



CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS

South Dakota FINAL REPORT

2025



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

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Final Report: South Dakota Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

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

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) and submitted to the CB on January 17, 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 Brookings, Pierre, and Sioux Falls in South Dakota during March 17–21, 2025, examining case practices occurring during March 2024 through March 2025.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
 - Attorneys for the agency
 - Attorneys for the children and parents
 - Court Appointed Special Advocates directors
 - Court Improvement Program director
 - DSS Central Office leadership, program administrators/specialists, and regional managers
 - DSS supervisors and caseworkers
 - Foster and adoptive parents and relative caregivers
 - Foster and adoptive parent licensing staff
 - Other public agency leadership
 - Parents
 - Service providers
 - State and Tribal judges
 - Tribal child welfare caseworkers/supervisors and Tribal directors

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

South Dakota 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 Placement stability
Permanency Outcome 2	Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11	N/A

Outcome	Case Review Item(s)	Statewide Data Indicators
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

South Dakota was found in substantial conformity with 2 of the 7 outcomes:

- Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect
- Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs

The following 5 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Statewide Information System
- Quality Assurance System
- Staff and Provider Training
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

CB Comments on State Performance

In its Round 3 CFSR in March 2016, South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with any of the 7 outcomes and was in substantial conformity with 6 of the 7 systemic factors, all but the Case Review System. South Dakota then entered a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas of nonconformity and successfully completed its PIP implementation.

In Round 4, South Dakota had a CB-Led Review, which was held during the week of March 17, 2025. The state was found to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect, and Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs. Further, the state was found to be in substantial conformity with 5 of the 7 systemic factors: Statewide Information System, Quality Assurance System, Staff and Provider Training, Agency Responsiveness to the Community, and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

South Dakota was not in substantial conformity with two systemic factors: Case Review System and Service Array and Resource Development. For the Case Review System systemic factor, which comprises 5 items, the state received an Area Needing Improvement for Item 20: Written Case Plan and Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights. For the Written Case Plan and Termination of Parental Rights systemic factors, the state also received Area Needing Improvement ratings during Rounds 1, 2, and 3, indicating that these are longstanding systemic concerns, similar to other states. While the state received an Area Needing Improvement rating for the Periodic Reviews and Permanency Hearings items during Round 3, the state provided information indicating that systemic improvements were made, resulting in both items being rated as a Strength in Round 4.

The Round 4 CFSR case review results identified several strategies implemented during South Dakota's Round 3 PIP that were associated with improved ratings and may be valuable to build upon in Round 4. During South Dakota's Round 3 PIP, the state implemented several strategies that positively affected performance on Safety Outcome 2, such as the Safety Plan Determination and Conditions for Return practice standards, which were implemented statewide to strengthen the assessment and management of child safety. Initial consultation and coaching, regional assessments, action planning, and fidelity reviews also contributed to improved performance.

For Safety Outcome 1, 97% of cases were rated as substantially achieved. The state performed highest on Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment, with 97% of the cases rated as a Strength. For Safety Outcome 2, 78% of cases were rated as substantially achieved. Item 3: Risk and Safety Assessment and Management performed relatively high, with 80% of the cases rated as a Strength. Item 2: Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care was

rated the lowest for the Safety 1 and 2 outcomes, at 78%. Thorough safety assessments are foundational to effective safety planning and essential when targeting services to meet individualized safety needs and ensuring that safety concerns are properly addressed. There is a need to strengthen safety and risk practices in terms of thoroughness and accuracy of safety and risk assessments, monitoring and revising safety plans as needed, and linking appropriate services to address identified needs. Case review findings suggest there may be value in further examining how cases involving physical abuse and domestic violence are handled, including how domestic violence is defined, addressed, and supported through services and safety planning. South Dakota generally performs statistically no different than national performance for both safety statewide data indicators: maltreatment in care and recurrence of maltreatment. There are variations in performance by age, race/ethnicity, and locality that are described later in this report.

South Dakota's lowest-performing outcome was Permanency Outcome 1. This outcome evaluates whether children in foster care experience permanency and stability in their living situations. When the August 2024 profile was issued, the state performed statistically worse than national performance for Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care; however, for the most recent reporting period, performance improved to statistically no different than national performance as shown in the February 2025 profile. South Dakota consistently performed statistically no different than national performance on the two other Permanency in 12 months statewide data indicators. Strength ratings on case review items assessed for this outcome—Items 4, 5, and 6—were 83%, 74%, and 65%, respectively; however, there was a low percentage of cases rated as substantially achieved at the outcome level, which considers performance on all three items. Forty-five percent of the 40 foster care cases were rated as substantially achieved. Stability of Foster Care Placement, Item 4, was rated as a Strength in 83% of the 40 foster care cases, with most children having 1 stable placement during the review period, which is positive. A subset of cases did have multiple moves during the PUR, and in some instances, those moves were during episodes of less than a year.

South Dakota's RSP for placement stability is statistically worse than national performance. Placement stability for children entering foster care continues to be a challenge for the state, particularly for children entering care at ages 11 and older and American Indian children. Minnehaha County (Sioux Falls) and Pennington County (Rapid City) account for the greatest number of days children spend in foster care within their entry year. While Minnehaha County consistently performs lower than the state overall (lower performance is desirable on this item), Pennington County consistently has higher rates than the rest of the state.¹

South Dakota's CFSR case review data is consistent with research² that shows children placed with relatives tend to experience greater placement stability. In cases where the child's only placement was with a relative, 92%, or 12 of the 13 cases, were rated as a Strength for Item 4: Stability of Foster Care Placement. Eight of the cases were from the Sioux Falls site, which may indicate strong practices associated with relative placements that contributed to their stronger performance on placement stability. Compared with other states, the state's data show that South Dakota places a lower percentage of children in out-of-home care with relatives statewide. Nationally, 38% of children were placed with relatives or kin on the last day of fiscal year (FY) 2023, whereas in South Dakota, 29% of children were placed with relatives or kin.³ Additional factors that contributed to placement instability included finding and maintaining placements for children with exceptional needs, including high medical, behavioral, or developmental needs. Additionally, stakeholder interviews identified gaps in the availability of foster, adoptive, and provider placements, including children who need a higher level of care but do not meet criteria for residential placement. South Dakota has a relatively high usage of residential care.

¹ 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.

² Osborne, J., Hindt, L. A., Lutz, N., Hodgkinson, N., & Leon, S. C. (2021). Placement stability among children in kinship and non-kinship foster placements across multiple placements. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 126, 106000.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2021.106000>

³ Based on state data submitted through the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System. See state and national summary reports at https://tableau-public.acf.gov/views/afcars_dashboard_main_page/mainpage?%3Aembed=y&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y

South Dakota's performance on reentry to foster care is worse than national performance. American Indian children tend to experience a higher percentage of reentry into care. Minnehaha (Sioux Falls) and Dewey Counties (which include a large proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native children) have a disproportionate percentage of children reentering foster care. The CB encourages the state to continue analyzing data evidence for this indicator to identify factors affecting performance as this indicator will need to be addressed in the PIP.

South Dakota's case review results showed many positive practices in the achievement of timely and appropriate permanency. For most cases reviewed, permanency goals (and concurrent goals, if applicable) were established timely, were appropriate to the child's needs, and matched the case circumstances with 28 of the applicable 38 cases rated as a Strength (74%) in Item 5: Permanency Goal for Child. In several cases, goals were regularly assessed and promptly changed from reunification to the most appropriate goal of guardianship or adoption. Also, in more than half of the cases, effective concurrent planning was implemented. The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve timely permanency in 26 of the 40 foster care cases (65%), as assessed in Item 6. Generally, concerted efforts were made toward achieving both permanency goals. Many cases had timely review and permanency hearings, and, in several cases, court hearings occurred more frequently. The frequency of hearings supported timely permanency. In half of the guardianship and adoption cases, relatives or non-relatives were promptly identified and provided the support needed so guardianship or adoption could be finalized.

