

**THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT (ASFA) TRAINING SERIES**

**ASFA AND THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS (CFSR): USING  
OUTCOMES TO ACHIEVE RESULTS**

**TRAINER'S GUIDE**

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**Developed by  
The Institute for Child and Family Policy  
Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service  
University of Southern Maine  
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## **THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT (ASFA) TRAINING SERIES**

### **ASFA AND THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEWS (CFSR): USING OUTCOMES TO ACHIEVE RESULTS**

#### **Introduction**

The national vision for child welfare is that children will grow up in safe, nurturing and stable environments. To help achieve that vision, state and county child welfare agencies are striving to assure that their practice, systems and management approach ensure that clients needs are assessed quickly, that individualized services for children and families are available and delivered promptly, that the impact of the services is monitored and, if need be, that services are modified.

The emphasis on results and the use of data to measure progress toward the achievement of outcomes carry clear expectations for child welfare administrators, supervisors and managers. While agencies are making progress implementing Adoption and Safe families Act (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 successfully implement the practice, managerial and legal implications of ASFA.

The document you are reading is one in a set of trainer's guides designed to communicate information on the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) that goes beyond introductory, compliance based topics. While this material is designed primarily for training purposes, it certainly is adaptable to other forums, such as internal or external workshops, presentations, newsletters or briefings on ASFA and could be successfully presented to child welfare administrators, supervisors, managers, foster parents, caseworkers, providers, teachers and other community stakeholders.

#### **The Training Series**

The trainer's guides in this series are:

##### **The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR): Using Outcomes to Achieve Results**

This trainer's guide highlights the major requirements of ASFA, presents federal outcomes and measures and systemic factors and provides an opportunity to discuss the philosophy, practice implications and results of the CFSR.

### **Action Planning: A Problem Solving Tool**

This trainer's guide introduces and demonstrates how the use of Action Planning can assist child welfare managers and supervisors in planning, managing and evaluating practice, systems and programs toward the achievement of desired outcomes.

### **Collaboration with Native American Tribes: ICWA and ASFA**

In the child welfare system Native American children have different service delivery systems as well as laws that apply to them. Therefore, individuals must ask different questions and make different assumptions in their efforts to identify and work with Native American children and families. Because of the importance of the interaction between the agency and tribes, this trainer's guide focuses on successful approaches to collaboration, the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and ASFA and the practice considerations when working with Native American children and families.

### **Using Data to Measure Success**

Child welfare managers and supervisors are increasingly expected to be able to use data, information and reports to guide decision making and to determine what is working and what isn't working in the organization, with practice and in the service delivery system. This trainer's guide gives participants practice in analyzing reports and in using basic data tools for reading and interpreting data.

### **Change is all Around Us: Tools to Build Commitment to Change**

In most organizations change occurs constantly. In order to be effective in leading and modeling change management skills, supervisors and managers must understand the dynamics of avoiding resistance to change and how to build commitment to it. This trainer's guide includes a model for building commitment to change, provides an opportunity to build on these skills and includes use of a case study, *Family Net: An Automated Child Welfare Information System* which explores organizational and managerial issues when a major change in the workplace takes place.

### **Collaboration with the Courts (under development)**

ASFA promotes the concept that the child protective system involves a network of interrelated agencies and services. The courts, of course, are an essential piece of this network. This trainer's guide explores what the courts and child protective agencies identify as their main opportunities, challenges and needs as they work together and independently to carry out their required activities in child welfare cases.

## Notes on Using These Trainer's Guides

The Muskie project team expects that each agency will use the *Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) Training Series* in a variety of ways, thus we designed the training guides to be easily modified to accommodate the differing needs of child welfare agencies. This approach enables each public child welfare agency to customize these training guides to meet its unique needs -- in effect to use the materials contained in this series to guide its own workshops, briefings and presentations. For example, some agencies will select and use material from all of the trainer's guides, others will use only 1 or 2 of the guides, while others will use these guides as a springboard to create their own materials to better suit their needs. The material in these guides is proven to accommodate and support this type of adaptation by child welfare personnel. At minimum, an agency will need to adapt the material by adding their own agency's outcome measures, results of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), policies, regulations, data, reports and other state or county specific materials.

To increase usability, this trainer's guide and the others in the series have the same format. The pages are divided into two columns. One contains the text of the guide and the other sometimes contains notes on the text and also provides space for users to write their own notes.

Each guide begins with information on the length of time the session will take to complete, the rationale, the learning objectives, activities, sample materials, advance preparation, glossary of terms and an annotated bibliography. The Trainer's Instructions are guidelines for the way a presenter may want to organize the material and thus are an attempt to standardize content, not delivery style. The text (appearing in regular type) provides information on moving through the material, while the text in italic type is a suggestion for what the presenter might actually say as he/she presents the material. Of course, the material in the text can be modified or changed to suit the needs of the presenter and the group. Following the text of the guides are the handouts/overheads that accompany the text. These appear in the order that they are referenced in the text.

### Additional Resources

The *Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) Training Series* builds on training material previously produced by the Institute for Child and Family Policy, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine:

- **Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being**, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published September 27, 2000 (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/sacwis>) and

- **Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team**, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published September 27, 2002 (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>).

Several talented experts in child welfare, curriculum design and the adult education field tested and provided feedback on these documents, including the trainer's notes, exercises and handouts, and helped polish the material to better convey the complex concept of outcomes based management.

