Child and Family Services Reviews

Connecticut

Final Report

2016

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

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Final Report: Connecticut Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Connecticut. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and (3) assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Federal law and regulations authorize the Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, to administer the review of child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSRs are structured to help states identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their child welfare practices and programs as well as institute systemic changes that will improve child and family outcomes.

The findings for Connecticut are based on:

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), and submitted to the Children's Bureau on March 25, 2016. The statewide assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes, and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan
- The results of case reviews of 82 cases sampled from all 14 Connecticut DCF offices (42 foster care, 35 in-home, and 5 in-home differential response) conducted via a State Conducted Case Review process between April 1, 2016, and September 20, 2016
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
    - Administrative Review Board members
    - Attorneys representing the agency
    - Attorneys representing parents
    - Central office health and licensing staff
    - Child welfare agency senior managers, program managers, and regional program directors and managers
    - Child welfare agency supervisors and caseworkers
    - Child welfare agency training partner
    - Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
    - Foster and adoptive parent licensing staff
    - Foster and adoptive parents
    - Information system staff

- Judges
- Parents
- Representatives from the court and Court Improvement Program
- Service providers
- Therapeutic foster care staff
- Tribal representatives
- Youth served by the agency

In Round 3, the Children's Bureau suspended the use of the state's performance on the national standards for the 7 statewide data indicators in conformity decisions. For contextual information, Appendix A of this report shows the state's performance on the 7 data indicators. Moving forward, the Children's Bureau will refer to the national standards as "national performance." This national performance represents the performance of the nation on the statewide data indicators for an earlier point in time. For the time periods used to calculate the national performance for each indicator, see 80 Fed. Reg. 27263 (May 13, 2015).

Background Information

The Round 3 CFSR assesses state performance with regard to substantial conformity with 7 child and family outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Each outcome incorporates 1 or more of the 18 items included in the case review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on an evaluation of certain child welfare practices and processes in the cases reviewed in the state. With two exceptions, an item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90% or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies to those items. For a state to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome.

Eighteen items are considered in assessing the state's substantial conformity with the 7 systemic factors. Each item reflects a key federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on how well the item-specific requirement is functioning. A determination of the rating is based on information provided by the state to demonstrate the functioning of the systemic factor in the statewide assessment and, as needed, from interviews with stakeholders and partners. For a state to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors, no more than 1 of the items associated with the systemic factor can be rated as an Area Needing Improvement. For systemic factors that have only 1 item associated with them, that item must be rated as a Strength for a determination of substantial conformity.

The Children's Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round of reviews and in response to feedback from the child welfare field. As such, a state's performance in the third round of the CFSRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round. Appendix A provides tables presenting Connecticut's overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Connecticut's performance in Round 2.

I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Connecticut 2016 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes and Systemic Factors

None of the 7 outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity.

The following 2 of 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Quality Assurance
- Agency Responsiveness to Community

Children's Bureau Comments on Connecticut Performance

The following are the Children's Bureau's observations about cross-cutting issues and Connecticut's overall performance:

The DCF entered into the Juan F. Consent Decree in January 1991. The Consent Decree requires monitoring agency performance through case reviews conducted by the Court Monitor. The Consent Decree has been renegotiated several times over the years, and most recently, in the fall of 2016, the U.S. District Court reduced the number of outcomes to be monitored from 22 to 6. While the consent decree assesses agency practice in outcomes similar to those in the CFSR, how each measures practice is different. Specifically, in the safety outcomes, the Court Monitor assesses timely initiation and completion of investigations. The CFSR assesses timely face-to-face contact with alleged victims of abuse and neglect. The CFSR review process revealed that DCF lacks policy that clearly defines timelines for face-to-face contact with all alleged victims in the family. Therefore, in the cases reviewed, the timeliness of face-to-face contact with the alleged victim was inconsistent and sometimes beyond 72 hours after the investigation was initiated.

