Child and Family Services Reviews

Texas

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: Texas Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

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

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and submitted to the Children's Bureau on February 1, 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 180 cases (108 foster care and 72 in-home cases) conducted via a State Conducted Case Review process in Lubbock, Abilene, Arlington, Tyler, Beaumont, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Midland, El Paso, and Edinburg, Texas, between May 23, 2016, and July 1, 2016
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
  - Attorneys representing the agency
  - Child welfare agency senior managers, including the commissioner, director of system improvement, regional directors, and program managers
  - Child welfare supervisors and caseworkers
  - Foster and adoptive parents and relative caregivers
  - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children staff
  - IV-E waiver staff
  - Parents, parent collaboration groups, and fatherhood representatives
  - Service providers
  - Tribal representatives
  - Youth served by the agency

In Round 3, the Children's Bureau suspended the use of the state's performance on 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 Texas's overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Texas's performance in Round 2.

I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Texas 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 3 of 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Statewide Information System
- Quality Assurance System
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Children's Bureau Comments on Texas Performance

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

After external reviews by the Stephens Group and the Texas Sunset Commission, the DFPS collaborated with stakeholders on a "transformation" effort focused on child safety, permanency, and well-being; effective program operations; and staff turnover and training. DFPS recently developed and began implementation of systemic improvements that included overhauling Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker and supervisor training programs, amending contracts with foster care providers, implementing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessments (CANS) to assess children's service needs upon removal, and implementing an alternative response system. Challenges with implementing these systems improvements were identified during the CFSR stakeholder interviews.

In preparation for the CFSR, DFPS dedicated resources to its State Conducted Case Review. This afforded the state the opportunity to conduct its own case review during the CFSR and created the potential to measure improvement. Although DFPS was approved to conduct its own review, and has successfully managed required sampling and time frames, CB raised numerous concerns regarding the quality of the state's self-assessment of its case practices and the accuracy of case ratings.

Cross-cutting concerns identified during the review include continued high rates of caseworker turnover, backlogged investigations, and a lack of placement resources. Stakeholders identified barriers to assuring child safety and expediting permanency that included a growing number of reports of child maltreatment, an increasing number of children in foster care, and a lack of resources to manage the backlog of pending investigations. Resource constraints and an insufficient array of appropriate services appear to have negatively affected performance on some of the outcomes.

Case review results identified areas of concern pertaining to assessing and managing safety and risk. A significant number of in-home cases reviewed involved a reliance on Parental Child Safety Placements (PCSP) during the investigation stage to avoid foster care placements. The use of PCSP often results in needed services not being provided to the children, parents, and caregivers. In many of these cases, either the children eventually enter foster care or the case is closed with tenuous permanency for the children

and a lack of positive outcomes for the families. The case reviews also identified delays in the transfer of cases from the investigation stage to ongoing services. This transfer delay results in delays in services provided to families and children. In some cases where domestic violence is identified, a lack of assessment and provision of safety services affects safety outcomes.

Engaging and working with parents and caregivers is critical to maintaining safety, achieving permanency, helping the child maintain connections, and promoting child and family well-being. Review results found challenges for the agency in making concerted efforts to support positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her parents; assessing the needs of parents and providing appropriate services; and ensuring that the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and parents are sufficient to meet family needs. A lack of concerted efforts to locate parents or to work with parents who are incarcerated or are resistant to being involved in case planning contributed to areas needing improvement, as did a lack of agency assistance to parents in accessing services.

The case review results identified areas needing improvement in the items related to setting appropriate goals for children in foster care and achieving permanency. The DFPS does not routinely focus on the most appropriate goal for the child's circumstances. Children are placed with relatives with guardianship as the goal, without considering other goals, such as adoption by the relative. Often, custody is transferred to a relative without guardianship assistance payments or other supports. The process of selecting a permanency goal appears driven by the need to comply with time frames set by state laws and policies, rather than consideration of the child's best interests. Case review results showed poor performance in achieving all types of permanency goals. In some cases, the goal of another planned permanent living arrangement is used for youth rather than exploring the appropriateness of other permanency goals, such as guardianship or adoption. Permanency outcomes for these youth are especially poor.

The practice of "pleading in the alternative" for termination of parental rights (TPR) at the initial filing for legal custody resulted in all cases reviewed showing timely filing of TPR petitions. However, the early TPR filings do not result in timely achievement of TPR and adoption because the date that the agency moves forward in the courts with TPR is actually later. The agency does not begin to recruit, process, or approve an adoptive home for the child later in the case, after a goal of adoption has been established.

Parental substance abuse was identified as a reason for agency involvement with the family in a majority of the cases reviewed. In these cases minimal substance abuse services were provided and often drug-testing parents was the primary service or intervention. Over-reliance on drug testing was identified as a barrier to reunification as was the lack of substance abuse services for parents and youth, and long waiting lists, particularly in rural areas.

The review identified areas where practice is improving and results are stronger. DFPS makes good efforts to locate and secure relative placements for children who are removed and placed in out-of-home care and has implemented a guardianship financial assistance program. While this program is available, it requires relatives to become certified as a licensed foster home. Frequently the custody is transferred, thus limiting the provision of services to relatives. In the cases reviewed, approximately one-half of the children in DFPS custody were placed with relatives.

Case review results showed stronger performance in agency coordination of children's basic educational needs and physical health needs, including stronger performance in providing oversight for psychotropic medication through the use of Star Health, its procedural infrastructure, and subject matter experts, including nurses, in each region of the state.

The systemic factors of Statewide Information System, Quality Assurance System, and Agency Responsiveness to the Community were all found to be functioning in substantial conformity. The Children's Bureau believes that with these systems in place and functioning, DFPS capacity for data analysis, combined with a functioning continuous quality improvement (CQI) system, can be leveraged to address other program areas and outcomes that need improvement. DFPS engagement of key stakeholders who share responsibility for system improvement and strategic planning will be critical to the success of ongoing work.

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. Where relevant, we provide performance summaries that are differentiated between foster care and in-home services cases.

This report provides an overview. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Details on each case rating are available to DFPS. 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

Texas is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 63% of the 73 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 accepted reports be assigned to one of two priority levels based on the assessment of the immediacy of the risk and the severity of the possible harm to the child. Priority I reports concern children who appear to face an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in death or serious harm. Priority II reports are all other reports of abuse or neglect that are not assigned as Priority I. Subject to the availability of funds, CPS responds immediately to Priority I reports that involve circumstances in which the death of the child or substantial bodily harm to the child will imminently result unless DFPS immediately intervenes. DFPS

responds within 24 hours to other Priority I reports. DFPS responds to Priority II reports within 72 hours by initiating an investigation or by forwarding the report to specialized screening staff.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 63% of the 73 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

Texas is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 69% of the 180 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 84% of the 108 foster care cases and 47% of the 72 in-home services 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 60% of the 90 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 83% of the 29 applicable foster care cases and 49% of the 61 applicable in-home services cases.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 78% of the 180 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 87% of the 108 applicable foster care cases and 65% of the 72 applicable in-home services 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

Texas is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 22% of the 108 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).

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 77% of the 108 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 48% of the 108 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 42% of the 108 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

Texas is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 71% of the 107 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 85% of the 60 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 54% of the 65 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 39% of the 23 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 72% of the 54 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 61% of the 31 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.

[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.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 78% of the 107 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 86% of the 103 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 64% of the 56 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 69% of the 54 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 55% of the 31 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

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

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[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.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 57% of the 180 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 63% of the 108 foster care cases and 47% of the 72 in-home services 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 58% of the 180 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as Strength in 64% of the 108 foster care cases and 50% of the 72 in-home services cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

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

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 12A because 92% of the 180 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 93% of the 108 foster care cases and 90% of the 72 in-home services cases.

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

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 53% of the 143 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 55% of the 71 applicable foster care cases and 51% of the 72 applicable in-home services cases.
- In 78% of the 137 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.

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[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.

- In 51% of the 114 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

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 12C because 94% of the 105 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 64% of the 165 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 70% of the 93 applicable foster care cases and 56% of the 72 applicable in-home services cases.
- In 96% of the 98 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 85% of the 135 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 57% of the 112 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 88% of the 180 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 94% of the 108 foster care cases and 81% of the 72 in-home services cases.

[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.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 47% of the 142 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 43% of the 70 applicable foster care cases and 51% of the 72 applicable in-home services cases.
- In 70% of the 135 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 48% of the 112 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

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 91% of the 87 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.

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[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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 91% of the 87 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 95% of the 76 applicable foster care cases and 64% of the 11 applicable in-home services 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

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 80% of the 157 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 82% of the 108 applicable foster care cases and 76% of the applicable 49 in-home services 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 88% of the 126 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 87% of the 108 foster care cases and 94% of the 18 applicable in-home services cases.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 79% of the 99 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 84% of the 62 applicable foster care cases and 70% of the 37 applicable in-home services 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

Texas is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Texas reported that the statewide information system, Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas (IMPACT), is fully functional statewide and can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care. Additional information in the statewide assessment confirmed that the IMPACT serves as the case record and provides timely tracking of the relevant information. Monitoring processes at the regional and statewide levels reconcile timely data entry and identify and correct errors.

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

Texas is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Three 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information and data in the statewide assessment showed that written case plans are jointly developed with the child's parents according to the required provisions and in place in almost all cases. An initiative is in place to implement a case planning meeting for every service plan for every child in care on the child's 45th day in care, with subsequent reviews planned for every 90 days thereafter.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that an initial periodic review is held no later than 180 days after the date the court renders a temporary order appointing the department as the temporary managing conservator of a child. Subsequent hearings are then held no later than 120 days after the date of the last permanency hearing.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Data provided in the statewide assessment showed that permanency hearings are occurring no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

Item 23. Termination of Parental Rights

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

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews, the case review system does not ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions. The practice of filing a TPR petition by pleading in the alternative at the initial filing for removal does not meet the requirements that a state files or joins a petition to TPR when a child has been in care for 15 of 22 months, absent exceptions and/or compelling reasons to do so. Information from the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed the state's practice of pleading in the alternative for TPR petitions is largely perfunctory and does not represent agency intent to move forward in the courts. It does not represent an action made in the best interests of children to develop a permanent plan of adoption. The agency actually files for TPR in court at a later date, and it may or may not be prior to the 15 of 22 months in care.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24. Findings were determined based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided in the statewide assessment indicated that foster/adoptive parents and relative caregivers are not always notified of court hearings, and no systems are in place to track this notification. In interviews, stakeholders noted concerns regarding the ability of caregivers to exercise their right to be heard in court hearings.

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

Texas 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) is operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and

safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information from the statewide assessment showed that the Texas quality assurance (QA) system is functioning statewide and operating in all the regions. The Division of Accountability uses an instrument based on the CFSR that includes standards to evaluate the quality of services and identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system. Case review results are used in conjunction with aggregate data. The process provides relevant reports and evaluation of some implemented program improvement. Although DFPS has a strong QA infrastructure, concerns were noted during the state conducted review about the lack of rating consistency with federal expectations for CFSR purposes.

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

Texas 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews noted that new caseworker training in place prior to 2015 did not provide the knowledge and skills to staff to enable them to effectively perform their job duties. As part of the agency's transformation efforts, DFPS redesigned and implemented new caseworker training in 2015. Given the length of time the new training has been in effect, there was limited data and information available other than satisfaction survey results. These survey results were positive. DFPS noted in the statewide assessment that the evaluation of the new worker training model would not be available until the end of 2016. Stakeholders were optimistic with the redesigned field-based training but expressed concerns about the availability of mentors to sustain the redesigned training, given the mentors' other full-time duties. DFPS continues to evaluate the functioning of the new training approach with their policy and practice model and resource allocations.

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.

- Texas 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 interviews with stakeholders did not confirm that ongoing training to enhance caseworker and supervisor skills and knowledge is consistently provided. Caseworker certification training is a voluntary program. Workloads, the location of the trainings, and other required trainings limit caseworkers' and supervisors' ability to attend the numerous specialized classes offered.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure training is occurring statewide for prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities. The state requires 35 hours of pre-service training and ongoing training for foster parents. All foster parents must have trauma-informed training before becoming certified/verified and annually thereafter. Most foster care placements are contracted with child-placing and residential agencies in Texas. DFPS monitors a percentage of the child-placing contracts each year.

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.

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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.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Texas is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. None of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information from the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders confirmed that the state does not have an adequate array of services accessible to children and families in all jurisdictions of the state. Significant differences were reported between services offered in the metro areas and those available within the rural areas of the state. Gaps in services or waitlists were noted in the following areas: transportation, mental health services, domestic violence services, housing for youth transitioning out of care, independent living services, services for children and parents who have developmental delays, services to families providing kinship care services, in-home services to meet identified safety-related issues and other identified family needs, substance abuse services, and services for families whose first language is not English.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

- Information from the statewide assessment and confirmed in stakeholder interviews showed that although improvements have been seen in parts of the state, the state does not consistently ensure that services are being individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families. Stakeholders said that service plans are usually not individualized to ensure tailored services, specifically services for the safety of children remaining in the home, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, children with special needs, and services for families for whom English is a second language.

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

Texas is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Both items in this systemic factor were 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed notable improvement by DFPS in the last several years regarding engagement and including community partners and parents as part of the Transformation Initiative. DFPS involves youth through the Youth Leadership Council and by employing former foster youth as Youth Specialists in every region to further engage youth and obtain input. The statewide assessment reports that the majority of the state has Child Advocacy Centers and strong working relationships with the Tribal Communities. The Children's Commission, which includes the courts, has held interactive forums over the past few years with a focus on the systemic factors of Case Review System, Service Array, and Foster Parent Licensing and Retention. Key community members were actively involved in these sessions and information from these sessions was used as a foundational element in development of the state's CFSP.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- The statewide assessment included specific examples that demonstrate how the state coordinates services or benefits with other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population. Examples include coordination with the Children's Commission, Department of State Health Services, and Office of Court Administration.

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

Texas 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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the state conducts home visits to foster and adoptive homes on a monthly basis and that DFPS holds all licensed caregivers and facilities to the same standards. Waiver and variance requests, as well as the number granted and denied, are monitored monthly. Data in the statewide assessment showed that requests for waivers were infrequent.

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.

- Texas 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 instrument showed that DFPS conducts a large number of public safety and FBI background checks for licensing purposes and that the state has taken several measures over the last few years to ensure

continued compliance with federal requirements for background checks for foster and adoptive homes. The DFPS IMPACT system automatically launches a Department of Public Safety name-based criminal check during the initial foster and adoptive parent licensing/approval process. Stakeholders reported concerns regarding the safety of children being housed temporarily in offices or hotels because the state is unable to find approved foster care placements.

Item 35. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

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

- Texas 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 described state supported and monitored faith-based and regional efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. However, stakeholders said that the state does not have an adequate pool of homes to meet placement needs in specific regions or counties and cannot ensure that all children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed have sufficient homes available statewide.

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.

- Texas received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information provided in the statewide assessment instrument and stakeholder interviews showed some concerns with the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children. Data and information from interviews identified barriers in approving homes for waiting children. The state is not completing home studies within the 60-day requirement and often exceeds the time frame by several months. The state has no tracking system to account for the home studies, which can remain in the field offices in some regions within the state for up to a year without any activity.

Appendix A
Summary of Texas 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	63% Substantially Achieved
Item 1 Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	63% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 2 Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	69% Substantially Achieved
Item 2 Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	60% Strength
Item 3 Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Texas 2016 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 1 Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	22% Substantially Achieved
Item 4 Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	77% Strength
Item 5 Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	48% Strength
Item 6 Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	42% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 2 The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	71% Substantially Achieved
Item 7 Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	85% Strength
Item 8 Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	54% Strength
Item 9 Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength
Item 10 Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	86% Strength
Item 11 Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	64% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Texas 2016 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 1 Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	57% Substantially Achieved
Item 12 Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	58% Strength
Sub-Item 12A Needs assessment and services to children	Strength	92% Strength
Sub-Item 12B Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	53% Strength
Sub-Item 12C Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Strength	94% Strength
Item 13 Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	64% Strength
Item 14 Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 15 Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	47% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 2 Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	91% Substantially Achieved
Item 16 Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	91% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3 Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	80% Substantially Achieved
Item 17 Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 18 Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	79% 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	In Substantial Conformity
Item 19 Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment	Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Texas 2016 CFSR Performance

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	Strength
Item 21 Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment	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

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 26 Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
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	Strength

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Statewide Assessment	In Substantial Conformity
Item 31 State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment	Strength
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	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.

[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 Texas 2016 CFSR Performance

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Periods Used for State Performance***
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.1%	Lower	7.3%	7.1%–7.6%	FY13–14
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	8.72	8.08–9.4	14A–14B, FY14
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	36.9%	36.2%–37.7%	12B–15A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	53.4%	52.3%–54.4%	14B–15A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	29.6%	28.6%–30.6%	14B–15A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	4.4%	3.8%–5.1%	12B–15A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	4.07	4.00–4.14	14B–15A

*** 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.

Appendix B
Summary of CFSR Round 2 Texas 2008 Key Findings

The Children's Bureau conducted a CFSR in Texas 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: 6
Date of Onsite Review: March 24–28, 2008
Period Under Review: October 1, 2006, through March 24, 2008
Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued: January 26, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: April 27, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: April 1, 2010

Highlights of Findings

Performance Measurements
A. The State met the national standards for **one** of the **six** standards.
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	96.1	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.55	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	120.1	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	97.4	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	93.1	Does Not Meet Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	82.9	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

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	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.	Achieved 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	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Achieved Substantial Conformity

Key Findings by Item

Outcomes

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
Item 2. Repeat Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
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	Strength
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: Texas 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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

Systemic Factors

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
Item 24. Statewide Information System	Strength
Item 25. Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
Item 26. Periodic Reviews	Strength
Item 27. Permanency Hearings	Strength
Item 28. Termination of Parental Rights	Strength
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	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
Item 37. Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement
Item 38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength

Appendix B: Texas 2008 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
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