The training guide(s) can be viewed/downloaded on the internet at <http://www.muskie.maine.edu/asfa>. Or, they can be ordered from Clearinghouse, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, University of Southern Maine, One Post Office Square, 400 Congress Street, P.O. Box 15010, Portland, ME 04112. Phone: (207) 780-5813; Fax: (207) 780-5817; e-mail: [clearing@usm.maine.edu](mailto:clearing@usm.maine.edu).

# **The Adoption and Safe Families Act and the Child and Family Services Reviews: Using Outcomes to Achieve Results**

**Time:** Approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes

**Rationale:** Meeting the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and changes in the way that the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) are conducted have had a great impact on the activities of public child welfare agencies. Successful implantation of ASFA and the CFSR depends largely on the ability of child welfare supervisors and managers to understand that they are now working within a system that measures outcomes associated with delivering services to children and families, not just the process. This module highlights the major requirements of ASFA, presents federal goals, outcomes, measures and systemic factors and provides an opportunity to discuss the philosophy, practice implications and results of the Child and Family Services Reviews.

## **Learning Objectives**

When this module is complete, the participant should be able to:

- Understand the workshop agenda and materials
- Define the major requirements of ASFA
- Understand the requirements of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)
- Explain the impact of ASFA on case practice with children, youth and families
- Explain ways to evaluate an agency's progress toward meeting child welfare goals, outcomes and measures as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, and his/her state/county

The trainer may want to make overheads/handouts of the learning objectives for each module.

- Identify systemic factors and indicators and how they can be used to determine strengths and areas for improvement in the agency's key internal systems
- Understand how to use data from reports to monitor the implementation of ASFA and agency goals and outcomes, with a focus on the outcomes he/she and his/her unit is responsible

### **Activities**

- Welcome, introductions, description of training agenda and materials (10 minutes)
- Present the ASFA Goals and Highlights (15 minutes)
- Exercise: Apply ASFA using the Meyer Family case vignette (45 minutes)
- Discuss the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) philosophy, practice principles, measures and indicators and the agency's performance results using reports or, if applicable, the CFSR and PIP (60 minutes)
- Storyboard the strengths and challenges in the agency's current internal systems (15 minutes)
- Exercise: Look at one or two reports and critique format and content. Ask if and why the data on the report is important, useful and used. Identify what the report is linked to - safety indicators or finance or budget, for example (25 minutes)
- Exercise: Look at selected reports that focus on ASFA/agency/unit goals, outcomes and measures or CFSR/PIP and make some comparisons between regions, teams, or units, include reports that relate back to specific (possibly national) performance indicators and/or state plan and are easily accessible by the users

(40 minutes)

### **Sample Materials**

- Summary of ASFA (Overhead # 1)
- ASFA and Final Rule: The Highlights (Overhead # 2)
- ASFA Timeline (Overhead # 3)
- The Meyer Family Case Vignette (Overhead # 4)
- The Trainer's version of the Meyer Family Case Vignette (Overhead # 5)
- Child and Family Services Reviews: Philosophy and Conceptual Framework (Overhead # 6)
- Child and Family Services Reviews: Practice Principles and Approaches (Overhead # 7)
- Comparison of the Final List of Child Welfare Outcomes and Measures and the Review Performance Measures (Overhead # 8)
- National Standards for Child and Family Services Review Measures (Overhead # 9)
- Systemic Factors and Indicators (Overhead # 10)
- Reports Helpful to Decision Making (provided by agency or located elsewhere)
- CFSR results report, PIP and /or State/County plan, goals, outcomes and indicators (provided by the agency or located elsewhere)
- Interpreting Data (Overhead # 11)
- Uses of Outcomes in Child Welfare (Overhead # 12)

Overhead/handouts are designed as "overheads", but they can be used as both overheads and/or handouts.

Note the numbers following the name of a handout or overhead refer to the number of the handout or overhead, not to a page number. The handout/overhead number is found on the top right hand corner of the page; the page number is on the right lower corner.

### **Glossary of Terms**

*Outcome*: consequence or result of actions or a set of actions.

*System outcomes:* what results will the activities produce in the administrative systems or infrastructure.

*Child and family outcomes:* the results effecting the child or family.

### **Advance Preparation**

If possible gather the state/county's outcomes and measures and related reports and plans. Use the CFSR report or PIP results. To get this information contact the agency or check your state child welfare agency web site. (One place each state child welfare agency website is listed is at <http://www.aphsa.org>)

If state/county information is not available locally, results from the CFSR reviews and the AFCARS and NCANDS data is available on-line at:

Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau:

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb>

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information:

<http://www.calib.com/nccanch>

Then determine how familiar the participants will be with the material and adapt the trainer's instructions and materials for those sections.

If you have the data and want to use it this way, complete the handout/overhead National Standards for Child and Family Services Review Measures (Overhead # 9) by adding state/county/regional data.

Review and customize, if needed, the ASFA timeline and the Meyer Family Case Vignette. You may want to invite an agency attorney to participate in the preparation for and/or delivery of this section of the training.

Make sure that a flip chart, markers, newsprint pad, overheads and an overhead projector are in the room.

### **Bibliography and Suggested Reading**

- **Publications**

*Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.* (1997) Public Law 105-89.

American Public Human Services Association. (2000) *States at Work: Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act, Parts I-III.*

This publication focuses on changes in practice that states have made to speed up the process of moving children out of foster care and into permanent homes to comply with the requirements of ASFA. Based on a survey with responses from 46 states and the District of Columbia, the publication is divided into three parts: Part 1 features successful adoption practices; Part II focuses on innovative practices in child protection, and Part III describes effective foster care practices.

*Child Welfare Outcomes 1999: Annual Report,* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children Youth and Families, Children's Bureau.