The case review results found that in complex cases that present multiple risk factors including substance abuse, domestic violence, or parental mental health, the agency is challenged in keeping families intact. While DCF has developed an array of services including Intensive Family Preservation, Crisis Stabilization, and Family Based Recovery, not all services are available statewide or are effectively individualized to meet the developmental, linguistic, or cultural needs of the families being served. These case review findings are consistent with information obtained during interviews with stakeholders, who noted that fewer services are available in some regions of the state.

In general, case reviews found that the agency practice is inconsistent in assessing safety and risk in the child's living environment and in preventing children's removal from their homes. The agency does not use its Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools consistently in all cases. The lack of timely and quality interviews with all family members, along with a lack of accurate ongoing assessment of risk and safety factors, contributed to the agency's lower performance in this area. In a number of cases where safety concerns were present, the agency did not develop an appropriate safety plan with the family or continually monitor and update the plan.

Case review results identified that DCF establishes timely and appropriate permanency goals for children in foster care. However, the achievement of permanency goals is hindered by systemic issues. Inadequate services contribute to delays in achieving reunification. Administrative issues such as the lack of timely adoption/guardianship applications, subsidy negotiations, and court scheduling delays, particularly around termination of parental rights (TPR) trials, delay adoptions and guardianships. Both the DCF statewide assessment and the CFSR results indicate that the state faces challenges with filing TPRs for children in care 15 of 22 months. Delays in filing TPRs also negatively affect the timely achievement of adoptions.

DCF's commitment to preserving connections for children in foster care is apparent across multiple areas of practice. The percentage of relative placements has steadily increased to over 40%. Case reviews showed that concerted efforts are made to place siblings together and that parent-child visitation occurs weekly or even more frequently. Case review results also found that the agency transitions from supervised to unsupervised visitation appropriately and changes the visit location from the agency office to the community or the parent's home. An area of challenge is maintaining connections for the child in a foster care placement with his or her extended family and friends.

The use of relative foster homes was a strong contributing factor to stable placements in the cases reviewed for the CFSR. Relative placements frequently result in only one placement during a child's entire time in foster care. Because relative caregivers often attend court hearings and Administrative Case Reviews, they are aware of the case plan, services, and child's permanency plan.

In October 2016, the Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) released a child fatality report that highlighted concerns about maltreatment in foster care, DCF's licensing of foster homes, and the agency's safety practices. The OCA report expressed concerns similar to the CFSR findings on the adequacy and effectiveness of safety planning, particularly when DCF places children or endorses children's living with relatives. CFSR case review results were mixed in terms of the adequacy of the assessment of foster parent needs and provision of services to foster parents, including relative placements. Similar to initial and ongoing family and child assessments, practice in this area is inconsistent statewide.

Another area of challenge for DCF is the lack of non-relative placement resources that reflect the needs of the children requiring foster care. In some cases, this leads to multiple placement moves for the child. Stakeholders indicated a need for better coordination and oversight of foster home resources, including updated recruitment and retention plans based on quality data and adjusted to reflect the changing demographics of the foster care population. Challenges to effective implementation of these plans include the number of children requiring placement and the caseloads for foster home licensing staff.

CFSR results also show inconsistent practice in meeting the well-being needs of children. While the review found strong practice in the frequency of worker contacts with children, DCF will want to focus attention on how to improve the quality of those visits, particularly in ensuring that safety and case planning are discussed during each contact with the child. The quality of caseworker visits with children affects the agency's ability to assess needs, provide appropriate services, and ensure safety. Case reviews also found that DCF practice in assessing the needs of children in general, and in the area of mental/behavioral health specifically, is slightly stronger than its provision of services to meet the identified needs. In mental/behavioral health, DCF has challenges in meeting identified needs and in monitoring and providing oversight for children on psychotropic medications. In the area of well-being, the state's practice is strongest in assessing and meeting the educational, physical health, and dental needs of children.

