

COLORADO
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW
STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

JANUARY 28, 2009



2009 Colorado Statewide Assessment

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Statewide Assessment Instrument

Section 1 – General Information

Name of State Agency	
State of Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Child Welfare Services	
Period Under Review	
Onsite review sample Period: October 1, 2007 - March 16, 2009 Foster Care: October 1, 2007 - March 31, 2008 In-Home: October 1, 2007 - May 31, 2008 Period of AFCARS Data: October 1, 2006 - September 30, 2007 Period of NCANDS Data: October 1, 2006 - September 30, 2007	
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I. COLORADO, AGENCY, AND CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

A. Colorado

Colorado is preparing for the second federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) scheduled for March 16-20, 2009. The Statewide Assessment includes a brief overview section followed by a narrative of each item. The overview includes information about Colorado, its services system, the state-county governance of Human Services, a brief summary about the three designated sites, and promising approaches and challenges encountered in child welfare systems.

Information about the State of Colorado

Colorado is located in the Southwest portion of the United States and ranks 8th in size. Colorado is a state of contrasts. Nearly half the state is flat compared to the mountainous areas of the Rocky Mountains. The geography results in a complex, extreme weather system which may shut down mountain passes, isolate citizens with blizzards, or destroy communities with tornados. Much of Colorado's population lives along the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains, in the Front Range Corridor. There has been a 31.03% increase in population since the 2000 Census; the 2007 population is estimated at 4,861,515, with a density factor of 41.5 people per square mile. Colorado has one of the highest Hispanic populations. There are two Tribal Reservations in Colorado: The Southern Ute and the Ute Mountain Ute, which are both located in the Southwest portion of the state. The Native American agencies providing supportive services are both located in Denver. The state median income is \$50,105. 10.2% of Colorado's population lives below the poverty level.

Colorado has some important restrictions on the ability of government to collect and spend revenue, which creates a unique fiscal environment when compared to other states. Income tax is figured on "taxable income". The Taxpayer Bill of Rights Amendment (TABOR), approved by Colorado Voters in 1992, is a constitutional change designed to restrain growth in all levels of government by prohibiting additional or new taxation without voter approval. The most serious negative impact from TABOR to date came with the recession of 2001-2003. Tax revenues fell and elected officials were forced to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from governmental budgets. This Amendment has impacted Colorado's funding for services statewide and has a "ratcheting down effect" with economic downturns. By 2005, when the economy was making strong gains, state and local governments were prohibited from using growing revenues to restore cuts to vital programs. Referendum C, passed by the voters in 2005, created a five-year "time-out" from TABOR, but sunsets in 2010. The future impacts of TABOR are unknown and unpredictable at this time.

A significant amount of county funding comes from property tax mill levies, which vary greatly. During times of economic downturn and decreased property taxes, funding bases shrink. A number of counties also have revenues from local voter-approved tax initiatives. Local Boards of County Commissioners may provide extra funding or cut county services. County funding levels have a significant impact on the level of staffing and programs in child welfare, which effect staff retention.

State Department of Human Services

The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) administers a broad range of child serving programs including: the Division of Developmental Disabilities; the Division of Youth Corrections; and, the Division of Behavioral Health. These entities deliver services in a regionalized model, which impact Colorado's community resources for families served by the child welfare system, as cited in stakeholder interviews.

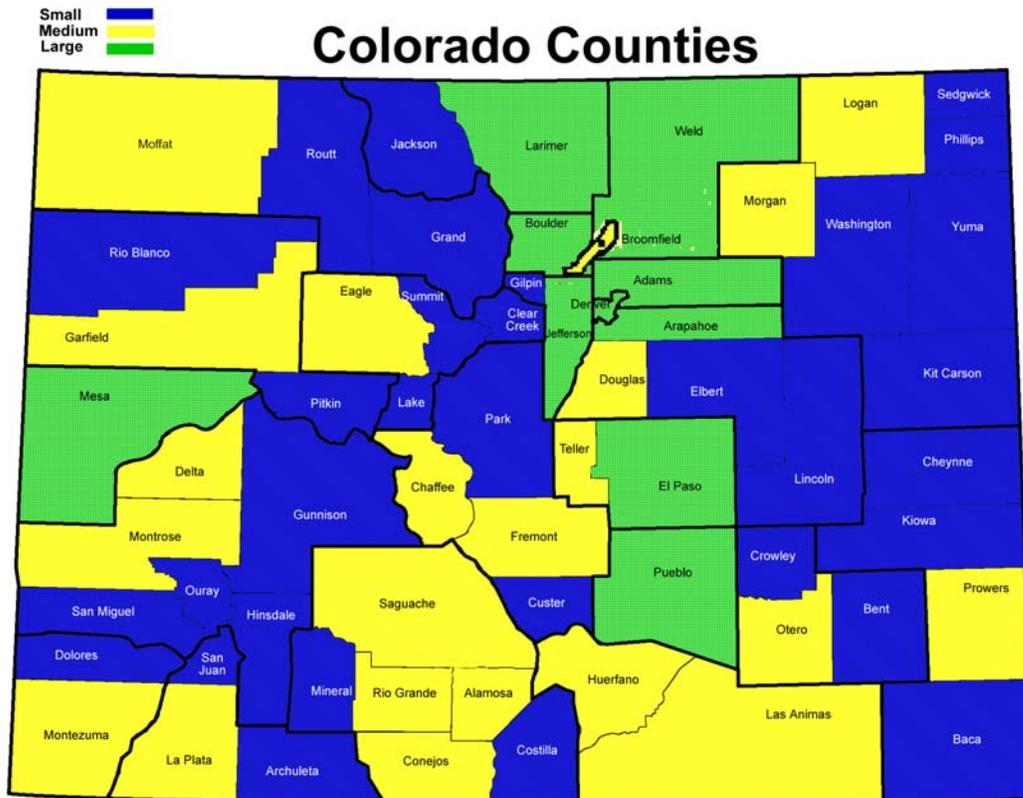
Division of Youth Corrections

Colorado's Youth Corrections system is within CDHS. The Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) uses the SACWIS system. DYC has a regionalized administrative structure comprised of four management regions: Central Colorado; Denver; Northeast Colorado; and, Southern and Western Colorado. County departments work directly with staff in the DYC regions on local policy issues, procedural matters, and specific child and family cases. Policy and procedural coordination between the child welfare system and the youth corrections system is achieved within Human Services at the state level. District Court judges make determinations whether youth will be served in the child welfare or the youth corrections systems. Studies have shown that with the exception of extremely violent crimes, such as murder, there is no real difference between the severity of offenses committed by youth who are served in the child welfare system and those served in the youth corrections system. The main differentiating factor appears to be the level of parental involvement. Youth with more involved parents tend to be served in the child welfare system and those with less involved parents tend to be committed to DYC. The generally held view in the child welfare system is that judges often have youth served in the child welfare system because their situation is viewed as amenable to treatment while youth whose situation is perceived as less amenable to treatment are committed to DYC for community safety. There are approximately twice as many delinquent youth in the child welfare system as in DYC at any point in time. Given the high turnover of youth in juvenile detention facilities, more delinquent youth will be served in DYC over the course of a year. Youth with delinquent and pre-delinquent behavior are served in the child welfare system in the program termed "Youth in Conflict" described below in "The Child Welfare System" section of this document.

Division of Mental Health

Colorado's Mental Health (CMH), Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs (SHHP) and Alcohol and Drug Abuse (ADAD) services are delivered through the Office of Behavioral Health and Housing, a subdivision of CDHS. Community mental health services are delivered through contracts with seven specialty clinics and 17 not-for-profit community mental health centers. The roles and functions of both Community Mental Health Centers and clinics are statutorily defined in Colorado Revised Statutes C.R.S. 27-1-201 et seq. There are five Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs) that are responsible for implementing the Medicaid Mental Health Capitation Program through contracts with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. The BHOs operate managed care programs serving all of Colorado's 64 counties. Each BHO is responsible for managing the delivery of mental health services to Medicaid-eligible individuals in its assigned geographic service area. Each regional area has unique community resources.

Colorado's Human Services system is a state-supervised, county-administered system. There are 64 Counties that have a relationship with CDHS. State supervision is indirect management as exercised through program development, practice and workload standards development, model office design, rule promulgation, technical assistance, monitoring, program evaluation, and performance improvement plans. All sixty-four counties are classified as large, mid-sized, or small (please refer to the county map below).



The ten large counties manage 85% of the Child Welfare workload. There are 23 mid-sized counties and 31 small counties. Two counties, Denver and Broomfield, have consolidated city-county governments. The other counties are administered by a Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) that also serves as the Human Services Board for the county department. The funding for county departments typically is 80% federal and state funds and 20% county funds.

The Three Onsite Review Sites

Denver is the largest metropolitan county in Colorado. Fremont and Larimer Counties have been selected and approved as the two additional sites for the Onsite Review. Larimer County is one of the ten large counties and Fremont is representative of a mid-sized county.

Denver is the capitol of the State of Colorado and is a consolidated city-county, governed by a mayor and a 13-member city council. It is known as the *Mile High City* because its official elevation is exactly one mile or 5,280 feet above sea level. It has a population of 588,349 (as of July 1, 2007) and it is the 21st most populous U.S. city. Denver was originally founded as Denver City in 1858 during the Pikes Peak Gold Rush in Kansas Territory. It has defined 79 official neighborhoods that city and county administration use for planning and administration purposes. These neighborhoods should not be confused with cities and suburbs that are separate entities within the metro area. The total population occupies 153 square miles and is represented as follows: 10.6% African-American, 3.3% Asian, 48% Anglo, 34.8% Hispanic and 1.3% Native American. There are approximately 133,900 children under the age of 18 residing in Denver. The median income for a household is \$41,767. 15.2% of the population is below the poverty line.

Larimer County, named for General William Larimer, Jr., an early settler of Denver, is located in north central Colorado. It is the 7th largest Colorado county based on population. The area is approximately 2,640 square miles with a population of approximately 251,494 (2000 U.S. Census) and is represented as follows: 0.9% African-American; 1.9% Asian; 94.8% Anglo; 9.6% Hispanic; and, 0.8% Native American. Larimer County's county seat is Fort Collins and the county includes several mountain

communities and Rocky Mountain National Park. Settlement of Larimer County occurred largely due to agriculture. Colorado State University is in Fort Collins. The median income for a household in the county is reported to be \$50,911. Approximately 9.8% of the population is reported to be below the poverty line.

Fremont County, named for explorer John C. Fremont, is located in south central Colorado along the Arkansas River Valley. The area is approximately 1,502 square miles with a population of approximately 46,145 (2000 U.S. Census) and is represented as follows: 5.2% African-American; 0.5% Asian; 91.0 % Anglo; 10.5% Hispanic; and, 1.6% Native American. Fremont County is the 13th most populous of Colorado's 64 counties. The county seat is Canon City. The first Colorado Territorial prison was built in 1871, five years before Colorado gained statehood. Today Fremont County is home to 13 state and federal correctional facilities. The median income for a family is \$35,129. 14.2 % of the population lives below the poverty line.

Source for site statistics: U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts; Wikipedia

The chart below illustrates the population of children removed from home by gender and ethnicity for the three review sites.

CHILDREN REMOVED FROM HOME	DENVER COUNTY	FREMONT COUNTY	LARIMER COUNTY
Female	43.3%	42.2%	41.9%
Male	56.7%	57.8%	58.1%
Black/African-American	20.9%	1.0%	5.2%
Native American	1.9%	2.9%	1.2%
Asian	0.8%	0.5%	0.6%
Hawaiian/Pacific Island	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%
White	44.0%	81.4%	73.1%
Hispanic	32.0%	14.3%	19.6%

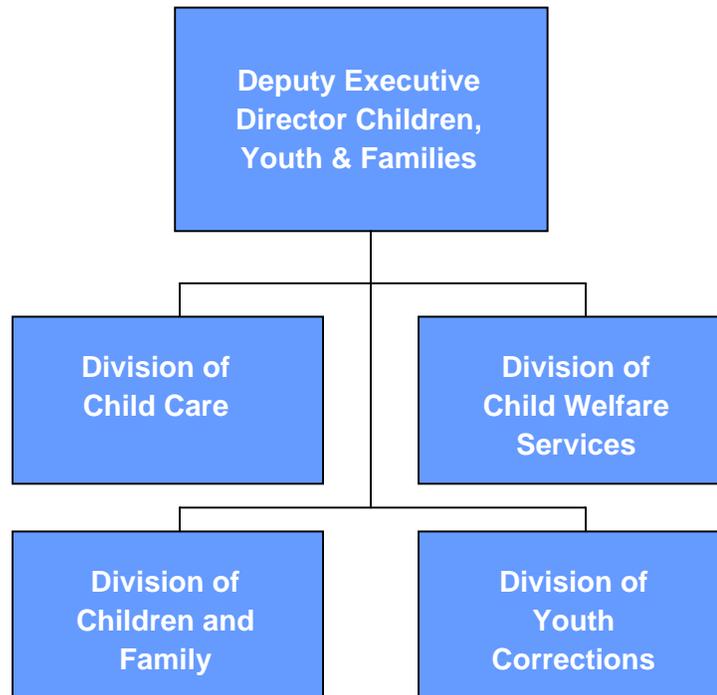
B. The Agency

CDHS has responsibility for all Children, Youth, and Family Services, Aging and Adult Services, Veterans, Developmental Disabilities, Child Care Licensing, and Public Assistance Programs with the exception of Medicaid, for the state of Colorado. It is also the oversight agency for Mental Health and ADAD Services. The Division of Child Welfare Services (DCWS) maintains responsibility for all services delivered by county departments intended to protect children from harm and to assist families in caring for and protecting their children.

These programs comprise the main thrust of Colorado's effort to meet the needs of children who must be placed or are at risk of placement outside their homes for reasons of protection or community safety. The delivery of child welfare services in Colorado is a state-supervised, county-administered system. State supervision includes responsibility for planning, program and policy development, training, and monitoring the system. Direct supervision of staff and administration of child welfare services is the responsibility of the counties.

Over the past 18 months, under the leadership of Executive Director Karen L. Beye, a critical examination of the child welfare system occurred and is planned to continue until December 2009, at which time the final recommendations are due. Colorado's Governor Bill Ritter supported Director Beye's efforts by advocating with and on behalf of CDHS with the General Assembly in securing additional resources for the Department to both address key areas and to conduct needed assessments of the system.

Organizational Chart for Children Youth and Families



The Child Welfare Action Committee evolved as the result of two Legislative Audits of DCWS's Foster Care Program and the findings of a Legislative SB 07-64 Committee, to study and recommend action for foster care, and 13 child fatalities during calendar year (CY) 2007 in which there was prior involvement between the family and the county department. Concerns were raised regarding the adequacy of staffing, training, and funding of the State's Child Welfare System. Questions were also raised about reimbursement of foster home providers, adequacy of placement resources for children and the Department's ability to hold counties accountable to the high standard needed to assure child safety, permanency and well-being. Following are the results of the work thus far:

- Six new staff were funded effective July 1, 2008. One new staff is directed to Kinship Care Policy and Support, one staff is dedicated to improving data quality and county accountability in Colorado's SACWIS, and four staff will conduct statewide monitoring of county foster home certification programs, also conducting program-specific reviews when necessary.
- Funding was approved to conduct a study of foster home rates and to conduct an organizational assessment of DCWS.
- The Governor's Child Welfare Action Committee comprised of 25 key stakeholders was formed to address specific issues in the system including:
 - Analyze Colorado's current state-supervised and county-administered child welfare system to determine whether this system is most effective in protecting children
 - Examine the quality and quantity of training that child protection caseworkers should receive.
 - Recommend ways to make the system more responsive to people reporting child maltreatment
 - Explore the role that independent oversight committees can play in ensuring that human service agencies are held accountable and recommend how these bodies can be incorporated into Colorado's child welfare system
 - Develop recommendations as to how public/private partnerships can improve the services and care provided to children who reside within the welfare system

An interim report was presented to the Governor on October 31, 2008. The final report is due December 31, 2009. The General Assembly supported this action by supplying funding for two years to cover the cost of the Committee and associated activities. This report may be accessed at:

<http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/documents/FinalOVERVIEW07-30.doc>

The Child Welfare Action Committee and the General Assembly will significantly shape the Department's efforts to improve outcomes for children and families served by the Child Welfare system.

The Best Practice Courts Program is one of the initiatives between the Department of Human Services and the Judicial Department to support increased outcomes success. It has been an important part of Colorado's work to improve service delivery to children and families and is important to resolve identified barriers. The Best Practice Courts Program (BPC) is designed to develop and foster permanent collaborative court structures, and to encourage local judicial districts to mobilize child welfare improvements within their local communities. This program is based on the National Council of Juvenile and Family Courts Judges Model Court Program. BPCs identify key stakeholders and include them in strategic planning processes to effect substantive, sustainable change. The focus of the program is 1) develop multi-disciplinary teams in each jurisdiction; and, 2) implement Chief Justice Directives 96-08 and 98-02 that direct local jurisdictions to develop local district plans for handling Dependency and Neglect cases and recommend court and child welfare agency collaboration and other best practices.

Colorado is divided into twenty-two judicial districts and twenty-one of those districts have formed multi-disciplinary teams designated as Colorado Best Practice Court Teams (BPC Teams). The foundational goals of the BPC Teams are to incorporate best practices in the handling of Dependency and Neglect cases and to develop an infrastructure consisting of ongoing collaboration among Colorado's child welfare stakeholders at all levels of government. A challenge faced by the BPC teams is maintaining regular communication among stakeholders. The Colorado Court Improvement Program (CIP) and the DCWS addressed this need by collaborating to create the *Colorado BPC Team Website*. The goal of the website is to encourage an electronic culture that provides access to expertise and consultation. The State Court Administrator, Court Improvement staff and four Judges are represented on Colorado's CFSR Executive Oversight Committee, with the purpose of disseminating CFSR data by judicial district to identify areas needing improvement to reinforce best practices.

C. The Child Welfare System

Colorado is directing this statewide self-assessment of the child welfare system in accordance with Administration for Children and Families requirements. Key stakeholders in the system are numerous and include the following:

- County departments of social/human services
- District courts
- Guardians ad litem
- County attorneys
- Mental health centers
- County commissioners
- Departments of public health
- Foster parents
- Private and public treatment providers and agencies
- School districts
- Family advocates
- Probation
- Foster children
- Adoption agencies
- Law enforcement
- Adoptive parents

The system is complex and includes multiple layers of oversight and interagency coordination. County protective services staff investigate reports of abuse and/or neglect and are responsible for the provision and oversight of in-home and out-of-home care and services to children and families. Colorado's district courts make judicial determinations regarding the best interests of children and

custody of children. The district courts also conduct the permanency and review hearings in cases under their jurisdiction.

Three programmatic areas define the target populations served in child welfare at the county level and one area for resource development.

- **Program Area 4 – Youth in Conflict, Federal Goal C:** Services are provided to reduce or eliminate conflicts between youth and their family members or the community when conflicts affect the youth's well-being, the normal functioning of the family, or the well-being of the community. The focus of services is on alleviating conflicts, protecting the youth and the community, re-establishing family stability, or assisting the youth to emancipate successfully.
- **Program Area 5 – Child Protection, Federal Goal C:** Services are provided to protect children whose physical, mental or emotional well-being is threatened by the actions or omissions of parents, legal guardians or custodians, or persons responsible for providing out-of-home care, including a foster parent, an employee of a residential child care facility, or a provider of family child care or center-based child care. The focus of services is on providing for the child's safety, enhancement of family functioning, and addressing the child's need for permanency.
- **Program Area 6 – Children or Youth in Need of Specialized Services, Federal Goal D:** Services are provided to specified children and families when the primary focus of services is no longer protective or youth-in-conflict. These services include children with subsidized adoptions, children with Medicaid-only services, and children for whom the disposition is no longer reunification, (i.e. long-term foster care, independent living).
- **Program Area 7 – Resource Development, Federal Goal F:** Provides for the development, maintenance and improvement of the resources available to serve children, including recruitment, certification, training, and retention of family foster homes, county operated group homes, adoptive homes, and licensed child care facilities.

The Colorado Children's Code and Human Services Code

Colorado's child welfare system is governed by the Colorado Children's Code (C.R.S. Title 19) and the Human Services Code (C.R.S. Title 26).

The Human Services Code, Title 26 was altered significantly in 1994 to conform to a restructuring of state governmental agencies and their responsibilities. In that restructuring the CDHS was constructed through a merger of the Colorado Department of Social Services and the Colorado Department of Institutions. The merger brought the two children and family serving agencies into one department.

1. Child Protection Teams

Counties that receive fifty or more reports of child abuse or neglect in one year are required to establish a **Child Protection Team (CPT)**, comprised of agency and community representatives in the subsequent year. CPTs review the actions of the County Department to determine the timeliness and appropriateness of the actions taken in response to reports, reports its findings to the County Department and makes them public, without identifying case information. Fifty-two counties have CPTs and 12 do not, based on the low number of referrals.

The **Institutional Abuse Review Team (IART)** is made up of individuals who are representative of the community at large as well as those who possess expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect, including fatalities and near fatalities. Its purpose is to review all reports of investigations of abuse and neglect by county departments in 24 hour out-of-home childcare settings which include Department licensed and certified out-of-home care settings such as foster care and kinship homes, Residential Child Care Facilities, Child Placement Agency Foster or Group Homes, as well as Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) Juvenile Facilities and Colorado Division of Mental Health

Institutions. Investigations are completed by the counties. The Team reviewed 642 reports from January to December 2007.

IART was designated to focus on the extent to which the child protective service system is coordinated with the foster care and the adoption programs. IART members review each referral/assessment, make recommendations regarding follow-up, and forward recommendations to involved state and county agencies. The State has provided assistance to the panel with training and administrative support.

2. Alternatives to Out-of-Home Placement

All counties in the state are required to assure access to alternatives to out-of-home placement for families with children at imminent risk of out-of-home placement. The county commissioners in each county may appoint a commission to prepare plans for these alternative services. Counties are also required to provide services to children who are in out-of-home placement. The services to be provided are determined by an assessment and a case plan.

3. Juvenile Courts/Emergency Protection Orders/Timeframes for Hearings

The juvenile court is authorized to issue emergency protection orders. Each judicial district is required to have a magistrate or judge available by phone to issue such orders when the court is closed for business. Children may only be removed from their homes by a law enforcement officer or through an emergency protection order. When children are removed from their homes, families are provided with a standardized form informing them of their rights and remedies. When temporary custody is placed with the county department of social services, the court must hold a hearing within seventy-two hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and court holidays, to determine further custody of the child. If the placement is in a facility not operated by the department of human services the hearing must be held within forty-eight hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and court holidays. If the placement is in a juvenile detention facility the hearing must be held within twenty-four hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and court holidays.

When petitions of Dependency and Neglect are filed, adjudicatory hearings are generally required within sixty days for children under the age of six and within ninety days for other children. When petitions are sustained, dispositional hearings are often held immediately, with thirty-day continuances granted for good cause.

Motions for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) must have a hearing within one hundred twenty days unless good cause exists to continue the matter. Appeals of TPRs are given precedence on the calendar over all other matters, unless otherwise provided by law. When parental rights are terminated, a hearing is conducted within ninety days to review the status of the child.

Permanency hearings for children six years of age or older who are in placement are required every twelve months after placement, although they may be held more frequently by court order or motions brought by any party. Permanency hearings for children under the age of six are generally required within three months after placement, reviews are conducted every six months and the child must be in a permanent home within twelve months after placement unless the court determines that it is not in the child's best interest. Relinquishment hearings are given priority and relinquishments of children under the age of one are expedited.

County Legal Representation

County Attorneys provide legal representation for Dependency and Neglect cases. Attorneys may be contracted or full-time staff, depending upon the needs of the county departments. The attorneys represent the counties in court, including the filing of petitions, setting of hearings and reviews, and organizing and presenting evidence and testimony. These attorneys usually participate in most court hearings and meet with child welfare staff to plan case actions.

Guardians ad litem (GALs)

Statutes provide that the court shall appoint a guardian ad litem for the child in all Dependency and Neglect cases. If the court determines it is in the best interest and welfare of the child, the court may appoint both a counsel and a guardian ad litem for the child.

4. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)

The court may appoint a CASA volunteer if the court finds the appointment is in the best interest of the child. The mission of the CASA program is to provide effective volunteer advocacy for the best interests of children involved in the court system to help ensure that these children have an appropriate permanent home. County department staff, GALs, and CASA volunteers work closely together. Typically CASA volunteers present reports to the court and the parties. There are fourteen CASA agencies with over 900 volunteers serving 30 counties and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The counties served by CASA agencies are as follows.

Adams	Arapahoe	Boulder	Broomfield
Chaffee	Clear Creek	Custer	Delta
Denver	Dolores	Douglas	Eagle
Elbert	El Paso	Fremont	Gilpin
Jefferson	Lake	Larimer	Lincoln
Logan	Mesa	Montezuma	Montrose
Morgan	Park	Pueblo	Summit
Teller	Weld	Grand	

II. SAFETY AND PERMANENCY DATA

CHILD SAFETY PROFILE	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)						Fiscal Year 2007ab						12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (Not submitted)					
	Reports	%	Duplic. Childn. ²	%	Unique Childn. ²	%	Reports	%	Duplic. Childn. ²	%	Unique Childn. ²	%	Reports	%	Duplic. Childn. ²	%	Unique Childn. ²	%
I. Total CA/N Reports Disposed¹	31,043		48,824		41,272		31,520		49,764		42,031							
II. Disposition of CA/N Reports³																		
Substantiated & Indicated	7,266	23.4	10,801	22.1	10,312	25.0	7,196	22.8	10,588	21.3	10,103	24.0						
Unsubstantiated	22,621	72.9	36,348	74.4	29,721	72.0	23,259	73.8	37,495	75.3	30,653	72.9						
Other	1,156	3.7	1,675	3.4	1,239	3.0	1,065	3.4	1,681	3.4	1,275	3.0						
III. Child Victim Cases Opened for Post-Investigation Services⁴			3,677	34.0	3,592	34.8			3,557	33.6	3,486	34.5						
IV. Child Victims Entering Care Based on CA/N Report⁵			1,834	17.0	1,820	17.6			1,740	16.4	1,722	17.0						
V. Child Fatalities Resulting from Maltreatment⁶					27	0.3					27 ^B	0.3						
STATEWIDE AGGREGATE DATA USED TO DETERMINE SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMITY																		
VI. Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence⁷ [Standard: 94.6% or more]					5,147 of 5,358	96.1					4,784 of 5,020	95.3						
VII. Absence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care⁸ (12 months) [standard 99.68% or more]					14,662 of 14,746	99.43					14,247 of 14,332	99.41						

Additional Safety Measures For Information Only (no standards are associated with these):																			
	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)						Fiscal Year 2007ab						12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (Not submitted)						
	Hours				Unique Childn. ²	%	Hours				Unique Childn. ²	%	Hours				Unique Childn. ²	%	
VIII. Median Time to Investigation in Hours (Child File)⁹	<24						<24												
IX. Mean Time to Investigation in Hours (Child File)¹⁰	34.6						31.4												
X. Mean Time to Investigation in Hours (Agency File)¹¹	A						A												
XI. Children Maltreated by Parents While in Foster Care.¹²					51 of 14,746	0.35					63 of 14,746	0.43							

CFSR Round One Safety Measures to Determine Substantial Conformity (Used primarily by States completing Round One Program Improvement Plans, but States may also review them to compare to prior performance)																			
	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)						Fiscal Year 2007ab						12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (Not submitted)						
	Reports	%	Duplic. Childn. ²	%	Unique Childn. ²	%	Reports	%	Duplic. Childn. ²	%	Unique Childn. ²	%	Reports	%	Duplic. Childn. ²	%	Unique Childn. ²	%	
XII. Recurrence of Maltreatment¹³ [Standard: 6.1% or less]					5,147 of 5,358	96.1					236 of 5,020	4.7							
XIII. Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care¹⁴ (9 months) [standard 0.57% or less]					14,662 of 14,746	99.43					67 of 12,769	0.52							

NCANDS data completeness information for the CFSR			
Description of Data Tests	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)	Fiscal Year 2007ab	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (Not submitted)
Percent of duplicate victims in the submission [At least 1% of victims should be associated with multiple reports (same CHID). If not, the State would appear to have frequently entered different IDs for the same victim. This affects maltreatment recurrence]	4.5	4.60	
Percent of victims with perpetrator reported [File must have at least 95% to reasonably calculate maltreatment in foster care]*	99.9	99.90	
Percent of perpetrators with relationship to victim reported [File must have at least 95%]*	96.2	96.50	
Percent of records with investigation start date reported [Needed to compute mean and median time to investigation]	0.9	100	
Average time to investigation in the Agency file [PART measure]	Not Reported	Not reported	
Percent of records with AFCARS ID reported in the Child File [Needed to calculate maltreatment in foster care by the parents; also. All Child File records should now have an AFCARS ID to allow ACF to link the NCANDS data with AFCARS. This is now an all-purpose unique child identifier and a child does not have to be in foster care to have this ID]	100	100	

*States should strive to reach 100% in order to have maximum confidence in the absence of maltreatment in foster care measure.

FOOTNOTES TO DATA ELEMENTS IN CHILD SAFETY PROFILE

Each maltreatment allegation reported to NCANDS is associated with a disposition or finding that is used to derive the counts provided in this safety profile. The safety profile uses three categories. The various terms that are used in NCANDS reporting have been collapsed into these three groups.