One of the annual reports mandated by ASFA. It analyzes the performance of state child welfare agencies on child welfare outcomes regarding the recurrence of child abuse and neglect; permanency planning; placement stability; and the safety of children in foster care. Data for the reports are obtained from state reports provided to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data system (NCANDS)

Christian, Steve. (1998) *State Legislative Responses to ASFA 1997*. National Conference of State Legislatures: Denver, CO.

The author summarizes the action taken by state legislatures in response to passage of ASFA. Although ASFA does not specify which state plan requirements must be incorporated into state statutes, those that affect court process and decision making required legislation in many states. The author discusses these legislative changes and other challenges presented by implementation of ASFA.

*Federal Register*/Vol. 64, No. 161/Friday, August 20, 1999/Notices.

This material presents a list of child welfare outcomes and measures. These outcomes and measures reinforce the focus on safety, permanency and child and family well being. The measures are the basis for the Children's Bureau reports to Congress.

*Federal Register*/Vol. 65, No. 16, Tuesday, January 25, 2000, Rules and Regulations, Washington, D.C.

This issue was published by the federal Department of Health and Human Services. It addresses the Child and Family Services Review and the Title IV-E eligibility reviews.

Fagnoni, Cynthia M. (12/22/99) *States' Early Experience in Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act*. GAO/HEHS-00-1, Washington, D.C.: United States General Accounting Office.

This report discusses states' early efforts to implement the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act. It describes how states have responded regarding legal, administrative, and other changes that social workers have made in practice, the status of states implementation of the two provisions related to making timely permanency decisions and the steps that the Department of Health and Human Services has taken to assist states and monitor the implementation of these two provisions.

*New Child and Family Services Review*. (Winter 2001), Managing Care for Children and Families Newsletter, Volume III, Number 2, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational

National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, Portland, ME. National Child Welfare Center for Organizational Improvement.

This edition of the newsletter focuses on the new federal Child and Family Services Reviews. It contains an overview of the review process, an interview with a federal Administration on Children and Families official responsible for the implementation of the reviews and tips from states that piloted the review process and a discussion of the Annual Report on Child Welfare Outcomes.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. (November 2000) *Rethinking Child Welfare Practice Under the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997*. Washington, D.C.:U.S. Government Printing Office.

This monograph gives an overview of the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act. It reports on the impact of ASFA on child welfare practice as viewed by an advisory group convened by the Children's Bureau. It addresses the implications of ASFA for outcome-based child welfare practice, the principles and key elements of "good:" child welfare practice and rethinking casework functions under ASFA.

- **On-Line**

[www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb)

The Children's Bureau website contains valuable information on the Child and Family Services Reviews. It also contains the final reports from the states that have completed the Federal Review. It contains the review outcomes and the data for each state displayed along with the national standards for each outcome.

<http://www.calib.com/nccanch>

The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information web site contains data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). One of the requirements of ASFA was that states had to collect and report information on abused and neglected children. The NCANDS reports include national and state findings on the number and sources of child abuse and neglect reports, investigative dispositions, types of

abuse and neglect reports, investigative dispositions, types of maltreatment, characteristics of children victimized, relationship of perpetrators to victims and services provided for child maltreatment victims. These reports are available on the Clearinghouse website.

Data is also available from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). ASFA also required that states collect case specific data on all children in foster care. This data is available on the Clearinghouse website.

<http://www.childwelfarereview.com/>

This site provides information useful in managing the child and family services and title IV-E foster care eligibility reviews.

<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>

This website was developed by the Institute for Child and Family Policy, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. It contains a curriculum titled 'Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team' that is designed to help child welfare supervisors, managers and senior administrators understand and implement the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). The site also contains final reports and related state by state data from two phone polls, conducted in 2001 and 2002, that asked child welfare and court improvement project representatives to discuss how meeting ASFA requirements has changed the way that child welfare agencies do business and to identify what skills child welfare managers and supervisors need to implement the requirements of ASFA.

### **Trainer's Instructions**

1. Begin the session by welcoming the group and introducing yourself and other presenters and presenting the agenda and materials. Then introduce the module by presenting the rationale and objectives.
2. Begin the discussion by referring to overhead Summary of ASFA Goals (Overhead # 1) and using the following as a guide:

*Many times when we think of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), we think about all the practice and*

Notes in italics in the Trainer's Instructions section are talking points, comments that the trainer may make directly to the participants or use to form the basis of his/her presentation.

*compliance issues it has changed for us as practitioners. We sometimes forget the underlying reasons and issues it was developed to address--- the needs of children and families in our system. We want to stress that ASFA is really about what is good for children and families. ASFA is about good social work practice.*

*ASFA was passed in response to a growing national concern about the extended periods of time that children spend in foster care. The Act mandated tighter timeframes and established three goal areas for child welfare systems - - attaining safety, permanency and well being for children in care. The Act requires the development of outcome measures in each goal area on which all states must report. ASFA also outlines the conditions under which a state should terminate parental rights and seek a permanent placement for a child, sets timeframes and deadlines for permanency determinations and provides financial incentives to states to increase adoptions.*

*These requirements, in combination with the mandates of other relevant legislation and regulations, substantially change the way child welfare systems are to be managed. One example of that is the Final Rule, which was published by the federal Department of Health and Human Services on January 25, 2000. It established new approaches to monitoring state child welfare programs under ASFA. It addresses the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the Title IV-E eligibility review. These new reviews focus on outcomes for children and families and practice improvements rather than on the accuracy and*

*completeness of the case files in isolation.*

3. Summarize with the participants the Highlights of ASFA and the Final Rule, using the ASFA and The Final Rule: The Highlights overhead (Overhead # 2) and the ASFA Timeline. (Overhead # 3). During this review the trainer should specifically note that a major change to practice is the more structured timeframes imposed to ensure timely and consistent oversight of a case.