Despite the assessment methods used by DCF, the CFSR case review results identified inconsistent practice in the assessment of parents' needs and the provision of services. While case review results found that the agency engages mothers more frequently than fathers, the assessment of needs and provision of services are not consistent for either mother or father. Stakeholder interviews supported that DCF struggles with consistently engaging parents in the case planning process.

Connecticut has a functioning administrative case review (ACR) process that the agency has been using to assess practice statewide in both foster care and in-home cases. In preparing for the CFSR, the state reworked its ACR process to use the federal Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions for its ongoing case reviews within its Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. Court Monitor Office staff have been trained in the CQI process. Prior to the CFSR case review period, Connecticut piloted the new process and incorporated improvements. The CQI process is supported by many internal DCF staff who have been trained to conduct reviews along with designated QA, Court Monitor, and ACR staff. This system will continue to be the basis for Connecticut's ongoing CQI process to monitor strengths and areas needing attention.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide performance summaries from the case review findings. The CFSR relies upon a case review of an approved sample of foster care cases and in-home services cases. Connecticut provides an alternative/differential response to, in addition to a traditional investigation of, incoming reports of child maltreatment or children in need of services. Where relevant, we provide performance summaries that are differentiated between foster care, in-home, and in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

This report provides an overview. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Details on each case rating are available to DCF. The state is encouraged to conduct additional item-specific analysis of the case review findings to better understand areas of practice that are associated with positive outcomes and those that need improvement.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Item 1.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 59% of the 41 applicable cases reviewed.

Safety Outcome 1 Item Performance

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

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

State policy requires that all reports of alleged abuse, neglect, or danger of abuse are prioritized, assigned, and initiated within specified time frames. Connecticut has a four-tiered prioritization system requiring investigations to be commenced the same day within 2 hours, 24 hours, or 72 hours of when the report is received. Time frames for commencement begin when the report is approved by the hotline supervisor. Commencement is defined as the investigator attempting to make face-to-face contract with the parent or person responsible for the child's care or with the child(ren). The standard for face-to-face contact with the child is within 72 hours of approval of the report by the hotline supervisor.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 59% of the 41 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

For performance on the safety statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 51% of the 82 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 67% of the 42 foster care cases, 31% of the 35 in-home services cases, and 60% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Safety Outcome 2 Item Performance

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

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 57% of the 21 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 67% of the 9 applicable foster care cases, 55% of the 11 applicable in-home services cases, and 0% of the 1 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response case.

Item 3. Risk and Safety Assessment and Management

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 51% of the 82 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 67% of the 42 applicable foster care cases, 31% of the 35 applicable in-home services cases, and 60% of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 24% of the 42 applicable cases reviewed.

Permanency Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 4. Stability of Foster Care Placement

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 86% of the 42 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 5. Permanency Goal for Child

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 78% of the 41 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 6. Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 31% of the 42 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

For performance on the permanency statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 62% of the 42 applicable cases reviewed.

Permanency Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 7. Placement With Siblings

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 76% of the 21 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 8. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father,[1] and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

[1] For Item 8, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification. The persons identified in these roles for the purposes of the review may include individuals who do not meet the legal definitions or conventional meanings of a mother and father.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 75% of the 28 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 80% of the 10 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation with a sibling(s) in foster care who is/was in a different placement setting was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 74% of the 23 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 56% of the 9 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

Item 9. Preserving Connections

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 50% of the 42 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 10. Relative Placement

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 62% of the 42 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 11. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father[2] or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

[2] For Item 11, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 67% of the 24 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 74% of the 23 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.
- In 44% of the 9 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 27% of the 82 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 33% of the 42 foster care cases, 17% of the 35 in-home services cases, and 40% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Well-Being Outcome 1 Item Performance

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

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency (1) made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents,[3] and foster parents (both initially, if the child entered foster care or the case was opened during the period under review, and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency's involvement with the family, and (2) provided the appropriate services.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 27% of the 82 cases were rated as a Strength.

[3] For Sub-Item 12B, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable "mothers" and "fathers" for the period under review in the case.