Additionally, in several cases, termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions were filed timely, promptly heard, and ordered by the court. However, these positive practices were not present across all cases reviewed. In some cases, there were minimal efforts to identify pre-adoptive parents or potential guardians. Also, reunification often remained a concurrent goal until termination of parental rights (TPR) occurred or guardianship was achieved, and concerted efforts were not consistently made toward both goals. In several instances, timely requests to file TPR petitions in both state and Tribal courts were made but were denied multiple times. Continued collaboration between DSS and legal and judicial professionals is needed to identify and address barriers to timely and appropriate permanency for children and families.

For Permanency Outcome 2, 83% of the cases were rated as substantially achieved. Item 7: Placement With Siblings was rated as a Strength in 93% of the 29 cases reviewed. Item 8: Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care was rated as a Strength in 81% of the 31 cases reviewed. Item 9: Preserving Connections was rated as a Strength in 89% of the 38 cases reviewed. Item 10: Relative Placement was rated as a Strength in 84% of the 37 cases reviewed. Lowest performing in this outcome was Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents, which was rated as a Strength in 73% of the foster care cases reviewed. Overall, for Permanency Outcome 2, the state is performing well in the continuity of family relationships and the preservation of connections for children, but enhancing the relationship of the child in care with parents and focusing on placements with relatives will improve performance on this outcome.

For Well-Being Outcome 1, 63% of the cases were rated as substantially achieved. This outcome comprises needs and services to children, parents, and foster parents; child and family involvement in case planning; and caseworker visits to children and parents. Thinking through needs and services, it is notable that according to the U.S. Census Bureau, South Dakota's child poverty rate was 16% in 2023 with county-level poverty rates ranging from 2% to 66%.⁴ Some of the counties in South Dakota are among those with the highest poverty rates in the nation. Oglala Lakota, Todd, and Mellette Counties have poverty rates over 50%. American Indian reservations include land in all three of these counties. Ten counties in South Dakota, primarily counties with American Indian reservations, have child poverty rates of 40% or more.⁵ Item 12B: Needs and Services to Parents was rated as a Strength in 64% of the 58 cases reviewed, while Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents was rated a Strength in 69% of the 58 cases reviewed. Research suggests that parent engagement may contribute to improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes, including reduced removals and

⁴ Benson, C. (2023, December 7). *More than one-third of U.S. counties had declining poverty rates in 2018–2022*. U.S. Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/12/poverty-rates-by-county.html#:~:text=Three%20counties%20in%20South%20Dakota,in%20the%20low%20poverty%20category>

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Child poverty rate: 2017–2021* [Map]. <https://dakotafreepress.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Screen-Shot-2022-12-21-at-5.15.43-AM.png>

increased family reunification. Case review findings underscore the importance of early and sustained engagement with parents and extended family. Moreover, the early involvement and engagement of parents, as well as kin, extended family, and fictive kin, can expand placement and permanency options for the child. Finally, when parents are included and able to participate in the decision-making process, they tend to be more likely to commit to working toward case goals, and services are more likely to be appropriately targeted to meet the needs of the family.

In Round 4, South Dakota demonstrated strong performance in assessing and meeting the educational needs of children. Both the assessment and the provision of appropriate services to meet children's educational needs was rated highly. Item 16: Educational Needs of the Child was rated as a Strength in 100% of the 35 cases reviewed. Case review results showed that the state collaborated with school personnel to help identify and meet children's educational needs and monitored children's school performance. Well-Being Outcome 2 will not need to be addressed in the state's PIP.

For Well-Being Outcome 3, 73% of cases were rated as Substantially Achieved. This outcome includes the physical and dental health of the child and mental/behavioral health, all including medication management. Strength ratings for South Dakota for assessing and addressing the physical health needs of children was 88% and for mental and behavioral health was 76%.

Stakeholders discussed significant gaps in services in the following areas: mental health services, especially in rural parts of the state; available foster homes (with a substantial lack of Native American homes); and transportation. There were also gaps in individualization of services as services tended not to be tailored to individual needs, especially for the disproportionate percentage of Native American children and families involved with the state's child welfare system.

South Dakota's quality assurance system and processes will continue to have an important role in collecting and analyzing data needed to examine contributing factors and underlying causes of practice and systemic concerns, and to identify strengths to build upon in making improvements.

Strengthening the state's relationship with the 9 federally recognized Tribes, whose children and families are central to the population served, will be critical. Addressing the concerns highlighted in this report requires an intentional effort to engage the Tribes, alongside legal and judicial partners, parents, youth, and other community stakeholders. The state and children and families served will benefit from ensuring partners are meaningfully included in the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) development and implementation process, fostering trust and collaboration. Additionally, integrating the voices of individuals with lived experience in the child welfare system may offer valuable insights that can help inform systemic changes that are more relevant, authentic, and impactful across the state.

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 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.

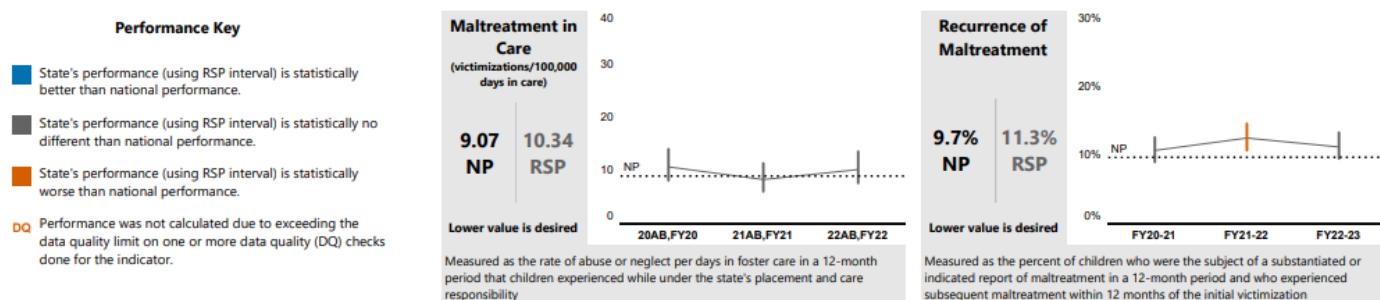
The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on two statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.

- The state's policy provides for a two-tiered response to reports of alleged child maltreatment. Reports with allegations of Present Danger require that DSS initiate the Initial Family Assessment by having face-to-face contact with the identified child(ren) as soon as possible and within the same calendar day of the report. Reports with allegations of Impending Danger require contact or a good-faith attempt to contact the identified child(ren) as soon as possible but no later than 3 calendar days from the day of 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



South Dakota was found to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1:

- The state's performance on the "maltreatment in foster care" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "recurrence of maltreatment" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.

- More 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	Inclusion in PIP?
Maltreatment in Foster Care	No Different	No Different	No
Recurrence of Maltreatment in 12 months	No Different	No Different	No

All results reported here are based on the February 2025 data profile and supplementary context data. These are the same values and reporting periods included in the August 2024 data profile and depicted in Figure 1 as performance on the safety indicators is updated annually with the August profile.

South Dakota consistently performs statistically no different than national performance on the statewide data indicator for maltreatment in care. The number of maltreatment victimizations in foster care is relatively small in South Dakota—fewer than 55 victimizations per year for the last 4 reporting years.