Disposition Category	Safety Profile Disposition	NCANDS Maltreatment Level Codes Included
A	Substantiated or Indicated (Maltreatment Victim)	“Substantiated,” “Indicated,” and “Alternative Response Disposition Victim”
B	Unsubstantiated	“Unsubstantiated” and “Unsubstantiated Due to Intentionally False Reporting”
C	Other	“Closed-No Finding,” “Alternative Response Disposition – Not a Victim,” “Other,” “No Alleged Maltreatment,” and “Unknown or Missing”

Alternative Response was added starting with the 2000 data year. The two categories of Unsubstantiated were added starting with the 2000 data year. In earlier years there was only the category of Unsubstantiated. The disposition of “No alleged maltreatment” was added for FFY 2003. It primarily refers to children who receive an investigation or assessment because there is an allegation concerning a sibling or other child in the household, but not themselves, AND whom are not found to be a victim of maltreatment. It applies as a Maltreatment Disposition Level but not as

a Report Disposition code because the Report Disposition cannot have this value (there must have been a child who was found to be one of the other values.)

Starting with FFY 2003, the data year is the fiscal year.

Starting with FFY 2004, the maltreatment levels for each child are used consistently to categorize children. While report dispositions are based on the field of report disposition in NCANDS, the dispositions for duplicate children and unique children are based on the maltreatment levels associated with each child. A child victim has at least one maltreatment level that is coded “substantiated,” “indicated,” or “alternative response victim.” A child classified as unsubstantiated has no maltreatment levels that are considered to be victim levels and at least one maltreatment level that is coded “unsubstantiated” or “unsubstantiated due to intentionally false reporting.” A child classified as “other” has no maltreatment levels that are considered to be victim levels and none that are considered to be unsubstantiated levels. If a child has no maltreatments in the record, and report has a victim disposition, the child is assigned to “other” disposition. If a child has no maltreatments in the record and the report has either an unsubstantiated disposition or an “other” disposition, the child is counted as having the same disposition as the report disposition.

1. The data element, “Total CA/N Reports Disposed,” is based on the reports received in the State that received a disposition in the reporting period under review. The number shown may include reports received during a previous year that received a disposition in the reporting year. Counts based on “reports,” “duplicated counts of children,” and “unique counts of children” are provided.
2. The duplicated count of children (report-child pairs) counts a child each time that (s)he was reported. The unique count of children counts a child only once during the reporting period, regardless of how many times the child was reported.
3. For the column labeled “Reports,” the data element, “Disposition of CA/N Reports,” is based upon the highest disposition of any child who was the subject of an investigation in a particular report. For example, if a report investigated two children, and one child is found to be neglected and the other child found not to be maltreated, the report disposition will be substantiated (Group A). The disposition for each child is based on the specific finding related to the maltreatment(s). In other words, of the two children above, one is a victim and is counted under “substantiated” (Group A) and the other is not a victim and is counted under “unsubstantiated” (Group B). In determining the unique counts of children, the highest finding is given priority. If a child is found to be a victim in one report (Group A), but not a victim in a second report (Group B), the unique count of children includes the child only as a victim (Group A). The category of “other” (Group C) includes children whose report may have been “closed without a finding,” children for whom the allegation disposition is “unknown,” and other dispositions that a State is unable to code as substantiated, indicated, alternative response victim, or unsubstantiated.
4. The data element, “Child Cases Opened for Services,” is based on the number of victims (Group A) during the reporting period under review. “Opened for Services” refers to post-investigative services. The duplicated number counts each time a victim’s report is linked to on-going services; the unique number counts a victim only once regardless of the number of times services are linked to reports of substantiated maltreatment.

5. The data element, “Children Entering Care Based on CA/N Report,” is based on the number of victims (Group A) during the reporting period under review. The duplicated number counts each time a victim’s report is linked to a foster care removal date. The unique number counts a victim only once regardless of the number of removals that may be reported.
6. The data element “Child Fatalities” counts the number of children reported to NCANDS as having died as a result of child abuse and/or neglect. Depending upon State practice, this number may count only those children for whom a case record has been opened either prior to or after the death, or may include a number of children whose deaths have been investigated as possibly related to child maltreatment. For example, some states include neglect-related deaths such as those caused by motor vehicle or boating accidents, house fires or access to firearms, under certain circumstances. The percentage is based on a count of unique victims of maltreatment for the reporting period.
7. The data element “Absence of Recurrence of Maltreatment” is defined as follows: Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation during the first 6 months of the reporting period, what percent were not victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation within a 6-month period. This data element is used to determine the State’s substantial conformity with CFSR Safety Outcome #1 (“Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect”).
8. The data element “Absence of Child Abuse/or Neglect in Foster Care” is defined as follows: Of all children in foster care during the reporting period, what percent were not victims of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by foster parents or facility staff member. This data element is used to determine the State’s substantial conformity with CFSR Safety Outcome #1 (“Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect”). A child is counted as not having been maltreated in foster care if the perpetrator of the maltreatment was not identified as a foster parent or residential facility staff. Counts of children not maltreated in foster care are derived by subtracting NCANDS count of children maltreated by foster care providers from AFCARS count of children placed in foster care. The observation period for this measure is 12 months. The number of children not found to be maltreated in foster care and the percentage of all children in foster care are provided.
9. Median Time to Investigation in hours is computed from the Child File records using the Report Date and the Investigation Start Date (currently reported in the Child File in mmddyyyy format). The result is converted to hours by multiplying by 24.
10. Mean Time to investigation in hours is computed from the Child File records using the Report Date and the Investigation Start Date (currently reported in the Child File in mmddyyyy format). The result is converted to hours by multiplying by 24. Zero days difference (both dates are on the same day) is reported as “under 24 hours,” one day difference (investigation date is the next day after report date) is reported as “at least 24 hours, but less than 48 hours,”-, two days difference is reported as “at least 48 hours, but less than 72 hours,” etc.
11. Average response time in hours between maltreatment report and investigation is available through State NCANDS Agency or SDC File aggregate data. "Response time" is defined as the time from the receipt of a report to the time of the initial investigation or assessment. Note that many states calculate the initial investigation date as the first date of contact with the alleged victim, when this is appropriate, or with another person who can provide information essential to the disposition of the investigation or assessment.

12. The data element, “Children Maltreated by Parents while in Foster Care” is defined as follows: Of all children placed in foster care during the reporting period, what percent were victims of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by parent. This data element requires matching NCANDS and AFCARS records by AFCARS IDs. Only unique NCANDS children with substantiated or indicated maltreatments and perpetrator relationship “Parent” are selected for this match. NCANDS report date must fall within the removal period found in the matching AFCARS record.
13. The data element, “Recurrence of Maltreatment,” is defined as follows: Of all children associated with a “substantiated” or “indicated” finding of maltreatment during the first six months of the reporting period, what percentage had another “substantiated” or “indicated” finding of maltreatment within a 6-month period. The number of victims during the first six-month period and the number of these victims who were recurrent victims within six months are provided. This data element was used to determine the State’s substantial conformity with Safety Outcome #1 for CFSR Round One.
14. The data element, “Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care,” is defined as follows: Of all children who were served in foster care during the reporting period, what percentage was found to be victims of “substantiated” or “indicated” maltreatment. A child is counted as having been maltreated in foster care if the perpetrator of the maltreatment was identified as a foster parent or residential facility staff. Counts of children maltreated in foster care are derived from NCANDS, while counts of children placed in foster care are derived from AFCARS. The observation period for these measures is January-September because this is the reporting period that was jointly addressed by both NCANDS and AFCARS at the time when NCANDS reporting period was a calendar year. The number of children found to be maltreated in foster care and the percentage of all children in foster care are provided. This data element was used to determine the State’s substantial conformity with Safety Outcome #2 for CFSR Round One.

Additional Footnotes

A. CO does not report time to investigation in the Agency File.

B. Colorado reported one additional child fatality in the Agency File in FFY 2007. The date of death was in FFY 2006, but the investigation was not completed until FFY 2007.

POINT-IN-TIME PERMANENCY PROFILE	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)		Federal FY 2007ab		12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)	
	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children
I. Foster Care Population Flow						
Children in foster care on first day of year ¹	8,130		7,960		7,901	
Admissions during year	6,616		6,372		6,215	
Discharges during year	6,462		6,303		6,338	
Children discharging from FC in less than 8 days (These cases are excluded from length of stay calculations in the composite measures)	819	12.7% of the	750	11.9% of the	701	11.1% of the discharges

		discharges		discharges		
Children in care on last day of year	8,284		8,029		7,778	
Net change during year	154		69		-123	
II. Placement Types for Children in Care						
Pre-Adoptive Homes	321	3.9	328	4.1	294	3.8
Foster Family Homes (Relative)	1,229	14.8	1,218	15.2	1,185	15.2
Foster Family Homes (Non-Relative)	3,764	45.4	3,608	44.9	3,550	45.6
Group Homes	335	4.0	342	4.3	352	4.5
Institutions	2,210	26.7	2,068	25.8	1,989	25.6
Supervised Independent Living	95	1.1	112	1.4	116	1.5
Runaway	178	2.1	190	2.4	165	2.1
Trial Home Visit	55	0.7	56	0.7	50	0.6
Missing Placement Information	97	1.2	107	1.3	77	1.0
Not Applicable (Placement in subsequent year)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
III. Permanency Goals for Children in Care						
Reunification	4,387	53.0	4,280	53.3	4,174	53.7
Live with Other Relatives	446	5.4	479	6.0	425	5.5
Adoption	1,644	19.8	1,480	18.4	1,417	18.2
Long Term Foster Care	672	8.1	653	8.1	644	8.3
Emancipation	900	10.9	906	11.3	916	11.8
Guardianship	41	0.5	44	0.5	32	0.4
Case Plan Goal Not Established	26	0.3	26	0.3	29	0.4
Missing Goal Information	168	2.0	161	2.0	141	1.8

POINT-IN-TIME PERMANENCY PROFILE	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)		Federal FY 2007ab		12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)	
	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children
IV. Number of Placement Settings in Current Episode						
One	3,087	37.3	2,976	37.1	3,017	38.8
Two	1,792	21.6	1,785	22.2	1,627	20.9
Three	1,017	12.3	981	12.2	960	12.3
Four	610	7.4	614	7.6	558	7.2
Five	412	5.0	371	4.6	354	4.6
Six or more	1,192	14.4	1,129	14.1	1,107	14.2

Missing placement settings	174	2.1	173	2.2	155	2.0
V. Number of Removal Episodes						
One	4,881	58.9	4,714	58.7	4,630	59.5
Two	1,961	23.7	1,878	23.4	1,799	23.1
Three	716	8.6	722	9.0	700	9.0
Four	311	3.8	305	3.8	295	3.8
Five	97	1.2	85	1.1	72	0.9
Six or more	83	1.0	74	0.9	71	0.9
Missing removal episodes	235	2.8	251	3.1	211	2.7
VI. Number of children in care 17 of the most recent 22 months² (percent based on cases with sufficient information for computation)						
	2,072	39.5	1,959	38.8	1,917	38.9
VII. Median Length of Stay in Foster Care (of children in care on last day of FY)						
	13.0		12.8		12.6	
VIII. Length of Time to Achieve Perm. Goal						
	# of Children Discharged	Median Months to Discharge	# of Children Discharged	Median Months to Discharge	# of Children Discharged	Median Months to Discharge
Reunification	4,402	4.2	4,139	4.8	4,138	5.4
Guardianship	240	10.2	295	9.2	298	9.6
Other	827	17.1	834	20.5	850	20.1
Missing Discharge Reason (footnote 3, page 16)	15	24.4	17	20.8	18	22.2
Total discharges (excluding those w/ problematic dates)	6,462	7.6	6,299	8.5	6,334	8.8
Dates are problematic (footnote 4, page 16)	0	N/A	4	N/A	4	N/A

Statewide Aggregate Data Used in Determining Substantial Conformity: Composites 1 through 4

	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)	Federal FY 2007ab	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)
IX. Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification [standard: 122.6 or higher].	State Score = 114.7	State Score = 125.3	State Score = 120.1
Scaled Scores for this composite incorporate two components			
National Ranking of State Composite Scores (see footnote A on page 12 for details)	22 of 47	10 of 47	16 of 47

Component A: Timeliness of Reunification The timeliness component is composed of three timeliness individual measures.			
Measure C1 - 1: Exits to reunification in less than 12 months: Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification in the year shown, who had been in foster care for 8 days or longer, what percent was reunified in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home? (Includes trial home visit adjustment) [national median = 69.9%, 75 th percentile = 75.2%]	77.2%	76.4%	76.8%
Measure C1 - 2: Exits to reunification, median stay: Of all children discharged from foster care (FC) to reunification in the year shown, who had been in FC for 8 days or longer, what was the median length of stay (in months) from the date of the latest removal from home until the date of discharge to reunification? (This includes trial home visit adjustment) [national median = 6.5 months, 25 th Percentile = 5.4 months (lower score is preferable in this measure ^B)]	Median = 5.4 months	Median = 5.7 months	Median = 5.9 months
Measure C1 - 3: Entry cohort reunification in < 12 months: Of all children entering foster care (FC) for the first time in the 6 month period just prior to the year shown, and who remained in FC for 8 days or longer, what percent was discharged from FC to reunification in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home? (Includes trial home visit adjustment) [national median = 39.4%, 75 th Percentile = 48.4%]	56.8%	56.5%	54.4%
Component B: Permanency of Reunification The permanency component has one measure.			
Measure C1 - 4: Re-entries to foster care in less than 12 months: Of all children discharged from foster care (FC) to reunification in the 12-month period prior to the year shown, what percent re-entered FC in less than 12 months from the date of discharge? [national median = 15.0%, 25 th Percentile = 9.9% (lower score is preferable in this measure)]	20.5%	15.2%	17.3%
X. Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of Adoptions [standard: 106.4 or higher]. Scaled Scores for this composite incorporate three components.	State Score = 113.5	State Score = 118.4	State Score = 120.0
National Ranking of State Composite Scores (see footnote A on page 12 for details)	11 of 47	8 of 47	6 of 47
	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)	Federal FY 2007ab	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)
Component A: Timeliness of Adoptions of Children Discharged From Foster Care. There are two individual measures of this component. See below.			
Measure C2 - 1: Exits to adoption in less than 24 months: Of all children who were discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in the year shown, what percent was discharged in less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal from home? [national median = 26.8%, 75 th Percentile = 36.6%]	58.4%	57.2%	55.2%

<p>Measure C2 - 2: Exits to adoption, median length of stay: Of all children who were discharged from foster care (FC) to a finalized adoption in the year shown, what was the median length of stay in FC (in months) from the date of latest removal from home to the date of discharge to adoption? [national median = 32.4 months, 25th Percentile = 27.3 months(lower score is preferable in this measure)]</p>	<p>Median = 21.9 months</p>	<p>Median = 21.9 months</p>	<p>Median = 22.8 months</p>
<p>Component B: Progress Toward Adoption for Children in Foster Care for 17 Months or Longer. There are two individual measures. See below.</p>			
<p>Measure C2 - 3: Children in care 17+ months, adopted by the end of the year: Of all children in foster care (FC) on the first day of the year shown who were in FC for 17 continuous months or longer (and who, by the last day of the year shown, were not discharged from FC with a discharge reason of live with relative, reunify, or guardianship), what percent was discharged from FC to a finalized adoption by the last day of the year shown? [national median = 20.2%, 75th Percentile = 22.7%]</p>	<p>18.2%</p>	<p>19.5%</p>	<p>20.7%</p>
<p>Measure C2 - 4: Children in care 17+ months achieving legal freedom within 6 months: Of all children in foster care (FC) on the first day of the year shown who were in FC for 17 continuous months or longer, and were not legally free for adoption prior to that day, what percent became legally free for adoption during the first 6 months of the year shown? Legally free means that there was a parental rights termination date reported to AFCARS for both mother and father. This calculation excludes children who, by the end of the first 6 months of the year shown had discharged from FC to "reunification," "live with relative," or "guardianship." [national median = 8.8%, 75th Percentile = 10.9%]</p>	<p>3.4%</p>	<p>3.2%</p>	<p>2.7%</p>
<p>Component C: Progress Toward Adoption of Children Who Are Legally Free for Adoption. There is one measure for this component. See below.</p>			
<p>Measure C2 - 5: Legally free children adopted in less than 12 months: Of all children who became legally free for adoption in the 12 month period prior to the year shown (i.e., there was a parental rights termination date reported to AFCARS for both mother and father), what percent was discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in less than 12 months of becoming legally free? [national median = 45.8%, 75th Percentile = 53.7%]</p>	<p>55.5%</p>	<p>57.7%</p>	<p>59.4%</p>

	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)	Federal FY 2007ab	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)
XI. Permanency Composite 3: Permanency for Children and Youth in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time [standard: 121.7 or higher]. Scaled Scores for this composite incorporate two components	State Score = 122.9	State Score = 124.0	State Score = 124.4
National Ranking of State Composite Scores (see footnote A on page 12 for details)	14 of 51	14 of 51	12 of 51
Component A: Achieving permanency for Children in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time. This component has two measures.			
Measure C3 - 1: Exits to permanency prior to 18th birthday for children in care for 24 + months. Of all children in foster care for 24 months or longer on the first day of the year shown, what percent was discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18th birthday and by the end of the fiscal year? A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification (including living with relative). [national median 25.0%, 75th Percentile = 29.1%]	19.2%	20.7%	20.4%
Measure C3 - 2: Exits to permanency for children with TPR: Of all children who were discharged from foster care in the year shown, and who were legally free for adoption at the time of discharge (i.e., there was a parental rights termination date reported to AFCARS for both mother and father), what percent was discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18th birthday? A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification (including living with relative) [national median 96.8%, 75th Percentile = 98.0%]	96.7%	97.0%	96.8%
Component B: Growing up in foster care. This component has one measure.			
Measure C3 - 3: Children Emancipated Who Were in Foster Care for 3 Years or More. Of all children who, during the year shown, either (1) were discharged from foster care prior to age 18 with a discharge reason of emancipation, or (2) reached their 18 th birthday while in foster care, what percent were in foster care for 3 years or longer? [national median 47.8%, 25th Percentile = 37.5% (lower score is preferable)]	31.0%	32.4%	32.0%

	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)	Federal FY 2007ab	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)
XII. Permanency Composite 4: Placement Stability [national standard: 101.5 or higher]. Scaled score for this composite incorporates no components but three individual measures (below)	State Score = 96.8	State Score = 97.9	State Score = 98.5
National Ranking of State Composite Scores (see footnote A on page 12 for details)	21 of 51	16 of 51	13 of 51
Measure C4 - 1) Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for less than 12 months. Of all children served in foster care (FC) during the 12 month target period who were in FC for at least 8 days but less than 12 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings? [national median = 83.3%, 75th Percentile = 86.0%]	85.9%	85.9%	86.4%
Measure C4 - 2) Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for 12 to 24 months. Of all children served in foster care (FC) during the 12 month target period who were in FC for at least 12 months but less than 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings? [national median = 59.9%, 75th Percentile = 65.4%]	62.2%	63.4%	64.2%
Measure C4 - 3) Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for 24+ months. Of all children served in foster care (FC) during the 12 month target period who were in FC for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings? [national median = 33.9%, 75th Percentile = 41.8%]	34.2%	35.7%	35.6%

Special Footnotes for Composite Measures:

- A. These National Rankings show your State’s performance on the Composites compared to the performance of all the other States that were included in the 2004 data. The 2004 data were used for establishing the rankings because that is the year used in calculating the National Standards. The order of ranking goes from 1 to 47 or 51, depending on the measure. For example, “1 of 47” would indicate this State performed higher than all the States in 2004.
- B. In most cases, a high score is preferable on the individual measures. In these cases, you will see the 75th percentile listed to indicate that this would be considered a good score. However, in a few instances, a low score is good (shows desirable performance), such as re-entry to foster care. In these cases, the 25th percentile is displayed because that is the target direction for which States will want to strive. Of course, in actual calculation of the total composite scores, these “lower are preferable” scores on the individual measures are reversed so that they can be combined with all the individual scores that are scored in a positive direction, where higher scores are preferable.

PERMANENCY PROFILE FIRST-TIME ENTRY COHORT GROUP	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)		Federal FY 2007ab		12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)	
	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children
I. Number of children entering care for the first time in cohort group (% = 1 st time entry of all entering within first 6 months)	2,388	70.6	2,180	71.1	2,219	70.3
II. Most Recent Placement Types						
Pre-Adoptive Homes	10	0.4	19	0.9	16	0.7
Foster Family Homes (Relative)	667	27.9	556	25.5	589	26.5
Foster Family Homes (Non-Relative)	1,037	43.4	944	43.3	944	42.5
Group Homes	58	2.4	54	2.5	73	3.3
Institutions	429	18.0	452	20.7	435	19.6
Supervised Independent Living	4	0.2	7	0.3	6	0.3
Runaway	15	0.6	16	0.7	7	0.3
Trial Home Visit	85	3.6	42	1.9	74	3.3
Missing Placement Information	83	3.5	90	4.1	75	3.4
Not Applicable (Placement in subsequent yr)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
III. Most Recent Permanency Goal						
Reunification	1,974	82.7	1,814	83.2	1,837	82.8
Live with Other Relatives	117	4.9	113	5.2	92	4.1
Adoption	120	5.0	104	4.8	105	4.7
Long-Term Foster Care	9	0.4	7	0.3	16	0.7
Emancipation	56	2.3	55	2.5	67	3.0
Guardianship	3	0.1	2	0.1	7	0.3
Case Plan Goal Not Established	3	0.1	2	0.1	0	0.0
Missing Goal Information	106	4.4	83	3.8	95	4.3
IV. Number of Placement Settings in Current Episode						
One	1,452	60.8	1,284	58.9	1,329	59.9
Two	524	21.9	502	23.0	499	22.5
Three	198	8.3	185	8.5	175	7.9
Four	68	2.8	52	2.4	77	3.5
Five	27	1.1	34	1.6	29	1.3
Six or more	20	0.8	21	1.0	18	0.8
Missing placement settings	99	4.1	102	4.7	92	4.1

PERMANENCY PROFILE FIRST-TIME ENTRY COHORT GROUP (continued)	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)		Federal FY 2007ab		12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)	
	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children
V. Reason for Discharge						
Reunification/Relative Placement	1,230	91.1	1,068	89.5	1,100	88.4
Adoption	12	0.9	13	1.1	10	0.8
Guardianship	41	3.0	42	3.5	46	3.7
Other	66	4.9	69	5.8	89	7.1
Unknown (missing discharge reason or N/A)	1	0.1	1	0.1	0	0.0
	Number of Months		Number of Months		Number of Months	
VI. Median Length of Stay in Foster Care	5.3		4.8		6.5	

AFCARS Data Completeness and Quality Information (2% or more is a warning sign):						
	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007 (06b07a)		Federal FY 2007ab		12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07b08a)	
	N	As a % of Exits Reported	N	As a % of Exits Reported	N	As a % of Exits Reported
File contains children who appear to have been in care less than 24 hours	0	0.0 %	3	0.0 %	3	0.0 %
File contains children who appear to have exited before they entered	0	0.0 %	1	0.0 %	1	0.0 %
Missing dates of latest removal	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
File contains "Dropped Cases" between report periods with no indication as to discharge	29	0.4 %	57	0.9 %	24	0.4 %
Missing discharge reasons	15	0.2 %	17	0.3 %	18	0.3 %
	N	As a % of adoption exits	N	As a % of adoption exits	N	As a % of adoption exits
File submitted lacks data on Termination of Parental Rights for finalized adoptions	55	5.6 %	58	5.7 %	48	4.6 %
Foster Care file has different count than Adoption File of (public agency) adoptions (N= adoption count disparity).	57	5.5% more in the unofficial adoption file*.	59	5.5% more in the unofficial adoption file*.	33	3.1% more in the unofficial adoption file*.
	N	Percent of cases in file	N	Percent of cases in file	N	Percent of cases in file
File submitted lacks count of number of placement settings in episode for each child	174	2.1 %	173	2.2 %	155	2.0 %

* The adoption data comparison was made using the discharge reason of "adoption" from the AFCARS foster care file and an *unofficial* count of adoptions finalized during the period of interest that were "placed by public agency" reported in the AFCARS Adoption files. This *unofficial* count of adoptions is only used for CFSR data quality purposes because adoption counts used for other purposes (e.g. Adoption Incentives awards, Outcomes Report) only cover the federal fiscal year, and include a broader definition of adoption and a different de-duplication methodology.

Note: These are CFSR Round One permanency measures. They are intended to be used primarily by States completing Round One Program Improvement Plans, but could also be useful to States in CFSR Round Two in comparing their current performance to that of prior years:

	12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2007		Federal FY 2007ab		12-Month Period Ending 03/31/2008	
	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children	# of Children	% of Children
IX. Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage was reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home? (4.1) [Standard: 76.2% or more]	3,396	77.1	3,123	75.5	3,099	74.9
X. Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home? (5.1) [Standard: 32.0% or more]	569	58.2	579	56.9	568	54.9
XI. Of all children served who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home, what percentage have had no more than two placement settings? (6.1) [Standard: 86.7% or more]	6,623	83.7	6,339	83.5	6,353	84.5
XII. Of all children who entered care during the year, what percentage re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode? (4.2) [Standard: 8.6% or less]	956	14.4 (70.6% new entry)	908	14.2 (70.2% new entry)	885	14.2 (70.3% new entry)

FOOTNOTES TO DATA ELEMENTS IN THE PERMANENCY PROFILE

¹The 06B07A, FFY 07, and 07B08A counts of children in care at the start of the year exclude 145, 152, and 160 children, respectively. They were excluded to avoid counting them twice. That is, although they were actually in care on the first day, they also qualify as new entries because they left and re-entered again at some point during the same reporting period. To avoid counting them as both "in care on the first day" and "entries," the Children's Bureau selects only the most recent record. That means they get counted as "entries," not "in care on the first day."

²We designated the indicator, *17 of the most recent 22 months*, rather than the statutory time frame for initiating termination of parental rights proceedings at *15 of the most 22 months*, since the AFCARS system cannot determine the *date the child is considered to have entered foster care* as defined in the regulation. We used the outside date for determining the *date the child is considered to have entered foster care*, which is 60 days from the actual removal date.

³This count only includes case records missing a discharge reason, but which have calculable lengths of stay. Records missing a discharge reason and with non-calculable lengths of stay are included in the cell "Dates are Problematic."

⁴The dates of removal and exit needed to calculate length of stay are problematic. Such problems include: 1) missing data, 2) faulty data (chronologically impossible), 3) a child was in care less than 1 day (length of stay = 0) so the child should not have been reported in foster care file, or 4) child's length of stay would equal 21 years or more. These cases are marked N/A = Not Applicable because no length of stay can legitimately be calculated.

⁵This First-Time Entry Cohort median length of stay was 5.3 in 06B07A. This includes 0 children who entered and exited on the same day (who had a zero length of stay). Therefore, the median length of stay was unaffected by any 'same day' children.

⁶This First-Time Entry Cohort median length of stay was 4.8 in FFY 07. This includes 3 children who entered and exited on the same day (who had a zero length of stay). If these children were excluded from the calculation, the median length of stay would still be 4.8.

⁷This First-Time Entry Cohort median length of stay is 6.5 for 07B08A. This includes 3 children who entered and exited on the same day (they had a zero length of stay). If these children were excluded from the calculation, the median length of stay would still be 6.5.

III. NARRATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

The assessment of each outcome is comprised of three parts:

1. The data summary includes the available data from federal and state sources, all of which are included in this report. The data is discussed and analyzed in this first part. The Administrative Review Division (ARD) and Colorado Trails, the state's SACWIS system, provide data cited throughout this document. ARD is responsible for managing the Case Review System and the Quality Assurance System. ARD reviews by reading case files and conducting face-to-face meetings of children in placement for six months or longer. Reviews are scheduled at six-month intervals as long as the child is in placement. The Quality Assurance Reviews are incorporated into all of these placement reviews. ARD also conducts reviews of cases through stratified random sample of cases involving children in placement less than six months and children served in their own homes. Additionally, ARD conducts issue specific reviews in coordination with DCWS such as the "Screen Out" review in October 2008 which evaluated county performance in screening of abuse and neglect referrals.
2. The stakeholder assessment includes the information gathered from the numerous stakeholders involved in the self-assessment process. To maximize the opportunity for and the value of local input, Colorado constructed six regions based upon the geographical location of counties, judicial districts and DYC Regions to conduct stakeholder assessments. Appendix A is a description of the regions. The regional approach allows DCWS to ascertain the geographic locus of strengths and weaknesses in the service delivery system as identified by the stakeholders.
3. An item-by-item evaluation that is comprised of item-level information on current policies and procedures, further analysis of the data available concerning the item, a description of the results of the first review, a summary of the changes since the first review including strengths and promising practices that support successful results with regard to the item, and a discussion of barriers to achieving desired outcomes in the Colorado system.

SAFETY OUTCOMES

A. Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect Round One: Outcome S1 was rated as Not in Substantial Conformity

1. Data Summary

There are two types of data at the core of Safety Outcome 1. The first is measurement of the timeliness of investigations of reports of abuse and neglect by the child welfare system. The second is measurement of the recurrence of maltreatment of children. Additionally, when considering the success of child welfare in protecting children from abuse and neglect, other data can be relevant such as total reports of child abuse and neglect that are disposed in the system and disposition of those reports.

Trails data from the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2000 to SFY 2007 show the following:

- Total reports disposed went from 30,663 in SFY 2000 to 26,950 reports in SFY 2005, rising to 31,520 in SFY 2007. The apparent drop in numbers from SFY 2000 to SFY 2005 is the result of reporting the information in the Trails system. In general, the stakeholders submit that Colorado is seeing a steady increase in reports due to population increase and outreach and education efforts on the part of the state and counties. More consistent documentation of reports in the Trails system also contributed to improvement. Colorado's total population increased by 17% between 1998 and 2006. Colorado's population of children nineteen years of age and under increased by 16% during the same time period. The population of children under the age of ten also increased by 16% during the same time period.