- Item 12 was rated as a Strength in 33% of the 42 foster care cases, 17% of the 35 in-home services cases, and 40% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 59% of the 82 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 71% of the 42 foster care cases, 43% of the 35 in-home services cases, and 60% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 27% of the 73 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 30% of the 33 applicable foster care cases, 23% of the 35 applicable in-home services cases, and 40% of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 45% of the 73 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 23% of the 60 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of fathers.

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 61% of the 41 applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 13. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents[4] and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

[4] For Item 13, in the in-home cases, “Mother” and “Father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, “mother” and “father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency’s work with multiple applicable “mothers” and “fathers” for the period under review in the case.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 41% of the 81 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 49% of the 41 applicable foster care cases, 31% of the 35 applicable in-home services cases, and 40% of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 52% of the 52 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 58% of the 72 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 28% of the 58 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve fathers in case planning.

Item 14. Caseworker Visits With Child

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 55% of the 82 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 67% of the 42 foster care cases, 40% of the 35 in-home services cases, and 60% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 15. Caseworker Visits With Parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers[5] of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 33% of the 72 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 41% of the 32 applicable foster care cases, 26% of the 35 applicable in-home services cases, and 40% of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

[5] For Item 15, in the in-home cases, “Mother” and “Father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, “Mother” and “Father” is typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency’s work with multiple applicable mother and fathers for the period under review in the case.

- In 46% of the 72 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 26% of the 58 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with fathers were sufficient.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Item 16.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 85% of the 53 applicable cases reviewed.

Well-Being Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 16. Educational Needs of the Child

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 85% of the 53 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 91% of the 33 applicable foster care cases, 71% of the 17 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 3 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 using the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

State Outcome Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 49% of the 74 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 55% of the 42 applicable foster care cases, 39% of the 28 applicable in-home services cases, and 50% of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Well-Being Outcome 3 Item Performance

Item 17. Physical Health of the Child

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 62% of the 58 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 69% of the 42 foster care cases and 44% of the 16 applicable in-home services cases. None of the in-home services alternative/differential response cases was applicable for assessment of this item.

Item 18. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

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

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 45% of the 49 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 48% of the 23 applicable foster care cases, 41% of the 22 applicable in-home services cases, and 50% of the 4 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

For each systemic factor below, we provide performance summaries and a determination of whether the state is in substantial conformity with that systemic factor. In addition, we provide ratings for each item and a description of how the rating was determined. The CFSR relies upon a review of information contained in the statewide assessment to assess each item. If an item rating cannot be determined from the information contained in the statewide assessment, the Children's Bureau conducts stakeholder interviews and considers information gathered through the interviews in determining ratings for each item.

Statewide Information System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 19.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

Statewide Information System Item Performance

Item 19. Statewide Information System

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The statewide information system is functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Connecticut sufficiently demonstrated that the state is able to identify routinely all the required elements for all children in foster care. However, stakeholders reported that no effective data quality process is established, and workload affects timely and consistent data entry.

Case Review System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Two of the 5 items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Case Review System Item Performance

Item 20. Written Case Plan

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment demonstrated that case plans for the most part are developed timely but do not provide information that parental engagement is consistently occurring. Stakeholders reported that even when parents are engaged, their input is not consistently included in case plans.

Item 21. Periodic Reviews

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed through stakeholder interviews showed that periodic administrative reviews occur timely in most cases. The state has an effective process for manually identifying cases that are not automatically scheduled for a review to ensure periodic reviews are held timely.

Item 22. Permanency Hearings

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that initial and ongoing permanency hearings address the required content and are held timely.

Item 23. Termination of Parental Rights

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that TPR petitions are filed infrequently for children in care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, and only a small portion of those cases where TPR was not filed had documented a compelling reason. Stakeholders reported that timely TPR filings are inconsistent statewide. Some but not all districts have created a process to make timely decisions within the 15-of-22-month time frame. Compelling reasons are inconsistently documented for cases without a TPR filed within the required time frame.