- Over the last 3 reporting years, the number of victimizations and maltreatment-in-care rates increased for children at birth to 5 years while it decreased for children in other age groups. For the most recent reporting year, the greatest number of victimizations and the highest rate of maltreatment per 100,000 days in foster care was for children aged 1 to 5. Children in this age group comprised 36% of South Dakota's total days in foster care whereas they accounted for 59% of the state's victimizations in care. Nationally, the greatest number of victimizations and highest rates of maltreatment in care are for children aged 11 to 16 years.
- American Indian/Alaska Native children in South Dakota account for the greatest number of days spent in foster care and the greatest number of victimizations in care.
- Most of South Dakota's victimizations in care occur in 4 counties:⁶ Minnehaha, Brookings, Pennington, and Todd. Brookings and Todd Counties have substantially fewer days in care but a similar number of victimizations as Pennington County. Differences and fluctuations in the rate of maltreatment across localities is largely attributed to the relatively small number of maltreatment-in-care victimizations.

South Dakota performed statistically no different than national performance on the statewide data indicator for recurrence of maltreatment in the most recent reporting year (FY 2022–FY 2023), which was an improvement from the preceding year when performance was statistically worse than national performance. Fluctuations across sub-groups is largely attributed to the relatively small number of children experiencing recurrence when the data is disaggregated; however, there are a few notable observations:

- Similar to the nation, children aged 1 to 5 years consistently account for the greatest number of victimizations. Children in this age group also tend to experience a higher percentage of recurrence and are overrepresented in the number of recurring victims, accounting for 35% of initial victims but 48% of recurring victims. Nationally, those figures are 30% and 33%, respectively.

⁶ See note 1 for definition of “county.”

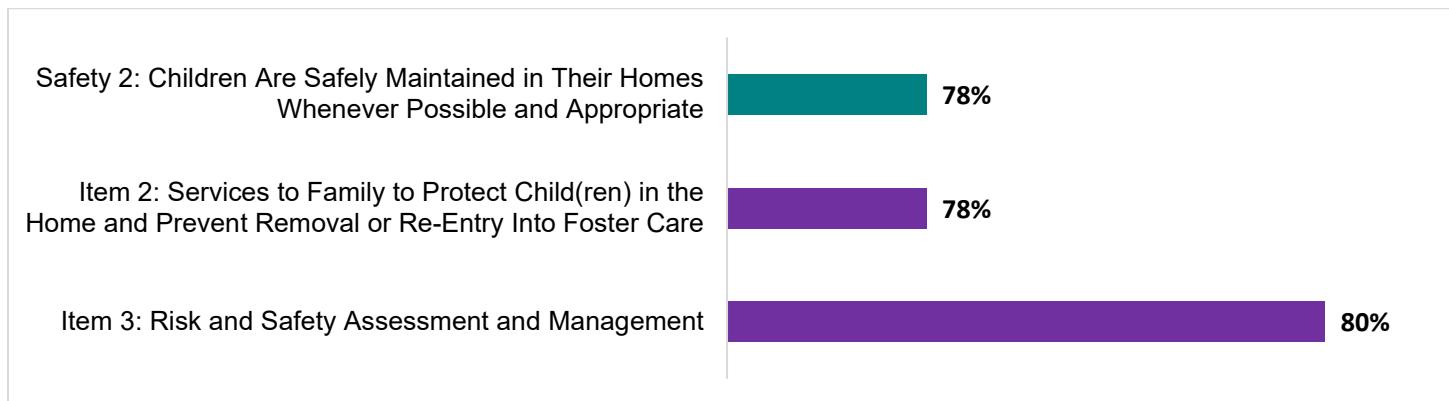
- American Indian/Alaska Native children consistently account for the greatest number of initial and subsequent maltreatment victims. In the most recent reporting year, they were overrepresented in the number of victims experiencing recurrence of abuse and/or neglect within 12 months, comprising 42% of initial victims but 51% of recurring victims.
- Minnehaha, Pennington, and Brown Counties have the greatest number of initial and recurring victims, accounting for approximately 75% of the state total.⁷ The percentage of children experiencing recurrence of maltreatment in Minnehaha County decreased from 10% to 7% over the last 3 reporting years. Pennington and Brown Counties had a higher percentage of recurrence than the state overall—12% and 13%, respectively.

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



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

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

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

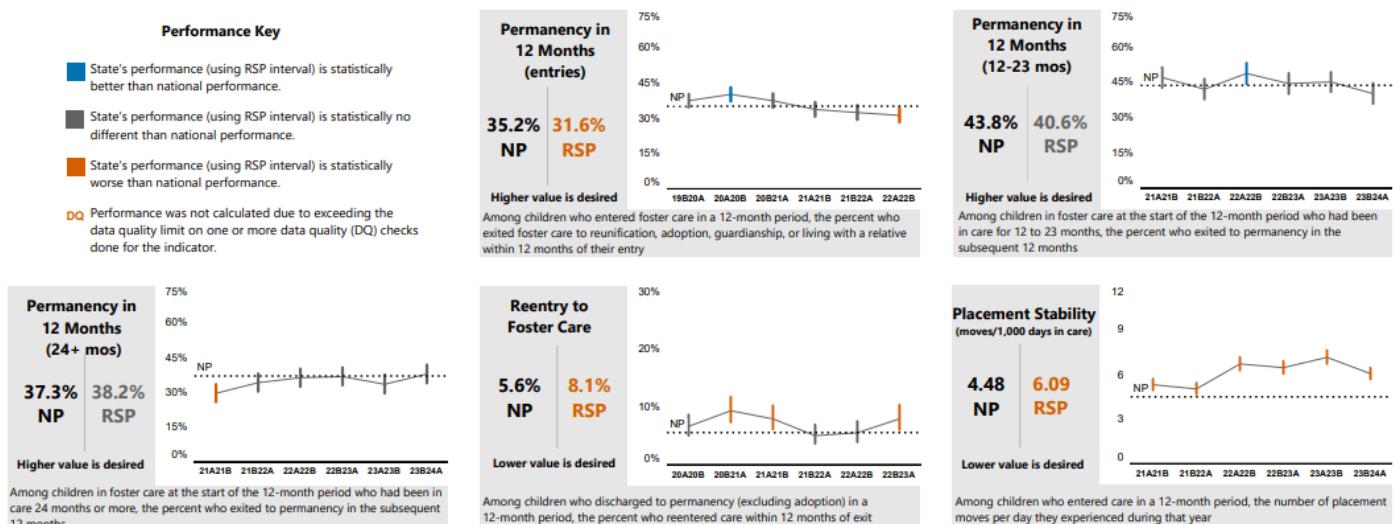
The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's RSP on 5 statewide data indicators and the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6.

Statewide Data Indicators

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

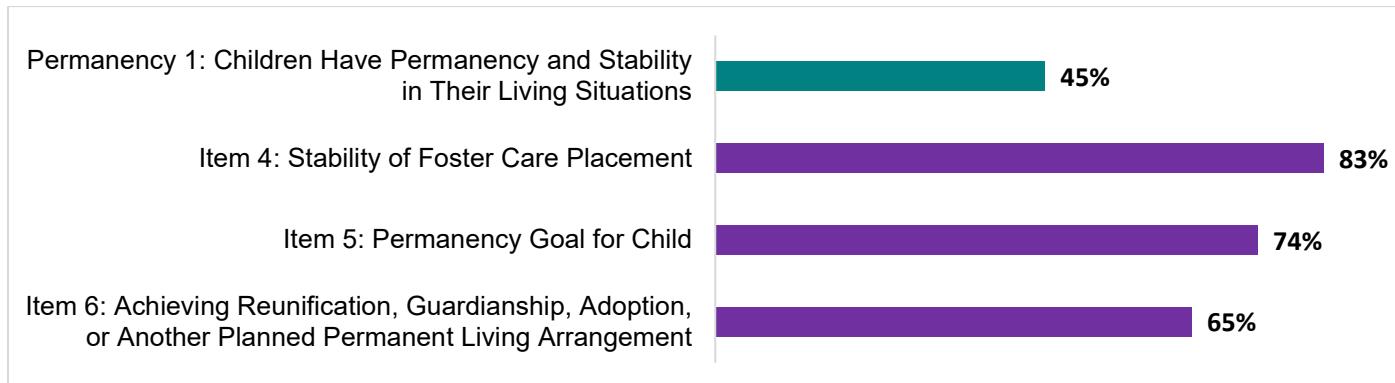
⁷ County performance reflects the local agency where the report of child maltreatment was assigned for a Child Protection Services response, which may or may not be the child's county of residence.