- The percentage of substantiated reports rose from 17.9% in Calendar Year (CY) 1998 to 21% in CY 2000. The percentages of substantiated reports in the current data show a higher and declining rate, from 23.7% in CY 2005 to 23.5% in CY 2006 to 22.8% in CY 2007. The percentages of unique children are 25.6% in CY 2005, 25.2% in CY 2006 and 24.0% in CY 2007.
- Colorado's result for absence of maltreatment recurrence was around 97% calendar year 1998 through CY 2000 and ranges between approximately 95% and 96% in the current Assessment (FFY 2005 through FFY 2007). In all six data time periods Colorado's achievements are above the national standard.

The child file data show the median time from report to investigation is an outstanding "less than twenty-four hours" in FFY 2005 through FFY 2007. These data also indicate the mean time from report to investigation varies from 32.2 hours in FFY 2005 to 35.1 hours in FFY 2006 to 31.4 hours in FFY 2007. This mean time bolsters the assessment that Colorado does a consistently positive job in responding to reports of child abuse and neglect in a timely manner.

The data counting children who are maltreated by their parents while in foster care show a stable picture. The percentages for the three years are .36% in FFY 2005, .39% in FFY 2006, and .43% in FFY 2007.

2. Stakeholder Assessment

The individuals and entities most often mentioned as key stakeholders in Outcome 1 are law enforcement, schools, public and private health agencies and individuals, drug task forces, probation, neighboring county child welfare operations, county commissioners, child protection teams, DCWS staff, Head Start, child care providers, GALs, courts, county attorneys, district attorneys, language interpreters, and mental health.

There are noticeable trends when the stakeholder input is considered across all six regions. All regions indicate one of the highest priority strengths and a crucial element for a high-quality system is good communication and collaboration among the agencies most involved in child welfare in each community. Stakeholders are consistent in their assessment of the counties' child welfare staff as generally experienced and competent and where that is not the case have identified the issue as one of the most important to address.

Often mentioned is the availability of intensive in-home services that are evidence-based and based in best practice. There is pervasive appreciation of three efforts emanating from DCWS: training for staff and providers of service; consultation on difficult cases and complex system problems; and, training on and distribution of the safety and risk assessment tools. Finally, there seems to be consensus that team decision-making produces better case decisions and is an important support to child welfare staff.

There are also consistent views of the circumstances that adversely affect the performance of the child welfare system in protecting children from abuse and neglect. There is a generally held view that the child welfare agencies are understaffed and there is insufficient funding for services to families. Coordination with law enforcement agencies is identified as a problem, as are driving conditions in winter and long driving distances for child welfare staff. An inability to locate some families that are reported causes time delays and may put children in potential danger. Finally, the families in which chronic neglect and/or substance abuse exists are identified as the families most likely to have a recurrence of maltreatment.

Highlights of the stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice that have been made since Round One, the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has

demonstrated, and the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance are included in the item-by-item discussion.

3. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 1. How effective is the child welfare system in responding to incoming reports of child maltreatment in a timely manner?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires counties to differentiate between cases in which present or impending danger exists and cases in which a risk of maltreatment exists but present or impending danger to the child does not exist. More rapid responses are required for the former types of cases. Staff use standardized criteria to make safety decisions at the referral stage and the assessment stage.

Current policy also requires county departments to assign priority and corresponding response times as follows:

1. **Immediate or Same Day Response:** report received during regular business hours indicates there may be present danger. If this type of report is received after regular business hours, a response is required as soon as possible but not later than eight hours after receipt of the report. Present danger is defined as an immediate, significant and clearly observable threat to child safety that is occurring at the point of contact with the family and will likely result in severe harm to a child.
2. **Three Calendar Day Response:** report indicates there may be impending danger to a child; a response is required by the end of the third calendar day following receipt of the report. Impending danger includes threats to child safety that are based upon specific information or conditions that create an immediate threat to child safety in the near future.
3. **Five Working Day Response:** Report indicates child maltreatment or at risk of maltreatment and indicates an absence of present or impending danger; must have a response within five working days from the date the report was received.

Finally, policy requires the investigation of intra-familial, third party, or institutional abuse and clarifies that face-to-face interviews are required when a child has the verbal capacity to relate information relevant to safety decisions.

b. What do the data show?

Due to education and outreach efforts and the increasing population, Colorado's social services departments are receiving a steadily increasing number of reports of abuse and neglect. About one-fourth of reports investigated have a disposition of "founded abuse or neglect." As was discussed earlier in this document, Colorado is successful in responding to reports of maltreatment in a timely manner. In addition to the strengths and promising practices discussed below, there are two core elements responsible for Colorado's continued success. First, rule changes subsequent to the Round One review instituted best practice and clarified safety decision-making. Second, counties have been vigilant in maintaining their focus on timely responses. FFY 2007 data continues to demonstrate the timely response of Colorado's child welfare system.

In their review of cases, ARD staff recorded whether documentation exists that face-to-face interviews or observations occurred within the assigned response time in new abuse and neglect referrals. ARD reviewed 177 cases in the first quarter of SFY 2008 and the interviews or observations were documented as having occurred within the time frames in 82.5% or 146 of the cases. The Department

will continue to review county performance as reflected by the ARD data to assure timely response to reports of child abuse and neglect are occurring.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

In the last review Item 1 was assigned an overall rating of area needing improvement. Concerns surfaced in 31% of the cases reviewed. The concerns centered on the fact that Colorado did not require a face-to-face interview or observation of the subject within the assigned response time.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

As a result of the Round One review, DCWS worked with the counties to develop the new policies concerning response time. Counties were educated on the change and ARD tracked county compliance with the new rules.

Stakeholders identified training and consultation with DCWS, skill and commitment of county staff, collaboration with community partners, new safety guidelines and the safety assessment tool, and family-focused practice as strengths and promising practices of the system for this item.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders highlighted themes of resource issues and barriers to overall performance for this item. Some counties have a lack of trained investigations' staff and few bilingual staff. The pay scales in some counties are too low to attract or retain highly qualified workers. Families are, at times, difficult to locate and maintaining contact with them can be challenging. In the more rural areas of the state, long driving distances, winter weather, and a lack of adequate private and public transportation create barriers for families and workers.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength for Colorado. Rule changes have corrected the deficiencies noted in Round One. As noted above, counties have been successful in maintaining timely responses. The child file data show the median time from report to investigation is an outstanding "less than twenty-four hours" in FFY 2005 through FFY 2007. These data also indicate the mean time from report to investigation varies from 32.2 hours in FFY 2005 to 35.1 hours in FFY 2006 to 31.4 hours in FFY 2007.

Item 2. How effective is the child welfare system in reducing the recurrence of maltreatment of children?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Colorado policy and statute require that all allegations of child abuse or neglect be investigated and safety decision making occur for children who may be maltreated. Policies mandate that all investigations include face-to-face interviews with alleged victims, determination of the conditions of other children in the home, and assessment of the child's living conditions when indicated. Mandated actions include advising the alleged person responsible for the abuse/neglect and giving the person an opportunity to respond. The information gained from face-to-face interviews or observations combined with the use of standardized criteria in making safety decisions contributes to greater safety and less likelihood that a child will experience maltreatment recurrence. Caseworkers use the comprehensive

safety assessment model for ongoing cases as well as new assessments to focus on the issue of reducing maltreatment recurrence.

b. What do the data show?

Colorado has exceeded the national standard in all six data time periods (FFY 1998, FFY 1999, FFY 2000, FFY 2005, FFY 2006 and FFY 2007). The system seems to have struck an appropriate balance between reunification and protection as indicated by a low number of children in care who are re-abused by their parent(s). There is little variance in the ACF data over the most recent three time periods (FFY 2005 through FFY 2007).

In the data concerning absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care, Colorado has reversed a disturbing trend. For the 9-month measurement, Colorado was well above the national standard of .57% at .3% in 1998. However, by 2000 Colorado had slipped below the national standard to .73%. The most recent data show a .52% measurement in FFY 2007, above the national standard. The most recent data for the 12-month measurement show Colorado has not achieved the national average of 99.68%, yet it has improved from 99.13% in FFY 2005 to 99.41% in FFY 2007.

As was discussed in Safety Outcome 1, the data counting children who are maltreated by parents while in foster care show a stable picture. The percentages for the three years are .36% in FFY 2005, .39% in FFY 2006, and .43% in FFY 2007. The relatively low percentages of this re-abuse in Colorado speak to the care and expertise with which child welfare staff is working toward reunification of children and families.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Colorado received a substantially achieved for this outcome associated with Item 2 in Round One as 89.5% of the cases reviewed were in compliance.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Counties have increased use of assessment models over prior years; particularly the safety assessment/plan instrument and the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS). These support more accurate assessments and better decision-making. There is an increased emphasis on the linkage between safety, permanency and well-being, as indicated by the increased use of the instruments.

The use of adequate safety assessments throughout the life of a case results in better responses to assessed danger, specifically choosing placement only when no other alternative is possible. Greater accuracy in assessment and decision-making is targeted to reduce repeat maltreatment by designing interventions that are more appropriate to meet the assessed needs of the family.

Counties and service providers are better engaged in providing aftercare services for children transitioning home from placement, which also contributes to preventing repeat maltreatment.

Stakeholders viewed some of the strengths and promising practices in the system as DCWS training and consultation, experienced child welfare staff, state leadership, a variety of evidence-based programs and practice, sound working relationships with community agencies, quality safety policies and tools, and performance feedback from ARD.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders presented their views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect overall performance. Some of the most-often mentioned are understaffing and high staff turnover, a lack of specialized services in rural areas of the state, and an under-reporting of safety concerns in some areas of the state.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. Counties consistently use assessment models and are better engaged in providing aftercare services with providers for children transitioning home from placement. Colorado has exceeded the national standard for recurrence of maltreatment in all six CFSR time periods and there is no indication the performance has deteriorated.

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

Round One: Outcome S2 was rated as Not In Substantial Conformity

1. Data Summary

When the ACF data from 1999 and 2007 are compared, the following changes are observed:.

- The percentage of child cases opened for post-investigation services has remained around 34% to 37% from Calendar Year 1999 through CY 2007, with a slightly higher rate in CY 2005.
- The measurements of child victims entering care for the two Assessments seem to be inappropriate for comparison. The previous Assessment percentages are under 10% in Calendar Year 1999 and Calendar Fiscal Year 2000, while the current rates show a decline from over 21% in CY 2005 to 17% in CY 2007. The stakeholders generally express the view that the previous numbers understate reality and the current measurements are likely accurate and reflect a continuing emphasis on alternatives to placement, in-home services, reunification with intensive services, and expedited permanency.

2. Stakeholder Assessment

The individuals and entities most often mentioned as key stakeholders in Outcome 2 are foster parents, other placement facilities, mental health, public health, schools, probation, drug task forces, law enforcement, courts, and kinship parents.

Most often mentioned in the discussion of strengths and promising practices across all six regions is the availability of intensive in-home services. Also discussed frequently is the introduction of Family Group Conferencing and sound communication and collaboration among the community agencies involved in child welfare cases. DCWS is acknowledged for the development of and training on the safety and risk assessment tools, case consultation, and training for workers and foster parents.

A wide variety of barriers to performance are identified across the six regions. Most often mentioned are the following. There are travel and transportation challenges particularly in rural areas for workers, families, and foster parents. The rural areas also tend to have a lack of services for families and children. Good foster homes are lacking in number, as is appropriate support for foster parents. Some language barriers pose problems for effective casework. Parental drug use and relapse during treatment often poses risk of harm for children.

3. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 3. How effective is the child welfare system in providing services, when appropriate, to prevent removal of children from their homes?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Colorado's philosophical emphasis on reasonable efforts and safety management is reflected in rules that have been rewritten and expanded. Rule 7.202.52.K states that reasonable efforts shall be made to prevent out-of-home placement, unless an emergency exists, and to maintain the family unit. Safety plans other than placement shall be considered, including but not limited to the provision of in-home and Family Preservation Program services, if appropriate and available; the possibility of removing the maltreating adult from the home rather than the child; the possibility of the non-maltreating parent placing child and self in a safe environment; or the availability of kinship placement.

b. What do the data show?

The percentage of child cases opened for post-investigation services has consistently ranged from about 34% to 37% from SFY 1999 to SFY 2007, with a slightly higher rate in SFY 2005. The SFY 2007 percentage is 34.5%. Stakeholders seem to view the rate at which cases are opened for services as appropriate. There has been no indication from stakeholders that counties are typically not opening cases that warrant services nor are they needlessly opening cases.

The SFY 2007 percentage is 17.0% for child victims entering care. The stakeholders generally seem to view this rate as appropriate and a reflection of a continuing emphasis on alternatives to placement, in-home services, reunification with intensive services, and expedited permanency.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This particular Item was assigned an overall rating of strength because 91% of the cases reviewed were determined to be situations where the agency engaged in diligent efforts to provide services to families, preventing child removal while ensuring their safety at the same time. Colorado achieved 82% compliance on the outcome of maintaining children safely in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

The Preserving Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program has helped prevent child removals, assured safety and well-being in families in forty counties and one Native American Indian tribe.

CDHS Colorado Works Program was awarded \$10 million in Promoting Responsible Fatherhood federal grant monies over a five-year period in October 2006. This funding, distributed in community access grants of up to \$50,000 to non-profits and county departments, increased fathering services to families involved in the child welfare system as well as other target groups. All programs are required to use a domestic violence screening tool and evidence-based services. The Father's Tool Kit training was provided to different regions and county and community staff participated, learning about parenting styles of mothers and fathers and ways to engage fathers in services.

Statewide, counties have continued to focus on safety decision-making. There has been an ongoing increase in the use of family decision-making models. Family to Family and Family Group Conferencing

has resulted in better family engagement in case planning and increased participation of community and family support systems.

The stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system centered on a few items. A consistent theme throughout is the training and consultation from DCWS. Quality programs such as intensive in-home services and Family to Family programs are highlighted. Also, sound working relationships both internally, such as with TANF staff, and externally, such as with the courts, are mentioned frequently.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect performance often mentioned by the Department and stakeholders are communication barriers with families, the time required of caseworkers for documentation, and a lack of specialized services in some areas of the state.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. Rules that have been rewritten and expanded emphasize reasonable efforts and safety management. The item was rated as an area of strength in Round One and there is no indication that the level of performance has decreased.

Item 4. How effective is the child welfare system in reducing the risk of harm to children, including those in foster care and those who receive services in their own homes?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Colorado has improved its safety management and decision-making policies and practices by implementing improved safety assessments and safety plan processes for use throughout the life of the case. These improvements, coupled with the directive to maintain children in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate, are designed to increase the focus on decision-making regarding children's safety and thereby reduce the risk of harm to children and keep families together.

Rule 7.202.534.A (effective 2/1/07) states the Colorado Safety Assessment provides fifteen safety concerns to assess for danger. The fifteen standardized safety concerns are used to analyze whether conditions within the family are threats to child safety that could result in moderate to severe harm.

Rule 7.202.534.B clarifies that the following four criteria must be present to determine that a safety concern exists. Meeting these criteria indicates that the family's behavior, condition or situation directly threatens the safety of a child and could reasonably result in moderate to severe harm to the child.

1. The threat to child safety is specific and observable.
2. The threat or conditions reasonably could result in severe harm to a child.
3. The caregiver(s) is unable to control conditions and behavior that threaten child safety.
4. The potential that a child could experience severe harm is imminent, which means that it could occur at any point in the near future.

Rule 7.202.534.F (effective 11/1/08) addresses safety assessments and the safety intervention analysis to determine whether to place a child out of home or develop an in-home safety plan. The elements prescribed for the analysis are:

1. To determine whether an in-home safety plan can sufficiently manage the safety concerns, consider and document how the following are met:
 - a. The home environment is stable enough to support an in-home safety plan

- b. Caregivers are willing to accept and cooperate with the use of an in-home safety plan
- c. Resources are accessible and the level of effort required is available to sufficiently control safety concerns

Rule 7.202.535.A (effective 2/1/07) states safety plans do not have to be developed if the safety analysis results in a decision that out-of-home placement is the only plan that is sufficient to control impending danger safety concerns.

Rule 7.202.535.B defines that a safety plan shall be developed for all other situations in which the safety intervention analysis has indicated that an in-home safety plan can sufficiently control safety concerns. It shall be documented in Trails. All children in the household whose safety is at risk shall be included in one safety plan.

b. What do the data show?

Child fatalities resulting from maltreatment show an increase from CY 2005 (20) to CY 2007 (27). Despite an increased population and increased caseloads, the fatalities are still fewer than in the previous Assessment. In response to child maltreatment fatalities, the Executive Director of Human Services ordered a review of 13 child maltreatment fatalities that occurred in the fourth quarter of CY 2007. The review focused on identifying commonalities and making recommendations for improvements in the system based upon those findings. The 13 child maltreatment fatalities occurred in families in which Child Protective Services had involvement in the last five years. In order to determine systemic issues, information from these 13 reviews was combined with data regarding all child maltreatment fatalities occurring in Colorado over the past five years, as well as data at a national level and from research conducted within the child welfare field. Child deaths are of grave concern to all within the child welfare system and within the communities. Colorado provides oversight and feedback in these cases through a statewide Fatality Review Committee and the counterpart local fatality review committees. As was noted previously, the Executive Director of Human Services ordered a review of child maltreatment fatalities in which the victim and families were previously known to Child Protective Services. The findings and recommendations of the review were issued in April 2008 and are available at <http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/childwelfare/Fatalities.htm>.

As was noted above, Colorado has reversed a disturbing trend of abuse and/or neglect in foster care. Colorado was well above the national standard in 1998 and slipped below the national standard by 2000. The recent data for the 12-month measurement show Colorado has not achieved the national average of 99.68%, yet it has improved from 99.13% in FFY 2005 to 99.41% in FFY 2007. The CFSR Round One data for the most recent year show the incidence of this maltreatment is .52% in FFY 2007, above the national standard of .57%. Stakeholders attribute the upswing to the strengths in the system, promising practices, and revised policies and procedures.

As was discussed in Safety Outcomes 1 and 2, the data counting children who are maltreated by parents while in foster care show a stable picture and are indicative of a child welfare system that is working effectively. The percentages of this re-abuse demonstrate the care and expertise with which child welfare staffs are working toward reunification with children and families. Again, stakeholders attribute the positive results to the strengths in the system, promising practices, and revised policies and procedures.

ARD collected data on whether the safety needs of children were adequately addressed during the review period in situations where a new abuse or neglect allegation was received. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 the review of 214 cases determined that 208 (97.2%) did have safety needs adequately addressed.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This Item was assigned an overall rating of strength because reviewers determined that in 87% of the cases reviewed the child welfare agency had made sufficient efforts to reduce risk of harm to children.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

The Department added additional staff to the existing teams that monitor state licensed facilities providing out-of-home placement services to children in the custody of the Department and county departments. During SFY 2008, DCWS' 24-Hour Monitoring Unit monitored 67 state licensed facilities including Child Placement Agencies (CPAs) that certify foster parents that provide out-of-home care to children. The purpose of the visit is to ensure that agencies are in compliance with minimum rules and regulations, to evaluate the quality of services being provided and the provision of services to children and families. All observed violations are documented in a Report of Inspection and violations are required to be corrected within 30-days or the agency must submit a corrective action plan outlining when the violations will be corrected. The unit also follows up on critical incident reports that state-licensed facilities are required to submit. A critical incident is a serious life safety or potential life safety incident or concern that poses a danger to the life, health and/or well-being of a child or children at a facility or a staff member at a facility. During SFY 2008, the Unit investigated over 150 complaints filed against state licensed facilities and conducted over 450 Stage II investigations to determine administrative culpability in cases of alleged child abuse and/or neglect. Over 5000 critical incidents were submitted to the Department.

In cases of founded institutional child abuse and/or neglect (assessed by county departments) the Monitoring Unit submits a recommendation for adverse licensing action. This may result in termination of employment of the alleged perpetrator or closure and denial of foster parent certification.

Some highlights of stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system for this item are training for foster and kin providers, careful screening of kin and foster parents, and mentoring programs for foster and biological parents.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

Some views of the Department and stakeholders of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect overall performance for this item are a shortage of trained and experienced foster parents which can lead to less than optimum matches between foster parents and children, the remoteness of placement facilities from some office locations, a lack of support services for foster parents, and a lack of racially and culturally diverse foster homes.

f. Summary

This item is overall an area of strength, although the element of abuse and/or neglect in foster care is not solidly a strength. Colorado has improved its safety management and decision-making policies and practices by implementing improved safety assessments and safety plan processes for use throughout the life of the case. Despite an increased population and increased caseloads, child fatalities are still fewer than in the previous Assessment. Strong measures have been taken and are being taken to address a recent rise in child deaths. Children are rarely maltreated by parents while in foster care. Recent ARD data show that 97.2% of children have their safety needs adequately addressed.

PERMANENCY OUTCOMES

A. Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. Round One: Outcome P1 was rated as Not in Substantial Conformity

1. Stakeholder Assessment

There are consistent responses when the stakeholder input is considered across all six regions. Often mentioned as strengths and promising practices of the child welfare system are multi-agency teams that make sound decisions and promote communication and collaboration, intensive in-home services for families and foster families, practice of Family to Family strategies, a strong and stable relationship between the caseworker and the family and child, Family Group Conferencing, the availability and expertise of DCWS staff, support and training for foster and adoptive parents, timely and comprehensive diligent searches, the safety and risk assessment tools developed and disseminated by the Department, and the Structured Assessment Family Evaluation home study procedure required statewide for foster care, adoption, and kin foster homes.

Often noted as barriers that adversely affect the performance of the child welfare system are the return of children to their families prematurely, parents' failures to comply with treatment plans particularly due to substance abuse relapses, and a lack of sufficient placement resources either because the resources are outside the community or the expertise and experience necessary to care for children is lacking in some of the counties.

2. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 5. How effective is the child welfare system in preventing multiple entries of children into foster care?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires that the county conduct post-placement activities that establish a clear plan for follow-up services with the family if needed. Additionally, the county is to review the case of children who have been returned home and re-entered care twice and have a current plan of return home. Each county is also required to provide access to aftercare services to prepare children for reunification and to prevent future out-of-home placement.

In the previous Assessment, Colorado used the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) as the needs assessment for children and their families. In February 2007, the NCFAS-R (Reunification) was implemented. This bridges five previous domains contained in the NCFAS with two domains that can be used to assist in predicting successful reunification. The NCFAS-R is intended to be used throughout the life of the case, but must be used at least twice during the case lifetime (7.301.1F) in all program areas where the goal is reunification or maintenance of the child in the home. The Colorado Family Risk Assessment is required prior to case closure in all Program Area 5 (Child Protection) cases. The Colorado Assessment Continuum (CAC) consists of safety assessment and planning, risk assessment, and needs assessment for Program Area 5 cases. The NCFAS is optional for Program Area 4 cases.

This rule revision additionally requires that at case transfer, pertinent information regarding child safety, permanency, and well-being must be communicated to the new caseworker.

Formal assessment and reassessment is required throughout a child protection case regarding risk, safety, and the needs of the child and family. These assessments will determine what case plans will

address the services described in the Family Services Plan(FSP). Caseworkers are expected to tailor FSPs to the specific strengths and needs of individual children and families.

b. What do the data show?

Colorado has shown improvement and yet has not met the national standard in preventing re-entries into foster care of children discharged from foster care to reunification in the previous 12-month period. The data for FFY 2005 show the State at 20.8%. The 12-month period data ending 03/31/2008 show the State at 17.3%, compared to the national 25th percentile of 9.9%.

When considering all children who entered care during the year and calculating the percentage that re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode, Colorado has shown consistent and marked improvement. In FFY 1998 through FFY 2000, 18% to 20% of these children re-entered foster care. In FFY 2005 through the most recent twelve-month period, Colorado improved from a 16.4% re-entry rate to a 14.2% rate. Since the national standard is 8.6%, Colorado must lower the rate further to meet the standard.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. Of the eleven cases reviewed, nine children (82%) did not re-enter foster care within 12 months of discharge from a prior foster care episode.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Focus groups were conducted for two days in November 2007 with certified and non-certified kinship families to determine gaps or barriers in needed services for kin families. For families where the county department has an open case, families have access to services. Kin thought that the cases should remain open longer to allow more time for the success of the parent of the child. For families that had informal placements (by the relatives without county department involvement), kin often were not aware of the services available through county departments and some kin were hesitant to have county department involvement. In general there was a sense of isolation and a desire to become aware of available community resources. Group members reported that the group had been a key source of support and information about community resources.

DCWS received an additional staff position in the 2008 State's budget process to develop programming and infrastructure for non-certified families to link them with community services regardless of whether kin are receiving kinship services through a county department.

Family support services through Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) such as family advocacy, home visitation, case management and referral and information services are provided to families in 40 counties and one Native American Tribe.

Family to Family principles and core strategies have been implemented in 11 county departments and at least 2 of the core strategies are implemented in 30 other county departments. Strategies such as Team Decision Making (TDM) and the involvement of community partners have helped provide wraparound services for a child or family that will help keep the child safe in the home. Quarterly Family to Family training, two conferences, involving county and state staff, community partners, and parents and five regional conferences were provided around the State. As a result, the State anticipates increases in consistent practice of family involvement and reduction in re-entries into out-of-home care.

Through May and June of 2008 meetings occurred throughout the State with county directors, administrators and supervisors to identify and problem solve county specific issues causing re-entry of children in out-of-home care. Counties that performed well on preventing re-entry identified the following promising practices:

- Initiating aftercare services for the family prior to the child's return to the home
- Holding family group conferences prior to reunification to arrange supports by extended family members
- Providing substance abuse treatment services for parents
- Providing respite services to the family
- Planning with the family for the child's return

Colorado continues to partner with the Adoption Exchange in preserving adoptive placements as a strategy to minimize re-entries. This entity, Colorado Post Adoption Resource Center (COPARC) provides services to families through services that involve, but are not limited to financial support, lending libraries, advocacy and networking. Four regional resource coordinators across the state are available to families, providing direct assistance as needed. COPARC has also actively marketed and provided outreach to other entities such as school districts, county departments and mental health agencies. To date, COPARC has a data base of 1,081 Colorado post-adoptive families.

Father involvement was identified as an area needing improvement in Round One and county departments have increased diligent search strategies. Fatherhood initiatives, including the availability of father-focused programs have increased the availability of paternal family resources for children, preventing re-entries into placement.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system for this item are highlighted by supervisory training by DCWS, financial support for caregivers, and stable relationships between caseworkers and families.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

Counties participating in regional meetings about causes of re-entry identified the following issues:

- Lack of appropriate aftercare services,
- Lack of reunification planning with family and kin,
- A need for greater communication with all parties involved with the family.

Counties developed action plans, including supervisor specific plans, to address issues that cause re-entry of children into out-of-home placement. The county will report the monitoring of county progress and improved outcomes quarterly to the Department.

The Department and the stakeholders note that some casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect performance for this item are chronic substance abuse by parents and relapses while parents are in treatment, the reluctance of some foster parents to work directly with biological parents, and a lack of communication among the multiple agencies involved in some cases.

f. Summary

This is an item needing improvement. While the data are showing increased performance, Colorado has not yet met the national standard. However, tools to enhance reunification decisions and safety and risk assessments have been implemented. Programs such as Family to Family and the Fatherhood Initiative have also been implemented.

Item 6. How effective is the child welfare system in providing placement stability for children in foster care (that is, minimizing placement changes for children in foster care)?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires county departments to not move a child from one short-term emergency placement to another unless all reasonable efforts to return the child home or to place the child in a permanent setting have been exhausted and documented in the FSP. Additionally, policy requires that no child is moved more than twice unless the move results in a permanent placement or is determined to be in the child's best interests. Counties are also required to review all cases in which a child has been placed in four different placements excluding a return home.

Beginning in January 2006, the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) home study process was required for all foster care (both kin and non-relative) and adoptive home assessments. A modified SAFE assessment for non-certified kin was developed and its use is optional. Use of the tool should result in better assessments of foster and adoptive homes which should reduce the numbers of moves occurring due to the providers' inability to handle the child or due to abuse of the child.

b. What do the data show?

For Permanency Composite 4 – Placement Stability, the national standard is 101.5 and Colorado's score was 97.9 in FFY 2007 and 98.5 in the most recent 12-month period. There are three measures in this composite. In the measure concerning children in care for 12 months or less experiencing two or fewer moves, the system exceeds the federal 75th percentile. In the measure concerning children in care for 12 to 24 months that experienced two or fewer moves during their entire time in care, the system is below the 75th percentile. In the measure concerning children in care for 24 months or longer that experienced two or fewer moves during their entire time in care, the system is below the 75th percentile. Colorado ranks 13th of 51 states (including Puerto Rico) in Composite 4.

In counting all children served who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home and calculating the percentage that have had no more than two placement settings, there is a decline in Colorado's performance. Colorado exceeded the national standard in all three years of the previous Assessment; however, the State has not met the standard in any of the three most recent years. While showing improvement from 82.1% in FFY 2005 to 84.5% in the most recent year, Colorado is below the standard of 86.7%. The barriers to meeting the standard and the perceived reasons for the decline are presented in the Stakeholder Assessment and Item specific sections below.

ARD collected data to measure the State's performance for the Performance Improvement Plan in Round One of the CFSR. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 ARD reviewed 842 cases and found that 452 of moves (53.7%) were planned to achieve case goals and/or to meet the needs of the child.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Colorado exceeded the national standard of 86.7% prior to the 2002 review with an 86.9%. However, in sample cases that were reviewed, the area was rated as needing improvement. The PIP set out Colorado's goal that 76% of children experiencing moves would be achieving goals in the case plans or meeting the needs of the children. Further, measurements of whether the goal has been achieved would be collected by ARD.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Work occurred statewide to implement principles of Family to Family. Ten counties routinely use team decision-making as a tool for planning for or preventing the move of a child. Supports and services discussed at TDMs are offered to the foster family in order to preserve the placement.