Item 24. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the current process for providing notice of court hearings and administrative hearings is not consistently effective in providing timely notice. Stakeholders confirmed that caregivers are not receiving timely notification routinely. Stakeholders also reported that their participation in court is dependent on the judge, which at times results in a denied opportunity to be heard.

Quality Assurance System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 25.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Quality Assurance System Item Performance

Item 25. Quality Assurance System

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The quality assurance system is functioning statewide to ensure that it (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews showed that the state has a robust, multifaceted, and integrated quality assurance (QA) system. The QA system uses a variety of QA activities and data sources, including feedback from stakeholders, to evaluate performance and inform performance and policy adjustments.

Staff and Provider Training

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. One of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Staff and Provider Training Item Performance

Item 26. Initial Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews showed that initial training prepares new staff with the basic knowledge and skills required for their positions. Connecticut has a mandatory 10-week initial training that combines classroom learning with on-the-job mentoring. New workers are typically placed in a regional training unit for one year where they are evaluated for readiness to assume full social worker status. Identified training needs are communicated to the Training Academy to support the knowledge and skills needed for their positions.

Item 27. Ongoing Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff[6] that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews showed that although Connecticut has a catalog of ongoing in-service training and standards for the amount of ongoing training required, the state recognizes there are gaps. The state is unable to produce useful reports to track staff compliance with training requirements and does not have an effective way of evaluating the effectiveness of the ongoing training.

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[6] "Staff," for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP. "Staff" also includes direct supervisors of all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

Item 28. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews describes comprehensive initial training for non-relative foster and adoptive parents. The completion of the training is a condition of licensure. The training is reported to be helpful in preparing foster and adoptive parents. However, the statewide assessment and stakeholders both reported that kinship foster parents receive significantly less training than nonrelative foster parents. Although the state tracks training for licensed providers, the data show that training is not completed consistently and the agency does not enforce consequences for non-completion.

Service Array and Resource Development

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. Both of the items in this systemic factor were rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

Service Array and Resource Development Item Performance

Item 29. Array of Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP: (1) services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, (2) services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, (3) services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and (4) services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Although information in the statewide assessment and collected during stakeholder interviews in general described a rich array of services, stakeholders reported significant gaps in the service array for the Northeast and Northwest sections of the

state. Stakeholders also reported significant waitlists across the state for services, particularly mental health and substance abuse services.

Item 30. Individualizing Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning statewide to ensure that the services in Item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and obtained in interviews with stakeholders described that although there are some processes for using wraparound funds and customizing services, the restrictions on how the funds may be used and limitations on providers are barriers to effectively individualizing services. Stakeholders also reported a lack of linguistic and culturally sensitive services and that significant turnover in therapeutic service providers interferes with the effective individualization of services.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. One item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community Item Performance

Item 31. State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that, in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that although Connecticut collaborates with a wide range of community partners, Tribal stakeholders reported that the state does not consult or engage with Tribal representatives in the creation or implementation of the CFSP or APSR.

Item 32. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the state effectively coordinates CFSP services with other federally funded or assisted programs that serve the same population.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Connecticut is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. One of the four items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Item Performance

Item 33. Standards Applied Equally

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment described a standard biannual licensing process that is applied equally statewide. Stakeholders confirmed this information and also confirmed that waivers were standardized with no significant differences in regions requesting waivers.

Item 34. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment described the extensive process that Connecticut has for checking criminal backgrounds and prior involvement with the child welfare system for prospective foster and adoptive parents that exceeds what is federally required. However, stakeholders noted that the process can take several months and that efforts have been made only recently to improve timeliness. Stakeholders also suggested that the process for creating and monitoring safety plans for children in the home when a background check reveals a concern is inconsistent. Each region manages the process locally, and the central office is involved only in those circumstances that require a waiver from the commissioner.