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



Case Review

Figure 5. Performance on Permanency Outcome 1 and Supporting Items



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

- The state's performance on the "permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care" data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more" data indicator was statistically no different than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "reentry to foster care in 12 months" data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- The state's performance on the "placement stability" data indicator was statistically worse than national performance.
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were rated as 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	Inclusion in PIP?
Permanency in 12 months for children entering care	Worse	No Different	No
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months	No Different	No Different	No
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	No Different	No Different	No
Reentry to foster care in 12 months	Worse	Worse	Yes
Placement stability	Worse	Worse	Yes

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

South Dakota performed statistically no different than national performance on the statewide data indicator for permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care in the most recent reporting year for this indicator, which was an improvement from the preceding year when performance was statistically worse than national performance.

- As with the nation, children removed as infants in South Dakota enter foster care at much higher rates than other age groups and exit to permanency within 12 months of entry at the lowest percentage relative to children in other age groups.⁸ South Dakota's foster care entry rate for infants (14.6 per 1,000 children in the population) is 3 times higher than the state's entry rate for all age groups (4.7 per 1,000 child population) and nearly 2 times higher than the national entry rate for infants (8.7 per 1,000 child population). Exits to permanency within 12 months for this age group decreased from 28% to 19% over the last 3 reporting years.
- American Indian/Alaska Native children are overrepresented in the South Dakota foster care population. They comprise about 11% of the general child population but 47% of the foster care entries. When we consider all American Indian children—including single, mixed-race, and Hispanic ethnicity—

⁸ There was an exception for youth over 17 years, who experienced an unusually low percentage of exits in the previous reporting year (21B22A).

they account for approximately 68% of the foster care entries in South Dakota.⁹ The foster care entry rate for American Indian/Alaska Native children (single race) in South Dakota was 19.5 per 1,000 child population for FY 2024. That rate is 4 times higher than the state's entry rate of 4.7 per 1,000 children in the population and more than 8 times higher than the overall national foster care entry rate of 2.3 per 1,000.

- 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 21% to 33%. Comparatively, the state's overall performance ranged from 33% to 40% over the last 3 reporting years.
- There is substantial variation by county for performance on this indicator.¹⁰ Minnehaha and Pennington Counties had a similar number of children enter foster care in the most recent reporting year. However, over the last 3 reporting years, the number of children entering care in Minnehaha County decreased 20%, and between 46% and 49% of children exited to permanency within 12 months of entry. In Pennington County, the number of children entering care increased 40%, and of those children, between 17% and 27% exited to permanency within 12 months.
- The number of children entering foster care in Hughes County decreased over 50%, from 120 to 55 children in the last 3 reporting years, and exits to permanency within 12 months of entry increased from 13% to 46%.

South Dakota performs statistically no different than national performance for permanency in 12 months for children in care 12–23 months and 24 months or more.

- As with the nation, children in care 1 year or more aged 11 to 16 consistently experience the lowest percentage of exits to permanency within 12 months, with the exception of the small number of youth aged 17.
- American Indian/Alaska Native children in care comprise the majority of children in care in South Dakota, and that proportion increases with longer lengths of stay. American Indian/Alaska Native (single race) children accounted for 51% of the state's foster care population for children in care less than 1 year, 58% of children in care 1 to 2 years, and 67% of the children in care 2 years or more.
- There is substantial variation by county in the percentage of children who exit foster care to permanency.¹¹ Among the top 5 counties with the most children in care 1 year or more, Minnehaha has the highest percentage of children timely exiting to permanency, with performance substantially increasing over the last 3 reporting years—from 45% to 60% for children in care 12–23 months, and from 14% to 51% for children in care 24 months or more. Todd County (includes a large proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native children) has the greatest need for improvement, with performance decreasing for those same years.
- Hughes County (includes a large proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native children) had a dramatic decrease in the number of children in care 1 year or more over the past 3 reporting years. In FY 2022, Hughes County had the greatest number of children in the state in care 1 year or more. Along with the decrease of children in care, there also was a substantial decrease in the overall percentage of children exiting to permanency within 12 months.

⁹ Percentages are based on disaggregated data for children identified as two or more races and Hispanic ethnicity for FY 2023.

¹⁰ See note 1 for definition of “county.”

¹¹ See note 1 for definition of “county.”

South Dakota's performance on reentry to foster care is statistically worse than national performance. Performance on this indicator has fluctuated over the last 6 reporting periods with worsening performance during the last 2 reporting periods.

- The number of children exiting foster care in South Dakota decreased 17% in the last 3 reporting years, while the number of children who reenter care fluctuated.
- Differences and fluctuations by age of the child at the time of exit is largely attributed to the relatively small number of children reentering foster care—52 children in the most recent reporting year.
- American Indian/Alaska Native children are generally more likely to experience reentry to foster care.
- Minnehaha County consistently has the largest number of children exiting care and a disproportionate number/percentage of children reentering care.¹² For the most recent reporting year, the county comprised 37% of all children exiting to permanency in the state but 44% of reentries. Dewey County (which includes a large proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native children) also had a disproportionate number/percentage of children reentering care in the most recent reporting year.

South Dakota's placement stability rate is consistently statistically worse than national performance. Performance fluctuated over the past 6 reporting periods but was worse in the most recent reporting period than it was in the prior 6 reporting periods.

- 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.
- American Indian/Alaska Native children experience higher rates of placement moves than the state overall. The difference is not substantial but is consistent across reporting years.
- Minnehaha and Pennington Counties account for about 60% of the total number of days children were in foster care during their first 12 months of entry—approximately 30% each.¹³ Minnehaha County consistently has a lower rate of placement moves than the state at 6.7 moves per 1,000 days in care, which increased 20% in the most recent reporting year, from 5.30 to 6.7. Pennington County consistently has a higher rate than the state, ranging between 8.11 and 8.55 moves per 1,000 days during the last 3 reporting years. Among the top 10 counties with the greatest number of days children were in foster care during their first 12 months of entry, Lawrence, Yankton, Codington, Todd, Hughes, and Minnehaha Counties had the lowest rates of placement moves per 1,000 days in care, while Dewey, Brown, Pennington, and Walworth Counties had the highest rates of placement moves per 1,000 days in care.

