged between 28% and 34% in the past 3 reporting years.
- There is substantial variation by county for performance on this indicator. Among the 8 counties with an average of 50 or more foster care entries per year, the percentage of children who exited to permanency within 12 months of entry ranged from a low of 36% in Yellowstone County to a high of 88% in Hill County.
- The number of children entering and exiting foster care in Yellowstone County decreased substantially, while it remained relatively steady for Cascade and Missoula counties (largest counties in terms of the number of foster care entries a year). Flathead and Gallatin counties have a larger general child population and notably fewer children entering foster care than Missoula and Cascade counties.

For the most recent reporting period, Montana performed statistically no different than national performance for permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months and 24 months or more. RSP has remained relatively stable for both indicators. For children in care 12–23 months, RSP decreased slightly from better to no different than national performance. RSP fluctuated between worse and no different than national performance for children in care 24 months or more.

- The number of children in care more than 1 year and exiting to permanency decreased over the past 3 reporting years, approximately 25% and 29%, respectively.
- While there were no notable differences in the percentage of children in care 12–23 months exiting to permanency by age group, children in care 24 months or more aged 11 to 16 consistently experienced the lowest percentage of exits to permanency within 12 months, with the exception of the small number of youth aged 17.
- The proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native children in care increased with longer lengths of stay. American Indian/Alaska Native (single race) children accounted for 25% of the state's foster care population for children in care less than 1 year, 35% of children in care 1 to 2 years, and 58% of all children in care 2 years or more.
- The distribution of children in care 1 year or more and the percentage of children who exit foster care to permanency varied substantially by county. Among the top 8 counties with the most children in care 1 year or more for the most recent reporting year, Missoula (61%), Cascade (59%), and Flathead (57%) counties had the highest percentage of children in care 12–23 months or more exiting to permanency, and Yellowstone (55%) and Lake (54%) counties had the highest percentage of children in care 24 months or more. The lowest performing counties for children in care 12–23 months exiting to permanency within 12 months were Rosebud (14%), Roosevelt (26%), and Glacier (27%), and for children in care 24 or more months, Rosebud (3%) and Glacier (5%). The counties with a low percentage of children exiting to permanency include a large proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native children, and the poverty rates are 2 to 3 times higher than the state's child poverty rate.
- A higher percentage of children entering foster care are reunified (returned home) in Montana than nationally. In Montana, 48% of children were reunified within 2 years of entry, and this increased to 60% within 5 years of entry. Nationally, these figures were 34% and 47%, respectively.

[4] An exception is youth over 17 years, who consistently experience a very low number and percentage of entries and exits.

Montana's performance was statistically no different than national performance on reentry to foster care for the past 3 reporting periods. Performance on this indicator shows improvement with a gradual decrease over the past 4 reporting periods.

- The percentage of children reentering foster care within 12 months in Montana decreased approximately 25% overall across the past 3 reporting years.
- Children 5 years of age and younger are over-represented in the percentage of children reentering foster care. However, the percentage of these children reentering foster care has decreased over the past 3 reporting years.
- Differences and fluctuations by race/ethnicity and location is attributed to the small number of children reentering foster care in Montana —59 children in the most recent reporting year.

Montana's placement stability rate was statistically no different than national performance for the past 3 reporting periods. The state's performance over time shows a gradual increase in the rate of placement moves per 1,000 days for children's first 12 months in care.