Item 35. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that recruitment and retention activities lack clear oversight and coordination. Stakeholders said that recruitment and retention activities are dependent on staff time, caseloads, and placement activities. They reported that while the state data show net gains and losses of foster homes, the state does not assess how recruitment efforts are working and adjust efforts accordingly. Stakeholders also report that there are not enough Spanish-speaking foster homes for the number of children entering care.

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

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.

- Connecticut received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed in stakeholder interviews showed that Connecticut effectively uses both in-state and out-of-state cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for children. However, the state acknowledged in the statewide assessment that the agency is unable to complete Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) home studies in 60 days.

Appendix A
Summary of Connecticut 2016 Child and Family Services Review Performance

I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes and Items

Outcome Achievement: Outcomes may be rated as in substantial conformity or not in substantial conformity. 95% of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

Item Achievement: Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement. For an overall rating of Strength, 90% of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of Item 1 and Item 16) must be rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies.

SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 1 Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	Not in Substantial Conformity	59% Substantially Achieved
Item 1 Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	59% Strength

SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE.

Date Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 2 Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	51% Substantially Achieved
Item 2 Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	57% Strength
Item 3 Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	51% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Connecticut 2016 CFSR Performance

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS.

Date Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 1 Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	24% Substantially Achieved
Item 4 Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	86% Strength
Item 5 Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
Item 6 Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	31% Strength

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN.

Date Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 2 The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	62% Substantially Achieved
Item 7 Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	76% Strength
Item 8 Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength
Item 9 Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	50% Strength
Item 10 Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	62% Strength
Item 11 Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	67% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Connecticut 2016 CFSR Performance

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.

Date Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 1 Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	27% Substantially Achieved
Item 12 Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	27% Strength
Sub-Item 12A Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	59% Strength
Sub-Item 12B Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	27% Strength
Sub-Item 12C Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	61% Strength
Item 13 Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	41% Strength
Item 14 Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	55% Strength
Item 15 Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	33% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

Date Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 2 Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	85% Substantially Achieved
Item 16 Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	85% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Connecticut 2016 CFSR Performance

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

Date Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3 Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	49% Substantially Achieved
Item 17 Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	62% Strength
Item 18 Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	45% Strength

II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The Children's Bureau determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the 7 systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The Children's Bureau determines substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined on the basis of ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the Children's Bureau must find that no more than 1 of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the Children's Bureau must find that the item is functioning as required.

STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 19 Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Case Review System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 20 Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21 Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 22 Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 23 Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24 Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix A: Summary of Connecticut 2016 CFSR Performance

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 26 Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 27 Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 28 Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Service Array and Resource Development	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 29 Array of Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30 Individualizing Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix A: Summary of Connecticut 2016 CFSR Performance

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 31 State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 32 Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment	Strength

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 33 Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 34 Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 35 Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36 State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

III. Performance on Statewide Data Indicators[7]

The state's performance is considered against the national performance for each statewide data indicator and provides contextual information for considering the findings. This information is not used in conformity decisions. State performance may be statistically above, below, or no different than the national performance. If a state did not provide the required data or did not meet the applicable item data quality limits, the Children's Bureau did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.1%	Lower	11.2%	10.4%–12%	FY13–14
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	12.29	10.17–14.87	14A–14B, FY14
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	Excluded due to Data Quality****	Excluded due to Data Quality	12B–15A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	31.0%	27.7%–34.4%	14B–15A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	23.9%	21.6%–26.3%	14B–15A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	Excluded due to Data Quality	Excluded due to Data Quality	12B–15A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	2.92	2.72–3.13	14B–15A

[7] In October 2016, the Children's Bureau issued Technical Bulletin #9 (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/cfsr-technical-bulletin-9), which alerted states to the fact that there were technical errors in the syntax used to calculate the national and state performance for the statewide data indicators. The syntax revision is still underway, so performance shown in this table is based on the 2015 Federal Register syntax.

Appendix A: Summary of Connecticut 2016 CFSR Performance

*** Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP)** is derived from a multi-level statistical model and reflects the state's performance relative to states with similar children and takes into account the number of children the state served, the age distribution of these children, and, for some indicators, the state's entry rate. It uses risk-adjustment to minimize differences in outcomes due to factors over which the state has little control and provides a more fair comparison of state performance against national performance.