Placement stability training was provided in August 2007 for caseworkers, administrators, supervisors, foster, kin, and adoptive families. The focus was the importance of sustaining and supporting their relationships in order to best serve children. The training was taped and a DVD was distributed in December 2007 to 64 county departments and about 35 child placement agencies so that ongoing training could be provided to caseworkers, other applicable staff, and foster, kin, and adoptive families.

Key partnerships between the counties and faith-based organizations were facilitated by DCWS through a summit held in June 2006. Department staff and several counties have participated in partnership projects, such as Project 1.27, where counties certify foster homes with the intent to adopt, and Project 1.27 staff train and support the families through child permanency. There is also strong faith-based support in El Paso County, with over 100 faith-based organizations that promote permanency through adoption for children in the child welfare system. Placing children in foster families that will eventually adopt them is a promising practice in preventing moves of children in care.

DCWS partnered with the Colorado State Foster Parents Association and developed a guidebook for foster parents regarding allegations of abuse or neglect. The guidebook provides opportunity for foster parents to be proactive and take preventative measures to decrease the likelihood that allegations are made. The guidebook is intended to increase foster parent understanding of the process and purpose of investigation, of how to get support, and on preventive techniques to decrease the risk of maltreatment. The guidebook should reduce the situations in which foster parents request that a child be removed when allegations of abuse or neglect are made. Copies were provided to all county departments and child placement agencies for distribution to their foster parents; and, continue to be made available. In addition, copies were provided to all foster parents who attend the State Core Foster Parent training.

In order to address the increased complexity of managing foster care programs, DCWS sponsored trainings to promote foster care program development for county staff and child placement agency staff, with topics such as developing treatment foster care, preparing foster parents of youth to help them successfully move to adulthood, and the dynamics of kinship. As county and child placement agency staff are able to strengthen their foster home recruitment and retention programs and provide appropriate supports and training to foster parents, it is anticipated that children in foster homes will experience less moves as a result of provider requests, abuse allegations or child's behavior.

Counties that perform well on this outcome report the following promising practices:

- A strong and diverse recruitment and retention program that places children in the home that is anticipated to be their permanent home
- Regional pooling of foster home resources to increase the diversity of homes available to a single county for better matching of children to foster parents
- Assignment of a mental health professional to foster homes so that an immediate resource is available to discuss child behavioral problems and appropriate responses
- Assignment of experienced foster parents to act as mentors to new foster parents
- Strong utilization review of foster placements to assure that resources that foster parents identify as needed are provided to preserve the placement

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

County Child Welfare Supervisors, Administrators and Directors identified the following as causing moves of children in out-of-home placement:

- Lack of services and supports for kinship and foster care providers
- Lack of thorough planning with kinship care providers when the children are initially placed
- A need for greater communication with all parties involved with the family

The Department and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect performance for this item include ethnic and language differences between caseworkers and families, a lack of respite care, and increased numbers of severely disturbed children/youth that require care from very experienced foster parents or more institutional forms of care.

f. Summary

This is an item needing improvement. While Colorado ranks 13th of 51 states and Puerto Rico in Permanency Composite 4 – Placement Stability, it is below the 75th percentile in two of the three measures comprising Permanency Composite 4 and above the 75th percentile in the third. The PIP set out Colorado's goal that 76% of children experiencing moves would be achieving goals in the case plans or meeting the needs of the children. ARD recently measured that 53.7% of moves surveyed were planned to achieve case goals and/or to meet the needs of the child.

Item 7. How effective is the child welfare system in determining the appropriate permanency goals for children on a timely basis when they enter foster care?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Staff Manual Volume 7.301.24 (J) requires a description of the services provided to reunite the family or to accomplish another permanency goal within the FSP. Then 7.301.24 (M) requires that the permanency goal documented in the FSP be based on the individual needs and best interest of the child. Additionally, the initial permanency goal for the child is to be returned home unless 1 of four conditions exists including:

- Parents are deceased
- Parents cannot be located after a diligent search
- Parents have been found guilty of repeated and or severe abuse or neglect of a child or the child's siblings
- A determination has been made that a safe return home of the child is not possible

Rules revised in 2002 clarify the maximum amount of time to 60 days that can elapse before a permanent plan has been designated and require agencies to document actions being taken to implement the plan. Additionally, since the last CSFR, legislation was passed to:

- Encourage relatives to petition the court for custody of a child and require relatives to petition the court if they wish to provide a permanent home for a child
- Create circumstances in which reasonable efforts are not required to terminate parental rights
- To deny continuances in termination of parental rights hearings unless it is in the best interest of the child

The Colorado Supreme Court adopted Colorado Appellate Rule 3.4 on February 10, 2005. It expedites the Dependency and Neglect appeals process and has led to a decrease in the amount of time between the notice of appeal and the issuance of an opinion.

b. What do the data show?

For Permanency Composite 3 – Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time, the national standard is 121.7 and Colorado's score was 124.0 in FFY 2007 and 124.4 in the most recent 12-month period. There are two components to Composite 3: achieving permanency for children in foster care for long periods of time; and, growing up in foster care. Colorado does not meet the national 75th percentile in exits to permanency for children in care for 24 months or longer and does not meet the national 75th percentile in exits to permanency for children with termination of parental rights (TPR). The system exceeds the 25th percentile in the measure of children growing up in foster care, ranking 12th of 51 states (including Puerto Rico). Performance in all three measures has declined somewhat from FFY 2005 to the most recent 12-month period.

ARD collected data on the reviewers' determination that the court-ordered permanency goal was the appropriate goal. In the first quarter of SFY 2008, of 2,327 cases, reviewers determined that 2,112 (90.8%) had the appropriate goal.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This Item was identified as an area needing improvement in Round One of the CFSR. In 72% of the applicable cases the agency established an appropriate permanency goal in a timely manner.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

The key change in Colorado's performance and practice was effected by two key activities implemented by CDHS. First, ARD staff reviewed each case of children in out-of-home care longer than 6 months and provided the caseworker, supervisor and administrator feedback on the appropriateness of the permanency goal. The second action was providing Trails data to counties of the low rate of documentation of the permanency goal in Trails at the time of the development of the FSP.

Stakeholders note the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include family preservation services, the use of multi-agency treatment teams, comprehensive diligent search, and the Model Court Programs.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers are highlighted by kin who are unaware of and unprepared for the issues that will arise with some children, incarceration of parents, and an inability to place some children close to home.

f. Summary

This item is an area needing improvement. Colorado is below the national standard in two of the three measures for Permanency Composite 3 – Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time and well above the national standard in the third. It ranks 12th among 51 states and Puerto Rico and is above the national standard for the Composite score. ARD determined that over 90% of cases reviewed have the appropriate goal.

Item 8. How effective is the child welfare system in helping children in foster care return safely to their families when appropriate?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy at Volume 7.301.24 (M) outlines the requirements when the initial permanency goal is one of return home. Additionally, policy at 7.301.24 (C, J, and L) requires the following documentation in the FSP:

- problems to be resolved to facilitate reunification of the family, and safely maintain the child in the home
- a description of services for family reunification including visitation plans
- reasonable efforts that have been made to make it possible for the child to return to the home

Policy at 7.301.21 and 22 requires the FSP to be completed within 60 days and that parents, extended family members as appropriate to the family and child's services needs, the child and providers be involved in the case planning.

There are several actions required of the county departments and the courts, which include the following: submission of caseworker reports for dispositional and review hearings that describe the reasonable efforts being made to reunite the family; make reasonable and timely efforts to contact the appropriate relatives identified by the parents within 90 days of the hearing; and, proceed with relative placement when appropriate, advising the court at the next hearing

Some counties and courts have adopted the practice of allocating parental responsibilities to kin within the Dependency and Neglect action. This is not a permanency goal; rather it supports reunification of the child with relatives.

Colorado funds Family Reconciliation Services for homeless youth provided by childcare facilities or homeless youth shelters. The purpose of the services is to develop skills and supports within families to resolve problems related to homeless youth or family conflicts to facilitate family reconciliation.

b. What do the data show?

For Permanency Composite 1 – Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification, the national standard is 122.6 and Colorado's score was 125.3 in FFY 2007 and 120.1 in the most recent 12-month period. Colorado ranked 10th of 47 states in FFY 2007 and 16th of 47 states in the most recent 12-month period for Composite 1. There are two components to Composite 1: timeliness of reunification; and, permanency of reunification. In two of the three measures of timeliness of reunification, exits to reunification in less than 12 months and entry cohort reunification in less than 12 months, Colorado exceeds the 75th percentile. In the measure of median stay Colorado is lower than the national median of 6.5 months and does not meet the 25th percentile of 5.4 months with a median stay of 5.7 months in FFY 2007 and 5.9 month in the most recent 12-month period. In the second component of permanency of reunification the measure is re-entries to foster care in less than 12 months. Colorado does not meet the 25th percentile of 9.9% (or lower), Colorado's measure was 15.2% in FFY 2007 and 17.3% in the most recent 12-month period. There are a number of stakeholders who are not alarmed by the system's standing in this measure, but express that Colorado's appropriate focus on timely reunifications necessarily leads to some substantial number of foster care re-entries. The Department does not support this opinion and supports that services should be in place to facilitate the child's safe and permanent reunification with family without the child experiencing a re-entry.

Clearly the system is very strong in its performance regarding reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement of children with relatives. However, Colorado's performance has been declining in these measures.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Item 8 was identified as an area of strength in the last review. In 86% of the cases reviewed the agency had made or was making diligent efforts to achieve the goals of reunification, guardianship, or a permanent placement with relatives.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

CDHS awarded \$3 million to counties who agreed to develop evidence-based services focused on adolescents to avoid out-of-home placement or to reduce the length of stay in placement, thus supporting reunification.

The PSSF program is currently being provided in 40 counties and one Native American Tribe. Family support services such as family advocacy, home visitation, case management and referral and information services are provided to families and kin involved with the PSSF program. When these services are provided, kin gain competence in their parenting abilities and are better able to maintain children in their homes.

TDMs have been utilized in many counties bringing kin to the table to discuss safety and placement decisions for children. When family members participate in the process they are more inclined to develop solutions to maintain their children with family. Some counties have used Family Group Conferencing successfully to determine services needed to stabilize the family or safely reunify the child with parents or other family members.

The stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include evidence-based treatment modalities, the integration of self-sufficiency and child welfare programs, and permanency planning training.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect performance include the time-intensiveness of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) process, a lack of substance abuse and mental health treatment programs in some areas of the state, and a conflict between expedited permanency timelines and the time needed to treat chronic drug-abusing parents.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. Colorado exceeds the 75th percentile in two of the three measures of timeliness of reunification and exceeds the national median in the third. Clearly the system is very strong in its performance regarding reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement of children with relatives.

Item 9. How effective is the child welfare system in achieving timely adoption when that is appropriate for a child?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires the following of county departments in filing of TPRs:

- File no later than the 15th month of placement for any child who has been in foster care under the state's responsibility for 15 of the last 22 months unless there is a compelling reason submitted to the court identifying why it is not in the child's best interest.
- File no later than 60 calendar days after the court determines that the child is an abandoned infant, unless there is a compelling reason presented to the court.
- File no later than 60 days after a determination is made that no reasonable treatment plan can be developed for the parents.
- Determine available adoptive resources for the child prior to and following termination of parental rights by the court. Document efforts in the FSP.

Policy has been revised to allow the availability of Title IV-E, in certain circumstances, for otherwise eligible children who are voluntarily relinquished to a private, nonprofit agency. Counties are required to provide the range of legal permanency options to caretakers in order to assist the parents, relatives, and guardians in planning for the children in their care. Policies are in place to implement the Title IV-E requirements related to inter-jurisdictional adoption, including penalty and corrective action provisions.

Statutory amendment and Rules of Juvenile Procedure provide that no final decree of adoption shall be attacked by reason of any jurisdictional or procedural defect after the expiration of ninety days following the entry of the final decree; except that, in cases of stepparent adoption, no final decree of adoption shall be attacked by reason of fraud upon the court or fraud upon a party, whether or not there is a jurisdictional or procedural defect, after the expiration of one year following the entry of the final decree of adoption. Further, when a final decree of adoption is attacked on any basis at any time, the court shall consider the best interests of the child. The court is required to sustain the decree unless there is clear and convincing evidence that the decree is not in the best interest of the child.

Counties are required to use the SAFE home study procedures and to implement the strategies described in the Title IV-E State Plan to assure compliance with the CFSR permanency goals. When a motion for termination of parental rights is filed, a hearing must be held within one hundred twenty days unless good cause exists to continue the matter. When parental rights are terminated, hearings are held within ninety days to review the status of the child.

A statutory amendment in 2005 expedited relinquishment proceedings for children under the age of 1 year.

b. What do the data show?

For Permanency Composite 2 – Timeliness of Adoptions, the national standard is 106.4 and Colorado's score was 118.4 in FFY 2007 and 120.0 in the most recent 12-month period. There are three components to Composite 2: timeliness of adoptions of children discharged from foster care; progress toward adoption for children in foster care for 17 months or longer; and, progress toward adoption of children who are legally free for adoption. Colorado does not meet the national 75th percentiles of the two measures of progress toward adoption for children in foster care for 17 months or longer. However, the system exceeds the 75th percentile in timeliness of adoptions and progress toward adoption of children who are legally free, resulting in a ranking of 8th out of 47 states in FFY 2007 and 6th of 47 states in the most recent 12-month period. Colorado's performance has generally been increasing in these measures.

ARD reviewers collected and analyzed two types of data regarding this item and concluded reasonable efforts were being made to finalize adoptions 92.8% (581 cases) of the time for the 626 children reviewed with a goal of adoption during the first quarter of SFY 2008. Reviewers also determined that 448 (83.6%) had an identified adoptive family in 536 cases of children who were legally free for adoption and whose goal was adoption for the same time period.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Round One of the CFSR identified this item as an area needing improvement. Reviewers determined that 17% of the cases reviewed onsite were proceeding to finalization in a timely manner. A key concern of the reviewers was that delays were due to casework practices rather than to court-related or system-imposed barriers.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Counties are implementing a variety of practices such as; reviewing case files for potential permanent placements; interviewing the child regarding his/her desires for an adoptive home; and, interviewing members of the child's current community (church, school, mentors, friends and other possible resources). The philosophy of the practice is that every child deserves permanent connections.

Child-Specific Family Recruitment is a promising practice. Through a contract between the CDHS and the Adoption Exchange all children awaiting placement with their forever families are registered on the Adoption Exchange (www.adoptex.org) and the Adopt Us Kids (<http://www.adoptuskids.org/>) websites. These two sites link with Colorado's Change a Life Forever (<http://www.changealifeforever.org>) website. When a family accesses this website, only Colorado children appear. Caseworkers that are looking for adoptive families for their waiting children have used this site as a resource.

The Heart Gallery, the traveling display featuring Colorado's longest waiting children, has been implemented since the last review. Thirty percent of the featured children were placed in adoptive homes during the first two years of implementation.

The state and county partnership with Project 1.27 includes several faith communities and has resulted in adoptive families for 89 children, 43 finalized adoptions and 258 families have been involved with the project since its inception.

CDHS staff and a contractor provided technical assistance to Moffat, Lake, Rio Grande, Montrose, Prowers, Weld, Gunnison, Arapahoe, Montezuma and Archuleta counties. This assistance included training in the following areas: child-specific recruitment, data entry into the Trails system; negotiation of Adoption Assistance Agreements; testimony at Administrative Law Hearings; improving the integrity and quality of the counties' adoption programs; and county Adoption Assistance Agreement policies and procedures updates.

Colorado has initiated a statewide partnership between the public and private adoption programs, convening representatives to discuss the adoption of Colorado's children. An important outcome was the agreement to share information on adoptive families that were interested in adopting a child (or children) from the public child welfare system with counties. Child welfare rules were amended to reflect this new partnership.

In January of 2007 child welfare staff and several county attorneys created a presentation for counties about preserving the confidentiality of birth families and providing adequate information to prospective adoptive families. This training encourages the counties to provide as much information as possible to prospective adoptive families to allow them to make educated decisions when choosing to adopt a specific child.

Stakeholders noted several changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system. Some of the factors most frequently discussed are concurrent planning, timely and comprehensive diligent searches, and adoption-specific services and programs such as the Heart Gallery and National Adoption Day.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that often affect performance of workers with large caseloads, a lack of culturally competent resources, and legal continuances when parents show marginal progress in treatment plans.

f. Summary

This is an item of needing improvement. As was discussed in Permanency Composite 2 – Timeliness of Adoptions, Colorado does not meet the national medians of the two measures of progress toward adoption for children in foster care for 17 months or longer. However, the system exceeds the 75th percentile in timeliness of adoptions and progress toward adoption of children who are legally free, resulting in a rank of 6th of 47 states. Further, ARD data showed that reasonable efforts were being made to finalize adoptions 92.8% of the time. Statute and rule changes along with program enhancements have been implemented to increase performance on this item.

Item 10. How effective is the child welfare system in establishing planned permanent living arrangements for children in foster care, who do not have the goal of reunification, adoption, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives, and providing services consistent with the goal?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Colorado policy regarding other planned permanent living arrangements (OPPLA) for children in foster care includes three options.

- OPPLA through emancipation. This option may only be used for youth aged sixteen to twenty-one
- OPPLA through relative long-term foster care. The plan must include either the name or other identifier of the specific placement. The county must document the steps taken to find the permanent placement
- OPPLA through non-relative long-term foster care. The plan must include either the name or other identifier of the specific placement. The county must document the steps taken to find the permanent placement

All three options must specify the projected date by which the goal is to be accomplished. Additionally, the second and third options may only be selected for children or youth in exceptional circumstances that have co-occurring complex conditions that preclude any other permanency arrangement. The county permanency review team must approve use of these three permanency goals. Policy details the steps that the permanency review team must consider in approving the goals and the use of the goal must be reviewed every 12 months.

Legislation passed in 2007 requires that youth are involved in their permanency planning hearing in the court.

b. What do the data show?

The data for Permanency Composite 3 – Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time, apply to Item 10. As was discussed in Item 7, Colorado is below the national 75th percentile for the component of achieving permanency for children in foster care for long periods of time and above the 25th percentile for children growing up in foster care.

ARD reviews whether case files have documentation that all other permanent goals were considered and appropriately ruled out for children with a permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement. The ARD data show that for the first quarter of SFY 2008, 620 such cases were reviewed, and 473 (76.3%) had the relevant documentation.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement in Round One of the CFSR. Two goals were agreed upon at the conclusion of the review. First, no more than 18% of cases would have OPPLA as a permanency goal. Based upon 2007 Trails data, Colorado met the goal of 18%. Second, 93% of the independent living cases would reflect diligent efforts to prepare youth for emancipation. Based upon 2007 ARD data, 90% of the independent living cases reflected the diligent efforts.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Creation of an independent living planning website has been a promising practice. The easily accessible website is informative and culturally sensitive for youth, foster parents, caseworkers, and the public.

The Denver Model Court Steering Committee and its Permanency Sub-Committee is collaborating on activities to increase youth participation in court hearings, increase Guardian Ad Litem contact with the children and youth they represent, and identifying barriers for permanence for children and youth with OPPLA as the permanency goal.

DCWS staff presented a workshop at the State Foster Parent Association's annual conference about different types of permanency for children and how to assist caseworkers so that children reach permanency.

DCWS staff conducted training to improve the appropriate use of the OPPLA permanency option to include effective diligent searches and active efforts with OPPLA as a secondary goal. Training stressed the importance of a more permanent but appropriate goal for the youth as the primary goal so the youth can maximize their "forever family" connections and access to Chafee entitlements before and after emancipation

DCWS completed the Region VIII Break-Through-Collaborative "Training on Youth Permanency" with a partner team of El Paso County, and youth participants. Trainers completed the "NRC for Youth Development Training for Train-The-Trainer for Youth Permanency" with El Paso County. Co-trainers were blended adult and youth teams using the State/El Paso County/Youth Permanency Training Team to conduct two Youth Permanency Summits. Summit #1 occurred in El Paso County where 44 attended on January 12, 2007 and Summit #2 occurred in the Denver Metro Area where 66 attended on March 31, 2007. A Train the Trainer Model was offered statewide for the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment. In addition, in 2008, DCWS piloted and implemented a Train the Trainer model for county departments and child placement agencies to train foster/group home parents of adolescents to actively participate in the successful transition to adulthood for youth in care.

The increased emphasis on monitoring quality assurance is reflected in quarterly reviews, random checks of Independent Living Plans (ILPs) in Trails and during foster care program reviews, as well as supervisor roundtable discussions on quality improvements.

Stakeholders note that some of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system are training in ILPs, the extension of Medicaid to youth who emancipate from foster care on or after their eighteenth birthday, and computer-based family searches.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

Some of the Department's and stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect performance in this item are a lack of available housing for youth, concerns of liability for the child welfare agency in monitoring and supervising youth who are living on their own, and increasing numbers of very disturbed children entering the system.

f. Summary

This item is an area needing improvement. Colorado is below the national 75th percentile for the component of achieving permanency for children in foster care for long periods of time and above the 25th percentile for children growing up in foster care. Colorado had two goals at the conclusion of Round One, is meeting one of the goals and is very close to meeting the second. Increased emphasis has been placed on quality assurance monitoring and training.

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

Round One: Outcome P2 was rated as Not in Substantial Conformity

1. Stakeholder Assessment

Identifiable trends can be noted when the stakeholder input is considered across all six regions. Often cited as strengths and promising practices in the child welfare system are kin homes and support for kin families, Family to Family practice and principles such as team decision-making, support and training from DCWS, as well as their guidance and instruction for using the assessment tools and instruments, such as the Colorado Assessment Continuum and the SAFE home study procedures, use of the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment, and enhanced foster care recruitment efforts and strategies.

Identified barriers to performance that surface often in the discussions include a general need for more foster and adoptive homes, an insufficient number of foster homes in neighborhoods where the children were removed, long distances for caseworkers and families to travel, a lack of transportation, and challenges to engaging some parents in treatment and to provide essential information.

2. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 11. How effective is the child welfare system in placing foster children close to their birth parents or their own communities or counties?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires a description in the FSP about how the home in which the child is placed is in reasonable proximity to the home of the parents or relatives and to the school the child has attended. If

the home is not in reasonable proximity, the reasons for the placement must be documented in the FSP.

The policy and importance of placing children in close proximity to parents is addressed in the caseworker training that is required for all new caseworkers.

b. What do the data show?

Colorado continues to place high percentages of children in close proximity to their parents, communities, or counties. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 measured by ARD, children were placed within close proximity to their parents or other potential permanent caregivers in 94.7% of the placements.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area of strength. The agencies were determined to have placed children close to their birth parents, communities or counties in 93% of the cases reviewed.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Several counties are using data collection and geo mapping to show neighborhoods and the placements of children into foster care. These activities assist in recruitment of resource families in the needed communities. Jefferson and Denver Counties presented their information at a Family to Family training offering it to all PSSF county staff.

Hilltop, a PSSF site on the Western Slope, has highlighted their promising practice of mentoring families' project, Tandem Families, at the Mental Health Conference, and the Family to Family Conference. By involving other parents in the community with the at-risk families, services can be provided within the child's community. Children are frequently placed with the mentoring family in situations in which the child cannot be safely maintained with their family.

Some of the stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system are providing financial resources for parents to visit children in placement, new foster care recruitment techniques, and good communication with placement agencies.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

Some of the Department's and stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers for this item are a lack of intensive treatment facilities in some communities, the location of foster homes tend to be in different communities than where most children are removed from home, a lack of adequate programming in some school districts causes children to be placed outside of their home district, and some children need to be removed from their communities because of gang and/or drug influences.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. ARD data show that 94.7% of children were placed within close proximity to their parents or other potential permanent caregivers. Some counties are using data

collection and geo mapping and/or mentoring to enhance their performance in this area.

Item 12. How effective is the child welfare system in keeping brothers and sisters together in foster care?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires that sibling groups be placed together if the county can find an appropriate and available joint placement for all children. Placing siblings together is presumed to be in the best interests of the children and such presumption may be rebutted by the county by a preponderance of the evidence that placement of the entire sibling group is not in the best interests of one or more of the children. The county must provide court and FSP documentation if siblings are not placed together. The policy and importance of placing siblings together is addressed in the caseworker training that is required for all new caseworkers.

The Department waives the limits on the licensing capacity for sibling placement, provided there is sufficient space and the capacity for safe care.

b. What do the data show?

There are no data for this item.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area of strength. The agencies were determined to have kept brothers and sisters together in foster care in 94% of the cases reviewed.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Placement of siblings together is a county value and practice, determined through county foster care program reviews. This was verbally acknowledged in the reviews and confirmed by Trails data. In a Denver County Mock CFSR, the staff stated that if children have to be separated, focus is on placing the children in foster homes in close proximity to one another to support the sibling relationships.

Stakeholders view some of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system as the use of the risk assessment tools and the SAFE instrument, dedicated child welfare staff, and foster parent education and training.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers include limited resources for sibling groups, a lack of therapists who are trained in children's issues in some parts of the state, some children in sibling groups have different fathers which can lead to children being placed with different relatives, families in which an older sibling is abusing younger siblings, and children from sibling groups often come into care at different times.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. Reviewers in Round One rated this item as a strength. There are no

indications that performance has declined since Round One.

Item 13. How effective is the child welfare system in planning and facilitating visitation between children in foster care and their parents and siblings placed separately in foster care?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

The Colorado Children's Code requires that visitation must be made available. The policy for visitation requires the development of visitation plans that address the needs of the child, contact with the child welfare agency, the increased frequency and duration of visits as reunification approaches, and visitation when reunification will not occur.

The policy and importance of visitation with parents and siblings and its relevance to reunification and other permanency goals is addressed in the caseworker training that is required for all new caseworkers. Also, ongoing training is provided regarding visitation.

As a result of foster care alumni advocating for visits with their siblings who are in out-of-home care, legislation and corresponding rules were passed in 2008 (effective November 1, 2008) to assure that when siblings (biological, step, and half siblings) mutually agree they want to visit or a Guardian ad litem requests visits on behalf of a child, then the county department must provide the opportunity, unless it is not in the child's best interests. The statute and rule also require that if either sibling is a victim or a witness in a criminal proceeding and the district attorney does not approve of the visits because of the impact on the criminal proceeding, then the county department shall not provide visitation.

Courts must address visitation as part of the FSP and the Treatment Plan.

b. What do the data show?

To measure the adequacy of visitation frequency for children in foster care, ARD considered visitation of children with the mother/guardian, with the father/guardian, and with siblings. The data for the first quarter of SFY 2008 show that of 1,165 children, 963 (82.6%) had visits with the mother/guardian frequently enough to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship. The reasons for inadequate visitation of the remaining 203 children were as follows: the mother/guardian was responsible for the lack of visits 67.5% of the time; the court was responsible 11.3% of the time; and, the agency was responsible 7.5% of the time. Other responsible parties are the GAL, the child, and the facility where the child is placed.

The data for the first quarter of SFY 2008 show that 534 of 737 children or 72.5% had visits with the father/guardian frequently enough to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship. The reasons for inadequate visitation of the remaining 203 children were as follows: the father/guardian was responsible for the lack of visits 77.8% of the time, the court was responsible 11.5% of the time, and the agency was responsible 4.1% of the time. Other responsible parties are the GAL, the child, and the facility where the child is placed.

The data for the first quarter of SBY 2008 show that 748 of 813 children (91.8%) had visits with siblings frequently enough to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship. The reasons for inadequate visitation of the remaining 67 children were as follows: the foster parent or kin was responsible for the lack of visits 23.3% of the time, the child was responsible 19.8% of the time, the facility where the child is placed was responsible 15.1% of the time, the parents were responsible 15.1% of the time, and the county was responsible 14.0% of the time. Other responsible parties were the GAL, and the court.

In all of the visitation opportunities measured by ARD, the county departments facilitated visitation 92.9% of the time, which exceeds the national standard of 90%.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. The county departments were determined to be in conformity in 81% of the cases reviewed and the national standard was 90%.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

County departments are facilitating visitation through caseworkers and case aides as demonstrated by the positive performance. Visitation training was provided jointly to judges and caseworkers, and training regarding the visitation rights of fathers was provided to caseworkers. Additionally, approximately 500 child welfare staff and community partners attended two-day visitation training sessions offered between 2004 and 2006. The sessions were designed to provide information about quality visitation to enhance successful reunification.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include the Court Improvement Program, the development of criteria that determine what type of visitation is appropriate (unsupervised, monitored, supervised, or therapeutic), and training on visitation strategies.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders view some of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers as a lack of training for foster parents to reduce the fear of engaging families, visitation restrictions on some parents, long distances between families and placement resources in some parts of the state and in some circumstances, and substance abuse issues of parents.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. In all of the visitation opportunities measured by ARD, the county departments facilitated visitation 92.9% of the time, which exceeds the national standard of 90%. Recent statute changes may also enhance performance in this area.

Item 14. How effective is the child welfare system in preserving important connections for children in foster care, such as connections to neighborhood, community, faith, family, tribe, school, and friends?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

The policy defining connections for children in foster care was broadened to include community, neighborhood, faith and religious beliefs, school activities, friends, and primary language of the child and family. Initial and ongoing caseworker training reflects the change.

The FSP must identify the efforts taken to preserve children's important connections.

b. What do the data show?

To determine whether children in foster care have important connections preserved, ARD examined the documentation of the following: tribal connections for Native American children in the FSP; the quality of effort by the agency to preserve the connections; and, educational connections. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 of 187 children in foster care with Native American heritage, the identified tribe or Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was notified of 145 (77.5%) children. Of 166 children, the court made a determination whether the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applied to the child for 112 (67.5%) children.

For the first quarter of SFY 2008, 2,322 FSPs were reviewed and 2,258 (97.2%) contained a description of how connections are maintained.

In the first quarter of SFY 2008 2,316 children were reviewed and the agencies were making concerted efforts to maintain the connections for 2,297 (99.2%) children.

Also in the first quarter of SFY 2008 472 FSPs were reviewed and 383 (81.1%) contained documentation that the initial foster placement process took into account proximity to the child's school.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. The child welfare agencies were determined to be in compliance in 72% of the cases reviewed. The national standard was 90% of the cases.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

One of the promising practices implemented immediately after Round One was through the ARD quality assurance reviews. ARD carefully scrutinized each case and provided case specific feedback to the worker, administrator and county director regarding both the importance of preserving connections and the connections that could be made for the specific child being reviewed.

A website was developed that includes resource guides and a step-by-step compliance checklist for each Indian Child Welfare Act court proceeding. Checklists and resource packages were created and made available to counties.

During county foster care program reviews supervisory and casework staff are interviewed regarding their considerations for placement of children in foster care homes. The responses most often noted are considering kinship alternatives first, the need to place the child in his or her own community, the developmental needs of the child, and the need to allow the child to remain in the same school or, secondarily, the same school district.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include collaboration with faith-based organizations and schools, life-books that document connections, and diligent searches.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers are characterized by a lack of transportation options, a lack of culturally similar foster homes for some children, and the need to break gang and/or drug connections some children have in their communities.

f. Summary

This item is an area needing improvement. ARD data indicates that Colorado is excelling in two of the five measures related to this item and not meeting the national standard of 90% in the other three. Intensive ARD monitoring and feedback has been implemented.

Item 15. How effective is the child welfare system in identifying relatives who could care for children entering foster care, and using them as placement resources when appropriate?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Since the first round of the CFSR, statute has changed requirements of parents and relatives related to securing permanency for children. At the temporary custody hearing the parents are advised of the requirement that they must provide the court a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of any grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, half-sibling, and first cousin of the child within 15 days of the hearing. Additionally, the parents may provide comment as to the appropriateness of the listed relatives for potential placement of the child. Statute was also passed requiring grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, and/or sisters of a child to submit a request to the court that guardianship and legal custody of the child be placed with the relative no later than twenty days after a motion for termination of parental rights is filed.

Parents are advised that failure to provide identification of relatives may result in the permanent placement of the child outside of a relative's home if the child cannot be safely reunified with the parents. Parents are also advised that there is a risk of emotional damage to the child if the child is attached to another caregiver and is later removed. Courts must be informed about possible placements within 90 days of the hearing. Statute allows that preference for placement may be given to relatives who are appropriate, capable, willing, and available to care for the child.

Policy also requires the county to document initial and on-going efforts to place children with kin in the FSP.

Rules allow children to be placed with relatives or individuals who have a significant relationship with a child, and county departments may issue a 60-day provisional certification in order for the provider to meet state requirements for certification.

Diligent searches for family members must begin within three working days of placement and the search efforts must be documented in the FSP.

b. What do the data show?

There are no data for this item.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area of strength. In 88% of the cases reviewed, the agencies were effective in identifying relatives and using them as placement resources when appropriate.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Several county departments have model diligent search strategies. Most common across the strategies are the use of search engines such as Accurant through Lexis-Nexis to locate kin. Some county departments have dedicated staff to complete family searches that are provided to caseworkers in the form of a family tree showing both maternal and paternal relatives along with contact phone numbers. Some programs use child support enforcement staff to complete the search that is then given to the child's caseworker.

A few of the counties have initiated family searches for children that have been in out-of-home placements the longest. The initial reasons for the search were to establish permanent connections for children in care. One of the counties reported finding relatives with whom a child ended up being placed after years in high-end out-of-home placements.

Placement with relatives is a county value and practice, as acknowledged during interviews in county foster care reviews. In Denver's mock CFSR, this was rated a strength in 13 of 17 applicable cases. In two other foster care program reviews in mid-size counties, it was rated as a strength in two of two applicable cases in one county, and in one of two applicable cases in the second county. Counties have varying policies regarding certification of kinship homes. Counties state some relatives cannot pass background checks due to a criminal history where the behavior was remediated but it is in violation of statute. In these cases, following assessment, the county may place the child in an uncertified home and the relatives are awarded custody. County practice varies in this type of arrangement, however, the relatives rarely receive support and services at the same level as certified kin family foster care homes. Many apply for TANF Child Only payments.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include training in diligent search, respite providers for kin caretakers, and good working relationships with schools.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department's and stakeholders' identification of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect performance in this item includes language barriers, parents who are reluctant to have other family members aware of the issues causing placement, families that enable destructive behavior, and inter-generational abuse and neglect in some families.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. It was rated as a strength in Round One and the system has continued to focus on identifying relatives and using them as placement resources when appropriate. Diligent search strategies have been improved.

Item 16. How effective is the child welfare system in promoting or helping to maintain the parent-child relationship for children in foster care, when it is appropriate to do so?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

The Colorado Children's Code requires that visitation must be made available. To supplement visitation contacts and enhance the parent-child relationship, foster parents or family members may encourage parents to attend doctor, physical therapy, and other assorted appointments. This serves the dual purpose of additional contact and helping the parent learn appropriate care. As visitation becomes less restrictive during the FSP, caseworkers may move their families to partially or unsupervised contacts with family. These contacts may consist of time in the family home or having family members attend

school and sporting events. Family members and friends are often considered for increasing contacts and connections for children, such as birthdays and other holidays. The balance between child safety and enhanced contacts to maintain relationships is usually determined by the child's needs and parental treatment progress.

b. What do the data show?

Information from ARD indicates that for the first quarter of SFY 2008, the frequency of visitation between the mother and the child adequately address the needs of the child to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship in 83% of the cases reviewed. The frequency of visitation with the father and the child addressed the needs of the child to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship in 72% of the cases. The largest single reason for lack of visitation was the parents' non-attendance. Additional contacts are not typically counted as visitations and are not specifically tracked.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. In 80% of the cases reviewed, the agencies were effective in promoting or helping to maintain the parent-child relationship when it is appropriate to do so. The national standard was 90% of the cases.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Visitation is monitored through the 90-day supervisory case reviews. As the data from the ARD quality assurance activity shows, the State has improved approximately 3 percent over the performance in Round One.

Promising practices in this area include meaningful involvement of the parents with their children and with their work with the Department through such activities as Family Group Conferencing and Team Decision Making.

Visitation issues were selected as a focus for several major trainings in 2005 because of the research-based findings that effective visitations are positively correlated with successful reunification. The Department partnered with the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning in this effort. In addition, visitation training was provided jointly to judges and caseworkers and training was also provided to caseworkers regarding the visitation rights of fathers.

A one-day Fatherhood Stakeholders Summit was convened for nearly 60 participants representing 31 state, county, and community agencies. Content included a framework to coordinate services across agencies, and strategies for father-friendly services. A linkage was established with the Fatherhood Coalition of Metro Denver that is developing a fatherhood practitioner's certification program at a local community college.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include visitation continuums ranging from unsupervised to therapeutic visitation, extended families who can care for children and assist parents in maintaining the relationships, and foster parents who coach biological parents on parenting skills.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

Some of the Department's and stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers are a lack of appropriate staff to supervise visits, the liability of foster parents transporting children, and domestic violence between parents.

f. Summary

This is an item needing improvement. ARD data indicate the frequency of visitation between the mother and the child adequately addresses the needs of the child to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship in 83% of the cases reviewed. The frequency of visitation with the father and the child addressed the needs of the child to maintain or promote continuity of relationship in 72% of the cases. These percentages are below the 90% national standard. As is noted above, Colorado's performance is improving and this area has been the focus of several major trainings. If additional contacts were tracked, Colorado could well show improvement in this area.

WELL-BEING OUTCOMES

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

Round One: Outcome WB1 was rated as Not in Substantial Conformity

1. Data Summary

Several data elements are collected by ARD to measure Well-Being Outcome 1. In the first quarter of SFY 2008, those data elements and the results of the responses are:

- Were the identified needs of all required parties, as they relate to the child's permanency addressed through appropriate services? In 98.4% or 2,291 cases, needs were identified.
- Did the FSP and/or court reports document the services needed by the foster parents or kin to maintain the stability of the placement? The response was positive in 95.3% or 1,669 cases.
- Were children placed in the most appropriate, least restrictive setting available to meet their needs? Children were placed in the most appropriate setting in 98.8% (2,250) cases.
- If the child was returning home and substance abuse treatment issues were identified for the parents, were services offered? In 344 cases (56.6%) substance abuse treatment was offered to the parents. Nearly 70% of the time, the reason that services were not provided were the parents' refusal of services. Lack of referral by the agency only occurred in 2.6% of the cases.
- Were parents and children over the age of 12 involved in case planning? Mothers were involved in case planning 99.2% (1,356 cases) of the time, fathers were involved in 1,025 cases (97.7%) and children were involved 99.6% of the time or in 1,126 cases.
- Were monthly face-to-face contacts made with children? Agencies made 93.6% of the contacts for children residing within Colorado as required by policy. For children placed outside of Colorado, 84 of 116 cases documented quarterly visitation (72.4%).
- Did face-to-face contacts with the child focus on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, or goal attainment? This activity was documented in 97.8% (2,178 cases) of the cases reviewed.
- Quality and frequency of parental contact was also measured. ARD reviewed 1,087 cases in the first quarter of 2008 and found that the contacts required by Colorado policy took place in 908 (83.5%) of them. ARD determined that of 1,118 parental contacts, 1,054 (94.3%) of them were documented as focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, or goal attainment.

2. Stakeholder Assessment

Some consistencies can be noted when the stakeholder input is considered across all six regions. Often assessed as strengths and promising practices of the child welfare system are multi-agency teams and treatment approaches, Family to Family practices and core strategies, consultation and leadership from DCWS, the inclusion of parents in the case planning and treatment processes, the Model Courts Project, and TDMs.

The elements consistently cited as barriers to performance are long distances for caseworkers and families to travel and a corresponding lack of transportation, uncooperativeness and/or unavailability of parents to engage in treatment and provide essential information, substance abuse by parents, and a lack of service providers either in geographical locations or by specialty or both.

3. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 17. How effective is the child welfare system in assessing the needs of children, parents, and foster parents, and in providing needed services to children in foster care, to their parents and foster parents, and to children and families receiving in-home services?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy at Volume 7.202.5 (B) requires that the needs and strengths of children and families be assessed during the intake investigation and at development and coordination of the initial FSP. Policy also requires the needs assessment in the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale to be used throughout the case in child protection cases and requires the involvement of the family in all phases of assessment and case planning.

As a result of the assessment/evaluation in child protection cases, the caseworker and family are to identify the family's safety, risk and needs, including the level of functioning, areas of strength and weaknesses, specific problems to be addressed and changes that must occur to remedy the problems that brought the family to the agency.

In youth in conflict cases, the county is required to complete a needs assessment and provide the needed services to the youth and family.

The FSP must be completed for all cases within 60 calendar days of opening an assessment and the county must assure the participation of the parent, child, immediate and extended family members and service providers in the development of the FSP, which documents the needs identified in the assessment, the treatment outcomes to be achieved and specific, measurable, realistic, time-limited objectives and actions steps to be accomplished by the parents, child, services providers, and county staff.

b. What do the data show?

The data show the following.

- In over 98% of cases the needs of all required parties, as related to the child's need for permanency, were addressed through appropriate services.
- In over 95% of the case files the FSP and court reports documented the services needed by foster parents or kin to maintain the stability of placements.
- Approximately 99% of children in placement were in the most appropriate setting to meet their needs.
- In 57% of the cases treatment services were provided when substance abuse issues were

identified and the child's goal was to return home.

It is also important to note situations in which services were not provided. In 70% of these cases parents refused services, and in 3% of these cases the county did not make a referral.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area of strength. Reviewers found the agencies to be effective in assessing needs and providing services in 91% of the cases examined.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Several changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One and are as follows:

- The Youth Empowerment Systems (YES!) Academy served Chafee-eligible youth statewide to prevent or intervene early in youth homelessness. Services included Ansel-Casey Life Skills assessments, plans, referrals, starter-kits, footlockers, and free housing vouchers for 18 months. Eight-two percent of the youth using vouchers were never evicted
- "Youth voice and choice" in recommendations to decision-makers was facilitated through the statewide Youth and Young Adult Leadership Team's (YLT) Shape Our System (SOS) Survey. Their concerns were: #1 hearing "youth voice" (61%); #2 being informed about available youth support resources (17%); #3 receiving transportation supports (15%); and, #4 receiving funding supports (7%)
- Approximately four million dollars in the Core Services programs are directed to funding evidence-based adolescent services. These programs have improved the quality and availability of services for children and families. In SFY 2004 a total of 32,712 Core Services were provided statewide and in SFY 2008 50,686 Core Services were provided. Ninety-seven percent of Colorado's counties reported that the menu of Core Services met the needs of children who are at imminent risk of placement
- The Colorado Sex Offender Management Board revised the 2002 standards of care to improve services for both sexually abusive juveniles and victims based on research supported best practices in 2008
- The 32 PSSF programs representing more than 40 counties have initiated implementation of the four Family to Family core strategies which include: self assessment; building community partnerships; recruitment, development and support of resource families; and, TDMS

Programs are also moving towards more evidence-based practices and programs for effective parenting and prevention of child abuse. Parents and youth are involved in every aspect of PSSF programs. Parents and youth sit on the Community Advisory Councils in the local districts. Parents act as family advocates and some are prior clients. Parents and youth take an active role in developing their own service plans.

Sites are currently focusing on services outcomes that will be tracked through an improved PSSF database.

DCWS added a new consultant during SFY 2007-2008 who is an expert in domestic violence and child protection.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include a range of services and support for foster parents, collaboration with schools and hospitals, including parents in the planning process, and the use of

assessment tools to chart placement progress and foster parent needs.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department's and stakeholders' identification of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers include a lack of therapeutic and health providers in some areas of the state, and a lack of culturally appropriate foster and kin homes.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. The data show that in over 98% of cases the needs of all required parties, as related to the child's need for permanency, were addressed through appropriate services. The FSP and court reports documented the services needed by foster parents or kin to maintain the stability of placements in over 95% of the case files. Approximately 99% of children in placement were in the most appropriate setting to meet their needs. Several program enhancements, described above, have been implemented.

Item 18. How effective is the child welfare system in involving parents and children in the case planning process?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Colorado policy clearly and straightforwardly requires the family to be involved in all phases of assessment and case planning.

Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Mullarkey issued a written directive on July 10, 2007 to all Colorado District Courts directing them to ensure that county departments are providing written notice of all proceedings to children, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers, and to routinely review certificates of mailing to ensure the notices are occurring.

b. What do the data show?

ARD reviewers found that mothers, fathers, and children were involved in the case planning process in no less than 97.7% of cases for any group. The system improved in its involvement of families.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This Item was assigned an overall rating of needing improvement. The system involved the parents and children in the case planning process in 72% of the cases. The key concern noted was that children and fathers were not being involved in the process. As can be seen from the current ARD data, the system has made the needed improvement.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Key practices that have improved the State's performance in this area have been: involvement of parents and others in ARD's review of out-of-home placement cases; parent and youth partnerships in the PSSF program; parent involvement in the Collaborative Management Program local and state governance bodies; involvement on the State Steering Committee for fathers through Promoting Responsible Fatherhood programs; and, expanded use of Family Group Conferencing and Family to

Family strategies that involve families in their case planning.

ARD convenes six-month reviews of out-of-home placement cases. The county coordinates participation of parents, children, foster parents and other providers. This process provides a non-adversarial venue for parents, foster parents and children to discuss services and supports that are needed.

Collaborative Management was implemented in legislation in 2004. This program encourages counties to enter into formalized agreements with the courts including probation, mental health, behavioral health organizations, DYC, the Managed Service Organization for substance abuse treatment, the public health department, and the local school districts to collaborate in services for multi-system clients and children. Many counties and the State Steering Committee for the program involve parents in the governance of the program to assure services and programs developed better meet the needs of clients.

Counties are expanding their use of Family to Family strategies in their practice of child welfare. The principles support children being able to remain safely with their own families or a family-like connection. Team Decision Making is a key strategy, which actively involves parents in developing their plan for services. Denver County has been designated as an anchor Family to Family site and a regional training site.

Many counties are using Family Group Conferencing or Family Group Decision Making to support families including extended families in working together to direct the care and treatment necessary to safely care for children.

Some of the stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system for this item are families are kept informed and encouraged to participate in decisions regarding their children, DCWS and ARD audits and feedback, and focus on reunification by caseworkers.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department's and the stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers include language barriers, the court process can create an adversarial relationship between the agency and parents, and long distances between the agency and some communities.

f. Summary

This is an area of strength. The implementation of practice improvements described above has resulted in the increased performance. ARD reviewers found that mothers, fathers, and children were involved in the case planning process in no less than 97.7% of cases for any group.

Item 19. How effective is the child welfare system in conducting face-to-face visits as often as needed with children in foster care and those who receive services in their own homes?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

In child protection cases, policy requires the county to have monthly face-to-face contact with children and monthly contact with the parent, parent surrogate or guardian with face-to-face contact occurring every other month.

In youth in conflict cases, the county is to have monthly face-to-face contact with the child and monthly face-to-face or phone contact with the parent, parent surrogate or guardian.

When a child is placed out of the home, contact is to be a minimum of two face-to-face visits with the child in the first month of placement and monthly face-to-face contact thereafter. A portion of the visit must occur out of the presence of the provider and contact must occur in the child's placement with a visual inspection occurring of where the child sleeps. Contact may occur by a member of the treatment team.

For children in out of state placements, contact must occur quarterly face-to-face by either the agency with custody or a public agency in the receiving state or an entity with whom the custodial agency has contracted. In Colorado's de-centralized Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) system, the county director is the liaison. The duty can be designated to someone at the supervisory or management level.

Face-to-face, telephone or e-mail contact must occur every three years in finalized subsidized adoption cases.

For children in foster care who have been determined Title IV-E eligible and have moved to Colorado or children who are eligible for Home and Community Base Services or Home Health Care Services, contact requirements are face-to-face or telephone contact every six months with at least one face-to-face contact annually.

Colorado grants an exception to the contact policies if direct contact is impossible due to the child's location. In those instances, an alternative agency contact agreement is to be developed that meets the minimum requirements for frequency and location of contacts specified in rule. The agency director or administrator must approve the plan and documentation must exist in the case file indicating why direct contact is not possible, how contact shall occur, if the case is supervised by another agency and the frequency of the contact by that agency and finally, how the county will monitor progress.

b. What do the data show?

The data show Colorado has improved significantly in visiting children. Over 97% of the required face-to-face contacts were conducted. Approximately 98% of case files contain documentation that contacts with children focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, and/or goal attainment. The noted strengths and promising practices along with the policy changes have had the desired impact.

The data on children placed outside Colorado is less encouraging. Out-of-state placements require the ICPC process in which the caseworker specifies the contact requirements for the child and the child's caregiver. However, files contained documentation that the child was visited at least quarterly by a caseworker from Colorado or the receiving state in 72.4% of the cases. Given the prevalence of documentation in files concerning visits to children in Colorado, improvement needs to be made in the actual visitation and coordination of visitation with other states rather than in the area of documentation.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. In the Program Improvement Plan, Colorado did not meet the standard of accomplishing 90% of required monthly face-to-face visits with children using the measurement initially approved.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Several trainings have occurred since 2004 with statewide participation intended to increase the evidence-based practices of caseworker contacts and visitation between parent(s) and child(ren) as proven approaches that increase successful reunification and other types of early, safe permanency. These trainings are as follows:

- “Partnering with Birthparents: Working with Birthparents in Substance Abuse Recovery”, Denver, April 28, 2005.
- “Building Blocks for the Life Cycle of Permanency: Placement Stability, Effective Reunification Strategies and Lifelong Connections”, Arapahoe County, January, 22-23, 2008.
- “Caseworker Contacts Convening,” Denver, September 9-10, 2008 to connect and integrate all the most promising practices related to caseworker contacts with children, parents, and resource families. This was a foundation event for Colorado’s work plan to reach compliance with Federal caseworker contact requirements.
- Continuing capacity-building events to imbed improved use of caseworker contacts for Federal Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

Staff retention is a key strategy to routine and effective caseworker visitation. The first Realistic Job Preview Video was premiered in Colorado in June, 2008. PSSF funding, designated for improvement of caseworker contacts, was used to produce the video. It has been distributed to counties around the state for implementation.

PSSF funding was also used to provide “Scaling the Summit”, a recruitment and retention conference sponsored through the Butler Institute for Families’ Western Regional Recruitment and Retention Project Grant. Scholarships were provided to 50 county staff.

Stakeholders’ views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include collaboration between counties to facilitate visitation, team approaches to treatment, and consistency in casework staff throughout the life of the case.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system’s overall performance?

A barrier to reaching compliance with Federal regulations pertaining to caseworker contacts is the formula for how caseworker contacts are counted. The formula only counts caseworker contacts for children for whom one hundred percent of visits occurred during the 12-month calendar year.

Some of the Department’s and stakeholders’ views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers for this item are a lack of transportation for families, the busy schedules of foster parents, and the inability to locate families.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. The trainings and staff retention efforts have had the desired impact. The data show over 97% of the required face-to-face contacts were conducted in Colorado. Approximately 98% of case files contain documentation that contacts with children focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, and/or goal attainment. However, the data on children placed outside Colorado is less encouraging and requires attention.

Item 20. How effective is the child welfare system in conducting face-to-face visits as often as needed with parents of children in foster care and parents of children receiving in-home services?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

In child protection cases, policy requires the county to have monthly face-to-face contact with children and monthly contact with the parent, parent surrogate or guardian with face-to-face contact occurring every other month.

In youth in conflict cases, the county is to have monthly face-to-face contact with the child and monthly face-to-face or phone contact with the parent, parent surrogate or guardian.

b. What do the data show?

Data on contacts between parent(s) and caseworkers showed that the contacts required by Colorado policy took place in approximately 84% of the cases. Of the visits that occurred, approximately 94% of them were documented as focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, or goal attainment.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. In 67% of the cases reviewed, the system conducted face-to-face visits as often as needed with parents of children in foster care and parents of children receiving in-home services.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Discussion contained in item 19 outlines the activities that have occurred related to improving visitation frequency and quality.

PSSF programs provide advocacy services to aid families with timely reunification of children, parent support, and family preservation services.

Stakeholders identified that the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include parent support groups, PSSF programs provide advocacy services to aid families with timely reunification of children, family preservation services and visitation initiated immediately upon placement.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance

The Department's and stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers include time spent by caseworkers awaiting court hearings, parents' attorneys advising the parents not to meet with agency staff unless the attorney is present, and the failure of schools to smoothly transition children from one district to another.

f. Summary

This is an item needing improvement. While the trainings and staff retention efforts have had the desired impact on visits with children, additional efforts are required for visits with parents. Data on contacts with parent(s) showed that the contacts required by Colorado policy took place in approximately 84% of the cases.

B. Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their

educational needs.

Round One: Outcome WB2 was rated as Substantial Conformity

1. Data Summary

Data was collected on the effectiveness of the agencies in addressing educational needs of children. ARD found that for the first quarter of SFY 2008 of 1,685 files reviewed, 1,354 (80.4%) of them contained all of the pertinent educational information. The lack of a current grade report accounted for 58.4% of the missing information.

ARD then determined whether the educational needs of children were adequately addressed during the review period. For the first quarter of SFY 2008 of 1,720 files reviewed, the reviewers determined that in 1,697 (98.7%) of them the educational needs of children were adequately addressed.

2. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 21. How effective is the child welfare system in addressing the educational needs of children in foster care and those receiving services in their own homes?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires county departments to refer children in out-of-home care for an educational assessment. If the education assessment determines that the child has an educational disability, the county and the district must meet to determine if the educational needs of the child can be met in placement or through the Core Services Day Treatment Program.

In 2008, the legislature passed House Bill 1019 which provided additional safeguards for children and youth in out-of-home care, in order to support their educational success. County departments are given information about the entitlements in the statute so that the county can advocate for children and youth. The following items outline the entitlements:

- School districts must designate an employee or contractor to be the Child Welfare Education Liaison
- Timeframes for transfer of education records were identified and this includes allowing a county designee to physically transport records to a new school
- Record transfers may not be delayed for any reason, including unpaid fines the student may have
- Timeframes for enrollment were identified
- The school district must certify course work fully or partially completed and the receiving school must accept certified course work as if it had been completed at the receiving school
- Students in out-of-home placement must receive an excused absence for court ordered activities (visitation, therapy, court appearances, etc.)
- School fees must be waived for students in out-of-home placement
- Opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities may not be limited due to fees
- To the extent possible, prior to a change of placement, all parties must consider the child's existing educational placement; and select a change of placement in the child's best interest, that enables the child to remain in the existing educational situation or to transfer to a new educational setting that is comparable
- If immunization records are not received prior to enrollment, the school must notify the legal guardian that the records must be received within 14 days of enrollment

b. What do the data show?

Data on the documentation of the agencies in addressing educational needs of children shows that approximately 80% of the case files examined contained all of the pertinent educational information. The lack of a current grade report accounted for the majority of the missing information.

The data also show that the educational needs of children are adequately addressed during the review period for approximately 99% of the children reviewed. Colorado has improved on an area already rated as a strength. Clearly the system's policies and casework practices with families, children, and schools have been effective.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area of strength. Reviewers found that educational needs of children were addressed in 91% of the cases examined.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

DCWS provides a research based curriculum, "Advocating for the Educational Needs of Children in Out-of-Home Care" training for caseworkers and supervisors. This training was developed in partnership with the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement and a committee of stakeholders from education, county departments, foster parents, and provider organizations. The training, with the purpose of providing information about educational requirements, advocacy and the needs of children in placement was piloted and then expanded to El Paso and Denver Counties between October 2007 and April 2008. The training is available upon request and is intended to increase the knowledge and skills of foster parents to advocate and support the educational needs of children in their care continues to be provided. A foster parent who is a former educator, and a county staff person with significant knowledge of child welfare and the education system facilitate this training.

The Spring Forum for the Educational Success of Children and Youth in Out-of-Home Care has been an annual event since 2005. The forum brings together county departments, school districts, NYC, and community partners, to identify ways to reduce barriers regarding education among the systems. Foster care alumni panelists are a key component for the Spring Forums, presenting their point of view to stakeholders. In addition, foster care alumni developed a DVD detailing their educational experiences while in out-of-home care. This DVD is used in the educational advocacy trainings for foster parents, caseworkers, and supervisors, and has been used in trainings at the Colorado State Foster Parent Conference and other conferences.

The 24 Hour Monitoring Unit is responsible for reviewing children's educational records during monitoring visits in child placement agencies and ensuring each child has an educational plan or an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

During county foster care program reviews, interviews with county administration, line staff, and foster parents address the working relationship of the school district with these stakeholders, as well as perceived barriers for the children in care.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include early childhood education programs, child care for teen parents, and the inclusion of school district staff on multi-disciplinary teams.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

In Colorado, there are over 800,000 students. Over 13,000 children and youth spend some time in out-of-home care through child welfare; 86% of these students are from the 10 large counties and a number of barriers effect performance. Counties typically have good working relationships with their school districts, although many have multiple districts (4-15) within their boundaries. School districts rely on their local mill levy for their budgets and those with high rates of poverty generally receive lower tax support. In addition, the following factors may exist:

- Insufficient placement resources in some communities cause children to be placed outside the school district.
- School districts give elective credit rather than core credit for classes that were partially completed or for completed classes with descriptions that differ from classes in the receiving school district, which may affect the youth's graduation status
- Incomplete communication or inadequate notification from county departments to school districts when youth are enrolled may also affect the graduation status
- In placements with kin, children with significant special education needs may reside in rural areas where school districts may not have the resources to meet their educational needs

Some of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers identified by the Department and stakeholders are a lack of testing and diagnostic services, home schooling that restricts the flow of information to the agency, and the difficulty in obtaining educational records due to some conservative interpretations of confidentiality requirements.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. The statute changes and addition of promising practices have solidified the strong performance for this item. The data show that the educational needs of children are adequately addressed for approximately 99% of the children reviewed.

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

Round One: Outcome WB3 was rated as Not in Substantial Conformity

1. Data Summary

Data was collected on issues concerning physical health, medical needs, and mental/behavioral health of children. ARD determined whether children's files contained the names and addresses of current health care providers, known medical problems, and current medications. For the first quarter of SFY 2008 reviewers examined 2,320 files and found that 2,202 (94.9%) of them had all of the health information. ARD also reviewed 714 children and found that 603 (84.5%) received a medical examination or screening within two weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within two weeks of initial placement for a medical examination.

Likewise, ARD examined the dental health needs of children. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 ARD reviewed 520 children and found that 434 (83.5%) received a full dental examination within eight weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within eight weeks of initial placement for a dental examination. ARD staff also determined whether children received regular dental care and treatment for identified dental needs. They found out of 1,904 children reviewed, 1,637 (86.0%) had received regular dental care and treatment for identified needs.

Reviews were conducted to determine whether children received regular health care, including immunizations and treatment for identified health needs. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 out of 2,293 children reviewed, 2,131 (92.9%) had received regular health care.

Finally, ARD staff explored whether mental health services were provided during the review period to meet children's needs. In the first quarter of SFY 2008 1,410 (90.2%) of children reviewed received the needed mental health services.

2. Item-by-Item Evaluation

Item 22. How does the child welfare system ensure that the physical health and medical needs of children are identified in assessments and case planning activities and that those needs are addressed through services?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires that FSPs include medical and mental health needs, the history of treatment of children and parents, medications, hospitalizations, placements, immunizations, and current functioning for all children in the plan. Children must have medical examinations before placement or a screening as soon as is reasonably possible after placement. These screenings must be consistent with EPSDT initial screenings. Full medical examinations are required to be scheduled within fourteen calendar days after placement and full dental examinations must be scheduled within eight weeks after placement. Agencies are also required to update health information, including the provision of ongoing timely medical and dental care at the time of each case review.

b. What do the data show?

Data on the physical health and medical needs of children show that almost 95% of children's files contained the names and addresses of current health care providers, known medical problems, and current medications. The data also show that approximately 85% of children received a medical examination or screening within two weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within two weeks of initial placement for a medical examination. Approximately 84% of children received a full dental examination within eight weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within eight weeks of initial placement for a dental examination. Exactly 86% of children received regular dental care and treatment for identified dental needs. Finally, approximately 93% of children received regular health care, including immunizations and treatment for identified health needs.

Colorado has expanded health services available to children and focused agency efforts on making those services available to children, and thus made improvements in the performance on this item, particularly in the major areas of concern.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing Improvement. In 77% of the examined cases, reviewers determined that the needs were adequately met. The major areas of concern were the ongoing health issues of children in foster care, and routine and preventative dental care.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

Health Passport information was added to Trails in October 2008 and is available for county departments to document all health related information.

Training occurred in October 2007 with the PSSF Coordinators to help family advocates assist families with Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) applications, Medicaid applications, and medical forms. Family

advocates frequently help families navigate community resources to obtain medical and dental services for their children.

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) provides a list of medical and dental providers by profession and location on their website, which is available to county departments to improve access to medical and dental care; and for providers, community partners and the general public to access.

Children's physical and dental health, examinations, and treatment information is verified during monitoring visits to child placement agencies by the 24 Hour Monitoring Unit.

The statewide Core Training for foster parents emphasizes the importance of scheduling the child's health assessment and dental examination in a timely manner and documenting the dates these activities took place.

The Colorado Care Coordination Project provides an integrated system of care coordination and case management among primary care and specialty providers, state agencies and their local counterparts, and local community agencies. The objectives of the Project include the creation of a single point of entry for medical services for children in Colorado, the creation of a database of all existing state and local resources, and a reference guide for medical services for Colorado's children.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include Health Department clinics, foster parents who have established relationships with medical providers which enable children to be seen quickly, and written communications to foster parents reminding them to schedule appointments and monitor medications.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

The Department's and stakeholders' views of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers for this item include physicians and dentists who do not accept new clients or Medicaid clients, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) restrictions that may prevent the agency from securing important information, and the failure of families to disclose health issues.

f. Summary

This is an item needing improvement. The trainings, practice changes, and information dissemination have had a positive impact. However improvement is still needed. The data show that approximately 85% of children received a medical examination or screening within two weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within two weeks of initial placement for a medical examination. Approximately 84% of children received a full dental examination within eight weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within eight weeks of initial placement for a dental examination. Exactly 86% of children received regular dental care and treatment for identified dental needs. Finally, approximately 93% of children received regular health care, including immunizations and treatment for identified health needs.

Item 23. How does the child welfare system ensure that the mental/behavioral health needs of children are identified in assessments and case planning activities and that those needs are addressed through services?

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires that FSPs include medical and mental health needs and the history of treatment of children and parents, including medications, hospitalizations, placement, immunizations, and current functioning.

The Colorado Assessment Continuum (CAC) must be utilized throughout the life of the case. The CAC includes:

- Safety Assessment and plan
- Risk Assessment
- Risk re-assessment
- NCFAS

Services to be provided must be directed at the areas of need identified in the CAC. Outcomes to be achieved as a result of the services provided will be described in terms of specific, measurable, agreed-upon, realistic, and time-limited objectives and action steps to be accomplished by the parent, child, service providers, and county staff.

b. What do the data show?

The data show that just over 90% of the children reviewed were provided mental health services during the review period to meet their needs. Through policy, collaboration with mental health centers and providers, and use of the tools and instruments provided by DCWS, agencies have made significant strides to improve performance in this item since Round One.

c. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This item was rated as an area needing improvement. In 77% of the examined cases, reviewers determined that the needs were adequately met. The major areas of concern were mental health assessments for children entering foster care, and the provision of mental health services to address identified issues.

d. What changes in performance and practice have been made since Round One? Overall, what are the strengths and promising practices that the child welfare system has demonstrated?

The CHP+ Behavior added mental health and substance abuse coverage. Senate Bill 07-036, effective January 2009, added eight new conditions to the biologically-based mental illness list, including but not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder, dysthymia, anorexia nervosa, and bulimia nervosa. Outpatient and inpatient care are time-limited benefits: outpatient care is limited to 20-30 visits per calendar year depending on the health plan, and inpatient care is limited to a total of 45 inpatient days or 90 partial hospitalization days during the calendar year. Residential services may be substituted for inpatient services with every two residential days counting as one inpatient day and will be applied against the 45-day maximum inpatient benefit.

During monitoring visits the 24 Hour Monitoring Unit verifies if children's mental health needs are being met by reviewing Service/Treatment plans and reason(s) for placement. In addition, all treatment notes/progress reports are reviewed for continuity and verification if clinical services are being provided in accordance with the child's Service/Treatment Plan.

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) has been working with the CDHS to identify gaps in mental health services available to Medicaid eligible children. HCPF is preparing for the next 5-year Medicaid Capitation contract and will be addressing service issues in the contract.

Legislation passed during Colorado's 2007-2008 Legislative Session (H.B. 08-1167) requires county departments to refer children under the age of 5, for whom there is a substantiated child abuse or neglect finding, for developmental screening within 60 days of the substantiation. The rules to implement this legislation became effective January 1, 2009.

C.R.S. 19-3-208 authorized the development of a Pilot Program designed to integrate child welfare and behavioral health services in a minimum of three counties or regions in Colorado for four years. The Pilot Program is a collaborative partnership between CDHS, Pilot Program sites, family advocates, and a contractor who will develop the Pilot Program components of mental health research, screenings, evaluations, and services needed to help children and youth (four through ten years of age) and their siblings who are the subject of an open case of substantiated abuse or neglect. Six counties and regions have expressed their intent to apply to become a pilot site.

Stakeholders' views of the changes in performance and practice since Round One, and strengths and promising practices in the system include early intervention with troubled children, the use of safety and risk assessment tools, and school-based clinics.

e. What are the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers that affect the child welfare system's overall performance?

Some of the casework practices, resource issues, and barriers noted by the Department and stakeholders are regionalized mental health services that are not readily available in all parts of the state, placement changes that result in changes in treatment providers and disruption of the mental health services, and providers that do not accept Medicaid.

f. Summary

This item is an area of strength. Monitoring visits, legislation providing additional treatment for certain conditions, and practice changes have resulted in a significant increase in performance. The data show that just over 90% of the children reviewed were provided needed mental health services.

IV. NARRATIVE ASSESSMENT OF SYSTEMIC FACTORS

The assessment of each systemic factor is a Factor Evaluation that includes information on current policy and procedure, a description of the results of the first CFSR, and the changes since Round One.

A. Systemic Factor: Statewide Information System

Item 24: The State is operating a Tier 2 statewide information system that, at a minimum, 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.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Trails is the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) and is also the state's automated case management system. Trails is the case record and policy requires counties to enter information into Trails at such times and in such manner as the State may prescribe. The Trails Job Aide describes the fields that are required to be completed and also outline detailed explanation regarding using the Trails system. There are agency guidelines that establish program and case specific timelines for the entry of changes into Trails. Generally, only agency staff enter data into Trails. There are some exceptions for Child Placement Agency (CPA) staff in a few areas of the state where providers contract with a county to complete case management functions and the county assigns a Trails profile to the provider. Counties must have a state-approved rule waiver to contract and make the assignment. Twenty CPAs may use the provider profile to enter foster home/parent information that the CPA is requesting to certify. A state supervisor from DCWS must approve the application information entered. Providers with Trails profile may enter critical incidents into Trails.

Many exception reports related to CFSR items are available through Trails. These reports allow county staff to monitor performance on the State's Web Portal and in Cognos. New functionality was added through Cognos to facilitate easier access by county staff to state and county CFSR performance data. Administrative, supervisory, and direct delivery staff use numerous Trails reports in daily practice and in monitoring compliance with state and federal standards. Some examples of reports are:

- Case audit report
- Assessment audit
- Case and client eligibility determination
- CFSR/PIP compliance
- Children eligible for emancipation Medicaid
- Children in out-of-home care without a permanency planning hearing
- CORE services
- MOE exception
- Open IV-E entitlements without placement

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Item 24 was rated as a strength because Colorado has the automated capacity to track the required information on children in foster care, such as the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals.

c. Changes since Round One

The Family Justice Information System (FAMJIS), recognized as one of the nation's best child welfare data exchange projects, is a result of collaboration between Human Services and State Judicial. This project evolved through the Court Improvement Project's (CIP) award of a Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts in America (SANCA) grant in 2003. The funds were used to develop the system to

engage in real-time data exchange between The Colorado Judicial Department and the Colorado Department of Human Services in Dependency and Neglect cases. These data from the data exchange measure performance on specific items related to safety, timeliness, due process, and permanency. This project fostered collaboration between the two agencies at both the state and local levels in order to accomplish the data exchange. Both agencies contributed executive staff designated to serve on a project management team, programming staff who worked together to develop the data exchanges, and business analysts that met regularly to identify the best business practices and develop training curriculum.

A CIP Technology Subcommittee was formed in response to an additional CIP technology grant awarded in 2005. Committee membership was comprised of judicial and child welfare staff from state and local levels. The Subcommittee was tasked with developing a five-year strategic plan to enhance the FAMJIS system developed through the SANCA grant. The plan was implemented statewide in February 2007. The State Court Administrator's Office worked closely with the CDHS to develop a joint agency training curriculum and schedule. Training was open to all child welfare stakeholders and focused on data exchange and its impact on each agency's business processes. Training participants were provided with a real-time demonstration of the systems' direct impact upon each other. Judges had before them a visual representation of the child's placements and a case timeline. Trainings were conducted statewide between July 2007 and November 2008.

Each agency identified an individual responsible to maintain communication and manage subsequent data exchange issues. Collaboration was enhanced between stakeholders at both state and local levels, with a commitment to ongoing training for child welfare stakeholders. The sense of teamwork that resulted from the Data Sharing Project work led to sharing caseworker reports and delinquency case information.

SACWIS and AFCARS federal reviews of Colorado occurred since Round One. Areas for improvement were identified and completed which demonstrates that the State is in substantial conformity in this area.

B. Systemic Factor: Case Review System

Item 25: The State provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan, to be developed jointly with the child, when appropriate, and the child's parent(s), that includes the required provisions.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

County departments are required to complete the FSP for each child receiving services to assure that the child's needs for safety, permanency, and well-being are met. Policy requires that counties assure that the caseworker, parent(s) or legal guardians, the child, immediate and extended family members as appropriate to the family and child's services needs, and service providers, including kin caregivers and other out-of-home caregivers participate in the development of the FSP. ARD determines whether there is documentation in the case file of appropriate involvement of the required persons in the development of the FSP, as reported earlier in this document. The same safeguards and procedural rights are implemented for all youth, including delinquent youth in the child welfare system and in community placements.

Volume 7.301.3 requires continual assessment and reassessment of the FSP and the plan must be amended if significant changes in client services need to occur.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Involvement of parents in the case planning process was rated as an area needing improvement.

c. Changes since Round One:

The Department trained counties and courts about the importance of involving families in family services planning. County departments implemented principles of Family to Family as discussed earlier in this document. The use of team decision-making involving parents and family group conferencing involving parents has expanded across the state. Additionally, Spanish-speaking caseworkers have translated the FSP into Spanish.

The data for Item 25 demonstrates the State's improvement in this area as outlined below

The ARD data for this Systemic Factor is from the first quarter of SFY 2008. These measurements apply both to foster care and in-home cases

- Out of 672 cases reviewed, the FSP was developed within 60 days from the date the referral was received in 628 (93.5%) of the cases
- Out of 2,340 cases reviewed, the FSP addressed the appropriate tasks and services for all required parties to achieve the permanency goal during the review period in 1,840 (78.6%) of the cases. Practice expectations and the unique needs of families result in individualized case planning
- Case files contained documentation that the county had made efforts to involve mothers in case planning in 99.1% of the cases reviewed, fathers in 98% of the cases reviewed and youth age 12 and over in 99.7% of the cases reviewed
- In 2,318 cases, the FSP contained a description of the type and appropriateness of the homes or institutions in which the child was placed during the review period in 2,108 (90.9%) of the cases
- In 2,333 cases, the FSP and court report discussed the extent of compliance with the case plan during the review period in 2,268 (97.2%) of the cases

Two measurements related to independent living cases

- In 558 cases of a youth age 16 or older, there was a written description of the programs and services that would help the youth prepare for the transition to independent living during the review period in 479 (85.8%) of the cases
- Out of 548 cases, independent living services provided were determined to be sufficient to address the youth's independent living needs during the review period in 508 (92.7%) of the cases

Item 26: The State provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

The court is required to conduct timely reviews (including 6 month reviews) or, if there are no objections, the court may use its discretion to require an administrative review by CDHS. The use of this option depends upon the court and the case.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Periodic review of children in out of home placement was rated as a strength.

c. Changes since Round One:

ARD meets periodically with county administrators to discuss performance. FAMJIS provides real-time exchange of data between courts and county/state agencies. The system also assesses training needs to target statewide technical assistance.

AFCARS data reflects an error rate of 13.46% for timely periodic review of children in out of home care.

Item 27: The State provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the State has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date that the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter. The data for Item 27 are presented below.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires courts to conduct permanency hearings no later than twelve months after the date the child is considered to have entered foster care and no later than every twelve months thereafter while the child remains in care. Additionally, if a child is under six years of age at the time a petition is filed, a permanency hearing shall be held no later than three months after the decree of disposition. The 12 month Permanency hearings for DYC youth are conducted by Administrative Law Judges.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Timeliness of Permanency Hearing for DYC youth in foster care was rated as an area needing improvement.

c. Changes since Round One:

ARD meets periodically with county administrators to discuss performance. FAMJIS provides real-time exchange of data between courts and county/state agencies. The system also assesses training needs to target statewide technical assistance.

The Department implemented a permanency review of youth in foster care through DYC using Administrative Law Judges.

The data for this Systemic Factor is from the first quarter of SFY 2008.

- In 1,622 cases of children in care for 12 months or longer, a court order that was signed and dated within the last 12 months that contains reasonable effort to achieve permanency language and does not contain nunc pro tunc language was in the file in 1,576 (97.2%) of the cases.

Item 28: The State provides a process for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA).

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Colorado requires that county departments file TPRs no later than the end of the 15th month of placement for any child who has been in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months unless there is a compelling reason submitted to the court identifying why it is in the child's best interest to not terminate parental rights. Most courts will not terminate parental rights if no adoptive home has been identified. Some courts require maintaining the reunification goal until the TPR is filed to avoid problems at termination and the courts ruling on reasonable efforts.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

This element was rated as Area Needing Improvement because TPR filings were based on the child's age rather than the child's status or circumstances. Also, the Expedited Permanency Planning Initiative may have resulted in younger children receiving more TPR consideration than older children.

c. Changes since Round One:

The Colorado Supreme Court adopted Colorado Appellate Rule 3.4 on February 10, 2005. It expedites the Dependency and Neglect appeals process and has led to a decrease in the amount of time between the notice of appeal and the issuance of an opinion. The data below show the number of cases filed in Colorado for the last five calendar years (CY) for Dependency and Neglect and Expedited Permanency Planning (EPP).

	<u>CY2004</u>	<u>CY2005</u>	<u>CY2006</u>	<u>CY2007</u>	<u>CY2008</u>
D&N	1,922	1,915	1,724	1,624	1,679
EPP	2,264	2,378	2,214	2,170	2,302
Total	4,186	4,293	3,938	3,794	3,981

The following data show the number of Dependency and Neglect appeals filed in Colorado for the last five calendar years. Most of the appeals are in TPR cases.

<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
131	140	138	124	155

The following data show the length of time between the notice of appeal and the issuance of an opinion for the same five calendar years.

<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
258 days	182 days	158 days	150 days	151 days

ARD review of cases demonstrate the following related to filing of TPR:

- In 367 cases in which a child has been in out-of-home care for 15 out of the last 22 months, a motion or petition for termination has been filed in 196 (53.4%) of the cases.
- Out of 195 motions to TPR, the ARD reviewer agreed the TPR was appropriate in 193 (99.0%) of the cases.
- Of the reasons for not filing a TPR, “not in the child’s best interest” accounted for 76.3% of the reasons. The primary circumstances that make filing a TPR not in a child’s best interest are: the child will emancipate in a short period of time; there is no adoptive family; the child is living with relatives who are not going to adopt; and, the child has severe disabilities and needs ongoing services from the county department.
- Out of 191 children in care for 15 out of the last 22 months, a documented and compelling reason for not filing a TPR was in Trails for 121 (63.4%) of the children. The reason for this low entry into Trails is not known.
- Out of 115 compelling reasons reviewed, reviewers determined the reason was appropriate in 97 (84.3%) of the cases.

Item 29: The State provides a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child. The data for Item 29 are presented below.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Notification to all appropriate parties of review and court hearings and their opportunity to be heard in those forums is required.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

The notice of hearings and reviews to caregivers was rated as an area of strength.

c. Changes since Round One:

On July 10, 2007 Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Mullarkey issued a written directive to all Colorado District Courts directing them to ensure that county departments are providing written notice of all proceedings to children, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers, and to routinely review certificates of mailing to ensure the noticing is occurring.

The data for this Systemic Factor is from the first quarter of SFY 2008.

- In 2,340 reviews, all required parties were invited to the review and given at least two weeks notice in 2,104 (89.9%) of the reviews. These figures include the 6 month review and 12 month permanency hearings. The opportunity to be heard in reviews is a requirement of ARD, but specific information is not collected concerning it. Information is not collected from hearings since only the court or an administrative law judge can conduct actual hearings.

C. Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance System

Item 30: The State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children.

Item 31: The State is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP) are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies the strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

ARD serves as an independent third party review system under the auspices of CDHS within the Office of Employment and Regulatory Affairs, and is responsible for the Quality Assurance System for both DCSW and DYC. County departments engaged in either the Integrated Care Management Program (1 county) or the Collaborative Management Program (24 counties) are required to have Quality Improvement and Utilization Review as a condition of program participation.

Administrative reviews are conducted for all children in placement every six months; and on a statistically valid random sample of all cases opened for in-home services. The six month periodic review may equate to a QA case review. One hundred percent of these case records are reviewed and input is solicited from individuals attending the review. The feedback loop for information is typically through administrators and supervisors, depending upon the county structure.

Reviews are conducted of the services provided by placement providers and their compliance with licensing and certification requirements. The standards are related to the functions being provided since functions are different.

County-specific programs are reviewed to address county policy and practice related to child safety or foster home certification.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Both items comprising this Systemic Factor were rated as areas of strength.

c. Changes Since Round One:

Changes since Round One were to require county departments implementing the Collaborative Management Program to have Quality Improvement and Utilization Review as elements of their program. Other than this, the Department has not implemented change to this area since it continues to function well and provides the Department with needed information to assure system improvement.

D. System Factor: Staff and Provider Training

Item 32: The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff that deliver these services.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Policy requires child welfare caseworkers to complete a 30-hour computer-based training program prior to receiving their first case and 60 hours of structured on-the-job training within the first three months of employment. The computer-based training is composed of ten major content areas: case planning; cultural sensitivity; confidentiality; documentation; domestic violence; investigation; risk assessment; reasonable efforts; substance abuse; and, medical aspects of child abuse and neglect. In addition, caseworkers are required to complete 14 days of core training within their first year. The subjects of the core training are: family preservation and protection for abused and neglected children; case planning and family-centered casework; the effects of abuse and neglect on child development; and, separation, placement, and reunification in child welfare. Many counties provide additional trainings and provide opportunities for workers to attend community trainings and national conferences. Initial caseworker training is provided by CDHS. County departments may supplement this training with county specific training.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Initial staff training was assigned an overall rating of strength because Colorado has a pre-service staff training program in place that addresses the skills and information needed for staff to perform their jobs.

c. Changes since Round One:

To ensure that the training offered is relevant and reflective of current best practice standards, the curriculum is evaluated and reviewed regularly. Each training topic is evaluated by the trainees and by a panel of content experts. An independent evaluator monitors the results of these evaluations. In addition, quarterly meetings between training providers and DCWS are conducted. The results of these training evaluation efforts are tabulated into an annual training evaluation report.

In SFY 2006, an average of 210 caseworkers attended core training. In SFY 2007, an average of 189 workers attended. Currently, the average wait time is 3 to 6 months for workers to receive the initial core training. County departments track the training participation by their caseworkers and supervisors.

In SFY 2007, 147 supervisors attended core supervisor training.

Item 33: The State provides for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Child Welfare caseworkers must complete a minimum of 6 hours of in-service training annually. CDHS offers 55 specialized and advanced training topics.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Ongoing staff training was rated as a strength because of the requirements and support for ongoing staff training.

c. Changes since Round One:

There have been numerous training activities since Round One and are articulated below.

In 2008, the Colorado Judicial Branch Court Improvement Program (CIP) and DCWS worked collaboratively to replace their respective annual conferences with the first annual *Colorado Summit on Children, Youth and Families (2008 Summit)*. The collaborative goal was to bring child welfare stakeholders together in one place to discuss issues facing the child welfare system and to find practical solutions for achieving the permanency, safety, and well-being of Colorado children and families who are or will be in the Dependency and Neglect court process. The success of this meaningful collaboration and joint planning was realized when approximately 1,000 professionals and volunteers from across the state and the nation attended the *2008 Summit* in Keystone, Colorado, from May 27 to May 30, 2008 and provided overwhelmingly positive evaluations of the *2008 Summit*.

During the summer of 2008, CIP staff collaborated with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and DCWS to present three regional trainings on NCJFCJ's *Resource Guidelines* to small, medium, and large judicial districts. The collaborative goal was to bring together child welfare stakeholders to discuss practical ways of improving the child welfare system.

The CIP Training Subcommittee is a standing committee that is creating multi-disciplinary training curricula to address the information requirements of individuals who are involved in the child welfare system. The curricula are designated as a "Training Wheel" which is comprised of nine different spokes or subject-matter areas: Roles and Responsibilities; Community and Culture; Collaborative Process; Procedure and Practice; Information; Services; Child Development; Law; and, Education. When the Training Wheel curricula is fully developed, it will be delivered at the local level by the BPC Teams and the CIP will maintain the curricula and provide technical assistance to local judicial districts who deliver the training.

Colorado contracted with the National Center on Child Protective Services to provide consultation on updating safety management policies. ACTION for Child Protection provided training statewide. The Butler Institute at the University of Denver is providing training on safety management and building parental capacity. Colorado's core training for caseworkers had lengthened the section of training dedicated to safety management and risk assessment.

Colorado has updated its safety management system and a coordinated efforts to institutionalize the changes has occurred, which includes updating policy, partnering with the counties, and providing statewide training.

In SFY 2006, a combination of 1201 supervisors and ongoing caseworkers attended ongoing training. In SFY 2007, 979 caseworkers attended training.

Item 34: The State provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of agency-licensed or agency-approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or

adoption assistance under title IV-E. The training addresses the skills and knowledge base that they need to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

Foster parents are required to complete 27 hours of pre-service training in order to be certified. Additionally, they must complete 20 hours of ongoing training annually to maintain their certification.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

Foster and adoptive parent training was rated as an area needing improvement because of the issues concerning access to pre-service and ongoing training by foster parents.

c. Changes since Round One:

Desk audits of foster home provider files from county program reviews were completed between October 2007 and April 2008 and in September 2008. The audit's focus was to determine whether foster parents certified by the county departments had met all requirements for certification and re-certification. The primary compliance issue was timely completion of annual foster parent training.

County departments track training participation by foster parents in county foster homes in the provider's record. Both foster parents are required to meet training standards. Foster parents who do not meet training standards may have their certification withheld. CPAs track participation for homes under their organizational umbrellas; the same standards are required of private agency providers. In SFY 2006, 545 foster parents received core training. An additional 659 foster parents received ongoing training. In SFY 2007, 429 foster parents received core training and 201 foster parents attended ongoing training. There are approximately 3400 certified foster homes in Colorado. Although the training curriculum is comprehensive, many foster parents may feel unprepared when challenging situations arise and need more agency support, which must be provided with county and community resources. Counties may require additional training when foster parents decide to adopt.

There is not a wait time for the required training and it occurs in many different state sites. Specialized training is available, such as for children who are medically fragile or have developmental disabilities. Training for foster parents is available through the Foster Parent College (online program), which is especially helpful to foster parents in rural areas of the state.

Training occurred for foster parents on placement stability in 2007. "Colorado's Guide to Abuse and Neglect" addresses institutional abuse and neglect and provides valuable information to foster parents and what to expect during an investigation of abuse or neglect.

Jacob Sprouse conducted a two-day training on recruitment and retention for county child welfare staff.

Statewide training was initiated in April-June 2008 for county departments and CPAs regarding appropriate and timely critical incident reporting in foster care homes. Critical incidents are required to be entered in the Trails system and Monitoring Team workers or county staff must address the incidents with the providers. The results of these contacts are recorded in the provider's case file. State staff provide additional technical assistance and training as needed.

Two-day core training for new county foster care certification workers was provided regarding certification requirements for foster care homes. The purpose of the training was to assure the quality and consistency of foster care certification statewide for child safety, and foster parent recruitment, and

retention. The training incorporated safety requirements such as background checks, the home study process, and the entire continuum of the process from inquiry to certification and recertification. Training was provided in November 2007 and June and September 2008.

Metro and regional foster care/kinship care coordinator training meetings provide a forum for foster care and kinship staff to be apprised of new requirements, practice, and trends in foster and kinship care. Information exchange occurs as participants' discuss issues and provide updates about their specific programs. Four training meetings were scheduled from October 2007 through September 2008.

E. Systemic Factor: Service Array and Resource Development

Item 35: The State has in place an array of services that assess and address the strengths and needs of children and families, which determine additional services needed to create a safe home environment. These services enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

Item 36: The services in Item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP.

Item 37: The services in Item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

19-3-208, C.R.S. and 26-5-102 C.R.S outlines the array of services each county is required to provide. In addition, policy mandates that a set of core services be provided statewide through the Core Service Program. Core Services Programs are funded in each county or region in the state. These services are considered family preservation services and are designed to serve families with children at imminent risk of placement and families that have been recently reunified, and to maintain children in the least restrictive setting. Colorado has Special Economic Assistance, for purchase of hard services, as part of the program. The Core Services Program is comprised of the services listed in Appendix B.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

The array of services area was rated as one of strength in Round One. The area of service accessibility was rated as one Needing Improvement in the last review. Major concerns were the lack of specialized services in some rural areas and long travel distances for some families to access services. The area of individualizing services was rated as one of Strength.

c. Changes Since Round One:

The Core Services allocation continued to increase and figures for the last three years are presented below.

SFY 2006-2007	\$45,379,414
SFY 2007-2008	\$45,055,425
SFY 2008-2009	\$47,167,867

SFY 2007-2008 funds served 17,773 children. SFY 2007-2008 was the first year that the Core Services Program was provided by the two indigenous Indian tribes in addition to the 64 counties. County-designed services are provided as part of the Core Services Program and nearly two thirds of the counties are using these services to meet the unique needs of their families and to fill community services gaps. The county-designed services in the most recent plan year are contained in Appendix B. Another important change since Round One is the addition of evidenced based Core services for

adolescents.

Eighty-nine percent of counties and tribes reported that collaboration efforts are part of their core services programs.

The Collaborative Management Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs) have defined expanded service arrays as community partners join together in identifying and addressing needs of children and families in the community.

PSSF programs have focused on providing family-centered services through building community partnerships in the past but now are encouraged to engage families and communities on a deeper level. The PSSF programs are now using the core strategies of the Family to Family initiative to reach better outcomes for children and families. The strategies include building community partners, using data to evaluate effectiveness and gaps of services, recruitment support and retention of resource families, and making decisions as a team.

F. Systemic Factor: Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Item 38: In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, 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 and objectives of the CFSP.

Item 39: The agency develops, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.

Item 40: The State's services under the CFSP are coordinated with the services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

When county departments provide services that are alternatives to placement, statutes require those county departments to appoint a Placement Alternatives Commission (PAC), made up of professionals and private sector individuals. The Commission prepares a plan for service provision that prevents placement of children out of the home or reunites children with their families. Counties that receive Core Services funds are required to appoint a Family Preservation Program Commission whose charge is to report annually to the Department and the Governor on the effectiveness and efficiency of Core Services provided as well as any recommended changes to the Core program. These two commissions assure agency responsiveness to the community and this information is included in the CFSP.

d. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

The area of state engagement in consultation with stakeholders was rated as one of strength. The area of agency annual reports pursuant to the CFSP was rated as one of strength. The area of coordination with other programs is rated as a strength.

c. Changes Since Round One:

Community involvement is a requirement of these programs/teams: Collaborative Management; PSSF; Family to Family; PACs; Sub PACs; Child Protection Teams; and, Grievance Resolution Boards. Many counties have also involved the community because it is best practice and expands resources. Community involvement is important on all levels for the larger community to understand the nature of child welfare services.

In addition to specified community involvement, DCWS has been involved with a number of child welfare research and training projects with Colorado State University, the University of Denver, and the University of Colorado. There has been additional community involvement in a number of other projects, such as Project BLOOM (SAMHSA grant), American Humane Association, and the Lewin Organization for Colorado Works/Child Welfare involved families.

DCWS also responds to the community through the Colorado's Children's Justice Task Force (CJTF). The CJTF is comprised of individuals who represent agencies and professionals involved in children's issues as required by the Federal Child Abuse and Protection Treatment Act. At the quarterly meetings, the CJTF panel provides input regarding interagency collaboration, child fatalities, abuse and neglect, domestic violence, substance abuse and coordination and collaboration with agencies and professionals with CPS investigations. The task force has continued to actively review current practices and statutes regarding the judicial and administrative handling of the investigation of child abuse, child fatalities as well as proposed legislative changes and model programs.

The Colorado Court Improvement Program (CIP) has been successful in bringing together child welfare stakeholders through the "Training Wheel" curricula, the 2008 *Summit*, and the Best Practice Court Teams. The CIP has also been successful in responding to the call for child welfare system reform. In April of 2008, Governor Bill Ritter, Jr. issued an Executive order creating the Governor's Child Welfare Action Committee with the charge of providing recommendations for improvements in Colorado's child welfare system. One of the four subcommittees of the Action Committee is the Child Welfare Action Committee Training Subcommittee. The CIP Training Subcommittee Coordinator is a member of the Training Subcommittee and is collaborating with DCWS staff to create sustainable multi-disciplinary state training for stakeholders involved in Colorado's child welfare system.

G. Systemic Factor: Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Approval, and Recruitment

Item 41: The State has implemented standards for family foster homes and child care institutions that are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards.

Item 42: The standards are applied to all licensed or approved family foster homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.

Item 43: The State complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances 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.

Item 44: The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed in the State.

Item 45: The state has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.

a. What do policy and procedure require?

The requirements for all Colorado certified foster care and group home providers are the same. Foster parents are required to complete 27 hours of pre-certification training. Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and FBI fingerprint checks are required of foster parents and all adults 18 and over residing in the home. The definition of cultural and ethnic considerations includes, but is not limited to, the child, family, community, neighborhood, faith/religious beliefs, and the primary language of the child

and family. Annual reviews of arrest records, abuse and neglect allegations, and abuse and neglect investigations are required as part of the recertification process. A conviction of child abuse for anyone in the home will result in a denial of the application or revocation of a certificate. Foster home certificates now have time limits of one year. Patterns of misdemeanors will result in the denial of an application or revocation of a certificate. Receiving homes may now care for only 6 children and additional training (32 hours) is required of receiving home parents. Use of the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) instrument is required for anyone conducting foster home studies, kinship foster care studies, and adoption home studies.

Confirmed child abuse and neglect record checks must be completed for all adults in the home in all states that have been places of residence for the adults for the previous five years. Completion of the background check takes approximately 30 days. Providers must be fingerprinted at a local agency and then the fingerprints are returned to the state for the check. Providers who have been licensed/certified in the State of Colorado may pay a transfer fee, and must also submit a new set of fingerprints. County agencies provide fingerprint cards, which include CDHS's identifying information.

County departments must conduct, complete, and return a report on a home study directly or by contract within 60 calendar days after a request is received from another state. The SAFE instrument is used for the ICPC requests.

b. Where was the child welfare system in Round One of the CFSR?

The following areas were rated as areas of strength:

- Standards for foster homes and institutions
- Requirements for criminal background checks
- Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive homes
- Use of cross-jurisdictional resources for permanent placements

The area of applying standards equally was rated as needing improvement.

b. Changes since Round One:

Two legislative foster care performance audits, one in August 2002 and one in August 2007, resulted in improved supervision and tracking mechanisms. In addition, The Department has provided the following:

- Scholarships for foster parents to attend Foster Parent Conferences.
- Quarterly foster and adoptive parent recruiter meetings in 2003 and 2004 and re-convened meetings in 2008. Many counties, especially the larger counties, have recruiter positions. Counties are doing ethnic-specific recruitment.

Since Round One, the Department has fully implemented monitoring of providers and has significantly increased monitoring of county departments to assure that standards are met. Additionally training provided to county departments and monitoring of county departments has resulted in consistent applications of standards between certified kin and certified foster homes.

V. STATE ASSESSMENT OF STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

1. Determine and document which of the seven outcomes and systemic factors examined during the Statewide Assessment are primarily strengths, citing the basis for the determination.

Strengths in Outcomes: Safety 1, Permanency 2, Well-Being 1, Well-Being 2
Strengths in Systemic Factors: A,C,D,E,F,G

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

Safety Outcome 1 is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

Colorado's results for absence of maltreatment recurrence were around 97% in the previous Assessment and range between about 95% and 96% in the current Assessment. In all six data time periods Colorado's achievements are above the national standard.

The median time from report to investigation is an outstanding "less than twenty-four hours." The mean time from report to investigation is 31.4 hours.

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

Permanency Outcome 2 is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings. These data are from the first quarter of SFY 2008.

Out of 1,517 children under review 1,436 (94.7%) were placed within close proximity to the parents or other potential permanent caregiver.

Out of 1,165 children, 963 (82.6%) had visits with the mother/guardian frequently enough to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship.

Out of 737 children, 534 (72.5%) had visits with the father/guardian frequently enough to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship.

Out of 813 children, 748 (91.8%) had visits with the siblings frequently enough to maintain or promote continuity of the relationship.

Out of 2,322 FSPs examined, 2,258 (97.2%) contained a description of how connections are maintained.

Out of 2,316 children reviewed, the agency was making concerted efforts to maintain the connections for 2,297 (99.2%) children.

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

Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1 is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings. These data are from the first quarter of SFY 2008.

ARD reviewed 2,328 relevant cases and found that in 2,291 (98.4%) of them the needs were addressed through appropriate services.

ARD also determined that the FSPs and court reports documented the services needed by the foster parents or kin to maintain the stability of the placement in (95.3%) of the cases.

A determination was made by ARD that 98.8% of children reviewed were in the most appropriate setting.

The involvement of mothers, fathers, and children age twelve and over in the case planning was measured by ARD. Mothers were involved in 99.2% of the cases, fathers were involved in 97.7% of the cases, and children were involved in 99.6% of the cases.

ARD determined that required face-to-face contacts were made with children 97.3% of the time. ARD then determined that agencies made 93.6% of contacts for children in placement.

ARD found that 97.8% of files contained documentation that contacts with children focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, or goal attainment the documentation.

Finally, data showed that 94.3% of parental contacts were documented in case files as focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, or goal attainment.

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

Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2 is primarily a strength, based upon the following finding. These data are from the first quarter of SFY 2008.

ARD determined that the educational needs of children were adequately addressed during the review period in 98.7% of the cases.

Systemic Factor: Statewide Information System

Systemic Factor: Statewide Information System is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

Colorado's statewide information system is rated as a strength because Colorado has the automated capacity to track the required information on children in foster care, such as the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals.

Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance System

Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance System is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

Both items comprising this systemic factor are rated as areas of strength.

System Factor: Staff and Provider Training

Systemic Factor: Staff and Provider Training is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

Initial staff training is assigned an overall rating of strength because Colorado has a pre-service staff training program in place that addresses the skills and information needed for staff to perform their jobs. Ongoing staff training is rated as a strength because of the requirements and support for ongoing staff training. However, there are waiting lists for the trainings. This is an area within the Factor that needs improvement.

Systemic Factor: Service Array and Resource Development

Systemic Factor: Service Array and Resource Development is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

The array of services area is rated as one of strength in Round One. The area of individualizing services is also rated as one of strength.

- **However, during the onsite review the State would like to examine more closely the difficulty in ensuring a complete service array in rural areas and possible avenues for improvement.**

Systemic Factor: Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Systemic Factor: Agency Responsiveness to the Community Service is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

The areas of state engagement in consultation with stakeholders, coordination with other programs, and agency annual reports pursuant to the CFSP are rated as areas of strength.

Systemic Factor: Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Approval, and Recruitment

Systemic Factor: Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Approval, and Recruitment is primarily a strength, based upon the following findings.

The areas of standards for foster homes and institutions, criminal background checks, diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive resources, and the use of cross-jurisdictional resources are rated as areas of strength. However, in some sections of the state there is a shortage of foster homes, making this an area needing improvement within the Factor.

2. Determine and document which of the seven outcomes and systemic factors examined during the Statewide Assessment are primarily areas needing improvement, citing the basis for the determination. Identify those areas needing improvement that the State would like to examine more closely during the onsite review. Prioritize the list of areas needing improvement under safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

Outcome and Systemic Factors with areas needing improvement

**Safety Outcome 2, Permanency Outcome1, Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3
Systemic Factor B**

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

Safety Outcome 2 is primarily an area needing improvement based upon the following findings.

The 9-month measurement of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care shows Colorado was well above the national standard of .57% at .3% in 1998. However, by 2000 Colorado had slipped below the national standard to .73%. The most recent 9-month data show a .52% measurement, above the national standard. The most recent data for the 12-month measurement show Colorado has not achieved the national average of 99.68%, yet it has improved from 99.13% in FFY 2005 to 99.41% for the most recent period.

- **During the onsite review the State would like to examine more closely whether there are areas of oversight of placements that are lacking.**

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

Permanency Outcome 1 is primarily an area needing improvement based upon the following findings.

When measuring all children who entered care during the year and calculating what percentage re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode, Colorado has not met the national standard. In FFY 2005 through the most recent twelve-month period, Colorado improved from a 16.4% re-entry rate to a 14.2% rate. Since the national standard is 8.6%, Colorado must lower the rate further to meet the standard.

Colorado's performance has declined in the percentage of all children served who have been in foster care less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home and have had no more than two placement settings. Colorado exceeded the national standard in all three years of the previous Assessment. However, Colorado has not met the standard in any of the three most recent years. While showing improvement from 82.1% in FFY 2005 to 83.5% in the most recent year, the system is below the standard of 86.7%.

Colorado's performance has been excellent when measured against the national standard percentage (76.2%) of children reunified in less than 12 months from the time of the latest removal from home of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care. However, in the most recent period Colorado is below the national average with 75.5%.

- **During the onsite review the State would like to examine more closely the dynamics in Colorado between reunification efforts and foster care re-entry.**

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

Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3 is primarily an area needing improvement based upon the following findings. These data are from the first quarter of SFY 2008.

ARD found that 84.5% of children received a medical examination or screening within two weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within two weeks of initial placement for a medical examination.

ARD found that 83.5% of children received a full dental examination within eight weeks of initial placement or were scheduled within eight weeks of initial placement for a dental examination. ARD staff also determined that 86.0% of children had received regular dental care and treatment for identified needs.

Of children reviewed by ARD, 92.9% had received regular health care.

Finally, ARD staff discovered that 90.2% of children received the mental health services they needed.

- **During the onsite review the State would like to examine more closely where improvement efforts should be directed. For example, do providers need more training or encouragement to obtain care for children? Are the numbers of providers insufficient to meet the children's needs?**

Systemic Factor: Case Review System

Systemic Factor: Case Review System is primarily an area needing improvement based upon the following findings. These data are from the first quarter of SFY 2008,

The FSPs reviewed by ARD addressed the appropriate tasks and services for all required parties to achieve the permanency goal during the review period in 78.6% of the cases.

The FSPs reviewed by ARD contained all of the required signatures in 63.6% of the cases.

In cases of a youth age 16 or older, there was a written description of the programs and services that would help the youth prepare for the transition to independent living during the review period in 85.8% of the cases.

Out of cases in which a child has been in out-of-home care for 15 out of the last 22 months, a motion or petition for termination has been filed in 53.4% of the cases. Of children in care for 15 out of the last 22 months, a documented and compelling reason for not filing a TPR was in Trails for 63.4% of the children. Out of the compelling reasons reviewed, reviewers determined the reason was appropriate in 84.3% of the cases.

All required parties were invited to reviews and given at least two weeks notice in 89.9% of the reviews.

- **During the onsite review the State would like to examine more closely whether there are effective procedures that can bolster the practice areas listed above.**

3. Recommend two additional sites for the onsite review activities.

The site selection process was guided by the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC), which was formed to guide the work of the CFSSR. Membership of the Committee includes:

- County department staff
- Chief Juvenile Judge of Denver County
- Three county directors appointed by the Colorado Social Services Directors Association
- Directors selected representing the diversity of Colorado's counties
- Three judges reflecting the diversity of Colorado's courts
- Office of the Child Representative director and staff (Guardian Ad Litem)
- Respondent counsel staff
- Representatives of the out-of-home provider community
- An adoptive parent
- Youth
- CDHS staff, including the Executive Deputy Director of Child Youth and Family Services, the Executive Deputy Director of Employment and Regulatory Affairs, the Director of Child Welfare, the Director of Administrative Review, the Director of Youth Corrections, and the Deputy Director of Behavioral Health and Housing

The EOC met monthly and developed the Site Selection Application and Scoring Grid that were sent to county departments (Please see Appendix C). In November, 2007, interested counties were asked to volunteer to apply to be CFSSR sites. Applications were mailed to all counties and Larimer and Teller Counties responded. With the change in date of the onsite CFSSR from June 2008 to March 2009, the site selection process was suspended until June 2008, and a new request was sent to 24 counties that were determined in 2004 to have a caseload to support the review. The information from the Site Applications was compiled into a matrix that included the counties' performance on safety, permanency and well-being outcomes, the National Data Indicators, and information collected by ARD. The matrix was presented to the EOC on August 1, 2008. Review and discussion occurred and the following variables were considered:

- County caseload to support the review
- Positive application scores and quality ARD data
- Geographic diversity within a reasonable driving distance of the metro area
- Weather considerations
- County size, since a large urban county and a mid-size county were sought
- A county's expressed interest in being a site
- Fremont and Larimer Counties were selected as the sites for the onsite review by the EOC. Pueblo and Las Animas Counties were chosen as alternate sites. Both counties are on the Front Range with Pueblo County located north of Las Animas County. Pueblo is a large-size county and Las Animas is a rural mid-size county. Las Animas had 61 cases compared to 232 for Fremont, 726 for Larimer and 987 for Pueblo. Las Animas had fairly new staff, including a new child protection supervisor.

Fremont and Larimer County Departments of Human Services (DHS) are both progressive human service agencies. Fremont County is a mid-sized county and Larimer County is one of the state's ten large counties. Selection of these sites in addition to Denver, which is the largest county, comprises a microcosm of Colorado's Human Services system. Other factors included in the selection process are described below.

Data and Quality Assurance

Use of Trails: Both Fremont and Larimer Counties use Trails to record case management activities in their counties. Both county departments use reports generated from Trails to direct their services and to identify client and county needs and services.

- Fremont DHS:
 - Consultants were used to train staff on the relationship between the CFSR and the ARD data.
 - Crystal Reports are used as well as other periodic reports.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Monthly Program Improvement Reports (PIPs) are used to monitor compliance issues including face-to-face contact with the child, the initial response time to referrals, and 15 of 22 months in out-of-home care compliance. PIP reports are distributed to management and staff and used in staff evaluations.

Performance on the 2001 CFSR Measures and subsequent changes: Both county departments did not meet some of the federal compliance standards and have shifted resources to come into compliance.

- Fremont DHS:
 - Core Services were increased for birth families and county foster/kinship homes to reduce removals and disruptions.
 - Increased collaborative relationships were developed with other community agencies.
 - A new Dependency and Neglect plan is being drafted to increase front loading of services to families, improve reunification efforts and increase supportive services for placement providers.
 - There is a commitment throughout the department to rely on data to measure performance.
 - The department exceeded timelines for the following compared to most other counties: a higher percentage of legally free children adopted in one year; children in 24+ months achieved permanency; and, children in care 17+ months exited to adoption by the end of the year.
- Larimer DHS:
 - The county met six of nine 2001 PIP measures and performed better than the other large Colorado counties.

- The county increased the use of Core Services to prevent removals and provide children and families with needed services and resources.
- The county increased collaborative relationships with other agencies.

Self Evaluation:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Assesses outcomes by examining monthly Crystal Reports and other periodic reports.
 - In early April 2007, began using the Family to Family philosophy.
 - Worked with El Paso County DHS (a contiguous county) to develop a database of TDMs. The monthly spreadsheet details the type of TDM held to determine trends in data and areas that need to be addressed.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Contracts with Colorado State University (CSU) to measure outcomes for agency programs including Therapeutic Residential Child Care Facility placements, Core Services, foster/kin care placements, and Child Placement Agency placements.
 - Outcome measures include CFSR measures of reunification, re-entry, number of placement settings, adoption, recurrence of abuse, and institutional abuse.

Responsiveness to Quality Assurance and ARD:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Created checklists in response to ARD reviews to address non-compliance issues.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Developed a report to track ARD results for each question by caseworker and unit.

Internal Department QA Process:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Established a Core Review Team to review Core service provision that is approaching 18 months.
 - The Director periodically meets with the Family and Adult Services Administrator and Child Welfare Supervisors on Interagency Coordinated Case Planning to ensure consistency with the unit mission statements, Volume VII, and Trails requirements.
- Larimer DHS:
 - QA staff conducts internal case audits to ensure compliance with the CFSR outcome measures.

Use of Data in Managing Departmental Operations:

Both Fremont and Larimer Counties are committed to using data in operations management.

Collaborative Partnerships/Relationships

Relationship with Judiciary:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Fremont DHS describes their relationship with the 11th Judicial District as excellent due to several collaborative relationships out of which the following evolved.
 - Together they implemented the Family to Family model, the Family Treatment Drug Court, the Family Friendly Court grant (supervised parenting), the Heart of Colorado Court Appointed Special Advocate program, Fremont County Collaborative Management Program, and a Dependency and Neglect Protocol.
- Larimer DHS:
 - The Dependency and Neglect and Juvenile Magistrates are members of the Collaborative Management Larimer County Interagency Oversight Group (LCIOG). The group has

designed new programs to specifically help to resolve Dependency and Neglect cases expeditiously and justly.

- Larimer DHS and Weld County DHS (a contiguous county) were awarded a Federal Regional Methamphetamine grant. The Larimer Magistrates were involved in the grant application.
- Creation of a Dependency and Neglect Family Drug Court involving both magistrates and the county. The Family Drug Court makes intensive treatment available to families resulting in faster resolutions of Dependency and Neglect cases.

Community Partnerships:

- Fremont DHS:
 - The Department's other partnerships and collaboratives, contracts, and cooperative agreements involve agencies including: school districts; law enforcement; county nursing; probation; mental health; and, substance abuse agencies.
- Larimer DHS:
 - LCIOG was established in July 2005 to assist in implementing Collaborative Management. Consisting of 10 community agencies, the goal of LCIOG is to improve services to children and families by eliminating duplication and fragmentation of services and increasing the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of services.
 - CSU measures outcomes for each service to compare effectiveness.

Inclusion of Tribes: Both counties follow the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and Volume VII requirements.

Responses to Advocacy Groups:

- Both Fremont and Larimer Counties are responsive to advocacy groups and work to include them in developing solutions to child welfare issues. They also provide services, such as training and partnering to other community groups that enlist the departments' support of their work.

Inclusion of Appropriate Persons in Case Planning and Treatment

Community Partners:

- Fremont DHS:
 - All parties to the case are included in the case planning, including Respondent's Party Counsel, GAL, probation, school personnel, mental health, and appropriate neighbors when a TDM is first scheduled.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Treatment providers are invited to family meetings including anyone the family wants to invite such as pastors, teachers, neighbors, etc.
 - Maintains the child's connections and allows foster parents to support those connections.
 - Implemented a process to search for family members of children in out-of-home placement for extended time periods to establish and maintain family connections.

Inclusion of Families:

- Fremont DHS:
 - TDMs are used for placement decisions. All parties involved in the case are invited including birth parents, primary caregivers, foster-adopt families, GALs, and others appropriate to the case.
 - Mothers and fathers are always included in the FSP.

- Icebreakers meetings involve both birth families and foster parents to transition youth and children to foster care.
- All parties are invited to Administrative Reviews and court hearings.
- Children age 12 and older are included in meetings regarding them and their families, with approval of the GAL.
- The Family Treatment Drug Court Oversight Committee is exploring a family advocacy position.
- In the development of FSPs parents work closely with their primary and visitation caseworkers.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Implemented Family Options, a Family to Family concept, that involves the family in the decision making process from the beginning and throughout the life of a case.
 - Initial family meetings are held within 72 hours of contact with the family.
 - Family Unity Meetings and Family Group Conferencing are used extensively.
 - The Department encourages and supports relationships between birth parents, foster/kin/adoptive parents, the community, and the agency.
 - Biological and foster families are included in family meetings and participate in developing the written plan.
 - Prospective adoptive parents are identified through concurrent planning and supported through adoption support groups, in-home therapy, and inclusion in family meetings.

Inclusion of Youth:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Caseworkers explore goals and future planning with youth in developing the FSP.
 - Youth establish goals in the Independent Living Plan (ILP).
 - All youth over age 12 are:
 - Part of the initial treatment planning
 - Included in treatment plan reviews including TDMs, Administrative Reviews, staffings, Multidisciplinary Team meetings, and monthly face-to-face visits.
 - Able to attend court hearings
 - Involved in the development of their ILP as prescribed in Volume VII.
- Larimer DHS:
 - The youth are included in person, by phone, or by letter in family meetings where the written plan is developed based upon the youth and family's input.

Policy and Practice

Colorado statute is permissive regarding concurrent permanency planning, but both counties incorporate concurrent planning in cases when it best meets the child's needs.

Concurrent Permanency Planning:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Find a foster-adopt family with a concurrent plan for relative (kin) placement.
 - Has expanded its recruitment strategy.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Use of concurrent planning is practiced at the beginning of the case. The family is involved in determining the concurrent plan if the child is unable to return home.

Independent Living Planning:

- Fremont DHS:

- Chafee Program caseworker completes an extensive assessment and plan with the adolescent.
- Implemented ILP groups for adolescents, especially for those not eligible for the Chafee Program or on a wait list for it.
- Larimer DHS:
 - A family search is completed for emancipating youth to establish connections with the youth's relatives while in the Department's care.
 - Contracts with a non-profit agency in the community to prepare youth to emancipate. Services include: Life skills, housing, education, and employment assistance.
 - Uses the Chafee Program to assist youth transitioning out of the system. The worker meets with the adolescent on a regular basis and helps the youth to plan their future. Funds are available to implement plan elements such as education and housing. Chafee services are available after emancipation and continue until age 21.
 - The Transitioning Youth Community Inclusion Group consists of Department staff, community members, and youth working to design a support system for emancipating youth.

Recruitment and Retention (staff and providers):

- Fremont DHS:
 - Staff Recruitment:
 - Staff turnover is rare, especially in Intake and Resource Units. There is some turnover in the Case Management Unit (ongoing) but the workforce is fairly stable.
 - There is a comprehensive recruitment strategy for staff.
 - Fremont County has a significant Hispanic population and the Department has hired applicants from this population.
 - Staff Retention:
 - Salary and benefits are comparable to other mid-sized county agencies.
 - Retention factors include: flextime; a Social Committee to schedule quarterly staff appreciation events; each child welfare unit has informal employee appreciation events or gatherings; and, an annual appreciation event is planned by the Director and three administrators for all agency employees.
 - Extensive orientation process for new employees.
 - Resource Family Recruitment:
 - Use of the Family to Family strategy of recruiting and supporting foster and kinship families.
 - Example of recruitment efforts: Adoption and Foster Care banners placed in Fremont County with the goal of increasing county foster homes.
 - The Department annually participates in job or career fairs with other agencies.
 - Resource Family Retention:
 - Monthly foster care meetings are held with county foster and kinship families. Training often occurs at the meetings.
 - Core and Training Plans address training needs for resource families, caseworkers, and case aides.
 - Foster parents are continually being trained in parenting classes.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Staff Retention:
 - The community hosts an annual banquet for all county child welfare workers and recognizes outstanding performance of caseworkers and team.
 - Quarterly Shining Star awards are given through staff nominations for good practice.
 - The intake and ongoing teams that have the best record of monthly caseworker contacts for the previous month hold a traveling trophy.
 - The county is employing a trainer to address specific training needs of staff.

- Resource Family Recruitment:
 - With a growing Hispanic population and a need for Hispanic foster parents, the Department hired a foster care recruiter who is Hispanic and very involved in the community.
 - The recruiter has targeted specific areas and events in the community to recruit foster parents.
- Resource Family Retention:
 - Foster parents receive training in a 10-week program, PRIDE, developed by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA).

Judicial and County Efforts Resulting in Timely and Efficient Handling of Dependency and Neglect Cases

Relationship between the Court and the County Department:

- Fremont DHS:
 - A number of joint projects and programs have occurred over the last two years due to the relationship between the Department and the 11th Judicial District.
- Larimer DHS:
 - Both the Juvenile and Dependency and Neglect Magistrates are members of LCIOG.
 - The LCIOG is responsible for designing new services within the community to address the needs of children and families.
 - The Dependency and Neglect Magistrate is a member of the Latino Community Inclusion Group consisting of county staff and community members to improve service delivery for both county services and court services to the Latino families in the community.

Policies and Procedures to Ensure Best Efforts to Achieving Permanency for All Children:

- Fremont DHS:
 - Eleventh Judicial District Plan for Processing Dependency and Neglect Cases Pursuant to Chief Justice Directive 98-02 and 96-08 to expedite Dependency and Neglect cases.
- Larimer DHS:
 - The court has implemented a fast track for Dependency and Neglect cases.
 - The fast track has proved challenging for scheduling family meetings.
 - The Department is working with the Court to coordinate the time lines for hearings to ensure the family has adequate time to participate in developing the treatment plan.
 - The County has been in compliance with the federal goal of adoption in 24 months for the past 2 years by implementing concurrent planning and utilizing reports tracking the number of months a case is open while the permanency goal is Return Home.
 - Utilizes their 15 of 22 Report to identify cases in which no termination of parental rights has been filed to ensure that an allowable reason exists for the lack of a filing.

Court Processes that Inform all Parties of the Court's Expectations and Time Frames:

- Fremont DHS:
 - With input from the 11th Judicial District GALs and Respondent Parent Counsel, the County Attorney has drafted a new Dependency and Neglect protocol that addresses proper notification of all parties with regard to case expectations, court dates, and other services available to the families.
- Larimer DHS:
 - The Court has a mediator whose role is to inform all parties of the expectations and time frames.
 - The Court adopted the Family Options philosophy.

- Family meetings have improved communication and knowledge of the court's expectations and time frames.

The Court in both Fremont and Larimer Counties affords all parties opportunities throughout the case to collaborate and resolve issues consensually in a non-adversarial productive environment.

Participation of GALs:

Both Fremont and Larimer GALs are active in Dependency and Neglect cases, participate in Administrative Reviews, and attend TDMs and family meetings.

4. Provide comments about the State's experience with the Statewide Assessment Instrument and process.

The Statewide Assessment is a valuable process in preparing for the CFSR; the instrument is a precision tool that defines accountability. It brings together stakeholders, the county departments and the State into an analysis of quality of services for children and families. It creates meaningful dialogue and data analysis across the state and in a comparison of data sets (Round One and Round Two). Data presents information clearly, with an acuteness that may change focus, programs or practices. There is a great workload to manage by county departments, the courts and community partners; an assessment results in assessing outcomes and what it means in the lives of children and their families.

5. Provide the names and affiliations of the individuals who participated in the Statewide Assessment process; please also note their roles in the process.

NAME	AFFILIATION	ROLE
Steve Brittain	Southern Ute Tribal Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Cindy Smith	La Plata County DHS	Regional Stakeholder
Theresa Campbell	La Plata County DHS	Regional Stakeholder
Eve Presler	Advocacy La Plata	Regional Stakeholder
Martha Johnson	La Plata County DHS	Regional Stakeholder
Matt Dodson	La Plata County DHS	Regional Stakeholder
Gloria Romansik	Weld County Child Welfare Administrator	Regional Stakeholder
Heather Walker	Weld County Child Protection Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Veronica Cavazos	Weld County Service Utilization Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Kyle Ragland	Weld County Intake Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Leeann Reigrut	Weld County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Jim Pope	Weld County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Brent Miller	Weld County Foster Care Coordinator	Regional Stakeholder
Joyce Hause	Weld County Caseworker	Regional Stakeholder
Linda Perez	Pillars	Regional Stakeholder
Jeanenne Garson	Weld County Mental Health	Regional Stakeholder
Liska Fraser-Williams	Weld County Mental Health	Regional Stakeholder
Jacqui Macdonald	Weld County Child Protection Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Christy Baron	Weld County Child Protection Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Robin Overmyer	Weld County Child Protection Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Bob Keenan	Weld County Foster Care Coordinator	Regional Stakeholder
David Long	Weld County Commissioner	Regional Stakeholder
Linda Henry	Weld County Public Health	Regional Stakeholder
Tami Russell	Weld County Business Office	Regional Stakeholder
Cindy Almond	Weld County Foster Parent	Regional Stakeholder
Greg Creed	Transitions Psychology Group	Regional Stakeholder
Kelly Schramm	Interagency Oversight Group	Regional Stakeholder
John Wilde	Island Grove Regional Treatment Center	Regional Stakeholder
Marsha Stoll	Kid's Place	Regional Stakeholder

Robert Lowenbach	District Nineteen Juvenile Judge	Regional Stakeholder
John Rattle	Northeast Behavioral Health	Regional Stakeholder
David Rastatter	North Range Behavioral Health	Regional Stakeholder
Jeff Johnson	Reflections for Youth	Regional Stakeholder
Dinsmore Tuttle	District Nineteen Magistrate	Regional Stakeholder
David Stang	Hope Family Services	Regional Stakeholder
Juan Lopez	Weld County School District Six	Regional Stakeholder
Sherry DeManche	Lutheran Family Services	Regional Stakeholder
Jim Drendel	Larimer County Human Services Division Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Denise Suniga	Larimer County Human Services Deputy Division Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Jeff Johnson	Reflections for Youth, Inc.	Regional Stakeholder
Michelle Brinegar	Larimer County Chief Deputy District Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Liz Buchanan	Larimer Center for Mental Health	Regional Stakeholder
John Gillies	Larimer County Human Services Deputy Division Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Angela Mead	Larimer County Human Services Deputy Division Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Ken Walker	Larimer County Human Services Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Thad Paul	Larimer County Human Services Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Paul Couget	LCWS, Private Practice	Regional Stakeholder
Barb Montoya	TRCCF	Regional Stakeholder
Joel Painter	TRCCF	Regional Stakeholder
Linda Connors	Larimer County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Lynn Oesterle-Zollner	CASA	Regional Stakeholder
Bob Bauman	Eighth Judicial District	Regional Stakeholder
Jim Campaign	Poudre School District	Regional Stakeholder
Joy Brill	Larimer County Alliance of Grandfamilies	Regional Stakeholder
Averil Strand	Larimer County Community Health Services Director	Regional Stakeholder
Ginny Riley	Larimer County Human Services Director	Regional Stakeholder
Laurie Klith	Executive Director, The Center	Regional Stakeholder
Jerri Howe	Director, Mathews House	Regional Stakeholder
John Jostad	Eight Judicial District Magistrate	Regional Stakeholder
Kathay Rennels	Larimer County Commissioner	Regional Stakeholder
Randy Eubanks	Larimer County Commissioner	Regional Stakeholder
Mary Jo Berenato	Eight Judicial District Magistrate	Regional Stakeholder
Marsha Ellis	Larimer County Division Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Ed Rutherford	Larimer County Business Office Division Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Tim O'Neill	Executive Director, Foothills Gateway	Regional Stakeholder
Melisa Maling	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Paula McKey	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Wendy Ingham	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Terrie Ryan-Thomas	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Kit Thompson	IMPACT (multi-agency collaboration)	Regional Stakeholder
Tonia Elliott	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Bitte Lindell-Colby	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Valerie Hotz-Callis	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Barbara Park	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Michael Rhoades	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Dusti Moats	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Frost Yarnell	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder

Mary Horton	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Bonnie Lloyd	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Brant McClung	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Charlene Wilson	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Holly Smith	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Janet Ryckman	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Eileen Saunders	Boulder County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Susan Sizemore	IMPACT (multi-agency collaboration)	Regional Stakeholder
Barbara Ryan	Boulder and Broomfield Counties Mental Health Center	Regional Stakeholder
Jen Leosz	Boulder and Broomfield Counties Mental Health Center	Regional Stakeholder
Monica Rotner	Boulder and Broomfield Counties Mental Health Center	Regional Stakeholder
Robin Bohannen	Boulder County Community Services	Regional Stakeholder
Chuck Stout	Boulder County Public Health	Regional Stakeholder
Ann Noonan	Boulder County Public Health	Regional Stakeholder
Roxanne Bailin	Twentieth Judicial District Judge	Regional Stakeholder
Carolyn McLean	Twentieth Judicial District Magistrate	Regional Stakeholder
Madeline Meacham	Boulder County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Peggy Wallis	Boulder County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Mark MacDonnell	Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Kim Verhoeff	Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Karen Verhoeff	Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Randa Davis-Tice	Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Larry Stutler	Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Scott Brase		Regional Stakeholder
Chelley Brase		Regional Stakeholder
Jimmy Cardinelli		Regional Stakeholder
Shawn Cardinelli		Regional Stakeholder
Jim Ramsay		Regional Stakeholder
Heather Ramsay		Regional Stakeholder
Gary Rodgers		Regional Stakeholder
Janice Rodgers		Regional Stakeholder
Stephanie Groves		Regional Stakeholder
Lupe Terrazes	Holly School District RE-3	Regional Stakeholder
Clede Widener	Prowers County Commissioner	Regional Stakeholder
Joe Marble	Prowers County Commissioner	Regional Stakeholder
Gene Millbrand	Prowers County Commissioner	Regional Stakeholder
Stan Brinkley	Fifteenth Judicial District Judge	Regional Stakeholder
Douglas Tallman	Fifteenth Judicial District Judge	Regional Stakeholder
Byron Hall	Chief Probation Officer, Fifteenth Judicial District	Regional Stakeholder
Becky Minis	Director, Southeastern Colorado BOCES	Regional Stakeholder
Ron Stock	City Administrator, Lamar, CO	Regional Stakeholder
Jay Brooke	Executive Director, High Plains Community Health Center	Regional Stakeholder
Jackie Brown	Director, Prowers County Public Health Nursing Services	Regional Stakeholder
Melvin Hendrickson	Developmental Center	Regional Stakeholder
Jim Faull	Sheriff, Prowers County	Regional Stakeholder
Debra Jones	Program Director, Southeast Mental Health Services	Regional Stakeholder
Lillian Norman	Director, Drug Free Communities	Regional Stakeholder
Doris Hughes	Director, Domestic Resource Center	Regional Stakeholder

David Snyder	Prowers Medical Center	Regional Stakeholder
	Southeast Developmental Services	Regional Stakeholder
Dr. Wayne Graybeal	Superintendent, Lamar RE-2 School District	Regional Stakeholder
Mike Doyle	Superintendent, Wiley Consolidated School District	Regional Stakeholder
Leo Laprarie	Superintendent, Granada RE-1 School District	Regional Stakeholder
Carlyn Yokum	Superintendent, Holly RE-3 School District	Regional Stakeholder
Kelli Gains	Southeast Land and Environmental Health	Regional Stakeholder
Dr. Bilal Ahmad	Wiley Medical Clinic	Regional Stakeholder
Michael Manley	PA, Wiley Medical Clinic	Regional Stakeholder
James Berg	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Donna Segura	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Ruth Horn	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Elisha Anderson	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Jeremy Meder	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Greg Parra	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Kiley Sanchez	Rio Grande Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Diane Fresquez	Conejos County Social Services, Caseworker	Regional Stakeholder
Trinci Pacheco	Conejos School District	Regional Stakeholder
RaAnne Gomez	Family Advocate	Regional Stakeholder
Steve Lujan	Conejos County Social Services, Caseworker	Regional Stakeholder
Andrea Gouies	Prevention	Regional Stakeholder
Geil Geinise	Prevention	Regional Stakeholder
Kari Snelson	LCSW, West Central Mental Health	Regional Stakeholder
Tim Landis	LCSW, West Central Mental Health	Regional Stakeholder
Julie Marshall	Eleventh Judicial District Judge	Regional Stakeholder
David Thorson	Eleventh Judicial District Judge	Regional Stakeholder
Larry Allen	Eleventh Judicial District Magistrate	Regional Stakeholder
Jeff Hunt	Assistance Chief Probation Officer, Fremont County	Regional Stakeholder
Debi Blackwell	Director of Special Services, Canon City Schools	Regional Stakeholder
Brenda Rall	Intake Supervisor, Fremont County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Donna Holloway	Resource Supervisor, Fremont County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Matt Graff	Adoption Advocate, Fremont County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Denise Santilli	Resource Lead worker, Fremont County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
David Holt	Family & Adult Services Administrator, Fremont County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Roni Spaulding	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Pat Hall	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Perry Boydstin	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Shirley Rhodus	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Kim Mauthe	Teller County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Celeste McKnight	Maple Star Child Placement Agency	Regional Stakeholder
Cheryl Schnell	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Toni Herman	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Becky Jacob	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Maija Schiedel	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Val Holtz	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder

Barb Lara	Youth Partners Foster Hope	Regional Stakeholder
Frank Lilawsa	Teller County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Mary Longmire	Teller County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Carrie Hobah	El Paso County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Paula Balsler	Savio	Regional Stakeholder
Annete Frymen	ConnectCare	Regional Stakeholder
Peggy Fulks	GAL	Regional Stakeholder
Laura Rago	El Paso County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Steve Zentz	Teller County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Jim Moore	Jefferson County Administrator	Regional Stakeholder
Mary Berg	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Natalie Mall	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Dan Makelky	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Barb Weinstein	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Holly Harman-Marcum	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Susan Franklin	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Sue McDonald	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Molly Haspels-Wickstrom	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Mary Stika	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Tom Burnett	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Roxanne Sabin	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Tiffany Patterson	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Roxanne Erdman	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Cricket Stevens	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Lisa Kreutzer-Lay	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Joan Heller	CA	Regional Stakeholder
Judge Boatright	Judicial	Regional Stakeholder
Loretta Koehler	Judicial	Regional Stakeholder
Marsh Whiting	DIFRC	Regional Stakeholder
Theresa Halsey	DIFRC	Regional Stakeholder
Robin Brown	Parent Partner	Regional Stakeholder
Leandra Pflugger	Parent Partner	Regional Stakeholder
Maryann Peratt	Schools	Regional Stakeholder
Kevin Klinkerfues	Probation	Regional Stakeholder
Anna Mullen	Probation	Regional Stakeholder
Diane Skufca	DYC	Regional Stakeholder
Liz Smith	JCMH	Regional Stakeholder
Kathy King	JCMH	Regional Stakeholder
Susan Johnson	DDRC	Regional Stakeholder
Cynthia Farkas	Health	Regional Stakeholder
Lily Boyce	1451	Regional Stakeholder
Ashleigh Sedbrook	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Lisa Kreutzer	Jefferson County Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Leah Varnell	CASA	Regional Stakeholder
Donna Worley	GAL	Regional Stakeholder
Sue Thibault	Clear Creek County Assistance County Attorney	Regional Stakeholder
Kathy Reed	CASA	Regional Stakeholder
Gail Meinster	GAL	Regional Stakeholder
Jean Barta	Public Health Director	Regional Stakeholder
Sharon Blum	Clear Creek County Casework Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Cindy Dicken	Clear Creek County Director	Regional Stakeholder
Betty Donovan	Gilpin County Director	Regional Stakeholder
Stacy MacDonald	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Michelle Beller	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder

Wendy van Antwerp	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Judy Pocius	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Sue Gruber	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Jim Lynum	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Michelle Wilson	Public Health	Regional Stakeholder
Mary Lou Taylor	Summit County Youth and Family Services	Regional Stakeholder
Mitzi Stauffer	Silverthorne Police Department	Regional Stakeholder
Lucy Adams	Summit County Alternative School	Regional Stakeholder
Susan Quesada	Breckenridge Police Department	Regional Stakeholder
Amy Noraka	Silverthorne Police Department	Regional Stakeholder
April Kemp	Summit County Social Services	Regional Stakeholder
Allie Casias	GAL	Regional Stakeholder
Lindsay Ishman	CASA Intern	Regional Stakeholder
Georgette Contos	Early Childhood Connections	Regional Stakeholder
Polly Akridge-Nash	Denver Human Services Foster Care Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Kristy Alles-Serrant	Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice	Regional Stakeholder
Leandra Anders	Foster Child	Regional Stakeholder
Irma Anthony	Denver Public Schools	Regional Stakeholder
Arletha Ashley	Denver Human Services Administrator	Regional Stakeholder
Skip Barber	Colorado Association for Family and Children's Agencies	Regional Stakeholder
Margaret Booker	Denver Human Services Caseworker Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Cherie Brown	Department of Youth Corrections	Regional Stakeholder
Ernesto Candelaria	Denver Human Services Advocacy Program Administrator	Regional Stakeholder
Anthony Clayton	Denver Human Services Staff Assistant	Regional Stakeholder
Erikka Danielson	AmeriCorps	Regional Stakeholder
Dixie Davis	Executive Director, Adoption Exchange	Regional Stakeholder
Wendy DiLivio	FAC Board Member	Regional Stakeholder
Patricia Garcia	Denver Human Services Program Administrator	Regional Stakeholder
Rudolph Gonzalez	Denver Human Services Family Crisis Center Caseworker Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Deirdre Grayson	Denver Human Services Caseworker Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Donna Hamburg	Denver Human Services Caseworker Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Michelle Harper	Denver Human Services PIA Division Director	Regional Stakeholder
Cara Herron	Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home	Regional Stakeholder
JoAnn Howe	Denver Children's Advocacy Center	Regional Stakeholder
Valerie Jenkins	Colorado Department of Human Services Program Specialist	Regional Stakeholder
Marilyn Kennerson	US Department of Health and Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Shirley Lee	Ariel Child Placement Agency	Regional Stakeholder
Brad Lenderink	Denver Police Department Sergeant	Regional Stakeholder
Chris Lobanov-Rostovsky	Colorado Department of Public Safety Division of Criminal Justice	Regional Stakeholder
Pearl Lopez	Denver Human Services Program Administrator	Regional Stakeholder
Isabelle Madchill	Denver Indian Family Resource Center	Regional Stakeholder

Sam Martinez	HHS-ACF Program Specialist	Regional Stakeholder
Tamara Mechern	Denver Human Services Resource Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Ron Mitchell	Denver Human Services Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Shaquania Murphy	Foster Child	Regional Stakeholder
Cynthia Noah	Executive Director Adoption Alliance	Regional Stakeholder
Kathleen O'Boyle	The GLBT Community Center of Colorado	Regional Stakeholder
Penny O'Malley	Denver Human Services Caseworker Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Penny Overby	Department of Youth Corrections	Regional Stakeholder
Charles Perez	Denver Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Allen Pollack	Denver Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Susan Radaelli	Denver Human Services Caseworker Supervisor	Regional Stakeholder
Joan Richardson	Family-to-Family Site Coordinator	Regional Stakeholder
Brian Rimar	Adoptive Parent	Regional Stakeholder
Kelly Rimar	Adoptive Parent	Regional Stakeholder
Judy Rodriquez	Colorado Department of Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Shannyn Romero	Denver Human Services Program Quality Assurance Technician	Regional Stakeholder
Toni Rozanski	Denver Human Services Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Terrie Rumley	Foster Parent	Regional Stakeholder
Gretchen Russo	Denver Human Service Judicial Liaison	Regional Stakeholder
Katrina Schrock	Denver Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Barbara Shaklee	Denver Human Services	Regional Stakeholder
Diane Skufca	Department of Youth Corrections	Regional Stakeholder
Jessica Stone	Denver Human Services Independent Living Unit	Regional Stakeholder
Rena Walker	Denver Human Services Caseworker Manager	Regional Stakeholder
Debra Ward White	Mental Health Corporation of Denver	Regional Stakeholder
Nachshon Zohari	Denver Human Services Substance Abuse Program Administrator	Regional Stakeholder

APPENDIX A
COLORADO'S STAKEHOLDER REGIONS

Region 1 covers the western part of Colorado, from its northern border to its southern border. The counties in Region 1 are listed below.

Moffat	Routt	Grand	Rio Blanco
Garfield	Mesa	Pitkin	Delta
Gunnison	Montrose	Ouray	San Miguel
Hinsdale	Dolores	San Juan	Montezuma
La Plata	Archuleta		

Region 2 is located in northeastern Colorado. The counties in Region 2 are listed here.

Jackson	Larimer	Boulder	Weld
Morgan	Logan	Washington	Sedgwick
Phillips	Yuma	Kit Carson	

Region 3 is the southeastern section of Colorado. The counties in Region 3 are listed below.

Cheyenne	Kiowa	Prowers	Baca
Las Animas	Bent	Otero	Crowley
Huerfano	Costilla	Conejos	Alamosa
Rio Grande	Mineral	Saguache	

Region 4 is comprised of counties in south-central Colorado and includes the following counties.

Pueblo	El Paso	Custer	Fremont
Teller	Chaffee	Park	

Region 5 is in central Colorado and is made up of the following counties.

Denver	Jefferson	Gilpin	Clear Creek
Summit	Eagle	Lake	

Region 6 is also in central Colorado. The counties in Region 6 are listed below.

Broomfield	Adams	Arapahoe	Douglas
Elbert	Lincoln		

APPENDIX B

CORE SERVICES PROGRAM

Home-based intervention
 Intensive family therapy
 Life skills
 Day treatment
 Sexual abuse treatment
 Special economic assistance
 Mental health services
 Substance abuse treatment services
 Aftercare services
 County-designed services that the county may also choose to provide
 Family stabilization services
 Early intervention services
 Adoption promotion services
 Medical and dental services for children who do not have insurance or Medicaid coverage

COUNTY-DESIGNED CORE SERVICES

County	Service type on Core Plan
Adams	Supervised Therapeutic Visitation Service
	Youth Intervention Program (Expansion - Ex)
Alamosa	Discovery Group
	Family Decision Making/Confer
	Intensive Mentoring Program (Ex)
Arapahoe	Family Empowerment
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex) - Synergy
	Savio Direct Link Program (Ex)
	Family Group Conferencing
Archuleta	High school Wellness Center
	MRTRT High School Responsibility/Mentoring (Ex)
Baca	None
Bent	None
Boulder	Community Evaluation Team (CET)
	Adoption Counseling
	Family Group Decision Making
Broomfield	Day Treatment Alternative
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex)
Chaffee	Chaffee County Mentoring
	Youth at Crossroads
Cheyenne	None
Clear Creek	None
Conejos	Intensive Mentoring (Ex)
Costilla	Intensive Mentoring Project (Ex)
Crowley	None
Custer	None
Delta	Mentoring

	Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)
	Day Treatment Alternative
Denver	Emerson Street School
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) (Non-Expansion)
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) (Ex)
	Savio Direct Link Program
	Domestic Violence Intervention
	Team Decision Making
	Supervised Visitation
	Denver Effect
Dolores	Day Treatment Alternative
Douglas	None
Eagle	None
Elbert	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex)
	Family Coaching/Youth Mentoring (Ex)
El Paso	Mediation Services
	Nurturing Programs
	Day Treatment Alternative
	Domestic Violence
	Functional Family Therapy (Ex)
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex)
Fremont	Day Treatment Alternative
	Family Group Conferencing
	Adolescent Support Group
	Functional Family Therapy (Ex)
	Parenting Skills
	Supervised Visitation
	Family Treatment Drug Court
Garfield	Adolescent Mediation (Ex)
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)
	Functional Family Therapy
Gilpin	None
Grand	Day Treatment Alternative
	Family to Family Team Decision Making
	Parenting Time/Supervision
Gunnison/ Hinsdale	Therapeutic Mentoring (Ex)
Huerfano	Reconnecting Youth (Ex)
Jackson	Day Treatment Alternative
Jefferson	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex)
	Team Decision Making Ex)
Kiowa	None
Kit Carson	Functional Family Therapy (Ex)
Lake	IFT/School Partnership
La Plata	Play Therapy
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex)
	Ad. Dialectical Behavioral (Ex)
Larimer	Foster Care/Adoption Support Groups
	Multi-systemic Therapy

	Nat'l Youth Program Using Mini-Bikes (NYPUM) (Ex)
	Functional Family Therapy (FFT)
	PCC Mediation (Ex)
	Family Options1
	Family Options 2 – Family Unity Meetings
	Family Options 3 – Family Group Conferencing
	Substance Abuse Petty Offenders
	Youth Services
	Life Nurse Visiting Program
	Community Based Family Services and Support
Las Animas	None
Lincoln	Foster Adopt Parents Support Services
	Family Group Conferencing
Logan	Play Therapy
	Day Treatment Alternative
Mesa	Structured/Supervised Parenting Time
	Rapid Response (Ex)
	Day Treatment to Adolescents (Ex)
Moffat	Day Treatment Alternative
Montezuma	Day Treatment Alternative
Montrose	Promoting Healthy Adolescents Trends PHAT (Ex)
Morgan	Structured Parenting Time
	Day Treatment Alternative
	Family Group Decision Making
Otero	Play Therapy
Ouray/ San Miguel	Day Treatment Alternative
Park	None
Phillips	None
Pitkin	None
Prowers	None
Pueblo	Visitation Center
	For Keeps Program (Ex)
Rio Blanco	Day Treatment Alternative
Rio Grande/Mineral	None
Routt	Day Treatment Alternative
Saguache	None
San Juan	Multi-Systemic Therapy
Sedgwick	None
Summit	Youth Outreach
	Day Treatment Alternative
	Mentor Supported SA Treatment (Ex)
	Multi Systemic Therapy
	Team Decision Making
Teller	Multi Systemic Therapy (Ex)
	Day Treatment Alternative
Washington	Foster Care/Adoption Intervention
Weld	Day Treatment Alternative

	TIGHT (Ex)
	Multi-Systemic Therapy (Ex)
	Foster Parent Consultation
	Functional Family Therapy
Yuma	Day Treatment Alternative

APPENDIX C
SITE SELECTION FORMS

CFSR Site Selection Scoring Grid					
Data and Quality Assurance	1	2	3	4	5
Use of Trails					
Performance on 2001 PIP Measures					
Self Evaluation					
Responsiveness to QA/ARD					
Use of Data in managing departmental operations					
Collaborative Partnerships/Relationships	1	2	3	4	5
Relationship with Judiciary					
Community Partnerships					
Responses to advocacy groups					
Inclusion of Tribes					
Inclusion of families in departmental operations					
Inclusion of youth in departmental operations					
Treatment of Respondent Parents (Mother and Father)					
Inclusion of Appropriate Persons in Case Planning	1	2	3	4	5
Community Partnerships					
Bio, Foster and Adoptive Families (Mother and Father)					
Youth					

CFSR Site Selection Scoring Grid

Policy and Practice	1	2	3	4	5
Independent Living					
ICWA					
Recruitment and Retention					
Judicial Efforts towards Timeliness and Efficient Handling of Dependency and Neglect Cases	1	2	3	4	5
Relationship with County Department					
Policies and Procedures are in place to expeditiously and justly resolve Dependency and Neglect cases					
Policies and Procedures are in place to ensure that best efforts towards achieving permanency for all children					
Does the Court facilitate a process to inform all parties regarding the court's expectations and time frames.					
Does the court afford all parties opportunities throughout the case to collaborate and resolve issues consensually in a non-adversarial, productive environment					
Timely inquiry and applicability of The ICWA					
Participation of GAL					

Explanation of CFSR County Site Selection Criteria:

Data and Quality Assurance

- ✓ Use of Trails:
 - Use For example: The County Department's use of Trails would be a 2 rating if county department policy requires all staff to enter case specific information into Trails. The rating would be a 3 if the county requires information be entered timely and accurately. The rating would be a 4 if the county has a review process to assure data is entered and the rating would be a 5 if the county has a feedback loop where staff are advised of their performance on Trails entry or if results of the QA activity is used in the staff performance evaluation process.

- ✓ Performance on 2001 PIP Measures:
 - Was the county in compliance with Colorado's 2001 PIP as of March 31, 2007?
 - If the county department was out of compliance what efforts were made to come into compliance with Colorado's PIP?

- ✓ Self Evaluation
 - How does the county department continually assesses outcomes, especially with regard to creating real and lasting changes in policy and practice?

- ✓ Responsiveness to QA/ARD
 - What policy and practice changes has the county made as a result of information provided through the Administrative Review report?

- ✓ Use of Data in managing departmental operations
 - How does the county use data from Trails, or county designed reports to implement policy and practice changes with the goal of improving the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being?

Collaborative Partnerships/Relationships

- ✓ Relationship with Judiciary
 - Describe the county department's collaborative relationship with the local judiciary to ensure that Dependency and Neglect cases are expeditiously and justly resolved and to ensure that new strategies for improving child welfare agency and court collaboration are designed by both agency and court personnel.

- ✓ Community Partnerships
 - What Family-centered and community-based practices have you implemented to improve outcomes for children and families?

- ✓ Inclusion of families in departmental operations
 - How does the county department consistently engage the groups that it serves from whom the child was removed (children (age appropriate), pre-adoptive parents, permanent relative or guardian caregivers) in case planning activities such as identifying strength and needs, determining goals and services, evaluating progress?

- ✓ Inclusion of youth in departmental operations

- How does the county department consistently engage the youth it serves in case planning activities such as identifying strength and needs, determining goals and services, evaluating progress?
- ✓ Relationship with the Colorado's Tribes and Tribal Organizations
 - How does the county department involve Colorado's Tribes and Tribal Organizations in identifying areas in which the county department and tribes could work together to improve both child welfare systems?
- ✓ Responses to advocacy groups
 - How does the county department seek the input of external stakeholders in assessing the needs of the various groups? (Tribes, CFSPA, CAFCA, Adoption Exchange)

Inclusion of Appropriate Persons in Case Planning

- ✓ Community Partners
 - How does the county department work to preserve important connections for children in foster care, such as connections to neighborhood, community, faith, family, tribe, school and friends?
- ✓ Bio, foster and Non-Custodial Parent
 - How does the county department include Bio, non-custodial and foster parents in the development of the written case plan?
- ✓ Youth
 - How does the county department include youth in the development of the written case plan?

Policy and Practice

- ✓ Concurrent Permanency Planning
 - How does the county department use concurrent planning?
- ✓ Independent Living Planning
 - How does the county department prepare adolescents in foster care with a goal of "other planned permanent living arrangement" make a successful transition to independent living? (Include the types and availability of programs and the children served.)
- ✓ Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
 - How does the county department determine whether a child is eligible for membership in an Indian tribe?
- ✓ Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Families
 - What are the county department's recruitment strategies for the recruitment and retention of ethnically and racially diverse providers?
 - How does the county department measure the effectiveness of the recruitment strategies?

Judicial Efforts towards Timeliness and Efficient Handling of Dependency and Neglect Cases

- ✓ Judicial Relationship with County Department
 - The courts play an integral role in supporting positive outcomes for children and families engaged in the child welfare process. How do the county department and the Judiciary work together to ensure that new strategies for improving child welfare agency and court collaboration are designed by both county department staff and court personnel?
 - What efforts are currently in place to build ongoing relationships between the county department and court personnel that will impact day-to-day practice?

- ✓ What policies, practices and procedures are in place to expeditiously and justly resolve Dependency and Neglect cases?
 - For example: early identification, notification and involvement of parent and interested family member in the Dependency and Neglect process, early assessment, and early development of meaningful treatment plans.

- ✓ What policies, practice and procedures are in place to ensure achieving permanency for all children both younger and adolescents?
 - For example: focusing on permanency from the beginning and at every stage of the case

- ✓ Does the Court facilitate a process to inform all parties of the court's expectations and time frames?
 - i.e. Court Facilitator Conference

- ✓ Does the court afford all parties opportunities throughout the case to collaborate and resolve issues consensually in a non-adversarial, productive environment?

- ✓ Is there a timely inquiry and applicability of Indian Child Welfare Act

- ✓ What is the role of the Guardian Ad Litem in the court process?

Colorado CFSR 2009 Review Site Selection Application

Background

The onsite review is the second phase of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) and is primarily designed to gather qualitative information. The onsite review lasts 1 week and includes the examination of a sample of cases for outcome achievement and interviews with State and local stakeholders to evaluate the outcomes and systemic factors under review. The review will take place in three sites in the State. The CFSR process requires one of the three selected sites be the largest metropolitan department (Denver), and the State Department and the Children’s Bureau Central and Regional Offices will select the two additional sites.

Application Instructions

Below are the selection criteria that will be used to determine two CFSR Review sites in March 2009. Please rate (score sheet is attached) the county’s performance on each of the criteria by using the Likert Scale 1-5 (1 being low and 5 being high). Once a score has been given, please provide a written description for each criteria that includes examples of policy and practice. Average the scores and provide the final scores in the “final score” column to the right of the criteria.

For example: The County Department’s use of Trails would be a 2 rating if county department policy requires all staff to enter case specific information into Trails. The rating would be a 3 if the county requires information be entered timely and accurately. The rating would be a 4 if the county has a review process to assure data is entered and the rating would be a 5 if the county has a feedback loop where staff are advised of their performance on Trails entry or if results of the QA activity is used in the staff performance evaluation process.

County Department _____ Date _____

Director’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

<u>Data and Quality Assurance</u>	<u>Final Score</u>
✓ Use of Trails	_____
✓ Performance on 2007 CFSR Measures	_____
✓ Self Evaluation	_____
✓ Responsiveness to QA/ARD	_____
✓ Has internal department for QA process	_____
✓ Use of Data in managing departmental operations	_____

<u>Collaborative Partnerships/Relationships</u>	<u>Final Score</u>
✓ Relationship with Judiciary	_____
✓ Community Partnerships	_____
✓ Inclusion of families in departmental operations	_____
✓ Inclusion of youth in departmental operations	_____
✓ Inclusion of Tribes	_____
✓ Responses to advocacy groups	_____
✓ Treatment of Respondent Parents (Mother and Father)	_____

<u>Inclusion of Appropriate Persons in Case Planning</u>	<u>Final Score</u>
✓ Community Partners	_____

- ✓ Bio, foster and Adoptive Families (Mother and Father) _____
- ✓ Youth _____

Policy and Practice

Final Score

- ✓ Concurrent Permanency Planning _____
- ✓ Independent Living Planning _____
- ✓ ICWA _____
- ✓ Recruitment and Retention _____

Judicial Efforts towards Timeliness and Efficient Handling of Dependency and Neglect Cases

- ✓ Relationship with County Department _____
- ✓ Policies and Procedures to expeditiously and justly resolve Dependency and Neglect cases _____
- ✓ Policies and Procedures to ensure best efforts to achieving permanency for all children _____
- ✓ The Court facilitates a process to inform all parties regarding the court's expectations and time frames _____
- ✓ The court affords all parties opportunities throughout the case to collaborate and resolve issues consensually in a non-adversarial, productive environment _____
- ✓ Timely inquiry and applicability of ICWA _____
- ✓ Participation of GAL _____

Please feel free to add additional comments:

Thank you for your interest in participating as a site for the Child and Family Services Review.

Please submit this application to: **Judy Rodriguez** by **July 22, 2008**.