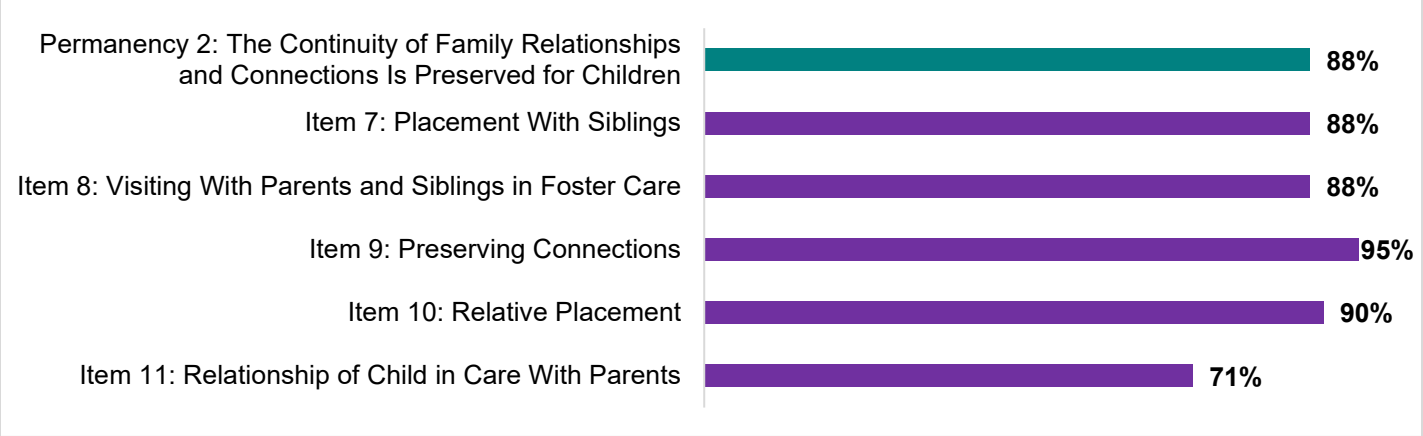
- Similar to the nation, children aged 11 to 16 entering care experienced the highest rate of placement moves per 1,000 days in foster care, with the exception of the small number of youth aged 17.
- Yellowstone County consistently accounted for the greatest number of days in care for children entering foster care and consistently had a lower rate of placement moves than the state at 3.1 moves per 1,000 days in care for the most recent reporting year. Cascade County had nearly half as many total days in care for child entries as Yellowstone County. However, Cascade County had a similar number of placement moves during the most recent reporting year and consistently had a higher rate of placement moves – 5.6 moves per 1,000 days in care.
- There were no notable differences based on race/ethnicity.

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



Montana 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.

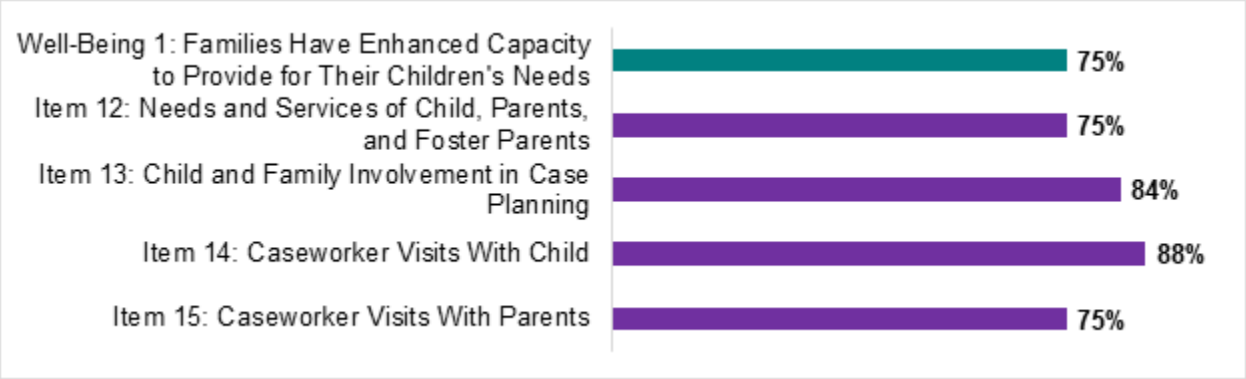
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 8.
- More than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 9.
- More than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 10.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 11.