**** 95% Confidence Interval** is the 95% confidence interval estimate for the state's RSP. The values shown are the lower RSP and upper RSP of the interval estimate. The interval accounts for the amount of uncertainty associated with the RSP. For example, the CB is 95% confident that the true value of the RSP is between the lower and upper limit of the interval.

***** Data Period(s) Used for State Performance:** Refers to the initial 12-month period and the period(s) of data needed to follow the children to observe their outcomes. The FY or federal fiscal year refers to NCANDS data, which spans the 12-month period October 1 – September 30. All other periods refer to AFCARS data. "A" refers to the 6-month period October 1 – March 31. "B" refers to the 6-month period April 1 – September 30. The 2-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

******Excluded due to Data Quality:** Identifies when performance was not calculated due to the state failing one or more data quality checks for this indicator.

Appendix B
Summary of CFSR Round 2 Connecticut 2008 Key Findings

The Children's Bureau conducted a CFSR in Connecticut in 2008. Key findings from that review are presented below. Because the Children's Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a state's performance in the third round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round.

Identifying Information and Review Dates

General Information
Children's Bureau Region: 1
Date of Onsite Review: September 22–26, 2008
Period Under Review: April 1, 2007, through September 26, 2008
Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued: March 9, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: June 8, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: January 1, 2010

Highlights of Findings

Performance Measurements
A. The State met the national standards for **none** of the **six** data indicators.
B. The State achieved substantial conformity with **one** of the **seven** outcomes.
C. The State achieved substantial conformity with **five** of the **seven** systemic factors.

State's Conformance With the National Standards

Data Indicator or Composite	National Standard	State's Score	Meets or Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of maltreatment recurrence (data indicator)	94.6 or higher	92.5	Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.21	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	96.6	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	100.0	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	96.3	Does Not Meet Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	98.1	Does Not Meet Standard

State's Conformance With the Outcomes

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

State's Conformance With the Systemic Factors

Systemic Factor	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Statewide Information System	Did Not Achieved Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Achieve Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Achieve Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Achieve Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Achieve Substantial Conformity

Key Findings by Item

Outcomes

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment	Strength
Item 2. Repeat Maltreatment	Strength
Item 3. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-entry Into Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
Item 4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	Area Needing Improvement
Item 5. Foster Care Re-entries	Strength
Item 6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	Area Needing Improvement
Item 7. Permanency Goal for Child	Area Needing Improvement
Item 8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Permanent Placement With Relatives	Area Needing Improvement
Item 9. Adoption	Area Needing Improvement
Item 10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	Area Needing Improvement
Item 11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	Strength
Item 12. Placement With Siblings	Area Needing Improvement
Item 13. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
Item 14. Preserving Connections	Area Needing Improvement
Item 15. Relative Placement	Area Needing Improvement
Item 16. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
Item 17. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix B: Connecticut 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	Area Needing Improvement
Item 19. Caseworker Visits With Child	Area Needing Improvement
Item 20. Caseworker Visits With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21. Educational Needs of the Child	Strength
Item 22. Physical Health of the Child	Strength
Item 23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

Systemic Factors

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 24. Statewide Information System	Area Needing Improvement
Item 25. Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
Item 26. Periodic Reviews	Strength
Item 27. Permanency Hearings	Area Needing Improvement
Item 28. Termination of Parental Rights	Area Needing Improvement
Item 29. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30. Standards Ensuring Quality Services	Strength
Item 31. Quality Assurance System	Strength
Item 32. Initial Staff Training	Strength
Item 33. Ongoing Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement
Item 34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength
Item 35. Array of Services	Strength
Item 36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
Item 37. Individualizing Services	Strength

Appendix B: Connecticut 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength
Item 39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Strength
Item 40. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength
Item 41. Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions	Strength
Item 42. Standards Applied Equally	Strength
Item 43. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
Item 44. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
Item 45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength