

**Building the Child Welfare Team: Results
of the 2002 Adoption and Safe Families Act
Phone Poll**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings from the second Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) phone poll conducted by the Institute for Child and Family Policy at the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine as part of a child welfare training grant funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families. The Muskie project team asked child welfare agency and court improvement project representatives to identify how implementing ASFA has changed the way that child welfare agencies do business. Seven themes emerged from the 2002 poll data analysis:

- Agencies view the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) from a 'good case practice' perspective and are striving to implement this approach throughout the agency and the child welfare network
- ASFA related training continues
- Agencies are beginning to note the impact of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR)
- The managerial and supervisory skills needed to implement ASFA are changing
- Coordination between the agency and the courts continues to increase
- The barriers to supporting staff as they implement ASFA reflect the economic difficulties agencies are facing, and
- Agency administrative and data systems continue to evolve.

Reviewing these themes in conjunction with the remarks made by phone poll participants provides valuable lessons learned regarding the progress that public child welfare agencies are making in implementing the requirements of ASFA throughout the child protective system.

ASFA mandates regarding the achievement of outcomes and the use of data carry clear expectations for child welfare supervisors and managers. The 2002 phone poll indicates that while agencies are making progress implementing ASFA, more work needs to be done to assure that the managerial and supervisory day to day decisions are informed by data and reports, that agencies refine internal administrative systems to support practice and that training continues to enhance the skills needed to support collaboration with the courts, tribes and community partners.

Please visit the website for this project (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>) to download this report, view a full description of the project and locate individual state by state responses to the 2002 ASFA phone poll.

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 was passed in response to a growing national concern about the extended periods of time that children spend in foster care. ASFA establishes three goals for child welfare systems--attaining safety, permanency and well being for children in care. Additionally, ASFA requires the development of outcome measures in each of the three goals, defines state reporting on progress toward achieving those outcomes and modifies the procedures for federal reviews of public child welfare systems. These requirements, in combination with the mandates of other relevant legislation and regulations, substantially change the way child welfare systems are to be managed.

Federal legislation also provides for the development of three major child welfare data collection systems--NCANDS (National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System), AFCARS (Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Report System) and SACWIS (Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems). It is now possible to use data to evaluate performance in child welfare programs and to establish clear measures of success. However, if these federal mandates and systems are to inform practice, child welfare professionals must put them to use.

To support that aim, the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, funded the Institute of Child and Family Policy at the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine, in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Kentucky Department of Community Based Services, to develop a trainer's guide to support a curriculum that integrates ASFA mandates with the effective use of child welfare data to support decision making at both the case and system levels. This 3-year project, which began in September 2000, is now in its second year.

In Year 1 of the project the Muskie project team collaborated with the Kentucky child welfare agency and a national multi-disciplinary advisory council to develop an ASFA implementation 'promising practices' analysis *'Building the Child Welfare Team Promising Practices 2001 Phone Poll Results'* report, issued in May, 2001, to create ASFA implementation competencies and to design a core curriculum to train child welfare managers and supervisors on data use and ASFA implementation skills. The curriculum, *'Understanding and Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)'*, is designed to help child welfare supervisors, managers and senior administrators implement the requirements of ASFA by ensuring that clients needs are assessed quickly, that individualized services are available and delivered promptly and that the agency systems support effective child welfare practice.

In Year 2, the current project year, the Muskie project team has updated the 'promising practices' analysis and is field testing, evaluating and revising the core curriculum in collaboration with: the Commonwealth of Kentucky Department of Community Based Services; the Department of Children, Youth and Families, New Mexico; Cuyahoga County Children and Family Services, Cleveland, Ohio; and the Division of Children and Family Services and the

Training Partnerships. The '*Understanding and Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)*' curriculum will be available for use by child welfare agencies in the fall of 2002.

In Year 3 the project team will update the 'promising practices' analysis and implement a national dissemination plan that provides intensive training of trainers in additional child welfare agencies on the '*Understanding and Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)*' curriculum, briefs ACF regional office staff, establishes a peer to peer consultation capacity and customizes the core curriculum to promote utilization by institutions of higher education that train child welfare professionals.

THE 2002 ASFA PHONE POLL REPORT

This report, *Building the Child Welfare Team: Results of the 2002 Adoption and Safe Families Act Phone Poll*, presents the findings of the second 'promising practices' poll conducted by the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service. Project team members polled representatives from 41 child welfare agencies and 3 court improvement projects and asked them to identify the skills staff need to implement ASFA and how meeting the requirements of ASFA has changed the way the agency does business. The report includes:

- The **Executive Summary** which highlights the 2002 poll results.
- The **Introduction** which provides a brief description of the curriculum development project and the organization of this report.
- The **Results** section which highlights the overall lessons learned from the poll, summarizes the data that we collected and presents participants' remarks that illuminate the 'promising practices'.
- The **Methodology** section which describes how the poll was conducted, the design of the data collection instruments and the approach to data analysis.
- The **Appendices** which include documents showing frequencies, samples of the poll instruments and a listing of the individuals who participated in the poll.

The project team will distribute the *Building the Child Welfare Team: Results of the 2002 Adoption and Safe Families Act Phone Poll* report to respondents, child welfare agencies, court improvement projects and other interested entities and publish it on the project website (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>). We hope this report provides the child protective community with information and ideas about promising administrative practices that have proved helpful to individual child welfare agencies as they work to meet the challenge of implementing ASFA. Please visit the website for this project to view or download this report, the 2001 poll report and a full description of the project. Individual state by state poll results from 2001 and 2002 years can also be found on the project website.

RESULTS

THEMES

Agencies view the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) from a ‘good case practice’ perspective

The 2002 ASFA phone poll analysis indicates that child welfare agencies continue to actively implement the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). Agencies tend to view ASFA requirements as 'good case practice' and are taking steps, such as joint training, starting interagency workgroups, communicating the shared responsibility for meeting outcomes for children in care and setting up informational websites, to implement this approach throughout the agency and the child protective network.

ASFA training continues

Agencies offer ASFA training on a variety of topics such as permanency issues, timeframes, reunification and concurrent planning. When the courts provide training to the agency, the topics include ASFA as it relates to state case law, barriers to successful termination and ethical issues. Often the ASFA training sponsored by the agency includes personnel from the courts, mental health providers and tribes; less often the training includes health care providers, foster parents, contract providers, schools, community stakeholders and child welfare board members. The extent and type of ASFA training provided by the agency may contribute to the increase in understanding of ASFA by child welfare managers, supervisors and workers, with workers showing the greatest increase between 2001 and 2002.

Agencies are beginning to note the impact of the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR)

Agencies are now in the midst of preparing for or responding to the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR). We noticed some differences in responses from the states that are in the initial phases of the CFSR (planning or assessment) versus the states in the later phases (review completed or working to complete PIP activities) in two areas --- understanding the requirements of ASFA and understanding how to implement ASFA. On the topic of understanding ASFA, it is interesting to note the differences in ratings given by states that are in the initial phases of the CFSR versus those in the later phases. States in the later phases rated the understanding of ASFA by managers, supervisors and workers significantly higher than did states that have yet to complete the review. States that have completed the CFSR rated workers need to ‘understand how to implement ASFA’ significantly higher than states in the initial phases of the review while both groups rated workers need to ‘understand the requirements of ASFA’ similarly. States that have been through the CFSR may see the need for workers not to just understand ASFA requirements but to know how to implement them more clearly than states that have yet to complete the process.

Both the child welfare agency respondents and the court improvement project respondents mentioned the need to coordinate, communicate and work together, especially as

they move forward with the CFSR. One court improvement project respondent noted that work on the CFSR has taken precedence over ASFA implementation. Agencies in the later phases of the CFSR also stressed the importance of helping staff become more aware of the financial impact if activities are not done or are done late, working with the tribes to reunite kids back to the tribes and understanding ASFA requirements.

The managerial and supervisory skills needed to implement ASFA are changing

Interestingly in the 2001 poll, casework was the key skill respondents said was needed by managers, supervisors and workers to implement ASFA. The results of the 2002 poll show that while casework remains the 1st ranked skill for workers, understanding the requirements of ASFA is ranked number one for managers and communication is ranked first for supervisors. In the 2002 phone poll, child welfare respondents also reported that an ‘understanding of ASFA requirements’, ‘knowing how to use data effectively’, ‘casework’ and ‘collaboration’ are important skills needed to implement ASFA. From the court improvement project perspective child welfare supervisors need the ‘ability to monitor staff’ and ‘assure that timelines’ are met while workers need to have ‘knowledge of the law and its requirements’, the ‘ability to make decisions quickly’ and know how ‘to testify in court regarding permanency and safety planning’.

Coordination between the agency and courts continues to increase

Building and sustaining productive relationships with the courts is of particular interest to child welfare agencies since the relationship of the child welfare agency and the court is an important factor in how smoothly cases move through the system. The 2002 poll results indicate that child welfare agencies and courts are launching a variety of joint training and administrative activities designed to support agency staff and court personnel as they carry out the provisions of ASFA and prepare for the newly implemented Child and Family Services Reviews. However, both groups continue to look for proven approaches to stabilizing positive working relationships between the child welfare agency and the court. Court improvement project respondents reported that there has been increased communication and collaboration between the courts and the agencies, including joint training sessions and agency and court personnel working together on the local level. Agencies note the benefits of the increased coordination between the agency and the courts in a barrier analysis question--- a ‘difficult relationship with the courts’ was ranked sixth by agencies in the 2002 poll, falling from second place in the 2001 poll.