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



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

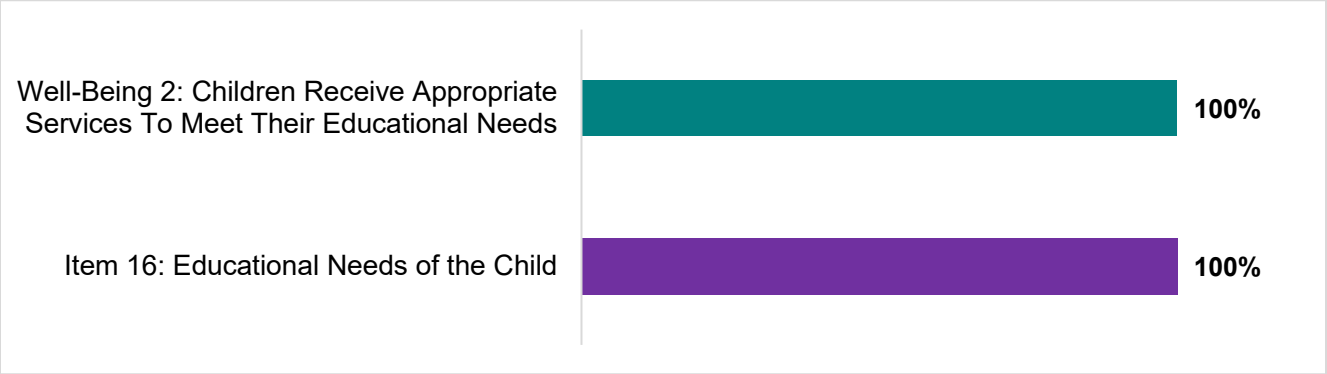
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 12.
  - More than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12A.
  - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12B.
  - More than 90% of the 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



Montana was found to be in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2:

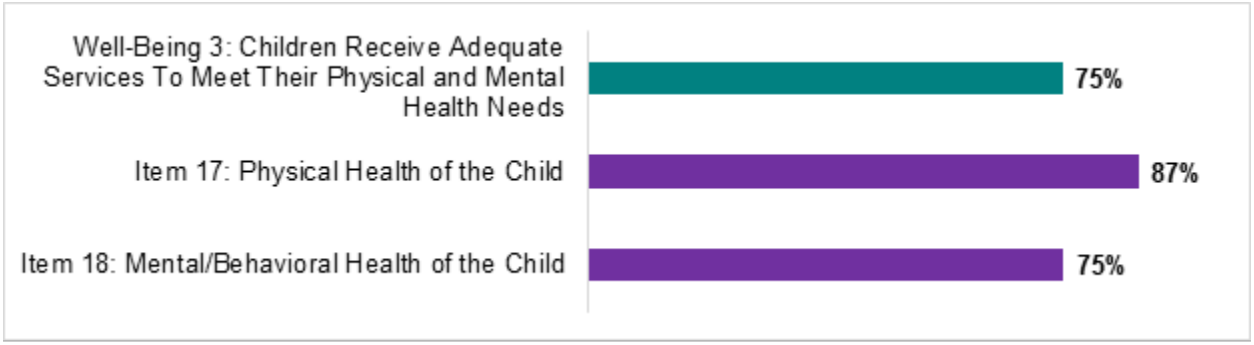
- More than 95% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 16.

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



Montana 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

Montana 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Montana was unable to provide data demonstrating that the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for children in foster care were entered into the system accurately and timely.

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

Montana 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information submitted did not demonstrate that each child had a written case plan that was jointly developed with the child's parents. Montana's policies and practices support children having case plans that are jointly developed with parents, but there is no mechanism to determine the degree to which these policies and practices are implemented.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 21 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information provided did not demonstrate that a periodic review for each child occurred no less frequently than once every 6 months. Montana does not have a systematic process to ensure that initial and ongoing periodic reviews are routinely occurring within 6 months of entry into foster care and every 6 months thereafter.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 22 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information provided did not demonstrate that for each child a permanency hearing occurred within 12 months of entry into foster care and every 12 months thereafter. Montana does not have a systematic process to ensure that permanency hearings are routinely being held within 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and at least every 12 months thereafter.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information provided did not demonstrate that termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions were filed in accordance with federal timeframes. Additionally, Montana does not have processes to ensure that TPR petitions are filed in accordance with federal law or a process to track exceptions, including documentation of compelling reasons not to file.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The data and evidence provided did not establish that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care were routinely receiving notification of permanency hearings across the state and that notice included the right to be heard. Also, although there was evidence that foster and pre-adoptive parents were routinely notified of administrative periodic reviews, there was a lack of data and information about whether the notice included the right to be heard.

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	Strength

Montana was found 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information provided demonstrated that the state's Quality Assurance (QA) system operates statewide. There are ongoing QA processes in place to identify strengths and needs of the service delivery system that include data analysis. The state has QA infrastructure, consisting of the CQI Team and Business Analyst Bureau. The state uses relevant reports on an ongoing basis and data is shared routinely with staff and system partners, as well as during meetings with the Statewide Advisory Council and Regional Advisory Council, to guide quality improvement efforts and to evaluate program improvement measures.

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

Montana was found 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information provided demonstrated that new worker training included virtual and classroom learning, shadowing, and coaching, and that initial case assignments occurred through a co-assignment process. New staff are completing initial training and obtaining certification within required timeframes. Additionally, there are multiple processes in place to include competency tests, training evaluations, and feedback from staff and regional/statewide leadership to evaluate and ensure that initial training equips staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their roles.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- The data and information provided did not demonstrate that ongoing training requirements were being met or that staff were provided with the skills and knowledge necessary to carry out their roles. Although ongoing training is required to be tracked, staffing capacity limitations affect the agency's ability to verify staff compliance. However, data did demonstrate that initial training for supervisors is being completed timely and equips supervisors with the skills and knowledge necessary to carry out their roles.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Resource parents must complete 8 hours of initial pre-licensure training, 10 hours of training within the first year of licensure, and 15 hours of ongoing training annually thereafter. Child Care Institution (CCI) staff must complete 24 hours of initial orientation training followed by 20 hours of annual ongoing training. All resource (foster) parent training is documented and tracked within the electronic case file. Licenses are not issued to resource families who have not met initial or ongoing training requirements, except in rare instances in which an exception has been formally approved. There are established processes to monitor the completion of both initial and ongoing training for resource parents and CCI staff; however, due to limitations in the current data system, aggregate statewide training reporting is unavailable.

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

Montana 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information gathered indicates shortages of mental health, substance use, developmental disability, and specialty services as well as housing and placement resources. Although urban areas offer a broader range of services, most rural communities have limited services that require families to travel significant distances. Additional challenges include waitlists and workforce challenges affected by service provider capacity, turnover, and qualifications. Despite these challenges, Montana implements creative strategies and solutions to mitigate these challenges.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information collected did not demonstrate that the service array and resource development system was functioning effectively statewide to ensure that services could be individualized routinely to meet the unique needs of children and families. Although Montana has policies to support tailored service delivery and is making efforts, including the use of flex funding, barriers such as limited access to culturally and developmentally appropriate services, delayed assessments, specialty provider shortages, and insufficient support for Native American and non-English-speaking families limit consistent statewide implementation.

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	Strength
Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength

Montana 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information collected indicated that the state has strong collaborations with its legal and judicial partners, foster parents, and public and private child- and family-serving agencies. Montana routinely meets with multiple groups comprising key internal and external system partners through a statewide advisory council and six regional advisory councils. While engagement of parents, youth, and Tribes is limited, the information gathered reflects meaningful and quality participation from those who do engage. Key external system partners are engaged in ongoing consultation in the development and implementation of goals, objectives, and measures for the provision of the CFSP and annual updates through the APSRs. Furthermore, ongoing consultation is supported by a defined feedback loop with these system partners.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided indicated that Montana coordinates services across internal divisions, such as Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Child Support Services, and coordinates with external programs like housing, education, workforce, and health programs. Coordination is supported by system interfaces and data-sharing agreements, allowing for seamless information exchange and service delivery.

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	Strength
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
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

Montana 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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided indicates Montana has licensing processes in place, guided by policy, to include a uniformed process using statewide standardized tools to ensure standards are applied equally. Foster and adoptive licensing is centralized, and the approval process includes multiple levels of file reviews before approval. Additionally, licensing of congregate care facilities is also centralized and includes a rigorous approval process guided by standardized tools and forms. Although limited in number, the state allows, tracks, and reviews non-safety-related licensing exceptions and waivers through multiple levels of oversight.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided indicated that Montana conducts fingerprint-based FBI checks, state and local criminal history reviews, Sexual and Violent Offender Registry checks, Motor Vehicle Division checks, and in-state/out-of-state and Tribal child abuse/neglect registry reviews for all foster and adoptive applicants and adult household members. Emergency placements use Purpose Code X9 national checks with required follow-up fingerprinting. These procedures are applied uniformly across the state, supported by mandated staff training, licensing compliance checklists used during licensure, and supervisory oversight. Background requirements are reassessed annually at renewal and if new concerns arise. Furthermore, the state has policy and case planning processes in place for assessing and addressing safety concerns for children in out-of-home placements.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information and data collected did not demonstrate that relevant data are available and utilized to inform recruitment efforts. Data limitations affect the state's ability to leverage pertinent demographic data to inform, adapt, and refine strategies to recruit families that reflect the race and ethnicity of children in foster care. However, information indicates that the state places a high value on and prioritizes family and fictive kin placements.

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.

- Montana received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.

- Data and information collected indicated that ICPC requests are not generally completed within the 60-day timeframe. However, Montana has a wide array of cross-jurisdictional resources that include Child Bridge, A Waiting Child, Wendy's Wonderful Kids, and a local inquiry system, utilized for children awaiting adoptive and permanent placements.

APPENDIX A

Summary of Montana 2025 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	82% Substantially Achieved
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	82% Strength

DA.TA 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	Worse Than National Performance	Lower	12.98	10.71–15.74	22A–22B, FY22–23
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.7%	Worse Than National Performance	Lower	13.6%	12.2%–15.2%	FY22–23

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	75% Substantially Achieved
Item 2: Services to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	87% Strength
Item 3: Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	75% 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	40% Substantially Achieved
Item 4: Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	85% Strength
Item 5: Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	69% Strength
Item 6: Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or another planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	60% 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%	Better Than National Performance	Higher	43.5 %	41.0%–46.0%	22A–24A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months	43.8%	Better Than National Performance	Higher	49.2 %	45.6%–52.7%	23B–24A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	37.3%	Worse Than National Performance	Higher	34.3 %	31.5%–37.1%	23B–24A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	5.6%	No Different Than National Performance	Lower	6.8%	5.5%–8.3%	22B–24A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.48	Better Than National Performance	Lower	4.12	3.82–4.45	23B–24A

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	88% Substantially Achieved
Item 7: Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 8: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 9: Preserving connections	Strength	95% Strength
Item 10: Relative placement	Strength	90% Strength
Item 11: Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	71% 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	75% Substantially Achieved
Item 12: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength
Sub-Item 12A: Needs assessment and services to children	Strength	91% Strength
Sub-Item 12B: Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength
Sub-Item 12C: Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Strength	92% Strength
Item 13: Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	84% Strength
Item 14: Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	75% 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.	In Substantial Conformity	100% Substantially Achieved
Item 16: Educational needs of the child	Strength	100% 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	75% Substantially Achieved
Item 17: Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	87% Strength
Item 18: Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	75% 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 and Stakeholder Interviews	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 and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

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

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

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Service Array and Resource Development	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	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	Strength
Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	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	Strength
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

APPENDIX B: PRACTICE PERFORMANCE REPORT
Montana CFSR (CB-Led) 2025

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 Montana 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.	82.14% (23 of 28)
(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.	67.86% (19 of 28)
(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.	44.44% (4 of 9)
Item 1 Strength Ratings	82.14% (23 of 28)

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.	21.43% (3 of 14)	81.25% (13 of 16)	53.33% (16 of 30)
(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.	64.29% (9 of 14)	Not Applicable	64.29% (9 of 14)
(Questions 2A and 2B) Agency did not make concerted efforts to provide services and the child was removed without providing appropriate services.	0% (0 of 14)	Not Applicable	0% (0 of 14)

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) Concerted efforts were not made to provide appropriate services to address safety/risk issues and the child(ren) remained in the home.	7.14% (1 of 14)	18.75% (3 of 16)	13.33% (4 of 30)
Item 2 Strength Ratings	92.86% (13 of 14)	81.25% (13 of 16)	86.67% (26 of 30)

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.	100% (40 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	98.46% (64 of 65)
(Question 3A1) There were no maltreatment allegations that were not substantiated despite evidence that would support substantiation.	97.5% (39 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	96.92% (63 of 65)
(Question 3A) The agency conducted an initial assessment that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	63.64% (7 of 11)	84.62% (11 of 13)	75% (18 of 24)
(Question 3B) The agency conducted ongoing assessments that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	75% (30 of 40)	80% (20 of 25)	76.92% (50 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.	60% (6 of 10)	100% (16 of 16)	84.62% (22 of 26)
(Question 3D) There were no safety concerns pertaining to children in the family home that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	92.31% (12 of 13)	100% (13 of 13)	96.15% (25 of 26)
(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.	100% (31 of 31)	Not Applicable	100% (31 of 31)
(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.	97.5% (39 of 40)	Not Applicable	97.5% (39 of 40)
Item 3 Strength Ratings	72.5% (29 of 40)	80% (20 of 25)	75.38% (49 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.	50% (6 of 12)	50% (6 of 12)
(Question 4C) The child's current or most recent placement setting is stable.	100% (40 of 40)	100% (40 of 40)
Item 4 Strength Ratings	85% (34 of 40)	85% (34 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% (39 of 39)	100% (39 of 39)
(Question 5B) Permanency goals in effect during the period under review were established in a timely manner.	89.74% (35 of 39)	89.74% (35 of 39)
(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.	82.05% (32 of 39)	82.05% (32 of 39)
(Question 5D) Child has been in foster care for at least 15 of the most recent 22 months.	56.41% (22 of 39)	56.41% (22 of 39)
(Questions 5E) Child meets other Adoption and Safe Families Act criteria for termination of parental rights (TPR).	5.88% (1 of 17)	5.88% (1 of 17)
(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.	86.36% (19 of 22)	86.36% (19 of 22)
Item 5 Strength Ratings	69.23% (27 of 39)	69.23% (27 of 39)

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.	83.33% (5 of 6)	83.33% (5 of 6)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve guardianship in a timely manner.	33.33% (1 of 3)	33.33% (1 of 3)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner.	40% (4 of 10)	40% (4 of 10)
(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.	100% (2 of 2)	100% (2 of 2)

Practice Description	Foster Care—Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types—Performance of Applicable Cases
(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.	63.16% (12 of 19)	63.16% (12 of 19)
Item 6 Strength Ratings	60% (24 of 40)	60% (24 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.	50% (12 of 24)	50% (12 of 24)
(Question 7B) When all siblings were not placed together, there was a valid reason for the child's separation from siblings in placement.	75% (9 of 12)	75% (9 of 12)
Item 7 Strength Ratings	87.5% (21 of 24)	87.5% (21 of 24)

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.	38.46% (10 of 26)	38.46% (10 of 26)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was once a week.	11.54% (3 of 26)	11.54% (3 of 26)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	11.54% (3 of 26)	11.54% (3 of 26)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	15.38% (4 of 26)	15.38% (4 of 26)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a month.	19.23% (5 of 26)	19.23% (5 of 26)
(Question 8A1) Child never had visits with mother.	3.85% (1 of 26)	3.85% (1 of 26)
(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.	92.31% (24 of 26)	92.31% (24 of 26)
(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.	92% (23 of 25)	92% (23 of 25)
(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.	92.31% (24 of 26)	92.31% (24 of 26)

Practice Description	Foster Care—Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types—Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was more than once a week.	42.86% (6 of 14)	42.86% (6 of 14)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was once a week.	28.57% (4 of 14)	28.57% (4 of 14)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	0% (0 of 14)	0% (0 of 14)
(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 14)	0% (0 of 14)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a month.	21.43% (3 of 14)	21.43% (3 of 14)
(Question 8B1) Child never had visits with father.	7.14% (1 of 14)	7.14% (1 of 14)
(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.	85.71% (12 of 14)	85.71% (12 of 14)
(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.	84.62% (11 of 13)	84.62% (11 of 13)
(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.	85.71% (12 of 14)	85.71% (12 of 14)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was more than once a week.	10% (1 of 10)	10% (1 of 10)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was once a week.	10% (1 of 10)	10% (1 of 10)
(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.	20% (2 of 10)	20% (2 of 10)
(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.	20% (2 of 10)	20% (2 of 10)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than once a month.	40% (4 of 10)	40% (4 of 10)
(Question 8E1) Child never had visits with siblings in foster care.	0% (0 of 10)	0% (0 of 10)
(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.	80% (8 of 10)	80% (8 of 10)
(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.	80% (8 of 10)	80% (8 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.	80% (8 of 10)	80% (8 of 10)
Item 8 Strength Ratings	87.5% (28 of 32)	87.5% (28 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).	95% (38 of 40)	95% (38 of 40)
Item 9 Strength Ratings	95% (38 of 40)	95% (38 of 40)

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.	40% (16 of 40)	40% (16 of 40)
(Question 10A2) The child's current or most recent placement with a relative was appropriate to the child's needs.	100% (16 of 16)	100% (16 of 16)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Identify** maternal relatives.	100% (3 of 3)	100% (3 of 3)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Locate** maternal relatives.	66.67% (2 of 3)	66.67% (2 of 3)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Inform** maternal relatives.	66.67% (2 of 3)	66.67% (2 of 3)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Evaluate** maternal relatives.	66.67% (2 of 3)	66.67% (2 of 3)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Identify** paternal relatives.	100% (3 of 3)	100% (3 of 3)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Locate** paternal relatives.	100% (3 of 3)	100% (3 of 3)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Inform** paternal relatives.	100% (3 of 3)	100% (3 of 3)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to **Evaluate** paternal relatives.	100% (3 of 3)	100% (3 of 3)
Item 10 Strength Ratings	90% (36 of 40)	90% (36 of 40)

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.	76.92% (20 of 26)	76.92% (20 of 26)

Practice Description	Foster Care—Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types—Performance of Applicable Cases
(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.	64.29% (9 of 14)	64.29% (9 of 14)
Item 11 Strength Ratings	71.43% (20 of 28)	71.43% (20 of 28)

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	72.5% (29 of 40)	80% (20 of 25)	75.38% (49 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.	92.5% (37 of 40)	92% (23 of 25)	92.31% (60 of 65)
(Question 12A2) Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's needs.	87.1% (27 of 31)	85.71% (12 of 14)	86.67% (39 of 45)
Sub-Item 12A Strength Ratings	90% (36 of 40)	92% (23 of 25)	90.77% (59 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	75.86% (22 of 29)	91.67% (22 of 24)	83.02% (44 of 53)
(Question 12B3) Appropriate services were provided to meet the mother's needs.	78.57% (22 of 28)	95.45% (21 of 22)	86% (43 of 50)
(Questions 12B1 and B3) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of mothers.	75.86% (22 of 29)	91.67% (22 of 24)	83.02% (44 of 53)
(Question 12B2) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the father's needs.	68.42% (13 of 19)	72.22% (13 of 18)	70.27% (26 of 37)

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.	76.47% (13 of 17)	75% (12 of 16)	75.76% (25 of 33)
(Questions 12B2 and 12B4) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of fathers.	68.42% (13 of 19)	72.22% (13 of 18)	70.27% (26 of 37)
Sub-Item 12B Strength Ratings	70.97% (22 of 31)	80% (20 of 25)	75% (42 of 56)

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.	94.74% (36 of 38)	94.74% (36 of 38)
(Question 12C2) The agency provided appropriate services to foster and pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care.	93.1% (27 of 29)	93.1% (27 of 29)
Sub-Item 12C Strength Ratings	92.11% (35 of 38)	92.11% (35 of 38)

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.	95.83% (23 of 24)	84.21% (16 of 19)	90.7% (39 of 43)
(Question 13B) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the mother in the case planning process.	82.14% (23 of 28)	91.67% (22 of 24)	86.54% (45 of 52)
(Question 13C) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the father in the case planning process.	77.78% (14 of 18)	77.78% (14 of 18)	77.78% (28 of 36)
Item 13 Strength Ratings	84.21% (32 of 38)	84% (21 of 25)	84.13% (53 of 63)

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.	2.5% (1 of 40)	12% (3 of 25)	6.15% (4 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was once a week.	5% (2 of 40)	20% (5 of 25)	10.77% (7 of 65)

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 less than once a week but at least twice a month.	12.5% (5 of 40)	28% (7 of 25)	18.46% (12 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.	75% (30 of 40)	36% (9 of 25)	60% (39 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a month.	5% (2 of 40)	4% (1 of 25)	4.62% (3 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.	92.5% (37 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	93.85% (61 of 65)
(Question 14B) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the child(ren) was sufficient.	92.5% (37 of 40)	84% (21 of 25)	89.23% (58 of 65)
Item 14 Strength Ratings	90% (36 of 40)	84% (21 of 25)	87.69% (57 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.	6.9% (2 of 29)	0% (0 of 24)	3.77% (2 of 53)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was once a week.	10.34% (3 of 29)	33.33% (8 of 24)	20.75% (11 of 53)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	13.79% (4 of 29)	16.67% (4 of 24)	15.09% (8 of 53)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	31.03% (9 of 29)	37.5% (9 of 24)	33.96% (18 of 53)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a month.	31.03% (9 of 29)	12.5% (3 of 24)	22.64% (12 of 53)
(Question 15A1) Caseworker never had visits with mother.	6.9% (2 of 29)	0% (0 of 24)	3.77% (2 of 53)
(Question 15A2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	79.31% (23 of 29)	87.5% (21 of 24)	83.02% (44 of 53)

Practice Description	Foster Care—Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services—Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types—Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15C) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	77.78% (21 of 27)	87.5% (21 of 24)	82.35% (42 of 51)
(Questions 15A2 and 15C) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the mother were sufficient.	72.41% (21 of 29)	83.33% (20 of 24)	77.36% (41 of 53)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was more than once a week.	5.56% (1 of 18)	0% (0 of 18)	2.78% (1 of 36)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was once a week.	5.56% (1 of 18)	27.78% (5 of 18)	16.67% (6 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.	11.11% (2 of 18)	5.56% (1 of 18)	8.33% (3 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.	38.89% (7 of 18)	50% (9 of 18)	44.44% (16 of 36)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a month.	27.78% (5 of 18)	11.11% (2 of 18)	19.44% (7 of 36)
(Question 15B1) Caseworker never had visits with father.	11.11% (2 of 18)	5.56% (1 of 18)	8.33% (3 of 36)
(Question 15B2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	72.22% (13 of 18)	88.89% (16 of 18)	80.56% (29 of 36)
(Question 15D) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	75% (12 of 16)	82.35% (14 of 17)	78.79% (26 of 33)
(Question 15B2 and 15D) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the father were sufficient.	61.11% (11 of 18)	77.78% (14 of 18)	69.44% (25 of 36)
Item 15 Strength Ratings	70.97% (22 of 31)	80% (20 of 25)	75% (42 of 56)

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.	100% (32 of 32)	100% (4 of 4)	100% (36 of 36)
(Question 16B) The agency made concerted efforts to address the children's educational needs through appropriate services.	100% (17 of 17)	100% (4 of 4)	100% (21 of 21)

Practice Description	Foster Care—Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services—Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types—Performance of Applicable Cases
Item 16 Strength Ratings	100% (32 of 32)	100% (4 of 4)	100% (36 of 36)

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.	92.5% (37 of 40)	100% (7 of 7)	93.62% (44 of 47)
(Question 17B1) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the physical health issues of the target child in foster care.	100% (15 of 15)	Not Applicable	100% (15 of 15)
(Question 17B2) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified physical health needs.	86.49% (32 of 37)	100% (5 of 5)	88.1% (37 of 42)
(Question 17A2) The agency accurately assessed the children's dental health care needs.	94.59% (35 of 37)	100% (1 of 1)	94.74% (36 of 38)
(Question 17B3) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified dental health needs.	90.91% (30 of 33)	100% (1 of 1)	91.18% (31 of 34)
Item 17 Strength Ratings	85% (34 of 40)	100% (7 of 7)	87.23% (41 of 47)

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.	91.3% (21 of 23)	100% (9 of 9)	93.75% (30 of 32)
(Question 18B) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the mental/behavioral health issues of the target child in foster care.	90.91% (10 of 11)	Not Applicable	90.91% (10 of 11)
(Question 18C) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified mental/behavioral health needs.	72.73% (16 of 22)	75% (6 of 8)	73.33% (22 of 30)
Item 18 Strength Ratings	73.91% (17 of 23)	77.78% (7 of 9)	75% (24 of 32)