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

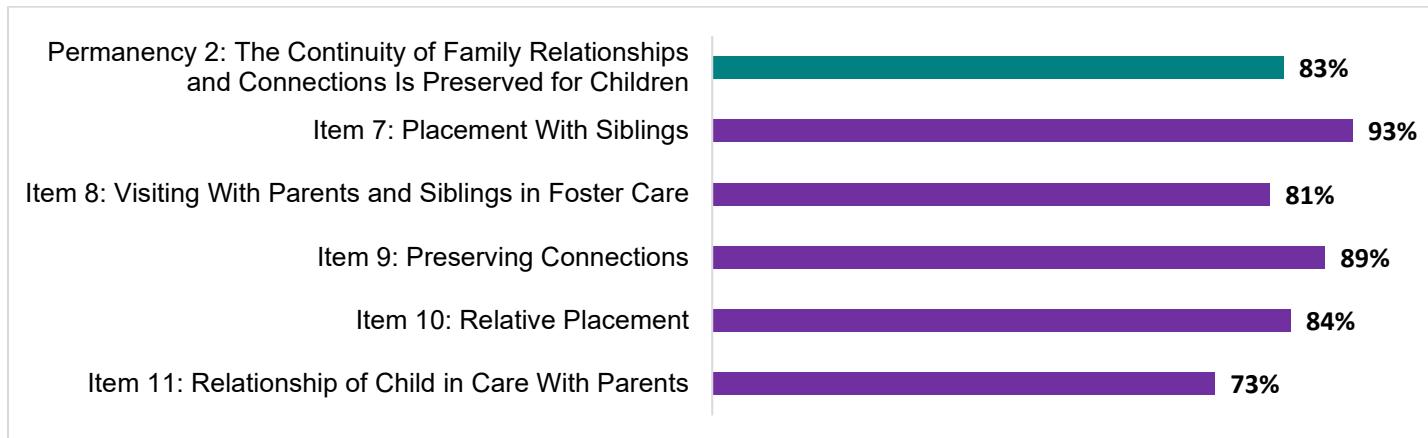
The CB determines whether a state is in substantial conformity based on the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

¹² See note 1 for definition of “county.”

¹³ See note 1 for definition of “county.”

Case Review

Figure 6. Performance on Permanency Outcome 2 and Supporting Items



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

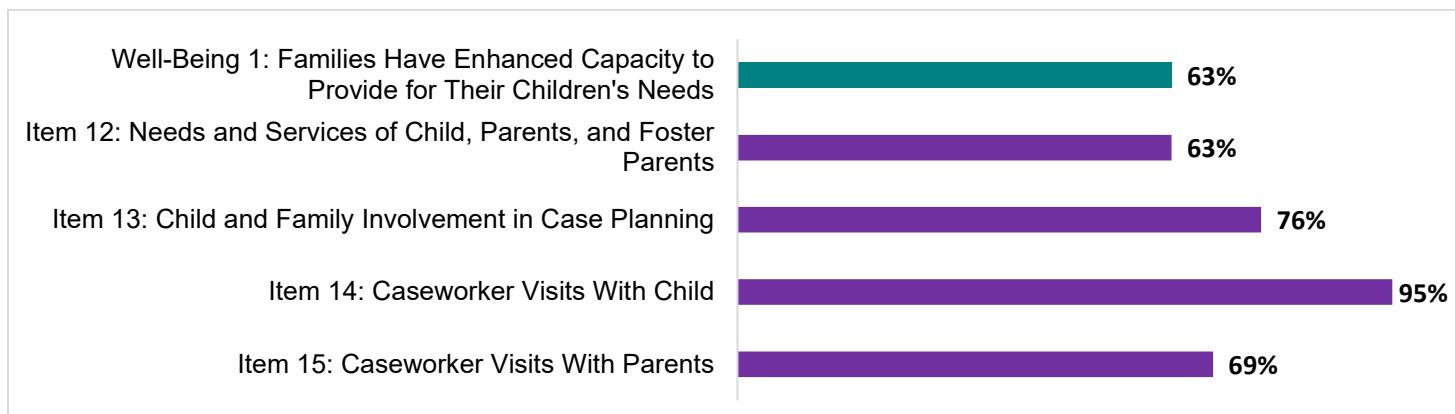
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- More than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 7.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 8.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 9.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated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

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

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

Case Review

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



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

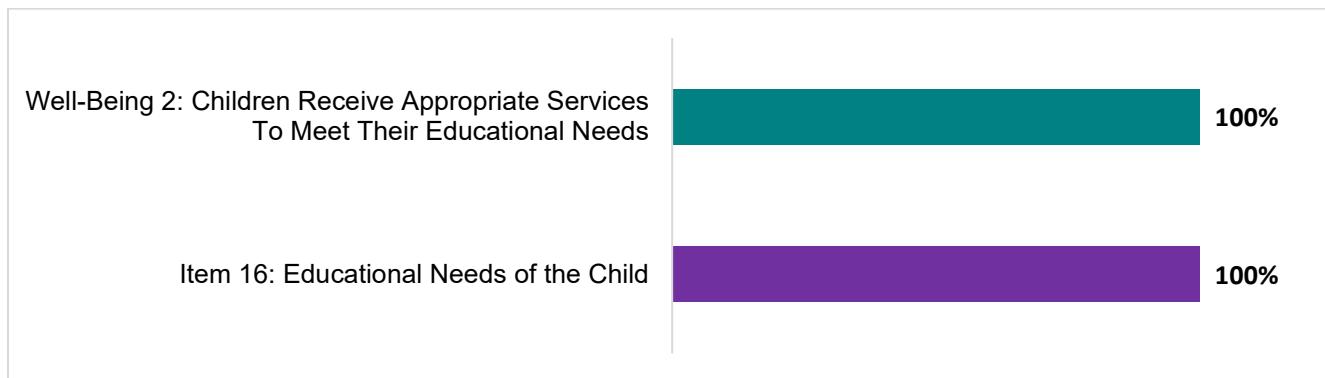
- Less than 95% of the cases reviewed were substantially achieved.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 12.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12A.
 - Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12B.
 - More than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Sub-Item 12C.
- Less than 90% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 13.
- More 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



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

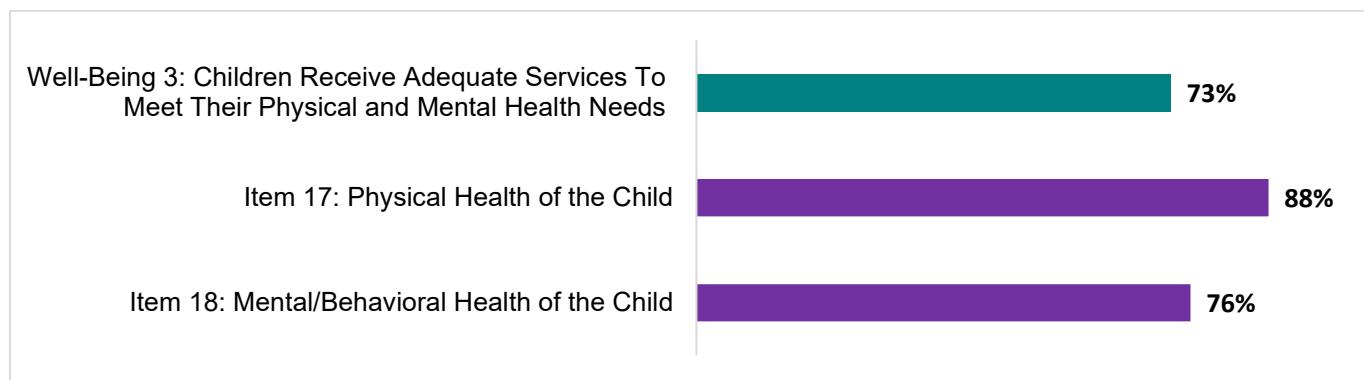
- More than 95% of the cases were rated as a Strength on Item 16.

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



South Dakota 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	Strength

South Dakota was found 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 19 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The state provided information and data demonstrating that the Family and Child Information System (FACIS) identifies the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of children in foster care and information is generally entered 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	Strength
Item 22: Permanency Hearings	Strength
Item 23: Termination of Parental Rights	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24: Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Strength

South Dakota 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The data and information provided did not show that case plans are routinely developed jointly with parents. While South Dakota provided data showing that most children in foster care have written case plans, there was a lack of evidence demonstrating that case plans are routinely developed jointly with parents.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information demonstrated that initial and subsequent periodic reviews (including administrative reviews of the Permanency Planning Review Team [PPRT]) 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information provided demonstrated 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- The data and information provided did not demonstrate that termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions were filed in accordance with federal timeframes. The agency's case management system can identify children who have been in care for 15 of the most recent 22 months and children who meet other Adoption and Safe Families Act requirements, and track exceptions to filing; however, there is no evidence to support that TPR petitions are routinely filed timely.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 24 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information gathered demonstrated that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers are provided notice that includes the right to be heard. South Dakota does have processes in place for notifying foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of periodic reviews and permanency hearings, including but not limited to mailing a letter before periodic reviews and permanency hearings. We recommend that the same language regarding the right to be heard also be included in notices for administrative reviews.

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

South Dakota 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Data and information provided demonstrated that there are ongoing QA processes in place to identify strengths and needs of the service delivery system that include data analysis and research. The state has policy, CQI plans, and QA infrastructure, consisting of three tiers, including a Core Team, Supervisor Advisory Groups, and Regional CQI Teams, to gather and examine whether the service delivery system is meeting the needs of children and families within the state. On an ongoing basis, the state uses relevant reports, and data are shared routinely with staff to guide quality improvement efforts and evaluate program improvement measures. The state's Quality Assurance System operates in all regions except those areas under the jurisdiction of an Indian Tribe that has a Tribal child welfare program and a current agreement with the state.

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	Strength
Item 28: Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength

South Dakota 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information gathered indicated that new worker training includes virtual and classroom learning, structured shadowing in the worker's regional office, and co-assignment to initial cases. Data demonstrated that trainees complete initial training within required timeframes. Additionally, there are multiple processes in place—including evaluations, fidelity reviews, competency tests, and feedback from regional leadership—to evaluate and ensure that initial training is effective and 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 27 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Information provided indicates that trainings related to practice and policy updates are required, with completion being tracked by supervisors. Additionally, supervisors must complete a series of trainings to provide guidance and support in their roles. Beyond mandatory trainings, opportunities for ongoing training are based on topics of interest. Training completion is monitored using a combination of manual and digital tracking methods. The effectiveness of ongoing training is evaluated through fidelity reviews conducted throughout the year as well as feedback collected from individual trainings, staff feedback surveys, and broader engagement surveys. This information informs updates and adjustments to training programs/curricula to better meet staff needs.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided demonstrated that foster and adoptive parents complete initial training requirements before licensure and in preparation for, or within 30 days of, annual re-licensure. Information provided also indicated that the state reviews and validates that staff of state-licensed facilities have completed initial and ongoing training requirements during the initial and annual licensing renewal processes. Licensing and accreditation staff continually evaluate the effectiveness of these ongoing trainings to ensure they provide current and prospective foster and adoptive parents and facility staff with the necessary skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties regarding foster and adoptive children.

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

South Dakota 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.

- South Dakota 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 in mental health and substance use treatment services, housing, and available foster homes. While urban areas offer a broader array of services, most rural communities have limited services and require families to travel significant distance for services. Despite transportation challenges for this frontier state, some DSS staff make extraordinary efforts to provide transportation to children and families to assist them in accessing services. Additional challenges within the service array include waitlists.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information and data gathered indicates that the individualized needs of the children and families are not routinely met. While stakeholders identified challenges related to individualized services for Native American children and families—including mental health, foster home availability, and transportation—the state reports ongoing efforts to address these issues. We recognize the complexity of meeting these needs in rural and Tribal areas and appreciate the state's commitment to continued improvement.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

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

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

South Dakota 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 31 based on information from the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided indicates that South Dakota experiences gaps in collaborating with parents, foster and adoptive parents, Tribes, judges, and attorneys. Although the state routinely meets with multiple groups comprising internal and external stakeholders, the data and information collected do not demonstrate that internal and external stakeholders are engaged in ongoing consultation in the development and implementation of the goals, objectives, and measures for the provisions of the CFSP and annual updates through the APSRs.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Information provided indicates that South Dakota facilitates coordination among its internal divisions, such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Child Care Services, Child Support Services, Behavioral Health, and Child Protection Services to provide integrated support for children and families. Monthly meetings include key leaders from various divisions to discuss initiatives, budgets, and service integration to ensure effective collaboration. Data are shared among divisions to implement programming and services. Additionally, there are interfaces among several divisions that create a seamless sharing of information and coordination of services.

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	Strength
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength

South Dakota was found 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 childcare institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Information and data provided indicates that South Dakota has licensing processes in place, guided by policy, to include quality assurance processes to ensure standards are applied equally. Licensing is overseen by the Office of Licensing and Accreditation. The state implements a uniform licensing process that includes the use of standardized documents. Additionally, the approval process includes multiple reviews of the file before approval as well as quality assurance processes. The state only allows for and tracks exceptions related to the number of children in the home. Tribal licensed homes follow their unique licensing standards and are reviewed by the state to ensure the Tribal licensed foster home meets the Tribe's licensing standards, which includes compliance with title IV-E eligibility requirements.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Information provided indicates that South Dakota performs both Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and state criminal background checks, including Central Registry and Sex Offender Registry screenings, and follows federal regulations for the FBI record checks. Data demonstrate that the state is in compliance with federal criminal background check requirements for licensed foster and adoptive parents. 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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 35 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.
- Information provided indicates that the state's recruitment of foster and adoptive parents is shaped by the demographic characteristics of children in foster care and licensed foster and adoptive parents. The Stronger Families Together Initiative prioritizes recruiting and supporting foster families, with a particular focus on the recruitment of Native American families. Recruitment efforts are guided by a statewide plan overseen by a steering committee, along with regional recruitment teams. The committee and teams, composed of key local, state, and Tribal stakeholders, meet monthly to analyze data, assess progress toward recruitment goals, and refine strategies at both the state and local levels.

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.

- South Dakota received an overall rating of Strength for Item 36 based on information from the Statewide Assessment.

- Information provided indicates that timely completion of adoptive or permanent placements for incoming Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children requests is effectively occurring within the 60-day requirement. Additionally, the state has processes in place for using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children within and outside of the state. These processes include the use of the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) system to process cross-jurisdictional adoptive and permanent placement requests, Wendy's Wonderful Kids and other nationwide organizations, coordination of placements with Tribes, case management support for children and placement providers, the use of purchased service contracts to complete supervision services for children placed in approved adoptive homes licensed through private adoption agencies, and costs for additional services not covered under Medicaid.

APPENDIX A

Summary of South Dakota 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.	In Substantial Conformity	97% Substantially Achieved
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations	Strength	97% Strength

DATA INDICATORS FOR SAFETY OUTCOME 1

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Overall Determination	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP	RSP Interval	Data Period(s) Used
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	9.07	No Different Than National Performance	Lower	10.34	7.79–13.73	22A–22B, FY22-23
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.7%	No Different Than National Performance	Lower	11.3%	9.6%–13.4%	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	78% Substantially Achieved
Item 2: Services to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
Item 3: Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	80% 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	45% Substantially Achieved
Item 4: Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	83% Strength
Item 5: Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	74% Strength
Item 6: Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or another planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	65% Strength

DATA INDICATORS FOR PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Overall Determination	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP	RSP Interval	Data Period(s) Used
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	35.2%	Worse Than National Performance	Higher	31.6%	28.7%–34.7%	22A–24A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12–23 months	43.8%	No Different Than National Performance	Higher	40.6%	36.3%–45.1%	23B–24A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	37.3%	No Different Than National Performance	Higher	38.2%	34.3%–42.2%	23B–24A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	5.6%	Worse Than National Performance]	Lower	8.1%	6.2%–10.5%	22B–24A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.48	Worse Than National Performance]	Lower	6.09	5.72–6.48	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	83% Substantially Achieved
Item 7: Placement with siblings	Strength	93% Strength
Item 8: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	81% Strength
Item 9: Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	89% Strength
Item 10: Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	84% Strength
Item 11: Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	73% 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	63% Substantially Achieved
Item 12: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	63% Strength
Sub-Item 12A: Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Sub-Item 12B: Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	64% Strength
Sub-Item 12C: Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Strength	94% Strength
Item 13: Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	76% Strength
Item 14: Caseworker visits with child	Strength	95% Strength
Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	69% 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	73% Substantially Achieved
Item 17: Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 18: Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	76% 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 and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
Item 19: Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

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

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 and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 27: Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Strength

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment	Strength

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Statewide Assessment	Substantial Conformity
Item 33: Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 36: State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment	Strength

APPENDIX B: PRACTICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

South Dakota 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 South Dakota 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.	100% (31 of 31)
(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.	93.55% (29 of 31)
(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.	50% (1 of 2)
Item 1 Strength Ratings	96.77% (30 of 31)

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.	18.75% (3 of 16)	81.25% (13 of 16)	50% (16 of 32)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 2A and 2B) Although the agency did not make concerted efforts to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect the children and prevent their entry into foster care, the child(ren) was removed from the home because this action was necessary to ensure the child's safety.	50% (8 of 16)	Not Applicable	50% (8 of 16)
(Questions 2A and 2B) Agency did not make concerted efforts to provide services and the child was removed without providing appropriate services.	18.75% (3 of 16)	Not Applicable	18.75% (3 of 16)
(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.	6.25% (1 of 16)	18.75% (3 of 16)	12.5% (4 of 32)
Item 2 Strength Ratings	75% (12 of 16)	81.25% (13 of 16)	78.13% (25 of 32)

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.	97.5% (39 of 40)	100% (25 of 25)	98.46% (64 of 65)
(Question 3A1) There were no maltreatment allegations that were not substantiated despite evidence that would support substantiation.	100% (40 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	98.46% (64 of 65)
(Question 3A) The agency conducted an initial assessment that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	100% (11 of 11)	84.62% (11 of 13)	91.67% (22 of 24)
(Question 3B) The agency conducted ongoing assessments that accurately assessed all risk and safety concerns.	87.5% (35 of 40)	76% (19 of 25)	83.08% (54 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.	50% (3 of 6)	75% (12 of 16)	68.18% (15 of 22)
(Question 3D) There were no safety concerns pertaining to children in the family home that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	70% (7 of 10)	72.73% (8 of 11)	71.43% (15 of 21)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 3E) There were no concerns related to the safety of the target child in foster care during visitation with parent(s)/caregiver(s) or other family members that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	100% (34 of 34)	Not Applicable	100% (34 of 34)
(Question 3F) There were no concerns for the target child's safety in the foster home or placement facility that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency.	100% (40 of 40)	Not Applicable	100% (40 of 40)
Item 3 Strength Ratings	87.5% (35 of 40)	68% (17 of 25)	80% (52 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.	97.5% (39 of 40)	97.5% (39 of 40)
Item 4 Strength Ratings	82.5% (33 of 40)	82.5% (33 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% (38 of 38)	100% (38 of 38)
(Question 5B) Permanency goals in effect during the period under review were established in a timely manner.	92.11% (35 of 38)	92.11% (35 of 38)
(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.	78.95% (30 of 38)	78.95% (30 of 38)
(Question 5D) Child has been in foster care for at least 15 of the most recent 22 months.	52.63% (20 of 38)	52.63% (20 of 38)
(Questions 5E) Child meets other Adoption and Safe Families Act criteria for termination of parental rights (TPR).	0% (0 of 18)	0% (0 of 18)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Questions 5F and 5G) The agency filed or joined a TPR petition before the period under review (PUR) or in a timely manner during the PUR or an exception applied.	66.67% (12 of 18)	66.67% (12 of 18)
Item 5 Strength Ratings	73.68% (28 of 38)	73.68% (28 of 38)

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.	87.5% (7 of 8)	87.5% (7 of 8)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve guardianship in a timely manner.	50% (2 of 4)	50% (2 of 4)
(Questions 6A4 and 6B) The agency and court made concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner.	50% (7 of 14)	50% (7 of 14)
(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% (1 of 1)	100% (1 of 1)
(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.	69.23% (9 of 13)	69.23% (9 of 13)
Item 6 Strength Ratings	65% (26 of 40)	65% (26 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.	62.07% (18 of 29)	62.07% (18 of 29)
(Question 7B) When all siblings were not placed together, there was a valid reason for the child's separation from siblings in placement.	81.82% (9 of 11)	81.82% (9 of 11)
Item 7 Strength Ratings	93.1% (27 of 29)	93.1% (27 of 29)

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.	30.77% (8 of 26)	30.77% (8 of 26)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was once a week.	7.69% (2 of 26)	7.69% (2 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.	19.23% (5 of 26)	19.23% (5 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.	19.23% (5 of 26)	19.23% (5 of 26)
(Question 8A1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and mother was less than once a month.	11.54% (3 of 26)	11.54% (3 of 26)
(Question 8A1) Child never had visits with mother.	11.54% (3 of 26)	11.54% (3 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.	88.46% (23 of 26)	88.46% (23 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.	100% (23 of 23)	100% (23 of 23)
(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.	88.46% (23 of 26)	88.46% (23 of 26)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was more than once a week.	22.22% (4 of 18)	22.22% (4 of 18)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was once a week.	11.11% (2 of 18)	11.11% (2 of 18)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	27.78% (5 of 18)	27.78% (5 of 18)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	16.67% (3 of 18)	16.67% (3 of 18)
(Question 8B1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and father was less than once a month.	11.11% (2 of 18)	11.11% (2 of 18)
(Question 8B1) Child never had visits with father.	11.11% (2 of 18)	11.11% (2 of 18)
(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.	83.33% (15 of 18)	83.33% (15 of 18)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 8D) Concerted efforts were made to ensure that the quality of visitation between the father and child was sufficient to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship.	93.75% (15 of 16)	93.75% (15 of 16)
(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.	77.78% (14 of 18)	77.78% (14 of 18)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was more than once a week.	20% (2 of 10)	20% (2 of 10)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was once a week.	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 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.	30% (3 of 10)	30% (3 of 10)
(Question 8E1) The usual frequency of visits between the child and siblings in foster care was less than once a month.	10% (1 of 10)	10% (1 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.	100% (10 of 10)	100% (10 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.	90% (9 of 10)	90% (9 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.	90% (9 of 10)	90% (9 of 10)
Item 8 Strength Ratings	80.65% (25 of 31)	80.65% (25 of 31)

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).	89.47% (34 of 38)	89.47% (34 of 38)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
Item 9 Strength Ratings	89.47% (34 of 38)	89.47% (34 of 38)

Item 10: Relative Placement

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 10A1) The child's current, or most recent, placement was with a relative.	37.84% (14 of 37)	37.84% (14 of 37)
(Question 10A2) The child's current or most recent placement with a relative was appropriate to the child's needs.	100% (14 of 14)	100% (14 of 14)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Identify maternal relatives.	75% (3 of 4)	75% (3 of 4)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Locate maternal relatives.	100% (4 of 4)	100% (4 of 4)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Inform maternal relatives.	100% (4 of 4)	100% (4 of 4)
(Question 10B) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Evaluate maternal relatives.	100% (4 of 4)	100% (4 of 4)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Identify paternal relatives.	80% (4 of 5)	80% (4 of 5)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Locate paternal relatives.	80% (4 of 5)	80% (4 of 5)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Inform paternal relatives.	80% (4 of 5)	80% (4 of 5)
(Question 10C) Cases in which concerns existed due to a lack of concerted efforts to Evaluate paternal relatives.	80% (4 of 5)	80% (4 of 5)
Item 10 Strength Ratings	83.78% (31 of 37)	83.78% (31 of 37)

Item 11: Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 11A) Concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive, nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.	80.77% (21 of 26)	80.77% (21 of 26)
(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.	66.67% (12 of 18)	66.67% (12 of 18)
Item 11 Strength Ratings	73.33% (22 of 30)	73.33% (22 of 30)

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	65% (26 of 40)	60% (15 of 25)	63.08% (41 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)	88% (22 of 25)	90.77% (59 of 65)
(Question 12A2) Appropriate services were provided to meet the children's needs.	86.67% (26 of 30)	73.33% (11 of 15)	82.22% (37 of 45)
Sub-Item 12A Strength Ratings	90% (36 of 40)	84% (21 of 25)	87.69% (57 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	76.67% (23 of 30)	80% (20 of 25)	78.18% (43 of 55)
(Question 12B3) Appropriate services were provided to meet the mother's needs.	65.52% (19 of 29)	66.67% (16 of 24)	66.04% (35 of 53)
(Questions 12B1 and B3) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of mothers.	66.67% (20 of 30)	68% (17 of 25)	67.27% (37 of 55)
(Question 12B2) The agency conducted formal or informal initial and/or ongoing comprehensive assessments that accurately assessed the father's needs.	79.17% (19 of 24)	50% (8 of 16)	67.5% (27 of 40)

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.	68.18% (15 of 22)	42.86% (6 of 14)	58.33% (21 of 36)
(Questions 12B2 and 12B4) Concerted efforts were made to assess and address the needs of fathers.	70.83% (17 of 24)	50% (8 of 16)	62.5% (25 of 40)
Sub-Item 12B Strength Ratings	63.64% (21 of 33)	64% (16 of 25)	63.79% (37 of 58)

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 12C1) The agency adequately assessed the needs of the foster or pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care on an ongoing basis.	97.06% (33 of 34)	97.06% (33 of 34)
(Question 12C2) The agency provided appropriate services to foster and pre-adoptive parents related to caring for children in their care.	91.67% (22 of 24)	91.67% (22 of 24)
Sub-Item 12C Strength Ratings	94.12% (32 of 34)	94.12% (32 of 34)

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.	100% (20 of 20)	87.5% (14 of 16)	94.44% (34 of 36)
(Question 13B) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the mother in the case planning process.	82.76% (24 of 29)	84% (21 of 25)	83.33% (45 of 54)
(Question 13C) The agency made concerted efforts to actively involve the father in the case planning process.	70.83% (17 of 24)	56.25% (9 of 16)	65% (26 of 40)
Item 13 Strength Ratings	78.38% (29 of 37)	72% (18 of 25)	75.81% (47 of 62)

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)	0% (0 of 25)	1.54% (1 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was once a week.	0% (0 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	17.5% (7 of 40)	4% (1 of 25)	12.31% (8 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.	80% (32 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	86.15% (56 of 65)
(Question 14A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and child(ren) was less than once a month.	0% (0 of 40)	0% (0 of 25)	0% (0 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.	97.5% (39 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	96.92% (63 of 65)
(Question 14B) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the child(ren) was sufficient.	100% (40 of 40)	96% (24 of 25)	98.46% (64 of 65)
Item 14 Strength Ratings	97.5% (39 of 40)	92% (23 of 25)	95.38% (62 of 65)

Item 15: Caseworker Visits With Parents

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

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	6.9% (2 of 29)	8% (2 of 25)	7.41% (4 of 54)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	44.83% (13 of 29)	80% (20 of 25)	61.11% (33 of 54)
(Question 15A1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and mother was less than once a month.	31.03% (9 of 29)	8% (2 of 25)	20.37% (11 of 54)
(Question 15A1) Caseworker never had visits with mother.	13.79% (4 of 29)	4% (1 of 25)	9.26% (5 of 54)
(Question 15A2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	82.76% (24 of 29)	92% (23 of 25)	87.04% (47 of 54)
(Question 15C) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the mother was sufficient.	76% (19 of 25)	83.33% (20 of 24)	79.59% (39 of 49)
(Questions 15A2 and 15C) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the mother were sufficient.	75.86% (22 of 29)	84% (21 of 25)	79.63% (43 of 54)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was more than once a week.	0% (0 of 24)	0% (0 of 16)	0% (0 of 40)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was once a week.	4.17% (1 of 24)	0% (0 of 16)	2.5% (1 of 40)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a week but at least twice a month.	8.33% (2 of 24)	6.25% (1 of 16)	7.5% (3 of 40)
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than twice a month but at least once a month.	29.17% (7 of 24)	62.5% (10 of 16)	42.5% (17 of 40)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 15B1) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and father was less than once a month.	45.83% (11 of 24)	25% (4 of 16)	37.5% (15 of 40)
(Question 15B1) Caseworker never had visits with father.	12.5% (3 of 24)	6.25% (1 of 16)	10% (4 of 40)
(Question 15B2) The typical pattern of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	70.83% (17 of 24)	62.5% (10 of 16)	67.5% (27 of 40)
(Question 15D) The quality of visits between the caseworker and the father was sufficient.	71.43% (15 of 21)	57.14% (8 of 14)	65.71% (23 of 35)
(Question 15B2 and 15D) Both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with the father were sufficient.	66.67% (16 of 24)	50% (8 of 16)	60% (24 of 40)
Item 15 Strength Ratings	69.7% (23 of 33)	68% (17 of 25)	68.97% (40 of 58)

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% (33 of 33)	100% (2 of 2)	100% (35 of 35)
(Question 16B) The agency made concerted efforts to address the children's educational needs through appropriate services.	100% (19 of 19)	100% (2 of 2)	100% (21 of 21)
Item 16 Strength Ratings	100% (33 of 33)	100% (2 of 2)	100% (35 of 35)

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.	90% (36 of 40)	100% (1 of 1)	90.24% (37 of 41)
(Question 17B1) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the physical health issues of the target child in foster care.	94.74% (18 of 19)	Not Applicable	94.74% (18 of 19)
(Question 17B2) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified physical health needs.	85.29% (29 of 34)	100% (1 of 1)	85.71% (30 of 35)
(Question 17A2) The agency accurately assessed the children's dental health care needs.	100% (38 of 38)	0	100% (38 of 38)
(Question 17B3) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified dental health needs.	100% (25 of 25)	0	100% (25 of 25)
Item 17 Strength Ratings	87.5% (35 of 40)	100% (1 of 1)	87.8% (36 of 41)

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.	96% (24 of 25)	66.67% (6 of 9)	88.24% (30 of 34)
(Question 18B) The agency provided appropriate oversight of prescription medications for the mental/behavioral health issues of the target child in foster care.	80% (8 of 10)	Not Applicable	80% (8 of 10)

Practice Description	Foster Care— Performance of Applicable Cases	In-Home Services— Performance of Applicable Cases	All Case Types— Performance of Applicable Cases
(Question 18C) The agency ensured that appropriate services were provided to the children to address all identified mental/behavioral health needs.	86.96% (20 of 23)	75% (6 of 8)	83.87% (26 of 31)
Item 18 Strength Ratings	80% (20 of 25)	66.67% (6 of 9)	76.47% (26 of 34)