The barriers to supporting staff as they implement ASFA reflect the economic difficulties agencies are facing

The barriers to the agency's support for staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA changed markedly between 2001 and 2002. In 2001, agencies mentioned most frequently the lack of resources, difficult relationship with courts, staff turnover and limitations or lack of computer system(s). In the 2002 poll, staff turnover was mentioned most frequently followed by lack of resources, heavy workload and lack of services, indicators of the financial difficulties many agencies now face.

Agency administrative and data systems continue to evolve

Agency respondents stated that as part of ASFA implementation child welfare agencies have made changes in certain administrative systems such as internal communication, the case review process and foster/adoptive parent recruitment. However, agencies were less likely to have changed performance appraisals, job descriptions or staff recruitment practices as a result of ASFA. Between the 2001 poll and the 2002 poll, there was little change in the ratings of how well the child welfare agency's information system supports the implementation of ASFA---3.17 in 2001 and 3.43 in 2002 (using a scale of 1-5, 1 being poor and 5 being outstanding). It is interesting to note that county -administered systems gave the information systems a lower rating (2.86) in the 2002 poll than non-county based systems (3.56).

CHILD WELFARE AGENCY POLL RESULTS

Understanding of ASFA

Respondents were asked to rate their agency's staff in terms of their understanding of ASFA requirements by ranking the level of understanding of managers, supervisors and workers on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'comprehensive'. The average ratings appear below:

Staff	Average Rating	
	2001	2002
Managers	4.08	4.27
Supervisors	3.62	3.78
Workers	3.06	3.41

In terms of understanding of ASFA, managers ranked ahead of supervisors and workers in both the 2001 and 2002 polls. All three groups showed an increase in understanding between 2001 and 2002 with workers showing a statistically significant increase ($p < .01$). The comments made suggest that managers are ranked higher in understanding because they have had more training, while supervisors know the ASFA requirements that pertain specifically to their areas of responsibility. Workers' understanding is good; they practice the requirements, but may not know ASFA as the source of the requirements. High staff turnover negatively influences workers' understanding.

In the 2002 poll we compared how respondents rated 'Understanding of ASFA' by managers, supervisors and workers in states in the initial phases of the CFSR (planning or assessment) to the states in the later phases (review completed or working to complete PIP activities). We found statistically significant differences between these two groups. As shown in the following table, states in the later phases of the CFSR process rated the 'Understanding of ASFA' by managers, supervisors and workers significantly higher than did states in the initial phases. Completing the activities associated with the CFSR appears to increase the understanding of ASFA by agency managers, supervisors and workers.

Group Rated	Average Rating: States in the Initial Phases of the CFSR	Average Rating: States in the Later Phases of the CFSR	Statistical Significance.
Rating of Managers' Understanding of ASFA	4.08	4.58	<.05
Rating of Supervisors' Understanding of ASFA	3.56	4.29	<.01
Rating of Workers' Understanding of ASFA	3.20	3.9	<.01

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Understanding of ASFA

At the management level, people have been trained and attended meetings where ASFA information has been provided and reviewed. However, we continue to provide training and work on implementation of consistent practice throughout the state. (CT)

Delaware went through the CFSR in 2001 so administrators understand ASFA and the implications. (DE)

Michigan's child welfare policy reflects ASFA requirements. Managers monitor staff performance and adherence to policy thereby increasing the adherence to ASFA. (MI)

If we're not modeling it 100%, then workers are not experiencing it 50%. Also, we have had significant turnover in our supervisors--50% of them have less than 2 years experience in that role. (AL)

We've had some turnover at the supervisory level which means that the ASFA knowledge might be a little less comprehensive here than at the management level. (AZ)

Some supervisors have a more comprehensive understanding than others. It can vary depending on the specific areas of oversight each supervisor maintains and their length of service with the agency. (NH)

There is more knowledge of the specific practices than the fact that those practices may be ASFA related. (CA)

Sometimes the knowledge becomes contained in specialized units and these units often include the most experienced and motivated staff. (NJ)

Although ASFA is supposed to be part of the fabric of the job, we have worker turnover and the learning curve is always an issue. (SC)

Workers know how to handle changes in policy and practice caused by implementation of ASFA but don't necessarily know that the reason for the changes is requirements of ASFA. (TX)

Skills

Respondents were asked to list the skills that managers, supervisors and workers need to have to implement ASFA. The top skills for each are listed below.

Managers' Skills

Skills	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Case work	1	5
Collaboration	2	4
Understanding the requirements of ASFA	3	1
Understanding how to implement ASFA requirements	4	3
Using data effectively	5	2

Supervisors' Skills

Skills	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Case work	1	4
Communication	2	1
Collaboration	3-4	2-3
Understanding how to implement ASFA	3-4	2-3
Using data effectively	5	5

Workers' Skills

Skills	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Case work	1	1
Collaboration	2	3
Communication	3	2
Understanding how to implement ASFA	4	4

Interestingly in the 2001 poll, casework was the skill most often mentioned for managers, supervisors and workers. The results of the 2002 poll show that while casework remains the 1st ranked skill for workers, understanding the requirements of ASFA is ranked number one for managers and communication is ranked first for supervisors.

When the responses of agencies in the later phases of the Child and Family Services Review (review completed and working under a Program Improvement Plan) were compared to those agencies in the initial (planning and assessment) phases, there was a statistically significant

difference in the responses. Those in the later phases rated workers' need to 'Understand how to implement ASFA' higher than states who were in the planning stages. The average rating of those who completed CFSR was 4.58; the average rating of those who were in the planning stages of CFSR was 3.86 ($p < .01$). The agencies that have been through CFSR appear to see the need for workers not just to understand ASFA requirements, but to be able to implement it also.

Administrative Activities

Respondents were asked if, as part of the ASFA implementation, the agency had undertaken any activities in certain administrative areas. A summary of the responses appears below. Selected remarks by participants, which appear below as well, are very informative regarding the changes made. They give specific details of the activity undertaken, why it worked and, in some instances, how it differs from practice and procedures before ASFA.

Agency structure. Of the 41 states responding to this question, 42% had changed agency structure based on ASFA. Among the changes mentioned most often were that a department or unit had been added or restructured or staff had been added.

Internal communication. Of the 41 states responding to this question, 68% had undertaken ASFA related activities in the area of internal communication. Activities mentioned most often were an increase in communications, more frequent use of e-mail, the intranet and websites and training for staff.

Performance appraisals. Of the 41 states responding, 24% have undertaken ASFA related activities in the area of performance appraisals.

Job descriptions. Of the 41 states responding, 15% have changed job descriptions to reflect ASFA requirements.

Staff recruitment. Of the 41 states responding, 22% have implemented activities in staff recruitment in response to ASFA. Hiring freezes and layoffs were factors mentioned by two agencies.

Case Review. Of the 41 states responding, 66% have modified their case review process in response to ASFA and the CFSR. Three agencies mentioned that they now have supervisors or coordinators review cases.

Foster/Adoptive Parent Recruiting. Of the 41 states responding, 56% have changed their foster/adoptive parent recruiting process to include activities such as on-going campaigns, increased support, contracting with private agencies and assigning specific staff to focus on recruitment.

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Changes in Administrative Activities

We created a separate substance abuse/mental health unit and hired the manager and staff for that unit, realigned staff and added 2 new positions to create a separate unit to focus on adoption subsidies. District 1, the largest district, has restructured the adoption unit to focus separately on children with no identified placement and children with an identified placement. (AZ)

Because of concerns about meeting challenges posed by ASFA, there was reorganization in the office to provide more direct services to field staff. Increased funds were given to local areas and they decided how to spend it. (LA)

We have transitioned Family Prevention Services from the Child Welfare unit to our Family Independence Program (cash/food assistance/MA etc). This was done to enhance the “one worker” concept; to assure that the worker that works with the family on their basic needs can also address child safety issues before they become critical. (MI)

The Division of Youth and Family Services developed a Case Practice Unit in our Central Office. This unit is comprised of experienced staff who support field in meeting the ASFA requirements. (NJ)

We formed an Executive Leadership Council made up of public, judicial and private agency members to assist in development of the statewide assessment and oversee the review process. (OH)

We instituted a formal program for Technical Assistance that includes issues such as ASFA, expedited TPR and permanency planning. Also we have strengthened our focus on community development and partnerships (SC)

We formed permanency support units that look at cases where children have been in foster care the longest and identify barriers to permanency with a regional focus. We’ve implemented two units of non-case carrying personnel in each region charged with recruiting, training and retaining foster parents. There are 36 new positions that have been filled. (TN)

We created a Quality Control Division and plan to replicate some parts of the CFSR review on a regular basis as part of the Quality Assurance structure. (TX)

Changes have been made to comply with the Milestone Plan and thus, to facilitate better outcomes for children and families. These changes have also led to better conformity to ASFA requirements. The position of Milestone Coordinator was created and filled. This position oversees all aspects of the Milestone plan. There is a regional coordinator in each of the five regions and a state Milestone Coordinator. Milestone coordinators look at data and practice. They are also responsible for the federal review that will take place in April 2003. Also we added trainers to train new employees, emphasizing best practice. We combined two trend analysis committees to look at data indicators and ASFA requirements. (UT)

The Division conducts an annual ASFA Implementation Study. The study allows the Office of the Chief Counsel to dialogue with the Division about ASFA issues and address barriers. (AR)

The counties have increased communication about supporting what is good for families, especially around engaging courts and knowing what the court's priorities are. (CO)

There is increased communication with field staff because of focus in state office on what is happening in the field. Field staff are being asked to participate and share information regarding reviews. (LA)

We share more information regarding improvements in handling children whose goal is adoption and processing paperwork faster. Our improved methods for tracking and identifying children have resulted in better matching. Our preliminary planning procedures have been tightened resulting in more unified practice. (MA)

Communication has been improved. When information regarding ASFA is sent to the field, it is sent to everyone, not just supervisors and managers. (MT)

Our Continuous Quality Improvement Unit has been doing a version of the CFSR in every county and has made it through the state. (OK)

We have done training, on-going case reviews for Quality Assurance and have developed an internal web site for staff to provide information about ASFA and the Federal Review. (TX)

In collaboration with the Court Improvement Project, we conducted training of multi-disciplinary groups throughout the state on ASFA requirements. Also, we drafted a bench book that outlines ASFA requirements for child protective services. (WY)

The Agency has moved toward a performance based system. Appraisals are tied to the regulations and are aimed at supporting our overall mission. One example is providing field offices with the number of moves children experience in out of home care and ensure this is addressed. County Directors are monitored and held accountable for adoptions and reunification's of children. (MI)

Where appropriate, reference is made to activities associated with ASFA. (NJ)

All counties undertook self-assessments involving stakeholders in the community. They are looking at results to identify where more work is needed. (WI)

Changes in performance appraisals are being implemented as part of the Milestone Plan. The agency is using Practice Model Training, which is a strengths based approach to casework in a parallel process with employee performance evaluations. The performance plan reflects the skills that caseworkers should demonstrate in managing the case. Then the supervisor and the caseworkers meet to determine the strengths and areas for improvement of the worker. The

supervisor and worker then discuss resources available for caseworkers that will help them to make the needed improvements. This is similar to the way caseworkers work with families. (UT)

We have made a strong commitment to ensure that job descriptions reflect tasks that are required by ASFA and that these tasks are used as measuring tools in completing performance appraisals. (IN)

While changes in job descriptions have not been mandated by the state, some individual supervisors may have done so. (KS)

We have requested from our legislature additional positions in intake, our IV-E eligibility determination unit and for additional paraprofessional staff. The intake and IV-E positions were requested to form statewide intake and eligibility units. (HI)

Some counties are hiring bi-lingual staff. (NC)

Early in 2001 efforts were made in the area of staff recruitment and retention; since then, there was a hiring freeze, and more recently layoffs. (MA)

We made some modifications to our case review process as a result of focus on safety. (MD)

We have designed a case review instrument that will be utilized by our quality assurance personnel. (MS)

We have started using a case checklist that includes ASFA requirements that is used by caseworkers. (MT)

The department received approval from the state personnel department to hire people into positions that previously required only a social work degree and licensure. The new requirements are for people with degrees in related fields and they can be hired into a limited number and type of positions, those doing only intake and investigations. This is to address the continuing vacancy and turnover rate and an inadequate number of licensed social workers to fill the positions. (NM)

A Program Specialist will be working with each District on Quality Assurance issues, including the reading of randomly selected case files for ASFA compliance and the state's Child and Family Services Review program improvement plan. (SD)

We are relying more on IV-E and Federal Review tools to carry on case reviews. Case reviews have always been done; however, more of them have been done since ASFA. (VA)

All of our contracts are now performance based and include a special focus on kinship care and permanency through guardianship. (AZ)

We are now using MAPP and are working closely with the Foster/Adoptive Parenting Association. (IA)

We have implemented concurrent planning statewide. (LA)

We are beginning to see positive results from past efforts. We have more contracts with private agencies, which has resulted in an increase in number of resource families. (MD)

We restructured statewide recruitment efforts to be based more on community collaboration. (MN)

We increased the number of contracted providers who do recruitment and training of resource families. There is now more emphasis by contractors on ASFA issues. (MO)

One staff person was hired at the statewide level recently to work on recruitment and retention. (WA)

Up until now mostly foster/adoptive parent recruitment was carried on at the local level. Now an agency has been contracted to develop a statewide campaign. (WI)

Training for Agency Staff

61% of the respondents report that their agency continues to provide ASFA training to their staff. The most frequently mentioned training topics were permanency issues, timeframes for reunification and concurrent planning. Conducting statewide training sessions on ASFA was mentioned most often for the second year in a row, although including ASFA topics as part of in-service training rose from 36.2% of the responses in 2001 to 49% in 2002. Agency staff, including training unit, regional and central office staff, continue to be mentioned most frequently as delivering the training. Others who were mentioned as providing training included consultants (34%), court staff (22%) and state university staff (15%). 59% of the respondents indicated that ASFA training was incorporated into other training, 51% indicated it was incorporated into new worker training and 20% indicated it was not incorporated into on-going training.

Training Methods

Training Method	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Statewide training sessions on ASFA	1	1
Part of regular in-service	2	2
Forums on ASFA topics	3	9
ASFA discussed at regularly scheduled meeting	4-5	7
Managers were trained; then trained others	4-5	5
Interactive video training on ASFA topics	6	11
Teleconferences on ASFA topics	7-8	8
Staff attended training given by federal group	7-8	10
Circulating information about ASFA	9	3

Training Method	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Pre-service training	-	4
Conferences	-	6

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Training for Agency Staff

Many training topics are driven by the requirements of ASFA. More specifically training has included topics related to recruitment and tracking of children in placement, but who didn't have an adoptive home. (MA)

We train on timelines for court hearings, findings that must be made at each hearing, language that must be included in court orders, permanency timelines. (MS)

As part of the Division's Strategic Plan to improve safety and expedite permanency, Division staff in consultation with the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment, and other child welfare experts, have developed a Structured Decision making (SDM) model for case handling. This initiative promotes timely, valid, and consistent judgments related to safety, risk assessment, case planning, service provision, and permanency on behalf of children and their families. SDM training will utilize several basic components to assess families. Thus far, the Division has implemented a safety assessment protocol. In the District Offices, the safety assessment document is completed in a case conference and provides assistance to the caseworker and his or her supervisor in making a determination as to whether a child is safe in his or her home or whether safety measures must be taken to ensure the child's well-being. Also in development are tools to provide uniform screening and risk assessment throughout the District Offices or indirectly through other child welfare providers from screening of the initial referral to case closure. SDM training was preceded by two Symposia series in 1998/1999 and 2000 that focused on implementation of ASFA regulations and child protective decision-making. The Division also, through the Adoption Opportunities grant, provided training about placement issues, child needs and family strengths. (NJ)

ASFA has been incorporated into all the relevant courses in the state's competency-based training program. All county agency staff are required to attend these courses. (PA)

A 10-grid training was held that involved agency staff and the community. It was designed to foster better relationships between the agency and the community and develop skills in partnering with the community so that the responsibility for meeting outcomes for children is shared and ways to partner with community members to solve problems are identified. (WY)

This year, we finished rebuilding our training to incorporate ASFA; the training now blends ASFA process, requirements, implications and practice. (FL)

Training with or for Courts

Most agencies continue to do ASFA related training with or for the courts on topics such as permanency issues, court requirements, reasonable efforts and preparation for the CFSR. The most frequently mentioned method of training in 2001 was 'joint training sessions attended by agency and court staff', while 'agency and court staff working together on the local level' rose to number 1 in 2002.

Training Method	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Joint training sessions attended by agency and court staff	1	4
Agency and court staff working together on the local level	2	1
Court Improvement Project events are attended by agency staff	3	2
ASFA workgroups comprised of agency and court staff	4-5	5
Agency staff have trained court personnel	4-5	3
Agency published a newsletter for court staff	6	6

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Training for the Courts

The Department, ABA and tribes delivered a training session on ICWA that was informative and well received; 60 % of the participants were attorneys working in the child welfare system. (IA)

The training was a Court Improvement project. It focused on training for 10 key judges. Topics included court practices, scheduling, emphasis on one judge-one case, child development issues and permanency. (MN)

Once a year there are Reasonable Efforts Symposiums in each region of the state that focus on ASFA topics. (WA)

Training for Other Organizations

As well as doing training with and for the courts, agencies report doing ASFA related training for tribes, mental health and health care providers, schools, foster care providers, community stakeholders and board members on a variety of topics such as permanency issues, timeframes fore reunification and best practice.

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Training for Other Organizations

There has been collaboration with mental health providers around time frames and compelling reasons, not really formal training. There is an on-going advisory council made up of tribal representatives who work on ASFA and NICWA issues, not really formal training sessions. (MN)

The Division and Rutgers University developed a three-day Expert Witness/Evaluator training program to train psychologists and psychiatrists. These experts are then better prepared to provide the assessments and evaluations and court testimony necessary to provide for the safety and permanency needs of the children. An experienced pediatric nurse under contract with the Division has trained foster parents about the health and safety needs of children in their care. (NJ)

We have done training with program specialists, internal people, contract providers and foster care providers on requirements of ASFA. In connection with the CFSR, training sessions were held with judges and childcare providers. ASFA requirements and the CFSR review has been the subject of meetings of the Child Welfare Board, which is made up of community members. (TX)

Information Systems

Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'outstanding' the support provided by the state information system for the work of managers, supervisors and workers in implementing ASFA. The average rating was 3.14 in 2001 and rose to 3.43 in 2002. In the 2002 poll, county administered states gave their information system a lower rating (average 2.86) than state administered states (average 3.56). When the responses of agencies in the later phases of the Child and Family Services Review (review completed and working under a Program Improvement Plan) were compared to those agencies in the initial (planning and assessment) phases, states in the later phases their systems a higher rating (average 3.83) than states who are in the earlier phases (average 3.22)

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Information Systems

Our Information Systems unit is doing a lot of work to upgrade the system and provide us with reports and ticklers necessary to track compliance with ASFA. This is a large assignment and continues to be worked on. (CT)

The information is there, but it could be more user friendly. (HI)

We are in the process of identifying reports that our system needs to generate in order to be responsive to field staff and management's ability to monitor ASFA requirements. We have begun to work with our systems staff in an effort to identify and clarify information needs. We are also identifying mandatory fields that will assist us in gathering information in a timely manner. (NH)

Our database has been very helpful in gleaning information for our research capabilities. (ND)

Our information system is wonderful. We have reports/data on all aspects of child welfare; we are able to enhance the system and/or modify reports to obtain needed information. (OK)

The state has a data warehouse that gets more sophisticated each year. Presently managers can get reports themselves. Work is being done on a more advanced system that supervisors will be able to use to get reports themselves. (TX)

Our system is good; you can get all kinds of specific data from it. (UT)

The managers like the information system. The workers don't like it because they say that the time it takes to input data is time they could be spending with families. The workers say that the data that is entered can't help families. At the state level, the information is helpful because it provides information on which to make decisions. (WY)

Staff Support

Shown below are the activities mentioned most often by the child welfare agency respondents as working well in supporting staff as they implement ASFA requirements.

Most Effective Practices for Supporting Staff

Practice	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Training	1	3
Increased communication	2	8
Resources available to support staff	3-4	6
Collaborative efforts with stakeholders	3-4	7
View ASFA as good casework practice	5-6	2
Provide management support	5-6	1
Revising policy to support ASFA	-	5
Monitoring implementation	-	4

Selected Participant Remarks Regarding Staff Support

We design training, literature and communication to help staff embrace ASFA as something not separate from their day-to-day work but something that is part of their work with families. (AL)

We recognize achievement within cases/casework; empower staff through knowledge and training. We see ASFA as a system change and understand it that way. (LA)

It is important to train people who work with families and is important that the court system understand ASFA. (MA)

We have been successful using a teamwork approach to casework. The use of family support team meetings has worked well. (MO)

With ASFA in particular, the court system is crucial in assuring that children obtain permanency. We have experienced some difficulty with courts not granting a TPR due to “best interest” determinations. Training for judges on “best interest” and permanency would be helpful. (NH)

Let the staff know how the agency is doing as far as results are concerned. (TX)

Managers need to go through same training as caseworkers. Managers have to have casework skills. They need them so they know how to communicate with caseworkers and understand what is happening with families. (UT)

Staff needs the opportunity to discuss ASFA related issues with peers and others. (VT)

The agency is dealing with inexperienced staff. It is possible to train them, but we need stability in work force too. There needs to be on-going staff support by supervisors and on-going agency support for supervisors. (WV)

We need to make sure staffing is adequate. We continue to ask staff to do more. Also, we need to work on understanding how to involve community to help in providing favorable outcomes for children and families. (WY)

Barriers to supporting Staff as they implement ASFA

Barriers to the agency's support for staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA changed markedly between 2001 and 2002. In 2001, agencies mentioned most frequently the lack of resources, difficult relationship with courts, staff turnover and limitations or lack of computer system(s). In the 2002 poll, staff turnover was mentioned most frequently followed by lack of resources, heavy workload and lack of services, indicators of the financial difficulties many public child welfare agencies are facing now.

Barrier	2001 Ranking	2002 Ranking
Lack of resources - funding, staff, equipment, etc.	1	2
Difficult relationship with courts	2	6
Staff turnover	3	1
Limitations or lack of computer system(s)	4	9-10
Lack of Understanding of ASFA	5-8	11-12
Heavy workload	5-8	3
Lack of support	5-8	13
Difficulty meeting ASFA requirements	5-8	9-10

Large number of cases	9-10	5
Difference in interpretation	9-10	8
Lack of services	11	4
Lack of time	12	7
Lack of training	13	11-12

County-Administered States

Of the 41 states where the poll was conducted, 10 were state supervised, county-administered states. These states were asked to what extent does the fact that their state is county-based impact ASFA implementation. Among the 35 comments received, 20% indicated that the county-based system is most responsive to local needs. Other comments were: resources are limited (17%), and there are few uniform practice standards (15%).

Child and Family Services Review Process

The poll asked agencies to identify where they were in the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process.

	Initial Phase	Later Phase
Planning	10	
State Assessment Underway	15	
Review Complete		7
Waiting to Complete PIP Activities		5

General Remarks

Selected Participant General Remarks

Development of the statewide assessment should begin as soon as the state receives its national data profile. Utilize the ACF Regional Representatives as much as possible. For the onsite review, cases should be pulled as soon as possible using the order given by the Feds. Because some cases will not be appropriate, and you will be unable to locate some clients, it is a good idea to pull 50 cases over the sample to be reviewed. (AR)

As a state, we may be able to better document use of compelling reasons; because of the large number of Native Alaskan children in custody, there is a reluctance to petition the courts to not provide reasonable efforts, so Alaska has not used those two provisions of ASFA to a great degree. (AK)

We did the preparation for the CFSR using our agency staff; we did not use consultants. During the review, we had policy staff on-site in each of the 3 reviewed areas as we thought it would be very important to ensure clarity and consistency in the interpretation of policy. Our results were reasonably good---we are in substantial conformity on 5 of the 7 systemic factors

and in conformity on the 2 safety indicators. It is an extensive and complex process that we viewed as bringing our agency value through the self-assessment and learning. We have a good relationship with Region 9 and received excellent communication and support from the staff in that office. (AZ)

The counties are having increased communication about supporting what is good for families, especially around engaging courts and know what the court's priorities are. This type of conversation is also going on with communities as the counties know that they can't do it all themselves. (CO)

Start planning early and look at data early. It is probably a good idea not to do the Federal Review and go through accreditation at the same time. (LA)

Coordinate what you are doing with the Review. The Review process pushes change. (MN)

Must have all staff involved, keep them informed, celebrate successes, understand that change takes time and may not see result of change for some time. (MS)

Stakeholders don't always see the broad picture and they sometimes make recommendations based on this narrow understanding. The problem is how to educate them before they participate in the review. The instructions and material provided by the Children's Bureau should be easier to understand and written in very simple language - not 'governmentese'. (MT)

We have had training in the past year specific to ASFA and are in the process now of training supervisors on how to supervise staff on ASFA issues. We have had the CFS review and have developed more specific data information about outcomes. (NM)

We are doing lots of Family Centered Practice work here now. Based on the review of the pilot CFSR report, we're also changing our way of looking at data and have new charts and graphs that make our progress toward outcomes clearer to understand. (RI)

Be prepared, practice before process, be familiar with instruments, be familiar with interpretation of instrument, be well organized, and communicate with the federal team regarding their needs. (TX)

It is important to help people understand the balance and interrelationship of outcomes. Improvement in one might affect another in a negative way. Solutions have to balance outcomes so they work together. Assessments have to be improved. Need to focus on implementing strategies. (WY)

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT POLL RESULTS

Understanding of ASFA by Agency Staff

Court improvement project (CIP) personnel were asked to rate the child welfare agency staff in terms of their understanding of ASFA requirements on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'comprehensive'. The average rating given in the 2001 poll was 3.25, which rose to 4.0 in the 2002 poll. Participants noted that the 'understanding was at a high level' and agency staff 'have a desire to understand but the issue is complicated'.

Skills

Court improvement project respondents were asked to rate the skills (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'don't need it' and 5 being 'extremely important') that child welfare supervisors and workers need to have to implement ASFA. The skills mentioned most often are listed below.

Supervisors' Skills

Skills	2002 Avg. Rating
Ability to monitor staff to assure time lines are met	5.0
Ability to explain the law and requirements to staff	4.7
Knowledge of the law and requirements	4.7
Ability to develop a relationship with court where information is shared	4.0

Workers' Skills

Skills	2002 Avg. Rating
Knowledge of the law and requirements	4.7
How to testify in court regarding permanency and safety planning	4.7
Concurrent planning skills	4.7
Knowledge of how to gather info about families for court use	4.7
Ability to monitor staff to assure time lines are met	4.7

As expected the skills that court improvement project (CIP) personnel think supervisors and workers need to have are focused on their understanding of the law, relationship building and the ability of agency staff to testify in court regarding ASFA issues. Child welfare agency staff, however, think the top skills needed by supervisors and workers are communication, collaboration and case work. With child welfare agency staff there was not the emphasis on knowledge of the law or testifying in court.

Administrative Activities

Court improvement project respondents were asked if, as part of the state's ASFA implementation activities, the court and the child welfare agency had undertaken or changed day-to-day joint activities and communication. Respondents reported that changes had occurred in both areas. For example, work groups have been formed to deal with case processing issues, staff have been observing court hearings, more information is circulated and there is increased collaboration between the courts and agencies.

Sharing Information

The project team asked court improvement project respondents if they were getting information they needed regarding cases from the agency. 66.7% of the respondents said they were getting the information, while 33.3 % noted that data was not entered so there was a problem getting it.

Training

Respondents were asked how they handled training on ASFA for court and agency personnel. Respondents report that for court personnel, court staff and consultants conducted ASFA training during conferences and seminars on topics such as permanency planning options and how ASFA relates to state law. For agency personnel, including agency attorneys, the courts held joint training, invited agency staff to court training and made presentations at child welfare conferences. The topics included permanency planning options, incorporating the final rule into case planning, ASFA as related to state law, child development, effects of substance abuse, case planning the judicial role in ASFA implementation, ethical issues and barriers to successful terminations.

What Worked Best

In the 2002 poll, court improvement project respondents were asked to rate (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being 'not important' and 5 being 'crucial') the importance of specific activities in terms of working with the child welfare agency as it implements ASFA requirements. The following table displays the results.

Comment	2002 Avg. Rating
Increased communication	4.7
Agency involvement with the CIP	4.7
Good working relationship between court/agency	4.7
Having sub-committees that deal with interagency issues	4.3
Having the director of the CIP involved in planning	4.3

Barriers

The court improvement respondents saw lack of resources, lack of clarity in federal and state law on permanency hearings and lack of understanding of the law as the top three barriers in the court improvement project's work with the agency as it implements the requirements of ASFA.

General Remarks

When asked if they had any other comments to make regarding the best way to implement the requirements of ASFA, respondents made several which are listed below:

- Collaboration and communication are important
- Keep working together
- The Child and Family Services Review activities in all the states have taken precedence over ASFA implementation. The indicators for the 3 ASFA goals are central to CFSR but the court part of the CFSR is too small.

METHODOLOGY

CHILD WELFARE AGENCY POLL

The Muskie project team conducted the child welfare agency poll by telephone during January through May 2002. The team developed and used a data collection instrument that assessed areas in which meeting ASFA requirements has impacted staff or changed the way the agency does business and allowed agencies to update the information they provided during the 2001 poll. The final instrument consisted of ten questions. (A copy of the final child welfare agency phone poll instrument appears in Appendix C in this document.) Most of the questions were multi-part, closed ended, with selections based on the results of the 2001 poll. Space was provided for additional comments.

The ten questions covered a variety of topics. They were:

- **Understanding of ASFA.** How would you rate your staff's understanding of ASFA?
- **Skills.** What skills do managers, supervisors, and workers need to have to implement ASFA?
- **Activities.** What activities has the agency undertaken as part of ASFA implementation?
- **Training.** How is training on ASFA handled?
- **Information System.** How well does the state's information system support implementation of ASFA?
- **Staff support.** What worked best in supporting staff as they implement ASFA requirements?
- **Barriers.** What were the barriers to the agency's support of staff as they implement ASFA?
- **Child and Family Services Review.** Where is the agency in the process?
- **General Remarks.** Do you have any other comments to make regarding the best way to implement ASFA?
- **County based.** How does the fact that a state is county-based impact implementation of ASFA?

If possible the 2002 phone poll was conducted with the person who responded to the 2001 poll. The poll took approximately 30 minutes to complete. Once the poll was completed, the Muskie project team e-mailed or faxed a copy of the completed instrument to the respondent for review and comment. When the respondent's comments were returned, the project team coded and entered data into a statistical analysis program (SPSS). The analysts performed comparisons of data from the 2001 and 2002 polls, county-administered versus state based systems and states that were in the initial (planning and assessment) phases of the Child and Family Services Reviews versus those in the later phases (review completed and working under a Program Improvement Plan). Additionally, analysts ran frequencies to get an overview of the results. A complete print out of the child welfare agency poll frequencies appears in Appendix A. In addition, several direct quotes from the participants are presented in the **Results** portion of the report to more comprehensively explain the details of the responses.

Responses were received from 41 states, which is 6 fewer than last year. Two states indicated that they were no longer participating in written surveys or phone polls due to staffing shortages. The information on county-administered states represents the responses of 10 states where the child welfare system is state supervised, county administered. Responses were also received from two states that are regionally administered - Tennessee and Washington.

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT POLL

As with the child welfare agency poll, the Muskie project team contacted the court improvement project representative who participated in the 2001 poll. The poll was conducted during January through May 2002. The poll took about 30 minutes to complete. (A copy of this instrument appears in Appendix D.) The team received responses from 3 of the 4 court improvement projects that participated in the 2001 poll. When the respondent's comments were returned, the project team coded and entered data into a statistical analysis program (SPSS) and ran comparisons and frequencies to get an understanding of the results. A complete print out of the court improvement project frequencies appears in Appendix B.

The questions covered a variety of topics. They were:

- **Understanding of ASFA.** How would you rate the child welfare agency in terms of their understanding of ASFA requirements?
- **Skills.** What skills do child welfare supervisors and workers need to implement ASFA?
- **Activities.** As part of ASFA implementation have the court and child welfare agency undertaken or changed any day to day or joint activities or method of communication?
- **Sharing information.** Is the court getting the information it needs from the agency?
- **Training.** How is training on ASFA handled?
- **What worked best?** What has worked best for the court in terms of working with the child welfare agency as it implements ASFA requirements?
- **Barriers.** What does the court view as barriers in working with the agency as it implements ASFA?
- **General Remarks.** Do you have any other comments to make regarding the best way to implement ASFA?

APPENDIX A. CHILD WELFARE AGENCY POLL – FREQUENCIES

1. How would you rate your agency's staff in terms of their understanding of ASFA requirements? We are particularly interested in the level of understanding of managers, supervisors and workers. Please rate their understanding on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'comprehensive'.

A. Managers:

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE
N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	6	14.6
4.00	17	41.5
4.50	2	4.9
5.00	16	39.0

Average of the Rating: 4.27

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
ASFA requirements understood well	7	17.1
County-based system answer based on limited knowledge of staff	6	14.6
Comprehensive training understanding	4	9.8
Good understanding of some elements not others	2	4.9
ASFA requirements incorporated not seen as ASFA	2	4.9
High staff turnover affects understanding	1	2.4
Need more training	1	2.4

B. Supervisors:

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE
N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
2.00	2	4.9
3.00	7	17.1
3.50	1	2.4
4.00	24	58.5
4.50	3	7.3
5.00	3	7.3

Average of the Rating: 3.78

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Good understanding of some elements not others	5	12.2
ASFA requirements understood well	2	4.9
County-based system answer based on limited knowledge of staff	2	4.9
High staff turnover affects understanding	2	4.9
Need more training	2	4.9
Comprehensive training understanding	1	2.4
Understand ASFA but not always a priority	1	2.4

C. Workers:

POOR 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE
N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
2.00	4	9.8
3.00	16	39.0
4.00	18	43.9
5.00	1	2.4

Average of the Rating: 3.41

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Knowledge of issues unaware of relation to ASFA	4	9.8
High staff turnover affects understanding	4	9.8
Need more training	3	7.3
ASFA requirements understood well	2	4.9
County-based system answer based on limited knowledge of staff	2	4.9
New staff gets lots of ASFA information	2	4.9
Understand ASFA but not always a priority	1	2.4
Comprehensive training understanding	1	2.4
Good understanding of some elements not others	1	2.4

2. Following are some of the skills that managers, supervisors and workers need to have to implement ASFA. Please rate each of these on a scale of 1-5 with one being ‘do not need it’ and 5 being ‘extremely important.’

A. Managers:

Understanding how to implement ASFA requirements

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
2.00	1	2.4
3.00	3	7.3
4.00	7	17.1
5.00	30	73.2

Average of the Rating: 4.61

Using data effectively

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	1	2.4
4.00	10	24.4
4.50	1	2.4
5.00	29	70.7

Average of the Rating: 4.70

B. Supervisors:

Case work skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
2.00	1	2.4
3.00	2	4.9
4.00	17	41.5
5.00	21	51.2

Average of the Rating: 4.41

Communication skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	3	7.3
4.00	8	19.5
5.00	30	73.2

Average of the Rating: 4.66

Collaborative skills
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	4	9.8
4.00	15	36.6
5.00	22	53.7

Average of the Rating: 4.44

Communication skills
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	3	7.3
4.00	9	22.0
5.00	29	70.7

Average of the Rating: 4.63

Understand how to implement ASFA
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	10	24.4
3.50	1	2.4
4.00	13	31.7
5.00	17	41.5

Average of the Rating: 4.16

3. In the past year, since our earlier survey, as part of your ASFA implementation has the agency undertaken any activities in the following areas:

- Agency structure? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	17	41.5
No	23	56.1

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Added new department division or unit	7	17.1
Restructured department or unit	7	17.1
Added additional staff	6	14.6

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Added new position(s)	2	4.9
Strengthened community development partnerships	2	4.9
State supervised, county administered system - multiple ways of doing things	1	2.4
Created technical assistance program with ASFA, TPR & permanency planning topics	1	2.4
Efficient in service delivery	1	2.4
Increased funds to local areas	1	2.4
Conducted training	1	2.4
Generated new reports to field workers	1	2.4
Combined or formed workgroups	1	2.4

- Internal communication? _____ No _____ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	28	68.3
No	12	29.3

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Increase in internal communication	8	19.5
Increase in communication with field staff, districts, regions	7	17.1
Increase in use of e-mail, intranet web sites	4	9.8
Training for staff	4	9.8
Implemented quality review system to monitor work	3	7.3
Supporting good case work practice	2	4.9
Data mapping project need CWIS policy procedure changes	2	4.9
Improved tracking, identifying of children, better matching	2	4.9
Annual implementation study	1	2.4
Set up committees to focus on information systems/casework	1	2.4
Permanency planning newsletter	1	2.4
Faster processing of paperwork	1	2.4
Teleconferences, video conferences held	1	2.4
Focus on strategic planning	1	2.4
Increased communication with court staff	1	2.4
System to deal with permanency planning	1	2.4
Peer review begun	1	2.4
Self assessment process	1	2.4
Pre-planning has led to more unified practice	1	2.4
Increased collaboration	1	2.4

- Performance appraisals? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	10	24.4
No	29	70.7

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Self assessment process being developed or used	2	4.9
Using case check list with ASFA requirements	2	4.9
New performance appraisal instrument the focal point of evaluation	2	4.9
Child welfare outcomes incorporate CFSR outcomes	2	4.9
Better internal reporting results in better case flow tracking	1	2.4
Made modifications, refinements to policy	1	2.4
Using performance based system	1	2.4
Looking at instruments	1	2.4
Changes being implemented (overall agency plan)	1	2.4

- Job descriptions? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	6	14.6
No	33	80.5

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Insured that job descriptions reflect ASFA requirements	2	4.9
Social workers changed due to licensing requirements	1	2.4
Plan proposed to upgrade job titles	1	2.4
Minor changes	1	2.4
Changed job titles, classifications	1	2.4

- Staff recruitment? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9	22.0
No	30	73.2

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Recruiting more, not ASFA related	2	4.9
Hiring freeze layoffs	2	4.9
Efforts for recruitment, retention made	2	4.9
Emphasis on hiring people with skills related to ASFA	1	2.4
Continuing education training for para-professionals to MSW	1	2.4
Approval to hire people without social work degree, licensure	1	2.4
Added staff	1	2.4

- Case review? ___No___Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	27	65.9
No	11	26.8

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
Modifications to case review process	9	22.0
Changes planned, not implemented	4	9.8
Supervisors/coordinators review cases	3	7.3
Some work in connection with CFSR	3	7.3
Review part of accreditation site visit, ASFA topics	3	7.3
Case review done regardless of ASFA	3	7.3
Using IV-E Federal Review tools	2	4.9
QA unit performance report measures compliance	2	4.9
Implemented QA review that mirrors CFSR	2	4.9
Case Review process implemented	2	4.9
Administrative Review Division works with programs/courts	2	4.9
Statewide review program evaluates items/develops case plans	1	2.4
Redesigning QA tool	1	2.4
Redesigning case conference tool	1	2.4
Legal issues	1	2.4
Going through review now	1	2.4
Foster Care Review board increased involvement	1	2.4
Checks for ASFA compliance	1	2.4

- Foster/Adoptive parent recruitment? ___No___Yes If yes, please describe.

N=41

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	56.1
No	15	36.6

N=41

Comments	Frequency	Percent
On-going campaigns focused on recruitment	6	14.6
Changes planned, not implemented	5	12.2
Increased support for foster/adoptive parents	4	9.8
Private agencies contracted to perform recruitment function	4	9.8
Staff assigned or hired to focus on recruitment	3	7.3
Performance based focus on kinship care/permanency	1	2.4
Emphasis on minority recruitment	1	2.4
Started program as part of PIP	1	2.4
Implemented concurrent planning statewide	1	2.4
Layoffs in recruiting positions	1	2.4
Committee workers, supervisors, workers develop recruitment	1	2.4
Refined on-going process	1	2.4
Cross jurisdictional placement recruitment	1	2.4
Restructured recruitment efforts to focus on collaboration	1	2.4
Using MAPP	1	2.4
Emphasis on ASFA issues	1	2.4
Increase in funding for recruitment efforts	1	2.4
Changed training strategies	1	2.4

4. In the past year, since our earlier survey, has there been any ASFA training for child welfare agency personnel? If yes, go to question 4a. If no, go to question 4e.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	61.0
No	11	26.8

A. What topics were covered in that ASFA training?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Various ASFA topics	9	22.0
Permanency Issues	8	19.5
Timeframes reunification	5	12.2
Concurrent Planning	5	12.2

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Termination of parental rights	4	9.8
Legal issues	4	9.8
Court requirements	4	9.8
Best Practice	4	9.8
ASFA elements in new worker training	4	9.8
Reasonable Efforts	3	7.3
Customized training according to local needs	3	7.3
ASFA incorporated into all relevant trainings	3	7.3
Safety well-being	2	4.9
Preparation for CFSR	2	4.9
Joint training with various agencies	2	4.9
IV-E eligibility	2	4.9
Federal regulations	2	4.9
Compelling reasons	2	4.9
Child Welfare issues including CFSR	2	4.9
Case planning	2	4.9
Tracking of children in placement not adoptive homes	1	2.4
Supervising ASFA outcomes measures	1	2.4
State/agency policies	1	2.4
Recruitment	1	2.4
MEPA training	1	2.4
Importance of relationship between agency/community	1	2.4
Home studies permanency reviews kinship placement	1	2.4
Dependency/Neglect case law update	1	2.4
Cross system training	1	2.4
Court Orders	1	2.4
Attorneys judges trained	1	2.4
Assessment	1	2.4
Adoptions	1	2.4

B. Which of the following methods did you use for the ASFA training?

N=41

Methods	Frequency	Percent
Statewide training	24	58.5
In service training	20	48.8
Information is circulated about ASFA	15	36.6
Pre-service training	14	34.1
Managers train people	12	29.3
Conferences on ASFA topics	11	26.8
Regularly scheduled meetings	10	24.4
Teleconferences on ASFA topics	9	22.0

Methods	Frequency	Percent
Forums on ASFA topics	8	19.5
Training by federal agencies	6	14.6
Interactive video on ASFA topics	3	7.3
New Worker Training	1	2.4

C. Who did the training?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Agency/training unit staff	24	58.5
Central office staff	18	43.9
Outside consultants	14	34.1
Regional staff	13	31.7
Court staff	9	22.0
State university	6	14.6

D. Was the training just on ASFA or was it incorporated into other training that you provide?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Incorporated	24	58.5
Incorporated into new worker training	21	51.2
Not incorporated	8	19.5

E. In the past year, since our earlier survey, have you done any of the following ASFA training with or for the courts?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Agency and court staff have worked together on local level	22	53.7
Court Improvement Project events attended by agency people	19	46.3
Agency staff have trained court people	13	31.7
Joint training sessions	12	29.3
ASFA workgroups of agency and court staff	10	24.4
Agency published a newsletter for court staff	3	7.3
Regional meetings held Court staff lead	1	2.4
Children's Law Project	1	2.4

F. What topics were covered in that ASFA training for the courts?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Permanency issues	11	26.8
Court requirements	9	36.6
Various ASFA topics	8	19.5
Reasonable Efforts	6	12.2
Preparation for CFSR	4	9.8
Timeframes reunification	3	7.3
Best Practice	3	7.3
IV-Eligibility	3	7.3
Court Orders	3	7.3
Termination of parental rights	3	7.3
Compelling reasons	2	4.9
MEPA training	2	4.9
Indian Child Welfare Act	2	4.9
Home studies permanency reviews kinship placement	2	4.9
Child Welfare issues including CFSR	2	4.9
Judge worker attorney roles	2	4.9
Adoptions	2	4.9
Case planning	2	4.9
Joint training with various agencies	2	4.9
Customized training according to local needs	1	2.4
Scheduling	1	2.4
Collaboration of services drug/alcohol	1	2.4
Legal issues	1	2.4
Bringing court and agency systems together	1	2.4
Safety well-being	1	2.4
Attorneys judges trained	1	2.4
Federal regulations	1	2.4
Importance of relationship between agency/community	1	2.4
State/agency policies	1	2.4

G. Have you done ASFA training with or for any of the following:

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Mental health providers	11	26.8
Tribes	7	17
Health care providers	3	7.3
Foster Care providers	3	7.3
Schools	2	4.9
Contract providers	2	4.9

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Child welfare board members	2	4.9
Community stakeholders	2	4.9
Citizen review panel	1	2.4
Substance abuse providers	1	2.4
Judges	1	2.4
Court services	1	2.4
Legislators	1	2.4
Parents	1	2.4
Child care providers	1	2.4
Social services	1	2.4
Internal staff	1	2.4

H. What topics were covered in the ASFA training?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Permanency issues	6	14.6
Timeframes reunification	5	12.2
Best practice	4	9.8
Various ASFA topics	4	9.8
Safety well-being	3	7.3
Compelling reasons	3	7.3
Indian Child Welfare Act	2	4.9
Preparation for CFSR	2	4.9
State/agency policies	2	4.9
Court requirements	2	4.9
Adoptions	2	4.9
Customized training according to local needs	1	2.4
Reasonable efforts	1	2.4
Recruitment	1	2.4
Home studies permanency reviews kinship placement	1	2.4
Child Welfare issues including CFSR	1	2.4
MEPA training	1	2.4
Federal regulations	1	2.4
CPS	1	2.4
Judge worker attorney roles	1	2.4
Case planning	1	2.4

5. How well does your information system support the work of managers, supervisors and workers in implementing ASFA? Please rate the support provided by your system on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'outstanding'

N=41 POOR 1 2 3 4 5 OUTSTANDING

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	2	5.3
2.00	4	10.5
2.50	1	2.6
3.00	11	28.9
3.50	1	2.6
4.00	13	34.2
4.50	1	2.6
5.00	5	13.2

Average of the Rating: 3.43

A. Why did you give your system that rating?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Good system for all our needs	7	17.1
New system	7	17.1
In process of upgrading system	6	14.6
Old system insufficient for needs	5	12.2
Working on developing reports	4	9.8
Reports and data not good	3	7.3
Outstanding for ASFA implementation	3	7.3
Gives a lot of information	2	4.9
Inconsistent use of system	2	4.9
Administrators/supervisors work well with data not staff/supervisors	2	4.9
Relying on MIS system to give data	2	4.9
Need more training on system	2	4.9
Enhanced system	1	2.4
System difficult to use	1	2.4
Ability to track time limits statewide	1	2.4

B. If a rating of 1 or 2 is given, probe as to the status of the SACWIS system.

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Do not have SACWIS system	2	4.9
New system	2	4.9
Development implementation of system in progress	1	2.4

6. Please rate the importance of the following in terms of supporting staff as they implement the ASFA requirements, with 1 being 'not important' and 5 being 'crucial.'

Training

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
4.00	15	36.6
5.00	24	58.5

Average of the Rating: 4.53

Increased communication

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
2.00	1	2.4
3.00	3	7.3
4.00	13	31.7
5.00	22	53.7

Average of the Rating: 4.35

Resources to support staff

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	2	4.9
3.00	2	4.9
4.00	11	26.8
5.00	25	61.0

Average of the Rating: 4.43

Collaborative efforts with stakeholders

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
3.00	5	12.2
4.00	9	22.0
5.00	25	61.0

Average of the Rating: 4.32

Seeing ASFA as good casework practice

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
2.00	1	2.4
3.00	1	2.4
4.00	8	19.5
4.50	1	2.4
5.00	28	68.3

Average of the Rating: 4.56

Management support

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
4.00	7	17.1
5.00	32	78.0

Average of the Rating: 4.73

Revising policy to support ASFA

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
2.00	1	2.4
3.00	3	7.3
4.00	9	22.0
5.00	25	61.0

Average of the Rating: 4.44

Monitoring implementation

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
1.00	1	2.4
2.00	1	2.4
3.00	2	4.9
4.00	11	26.8
5.00	25	61.0

Average of the Rating: 4.45

Support from front line supervisors
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL
 N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
5.00	2	4.9

Average of the Rating: 5.00

Sufficient staff to do work
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL
 N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	2.4
5.00	1	2.4

Average of the Rating: 4.5

Staff opportunity to discuss ASFA issues
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL
 N=1

Rating	Frequency	Percent
5.00	1	2.4

Average of the Rating: 5.00

Constructive feedback to front line staff
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL
 N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
5.00	1	2.4

Average of the Rating: 5.00

Time available to monitor success of process
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL
 N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	1	2.4

Average of the Rating: 3.00

Discussion local level between courts/agency
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL
 N=41

Rating	Frequency	Percent
5.0	1	2.4

Average of the Rating: 5.00

7. Do you see any of the following as barriers to your agency's support for staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA (check if 'yes')?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Staff turnover	34	82.9
Lack of resources	31	75.6
Heavy workload	29	70.7
Lack of services	24	58.5
Large number of cases	22	53.7
Difficult relationship with courts	20	48.8
Lack of time	19	46.3
Differences in interpretation	14	34.1
Limitations or lack of computer system	13	31.7
Difficulty meeting ASFA requirements	13	31.7
Lack of understanding/knowledge about ASFA	10	24.4
Lack of training	10	24.4
Lack of support	9	22.0
Problems caused by a county-based system	6	14.6
Lack of Mental Health/Substance Abuse programs	1	2.4
Lack of assistance with interpretation	1	2.4

8. (For County based systems only.) Do any of the following impact your ASFA implementation (check if 'yes')?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Must be responsive to local needs	8	19.5
Limited resources	7	17.1
Lack of uniform practice standards	6	14.6
Communication can be difficult	5	12.2
Limited state control	5	12.2
Approach is fragmented	4	9.8

9. At which point in the Child and Family Services Review process is your agency?

A.

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Statewide assessment underway	15	36.6
Planning	10	24.4
Review complete	7	17.1
Working to complete the activities described in the PIP	5	12.2

B. Are there any significant lessons you learned from the CFSR process that you suggest we include in our curriculum? If so, please describe.

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Preparation using agency staff	3	7.3
Case planning	3	7.3
Statewide assessment helpful identifying strengths weaknesses	2	4.9
Be prepared practice be familiar with instruments	2	4.9
Be organized and communicate with team	2	4.9
Understanding what to do first who can help	2	4.9
Assessments need improvement focus on implementing strategies	2	4.9
Start statewide assessment after national data profile given	1	2.4
Go through Federal Review without any other distractions	1	2.4
Stakeholders not seeing broad picture, educate them	1	2.4
Lack of info from Federal Agency	1	2.4
Coordinate agency activities with review	1	2.4
Utilize ACF representatives	1	2.4
Integration of policy information system training	1	2.4
Instructions should be easy to understand simple language	1	2.4
Review data as soon as possible	1	2.4
For the on-site reviews pull 50 cases ASAP	1	2.4
Work closely w/foster parents	1	2.4

10. Is there anything else that you want to tell us regarding the best way to support staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA?

N=41

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Training	6	14.6
Design training to show ASFA is part of everyday work	3	7.3
Empower staff through knowledge training	3	7.3
Have adequate staff	3	7.3
Management support for staff	2	4.9
Internal/External resources difficult	2	4.9
Courts should understand ASFA system	2	4.9
Using teamwork approach to casework	2	4.9
Provide follow-up to reinforce training	2	4.9
Develop coordinated services at local level	2	4.9
Retention	2	4.9
Increase communication keep staff informed	2	4.9

Topics	Frequency	Percent
Work together with tribes to reunite kids back to tribes	1	2.4
Staff unaware of financial impact	1	2.4
Recognize cases casework achievement	1	2.4
Lower caseloads	1	2.4
Coordination between workers courts	1	2.4
Family support team	1	2.4
Training on use understanding of data	1	2.4
Interested in what other states doing with courts successfully	1	2.4
Train managers on casework/understanding casework	1	2.4
Need useful information for county administered systems	1	2.4
Understand ASFA requirements	1	2.4
See ASFA as systems change understand it that way	1	2.4
Funding for resources	1	2.4
Curriculum needs updating information old	1	2.4
Improve working conditions	1	2.4

Knowledge of the law and requirements
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.7

Monitor staff to assure time lines are met
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
5.00	3	100.0

Average of the Rating: 5.00

Ability to set up hearings and court dates
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	2	66.7
5.00	1	33.3

Average of the Rating: 3.7

Knowledge of gathering information about families for court use
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.33

How to testify in court regarding permanency and safety planning
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
 IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	2	66.7
5.00	1	33.3

Average of the Rating: 4.33

Ability to identify resources
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
2.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 3.00

B. Workers

Knowledge of the law and requirements
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

How to testify in court regarding permanency and safety planning
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

Ability to develop relationship with court where information is shared
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.33

Ability to make decisions quickly
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
3.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.33

Concurrent planning skills
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

Knowledge of gathering information about families for court use
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

Monitor staff to assure time lines are met
 DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

3. In the past year, since our earlier survey, as part of your ASFA implementation have the court and the child welfare agency undertaken or changed any day to day joint activities? _____ No _____ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	100.0
No	0	0.0

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Increased collaboration between courts and agencies	2	66.7
Work groups set up to work with case processing issues	1	33.3
Private social workers testifying on child safety	1	33.3
Director of Court Improvement Project on committee for Federal Review	1	33.3
Jurisdictions meeting on regular basis	1	33.3
Staff observing court hearings	1	33.3

A. Has communication changed? _____ No _____ Yes If yes, please describe.

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	100.0
No	0	0.0

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Increased communication between agency/court staff	2	66.7
Increased collaboration	1	33.3
More information circulated	1	33.3

B. Are you getting the information you need regarding cases from the agency? _____ No _____ Yes If no, please describe.

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	66.7
No	1	33.3

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Problems getting data, not entered	1	33.3
Need to improve data collection/reporting	1	33.3

4. In the past year, since our earlier survey, has there been any ASFA training for court personnel? If yes, go to 4a. If no, go to 4e.

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	66.7
No	1	33.3

A. What topics were covered in the training?

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
ASFA topics incorporated into other training	2	66.7
Permanency planning options	1	33.3
ASFA as related to state case law	1	33.3
Judges presented at Child Welfare Conference	1	33.3

B. Which of the following did you use for staff training on ASFA?

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Conferences	2	66.7
Seminars	1	33.3
Joint training sessions		
Meetings		
Regularly distributed publications/ bulletins/ newsletters		
Presentations on ASFA		
Part of training on other topics		

C. Who did the training?

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Consultants	2	66.7
Court Staff	1	33.3
Court Improvement Project personnel		
National conferences		
Attorney		

D. Was the training just on ASFA or is it incorporated into other training that you provide?

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Incorporated	1	33.3
Not incorporated	1	33.3

E. In the past year, since our earlier survey, did you do any of the following ASFA training with or for the child welfare agency?

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Joint training	1	33.3
Agency staff invited to some court training sessions	1	33.3
Judges presented at Child Welfare conference	1	33.3
Agency staff invited to judicial training at conference		

F. What were the topics covered in the ASFA training for the child welfare agency?

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Permanency planning options	1	33.3
Final rule how to incorporate into case planning	1	33.3
ASFA as related to state case law	1	33.3
Judiciary role in ASFA implementation	1	33.3
Barriers to successful termination	1	33.3
Ethical issues	1	33.3

G. In the past year, since our earlier survey, have you done any of the following training with or for the agency attorneys?

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Joint training	1	33.3
Agency attorneys invited to some court training sessions	1	33.3
District Attorney handled training		

H. What were the topics covered in the ASFA training for the agency attorneys?

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Permanency planning options	1	33.3
Child development	1	33.3
ASFA as related to case law	1	33.3
Effects of substance abuse	1	33.3
Case planning	1	33.3
Agency unclear about the responsibilities	1	33.

5. Please rate the importance of the following in terms of working with the child welfare agency as it implements the ASFA requirements, with 1 being 'not important' and 5 being 'crucial.'

Increased communication

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

Having sub-committees that deal with interagency issues
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	2	66.7
5.00	1	33.3

Average of the Rating: 4.33

Having the Director of Court Improvement Projects involved in planning discussions
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	2	66.7
5.00	1	33.3

Average of the Rating: 4.33

Having the Agency's active involvement in the Court Improvement Project
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating: 4.67

Good working relationship among court and agency staff
 NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

N=3

Rating	Frequency	Percent
4.00	1	33.3
5.00	2	66.7

Average of the Rating :4.67

6. Do you see any of the following as barriers to your work with the agency as it implements the requirements of ASFA? (check if 'yes')?

N=3

Response	Frequency	Percent
Lack of resources: staff, funds, time, etc	2	66.7
Federal and state law not clear on what a permanency hearing is	2	66.7
Lack of understanding of the law	2	66.7

Response	Frequency	Percent
Timelines for TPR are too short, unable to make informed decisions in every case	1	33.3
Lack of understanding of the key stakeholders responsibilities and how they are structured	1	33.3
Agency unclear about there responsibilities	1	33.3

7. Is there anything else that you want to tell us regarding the best way to support staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA?

N=3

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Collaboration communication important	1	33.3
CFSR comes first three ASFA goals central CFSR court aspect small	1	33.3
Work together	1	33.3

APPENDIX C. CHILD WELFARE AGENCY - POLL INSTRUMENT

1. How would you rate your agency's staff in terms of their understanding of ASFA requirements? We are particularly interested in the level of understanding of managers, supervisors and workers. Please rate their understanding on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'comprehensive'.

a. Managers:
 POOR 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE

Comments:

b. Supervisors:
 POOR 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE

Comments:

c. Workers:
 POOR 1 2 3 4 5 COMPREHENSIVE

Comments:

2. Following are some of the skills that managers, supervisors and workers need to have to implement ASFA. Please rate each of these on a scale of 1-5 with one being 'do not need it' and 5 being 'extremely important.'

a. Managers:

Case work skills	DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
Collaborative skills	DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
Understand Requirements of ASFA	DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
Understanding how to implement ASFA requirements	DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
Using data effectively	DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

b. Supervisors:

Case work skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Communication skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Collaborative skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Understand how to implement ASFA requirements

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Using data effectively

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

c. Workers:

Case work skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Collaborative skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Communication skills

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Understand how to implement ASFA

DON'T NEED IT 1 2 3 4 5 EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

3. In the past year, since our earlier survey, as part of your ASFA implementation has the agency undertaken any activities in the following areas:

- Agency structure? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.
- Internal communication? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.
- Performance appraisals? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.
- Job descriptions? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.
- Staff recruitment? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.
- Case review? ___No___ Yes If yes, please describe.

- Foster/Adoptive parent recruitment? ___No___Yes If yes, please describe.

4. In the past year, since our earlier survey, has there been any ASFA training for child welfare agency personnel? If yes, go to question 4a. If no, go to question 4e.

a. What topics were covered in that ASFA training?

b. Which of the following did you use for the ASFA training?

- ___ Statewide training
- ___ In service training
- ___ Pre-service training
- ___ Forums on ASFA topics
- ___ Conferences on ASFA topics
- ___ Regularly scheduled meetings
- ___ Managers train people
- ___ Interactive video on ASFA topics
- ___ Teleconferences on ASFA topics
- ___ Training by federal agencies
- ___ Information is circulated about ASFA

c. Who did the training?

- ___ Agency/training unit staff
- ___ Outside consultants
- ___ State university
- ___ Court staff
- ___ Central office staff
- ___ Regional staff

d. Was the training just on ASFA or was it incorporated into other training that you provide?

- ___ Incorporated
- ___ Incorporated into new worker training
- ___ Not incorporated

e. In the past year, since our earlier survey, have you done any of the following ASFA training with or for the courts?

- ___ Joint training sessions
- ___ Agency and court staff have worked together on local level
- ___ Court Improvement Project events attended by agency people
- ___ ASFA workgroups of agency and court staff
- ___ Agency staff have trained court people
- ___ Agency published a newsletter for court staff

f. What topics were covered in that ASFA training for the courts?

g. Have you done ASFA training with or for any of the following:

- Schools
- Health care providers
- Mental health providers
- Tribes
- Other, please specify _____

h. What topics were covered in the ASFA training?

5. How well does your information system support the work of managers, supervisors and workers in implementing ASFA? Please rate the support provided by your system on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'outstanding'

POOR	1	2	3	4	5	OUTSTANDING
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a. Why did you give your system that rating?

b. If a rating of 1 or 2 is given, probe as to the status of the SACWIS system.

6. Please rate the importance of the following in terms of supporting staff as they implement the ASFA requirements, with 1 being 'not important' and 5 being 'crucial.'

Training

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Increased communication

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Resources to support staff

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Collaborative efforts with stakeholders

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Seeing ASFA as good casework practice

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Management support

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Revising policy to support ASFA

NOT IMPORTANT	1	2	3	4	5	CRUCIAL
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Monitoring implementation

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

Other, please specify and rate _____

7. Do you see any of the following as barriers to your agency's support for staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA (check if 'yes')?

- Lack of resources
- Difficult relationship with courts
- Staff turnover
- Limitations or lack of computer system
- Lack of understanding/knowledge about ASFA
- Heavy workload
- Lack of support
- Difficulty meeting ASFA requirements
- Large number of cases
- Differences in interpretation
- Lack of services
- Lack of time
- Lack of training
- Problems caused by a county-based system
- Other, please specify

8. (For County based systems only.) Do any of the following impact your ASFA implementation (check if 'yes')?

- Must be responsive to local needs
- Lack of uniform practice standards
- Communication can be difficult
- Approach is fragmented
- Limited state control
- Limited resources

9. At which point in the Child and Family Services Review process is your agency?

- a. Planning
- Statewide assessment underway
- Review complete
- Working to complete the activities described in the PIP

b. Are there any significant lessons you learned from the CFSR process that you suggest we include in our curriculum? If so, please describe.

10. Is there anything else that you want to tell us regarding the best way to support staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA?

Do you mind if we call you again if we need additional information?

No
 Yes

Thank you for your time, help and expertise. I will send you a copy of my write-up of this conversation for your review and comment as well as a copy of the 'promising practices' poll report when it is completed.

How to testify in court regarding permanency and safety planning							
DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY	IMPORTANT
Ability to develop relationship with court where information is shared							
DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY	IMPORTANT
Ability to make decisions quickly							
DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY	IMPORTANT
Concurrent planning skills							
DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY	IMPORTANT
Knowledge of gathering information about families for court use							
DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY	IMPORTANT
Monitor staff to assure time lines are met							
DON'T NEED IT	1	2	3	4	5	EXTREMELY	IMPORTANT

3. In the past year, since our earlier survey, as part of your ASFA implementation have the court and the child welfare agency undertaken or changed any day to day joint activities? No Yes If yes, please describe.

a. Has communication changed? No Yes If yes, please describe.

b. Are you getting the information you need regarding cases from the agency? No Yes If no, please describe.

4. In the past year, since our earlier survey, has there been any ASFA training for court personnel? If yes, go to 4a. If no, go to 4e.

a. What topics were covered in the training?

b. Which of the following did you use for staff training on ASFA?

 Joint training sessions

 Conferences

 Seminars

 Meetings

 Regularly distributed publications/bulletins/newsletters

 Presentations on ASFA

 Part of training on other topics

 Other. Please describe.

c. Who did the training?

- Court Improvement Project personnel
- Court staff
- Consultants
- National conferences
- Attorney
- Other Who?

d. Was the training just on ASFA or is it incorporated into other training that you provide?

- Incorporated
- Incorporated into new worker training
- Not incorporated

e. In the past year, since our earlier survey, did you do any of the following ASFA training with or for the child welfare agency?

- Joint training sessions
- Agency staff invited to some court training sessions
- Other. Please describe

f. What were the topics covered in the ASFA training for the child welfare agency?

g. In the past year, since our earlier survey, have you done any of the following training with or for the agency attorneys?

- Joint training
- Agency attorneys invited to some court training sessions
- District Attorney handled training
- Other. Please describe.

h. What were the topics covered in the ASFA training for the agency attorneys?

5. Please rate the importance of the following in terms of working with the child welfare agency as it implements the ASFA requirements, with 1 being 'not important' and 5 being 'crucial.'

Increased communication

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

Having sub-committees that deal with interagency issues

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

Having the Director of Court Improvement Projects involved in planning discussions

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

Having the Agency's active involvement in the Court Improvement Project

NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

Good working relationship among court and agency staff
NOT IMPORTANT 1 2 3 4 5 CRUCIAL

6. Do you see any of the following as barriers to your work with the agency as it implements the requirements of ASFA? (check if 'yes')?

- Lack of resources: staff, funds, time, etc
- Federal and state law not clear on what a permanency hearing is
- Timelines for TPR are too short, unable to make informed decisions in every case
- Lack of understanding of the key stakeholders responsibilities and how they are structured
- Lack of understanding of the law
- Other. What is the barrier?

7. Is there anything else that you want to tell us regarding the best way to support staff as they implement the requirements of ASFA?

Do you mind if we call you again if we need additional information?

- No
- Yes

APPENDIX E. CHILD WELFARE AGENCY POLL PARTICIPANTS

We thank the following individuals for sharing their time and expertise during this poll.

Child Welfare Contact Information			
Alaska	Deidre O'Connor Alaska Division of Family and Youth Services Field Administrator PO Box 110630 Juneau, AK 99801 Phone #: 907-465-2104 deidre_oconnor@health.state.ak.us	Colorado	Sharen Ford Manager, Adoption, ICPC and Recruitment Colorado Department of Human Services 1575 Sherman Street Denver CO 80203 Phone #: 303-866-3197 Fax #: 303-866-4629 Sharen.ford@state.co.us
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South Carolina	Carolyn Orf South Carolina Department of Social Services PO Box 1520 Columbia, SC 29202 Phone #: 803-898-7707 corf@dss.state.sc.us	Washington	Laura Hurtado-Webb Permanency Planning Program Manager Washington Department of Social and Health Services PO Box 45710 Olympia, WA 98504 Phone (360) 902-7568 Hurl300@dshs.wa.gov
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APPENDIX F. COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT POLL PARTICIPANTS

We thank the following individuals for sharing their time and expertise during this poll.

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