4. Explain to the participants that we are now going to apply ASFA and The Final Rule to one case vignette, the Meyer Family. Ask participants to refer to the case (Overhead # 4). Divide the participants into three small groups and assign each of the groups one of the questions to answer. Ask each group to select a reporter, who will present the group's discussion to the large group. Give the group 10 minutes to answer their question.

5. Bring the small groups back together after 10 minutes. Ask each small group's reporter to report on the group's conclusion, as the trainer assures the accurate response (found within the trainer's version of the Meyer Family case vignette scenario (Overhead # 5) and adds the additional comments from the trainer's version. Summarize and assure all questions are answered before moving on.

6. Reference the Child and Family Services Reviews: Philosophy and Conceptual Framework overhead (Overhead # 6) and the Child and Family Services Reviews Practice Principles and Approaches, Overhead # 7, and continue:

*One of the key features of the CFSR process is that the focus is on practice, results and accountability. A basic foundation of the CFSR process is the belief that the interactions a family has with the agency have very powerful effects on the outcomes. What happens between the caseworker and the family, the quality of the case planning, strategies used to engage the family, how families' needs are assessed and matched to services have huge impacts on outcomes. For agencies, the CFSR will :*

- Identify both the needs and strengths of state programs and drive toward program improvements*
- Promote practice principles believed to support improved outcomes for children and families, such as family-centered practice, community-based services, strengthening parental capacity to protect and provide for children and individualizing services that respond to the unique needs of children and families.*
- Emphasize accountability. While the review process includes opportunities for States to make program improvements before having Federal funds withheld because of nonconformity, there are significant penalties associated with the failure to make the improvements needed to attain substantial conformity.*
- Focus on improving systems that support effective practice.*
- Enhance state capacity to become self-evaluating. By conducting the Statewide Assessment and participating in the onsite review, States will become familiar with the process of examining outcomes for children and families and systemic factors that affect those outcomes. They can adapt this process for use in the ongoing evaluation of their systems and programs.*

*the ongoing evaluation of their systems and programs.*

7. Move to a discussion of the agency's performance under ASFA using, if available, the agency's CFSR report or Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Reference the Comparison of the Final List of Child Welfare Outcomes and Measures and the Review Performance Measures overhead (Overhead # 8). If the CFSR report is available, use overhead National Standards for Child and Family Services Reviews (Overhead # 9). Highlight and discuss the specific measures the reviews focus on and the state/county's/region's performance. Introduce the topic using the following as a guide:

*This material presents the list of child welfare outcomes and measures as published August, 1999 in the Federal Register and the Review Performance Measures -- January, 2000. These outcomes and measures reinforce the focus on safety, permanency and child and family well being. These measures will be the basis for the Children's Bureau reports to Congress on how states are doing meeting the goals and objectives of the child welfare system. As you can see, some of these measures are covered in the state by state reviews.*

8. If the CFSR report and/or the PIP are available, you will have already reviewed the agency's performance on each of the systemic factors during the report walkthrough and won't need this activity. If you are using the activity, put up overhead, Systemic Factors, (Overhead # 10) and continue this storyboarding activity using the following as a guide:

*During the CFSR these seven systemic factors will be reviewed to see how they relate to the agency's capacity to*

*reviewed to see how they relate to the agency's capacity to deliver services leading to improved outcomes how each of these systems is working to support the agency's practice. Each of these systemic factors in reality represents an internal agency unit or team that performs the function described by the factor (for example, training, QA, and Information Technology).*

9. Go through each factor and ask the group to define each factor (for example, what makes up our case review system?). Ask if there are other systems, groups or factors that are key to the agency's internal management. Write each factor on a flip chart and post the flip charts around the room.
  
10. Refer to the seven flipcharts posted around the room, noting that each flipchart lists one of the systemic factors. Provide each participant with some sticky notes and ask that they answer the question for each of the factors: 'How could this factor be strengthened?'. Mention that the senior administrators want feedback on this discussion of the factors, especially the 'how could each factor be strengthened' comments, and encourage answers that are honest, strength based and fair. Explain that the results of this activity will be provided to the administrators.
  
11. After 5 minutes, ask participants to post their sticky note on the associated flipchart. Process the comments posted on each flipchart.
  
12. Wrap up this activity by summarizing the discussion, reinforcing the need to collaborate with each of these internal units

reinforcing the need to collaborate with each of these internal units and reminding participants that the results will be forwarded to agency administrators.

13. The next two activities are designed to be a discussion of actual reports that are being used by the child welfare agency. If these are not readily available, reports from other sources can be used. The point is that participants should practice looking at reports and analyze what they are saying.

14. Distribute one or two sample reports. Ask the participants to look at them and launch a discussion by asking them if anyone uses the reports and if so how. If not used, what would be more useful?

15. Distribute the sample reports that focus on ASFA/agency/unit goals, outcomes and measures or the CFSR/PIP and make some comparisons between regions, teams, and units, or to the state data and the national standards. Ask them to break into smaller groups to discuss. Show Overhead #11, Interpreting Data, and ask them to answer the questions which are also in their handout packet. Specifically, have the groups interpret the data.

16. After about 10 minutes, probe for reactions to the performance results information using the following as a guide:

*Each of the numbers in this report represents a child or family, indicates significant effort by our workers and presents just a small piece of our practice. It is, however, appropriate to take a few minutes to reflect on what this information is trying to*

*a few minutes to reflect on what this information is trying to say about certain areas of our performance. Let's do that by answering the following questions:*

- What is the data on these reports saying or trying to say?
- Do these numbers surprise you? If so, how?
- What factors or practices in your unit could explain these numbers?
- How could you as a supervisor or manager use this information to help improve performance on these measures?

Process the responses to these questions with the group.

17. Wrap-up the module using Overhead #12, the Uses of Outcomes in Child Welfare, and the following as a guide:

*We're in this room discussing outcomes and measures primarily because of a process launched by Federal requirements and expectations. The federal focus on achieving the goals of safety, permanency and well being for each child and family is a driving force in the discussion of outcomes and measures and the funding of child welfare programs. However, these federal requirements are in concert with a broader national commitment to and growing emphasis on what is being achieved for families and children versus what is being done.*

*In many ways, this focus is not new. You've always worried about case/client and service outcomes every day...will Sally not leave her four pre-teen children unattended? Will Gloria find childcare so she can go back to high school? Why is the*

*find childcare so she can go back to high school? Why is the success rate of the XYZ drug program so much higher than the success of the POL drug program? Looking at such outcomes helps us make day to day decisions about the work we do, the people who do it and checkout if our practice serves effectively the client mix we are seeing today.*

*So outcome based management is here; it's a way of life in child welfare. Supervisors and managers thus must constantly ensure that their day to day work effort is responsive to an outcomes approach, both at the case and the agency level and have an increased concern about meeting the established timelines. This approach puts new emphasis on responsibility, accountability, effectiveness, and results, both for child welfare agencies, the child welfare system and families. It is the child welfare system, not any one agency that needs to stand prepared to help support the families as they try to resolve their individual issues and achieve desired outcomes.*

18. To wrap the module up, ask participants to reflect on and then share the key points they learned from these discussions and activities about the impact that ASFA and the requirements of the CFSR are having on the child welfare system.

## **The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA)**

- Establishes three broad goals for children and families served by the child welfare system:

Safety

Permanency and

Child and Family Well Being

- Identifies seven outcomes for children and families served by the child welfare system:

Reduce recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect

Reduce the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care

Increase permanency for children in foster care

Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry rates

Reduce time in foster care to adoption

Increase placement stability

Reduce placements of young children in group homes or institutions

- Outlines the conditions under which a state should terminate parental rights and seek a permanent placement for a child
- Sets timeframes and deadlines for permanency determinations
- Provides financial incentives to states to increase adoptions



## **ASFA and The Final Rule: The Highlights**

### **Contrary to the Welfare Findings**

- Must be made on the first court order following a child's removal from home.
- If the finding is not made in the first order, the agency will NOT receive IV-E dollars for the entire length of the child's stay in foster care.
- Must be case specific and detailed -- cannot be merely a reference to state law.
- Need not be exact language, but must be child specific -- the finding, for example, cannot be that placement is contrary to the safety of the community.
- *Nunc pro tunc* orders are not permitted.

### **Case Plans**

- Must be developed within 60 days from the time the child is removed from home.
- Parents must be included in the process.
- Plans must be detailed and case specific -- cannot be merely a reference to state law.

### **Reasonable Efforts**

- The court must make a finding that reasonable efforts to prevent placement were made within 60 days of the child's removal from home.
- If the court does not make the finding, the agency will not receive IV-E dollars for the child's entire stay in foster care.
- The finding must be detailed and child specific -- not just a reference to state law.
- The court must make a finding concerning reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan within 12 months of the child's entry into foster care.
- A negative, late, insufficient or missing finding means the agency is ineligible for IV-E dollars until the court makes a positive finding.
- The regulations do not require a finding concerning reasonable efforts to reunify, however, for best practice, the court should be making a reasonable efforts finding at each hearing and review. Six month reviews are still required in every case.

### **No Reunification Services**

- No reasonable efforts to reunify are necessary if a court finds; aggravated circumstances, the parent was convicted of one of the enumerated crimes, or the parent's rights to another child were involuntarily terminated.
- If a criminal case is pending against a parent for one of the enumerated crimes, the court has discretion to waive reunification services based on the child's developmental needs and the amount of time until the criminal case will be resolved.
- If the court decides the agency does not need to make reunification efforts, the court must conduct a permanency hearing within 30 days.

### **Permanency Hearings**

- Must be held within 12 months of the child's entry into foster care (or 30 days after no reunification services decision) and every 12 months thereafter as long as child is in foster care.
- Must be a full hearing, not paper reviews, held by a court or court-approved administrative body and must be open to parent participation.
- Court must approve the child's permanency plan, which shall be one of the following: reunification, adoption, legal guardianship, placement in the home of a relative or planned permanent living arrangement.
- If the plan is planned permanent living arrangement, the agency must document compelling reasons for this plan.

### **Termination of Parental Rights**

- The agency must file a TPR if the child is in foster care for 15 of the last 22 months, or within 60 days of a judicial finding that the child is an abandoned infant or a decision of no reunification services due to the parent's felony conviction.
- The TPR petition must be filed with the court by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> month.
- The exceptions for mandatory filing are; the child is placed with a relative, the agency has documented a compelling reason why it would not be in the child's best interests, or the agency has not provided necessary services.

### **Responsibility for Placement**

- For Title IV-E eligibility, the agency must have responsibility for the child's placement and care. Therefore, a court may not unilaterally order a specific placement for a child without the agency's input.

### **Notice and Opportunity to Be Heard**

- Foster parents, relative caretakers and adoptive parents have the right to timely notice of permanency hearings and six-month periodic reviews and the right to be heard.
- This section does not give the caretakers "party status" in the hearing.

### **Child and Family Services Reviews**

- The purpose is to ensure the state is achieving desired outcomes for children and families, and that the state system is functioning at a level that promotes achievement of the identified outcomes.
- Review will include a statewide assessment and an on-site review
- During the on-site review, the review team will analyze 30-50 case files and interview stakeholders, including courts, on the same cases.
- If the state is not in substantial compliance after the review, it will have the opportunity to enter a program improvement plan prior to facing fiscal penalties.

### **Title IV-E Eligibility Reviews**

- The purpose of the Title IV-E foster care reviews is to determine whether a child's case meets the statutory eligibility requirements for the IV-E program.

- The review team will examine whether the appropriate court orders were made in the case, whether the child meets the income test for the program and whether the child is placed in an appropriately licensed foster home.
- The reviews are scheduled every three years unless a state is out of compliance. A state will be out of compliance, if more than 8 of the initial 80 reviewed cases are ineligible. In this case, the state will have one year to improve or face a financial disallowance.
- Following the program improvement period, ACF will conduct a secondary review of 150 cases before funds are withheld. If the state remains in noncompliance after the secondary review the pool of funds which could be withheld would be calculated by multiplying the dollar error rate found in the sample by the population of children who received Title IV-E payments during the review period.

### **Delinquency Cases**

- All ASFA provisions relate to delinquency and status offender cases if the agency is receiving IV-E dollars for the child including permanency hearings, TPR mandates, case plans etc.

Mimi Laver

National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues

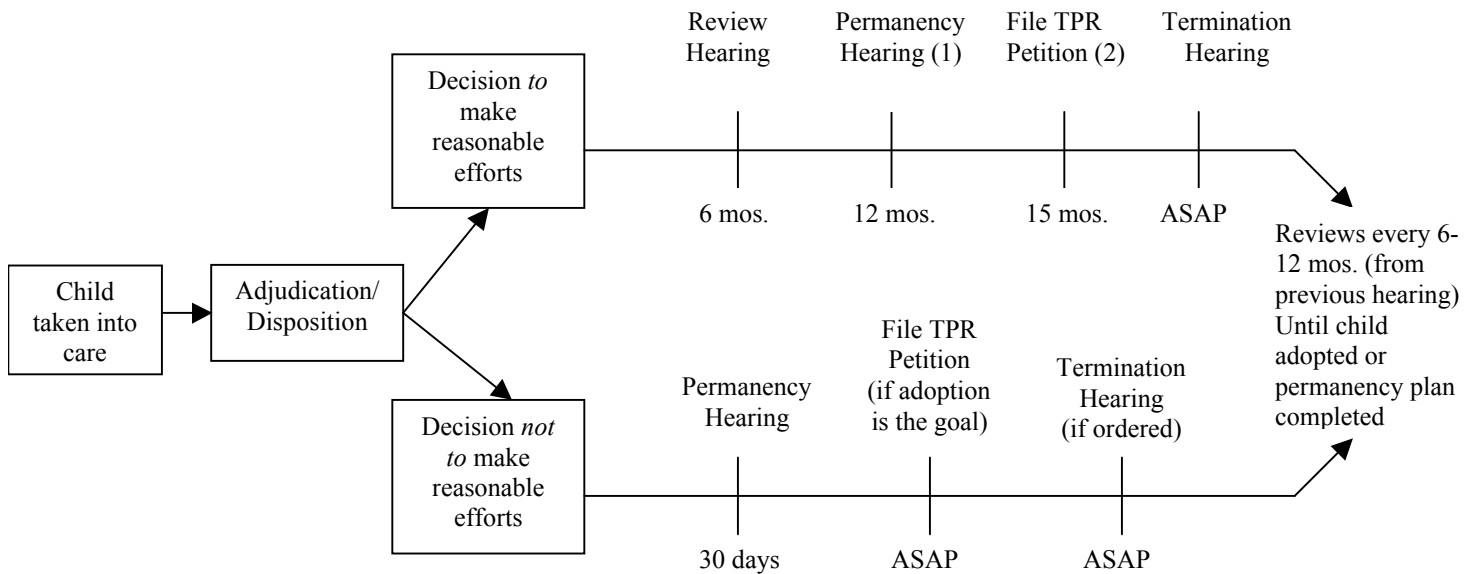
ABA Center on Children and the Law

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## Adoption and Safe Families Act Timeline



(1) When calculating when to have the permanency hearing or the 15 of 22 months, use the earlier of the date of adjudication OR 60 days after the child is removed from the home.

(2) Unless child is being cared for by relative or compelling reason not to TPR exists.

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## **The Meyer Family**

On March 30, 2002 at 7:30 a.m., the local department of health/social services receives a call from a neighbor who is concerned about the Meyer children who live next door. He reports that the children, ages four and six, are at his door in their pajamas asking for food because their parents are not home. The neighbor is advised to keep the children with him and that law enforcement and social services will be there shortly. The agency case records show a history of the Meyer children being left alone and AODA issues with both parents. A safety plan that was developed less than one month ago is in place.

Based on the children's statements and the absence of the parents, the children are taken into temporary physical custody and placed in a licensed foster home. No relatives were available. The parents are located later that day and the parents and the worker sign a waiver of temporary physical custody form.

On June 5, 2002, the court issues a dispositional order for each child that continues the out-of-home placement. The two court orders include judicial findings for each child that "it is contrary to the child's welfare to remain in the home" and that "the agency has made reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of the children from the home through provision of safety services to the Meyer family, including supervision/ observation one-hour, three times per week; assistance from the social worker to help the parents identify a safe and appropriate caregiver for instances when parent choose to consume alcohol; and arrangements for respite care two times per week." The children remain in the same foster care placement.

On May 30, 2003, the court enters an order to extend the original dispositional order. In the extension order, the court makes a judicial finding that "the agency has made reasonable efforts to carry out the provisions of the permanency plan—see the court report."

- 1. Is the Judicial Finding of Contrary to the Welfare:**
  - a. Timely?**
  - b. Sufficient?**
  
- 2. Is the Judicial Finding of Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Removal:**
  - a. Timely?**
  - b. Sufficient?**
  
- 3. Is the Judicial Finding of Reasonable Efforts to Carry Out the Provisions of the Permanency Plan:**
  - a. Timely?**
  - b. Sufficient?**

Developed jointly by the four Wisconsin Child Welfare Training Partnerships and the State of Wisconsin Department of Child and Family Services.



## **The Meyer Family**

### **Trainer's Version**

On March 30, 2002 at 7:30 a.m., the local department of health/social services receives a call from a neighbor who is concerned about the Meyer children who live next door. He reports that the children, ages four and six, are at his door in their pajamas asking for food because their parents are not home. The neighbor is advised to keep the children with him and that law enforcement and social services will be there shortly. The agency case records show a history of the Meyer children being left alone and AODA issues with both parents. A safety plan that was developed less than one month ago is in place.

Based on the children's statements and the absence of the parents, the children are taken into temporary physical custody and placed in a licensed foster home. No relatives were available. The parents are located later that day and the parents and the worker sign a waiver of temporary physical custody form.

On June 5, 2002, the court issues a dispositional order for each child that continues the out-of-home placement. The two court orders include judicial findings for each child that "it is contrary to the child's welfare to remain in the home" and that "the agency has made reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of the children from the home through provision of safety services to the Meyer family, including supervision/ observation one-hour, three times per week; assistance from the social worker to help the parents identify a safe and appropriate caregiver for instances when parent choose to consume alcohol; and arrangements for respite care two times per week." The children remain in the same foster care placement.

On May 30, 2003, the court enters an order to extend the original dispositional order. In the extension order, the court makes a judicial finding that "the agency has made reasonable efforts to carry out the provisions of the permanency plan—see the court report."

#### **4. Is the Judicial Finding of Contrary to the Welfare:**

- a. Timely?** Technically, Yes. The first court order is the dispositional order if no Temporary Physical Custody Order is generated. However, the intent of ASFA is that this judicial review and finding occur as close to the removal as possible, recognizing the severity of removing a child, even temporarily, from the home. Under new state legislation (pending at this time in Wisconsin), a temporary physical custody hearing is required and the contrary to the welfare finding is required to be in the temporary physical custody order.
- b. Sufficient?** No. Although the court order does include the words "contrary to the welfare," it does not include detailed, child-specific information as the basis for the finding. If a more detailed finding was made in the hearing, but

was not documented on the court order, then the only documentation that is sufficient is a transcript.

**5. Is the Judicial Finding of Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Removal:**

- a. **Timely?** No. This finding must be made no later than 60 days from removal with no exceptions. In this scenario, the removal was on March 30th, the finding was due on May 29<sup>th</sup>, but the actual finding wasn't made until June 5, 2002.

A common mistake may be to simply count two months from date of removal (May 30<sup>th</sup>). In that instance, the finding would be late by one day.

- b. **Sufficient?** Yes. The finding provides detail about the efforts and activities of the agency specific to this child and family to prevent the removal. The more detail provided for all judicial findings the better. The intent is for the court to provide an important procedural safeguard against inappropriate agency action by providing individualized oversight, not “rubber-stamping.”

This requires that the worker provide detailed information to the court to serve as the basis for any finding of fact. The importance of communication with the court, district attorney and/or corporation counsel about the ASFA timeline, the content of judicial findings, and the administrative impact of needing to have more information in court orders.

**6. Is the Judicial Finding of Reasonable Efforts to Carry Out the Provisions of the Permanency Plan:**

- a. **Timely?** No. The finding is required no later than 12 months from the date of removal and every 12 months thereafter. The removal date is March 30, 2002, the finding is due no later than March 30, 2003, but it was made late on May 30, 2003. One solution for getting the timing on track would be to request a dispositional order that expires 12 months from the date of removal rather than the standard request that it expire one-year from date of disposition.
- b. **Sufficient?** Probably yes. If the court report has a discrete section that provides a detailed description of the agency's efforts to carry out the provisions of the permanency plan, then a reference to the attached court report is sufficient under the most recent guidance given by the Children's Bureau.

If the court report does not specifically address the actions of the agency to support this particular judicial finding, then the finding is not sufficient.

Developed jointly by the four Wisconsin Child Welfare Training Partnerships and the State of Wisconsin Department of Child and Family Services.

## **Child and Family Services Reviews Philosophy and Conceptual Framework**

**Prepared by the Child Welfare Review Project  
July 2001**

The new child and family services reviews, authorized by the 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act (SSA) and administered by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), provide a unique opportunity for the Federal government and State child welfare agencies to work as a team in assessing the State's capacity to promote positive outcomes for children and families engaged in the child welfare system.

The child and family services reviews are based on a number of central principles and concepts, including the following:

- **Partnership Between the Federal and State Governments**

The child and family services reviews are a collaborative effort between the Federal and State governments. A review team composed of both State and Federal and State staff conducts the reviews and evaluates State performance.

- **Use of Multiple Sources To Assess State Performance**

The review teams collect information from a variety of sources to make decisions about a State's performance. The sources of information include a Statewide Assessment, completed by State members of the review team; statewide aggregate data; onsite reviews of a sample of case records and case-related interviews with children, parents, foster parents, and case managers and other professionals working with a child; and interviews with State and community stakeholders.

- **Examination of Outcomes of Services to Children and Families and State Agency Systems That Affect Those Services**

The reviews examine State programs from two perspectives. First, the reviews look at outcomes of services provided to children and families served by the State agency. Second, they examine systemic factors that have an effect on the agency's ability to help children and families achieve positive outcomes.

- **Comprehensive Review of All Relevant Child Welfare Programs**

The reviews will focus on how all the State's child welfare programming affects positive outcomes for children and families.

- **Identification of State Needs and Strengths**

The reviews are designed to capture both the strengths and the needs of State programs. With a strong emphasis on using the reviews to drive program improvements, the reviews identify the strengths of State programs that can be used to make improvements in other program areas, where needed.

- **Promotion of Practice Principles**

The reviews promote practice principles believed to support improved outcomes for children and families, such as family-centered practice, community-based services, strengthening parental capacity to protect and provide for children, and individualizing services that respond to the unique needs of children and families.

- **Emphasis on Accountability**

The reviews emphasize accountability. While the review process includes opportunities for States to make program improvements before having Federal funds withheld because of nonconformity, there are significant penalties associated with the failure to make the improvements needed to attain substantial conformity.

- **Focus on Improving Systems**

Following the reviews, State Child Welfare agencies, with the support of their Federal ACF Regional Office partners, will develop plans for strengthening their system's capacity to create positive outcomes for children and families.

- **Enhancement of State Capacity To Become Self-evaluating**

Through conducting the Statewide Assessment and participating in the onsite review, States will become familiar with the process of examining outcomes for children and families and systemic factors that affect those outcomes. They can adapt this process for use in the ongoing evaluation of their systems and programs.

Adapted from Johnson, Bassin & Shaw, Inc and their work with the Child Welfare Review Project supported by the Children's Bureau; Administration on Children, Youth and Families; Administration for Children and Families; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Further information can be found at <http://www.childwelfarereview.com/>

## **Child and Family Services Reviews Practice Principles and Approaches**

**Prepared by the Child Welfare Review Project  
July 2001**

Recent shifts in the delivery of child welfare services have focused on family-centered community-based and individually focused approaches. The Child and Family Services Reviews, administered by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, are designed to promote these practice principles, which are believed to support improved outcomes for children and families.

### **Family-Centered Practice Is Designed To:**

- Strengthen, enable, and empower families to protect and nurture their children
- Safely preserve family relationships and connections when appropriate
- Recognize the strong influence that social systems have on individual behavior
- Enhance family autonomy
- Respect the rights, values, and cultures of families
- Focus on an entire family rather than select individuals within a family

### **Community-Based Practice Is Designed To:**

- Support the needs of children within the context of their families and communities
- Emphasize prevention-oriented services and supports
- Provide local communities a role in identifying, designing, implementing, and overseeing services within the community

### **Individualizing Services Are Designed To:**

- Tailor interventions to meet the specific needs of children and families served
- Recognize that children and families are affected by both individual and environmental factors
- Recognize that children and families and the environments in which they operate are unique
- Offer children and families opportunities to provide input in the identification of their strengths, needs, and goals and the means to achieve those goals

Adapted from Johnson, Bassin & Shaw, Inc and their work with the Child Welfare Review Project supported by the Children's Bureau; Administration on Children, Youth and Families; Administration for Children and Families; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Further information can be found at <http://www.childwelfarereview.com/>



Goal	Final List Outcomes	Final List Measures *	Review Performance Outcomes	Review Performance Indicators **
Safety	<p>1. Reduce Recurrence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect</p> <p>2. Reduce the Incidence of Child Abuse and /or Neglect in Foster Care</p>	<p>Measure 1.1: Of all children who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during the reporting period, what percentage had another substantiated or indicated report within a 12-month period?</p> <p>Measure 2.1: Of all children who were in foster care during the reporting period, what percentage was the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff?</p>	<p>1. Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect</p> <p>2. Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate</p>	<p>Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment</p> <p>Repeat maltreatment</p> <p>Incidence of child abuse and /or neglect in foster care provider</p> <p>Services to families to protect children in the home and to prevent removal</p> <p>Current risk of harm to the child</p>
Permanency	3. Increase Permanency for Children in Foster Care	<p>Measure 3.1: For all children who exited the child welfare system, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?</p> <p>Measure 3.2: For children who exited the system and were identified as having an identified diagnosed disability, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption,</p>	1. Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	<p>Incidence of foster care reentry's</p> <p>Stability of foster care placement</p> <p>Length of time to achieve permanency goal of reunification</p> <p>Length of time to achieve permanency goal of adoption</p>

Goal	Final List Outcomes	Final List Measures *	Review Performance Outcomes	Review Performance Indicators **
	<p>4. Reduce the Time in Foster Care to Reunification Without Increasing Re-entry</p>	<p>or legal guardianship?</p> <p>Measure 3.3: For children who exited the system and were age 12 or older at the time of their most recent entry into care, what percentage left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?</p> <p>Measure 3.4: For all children who exited the system, what percentage by racial/ethnic category left either to reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship?</p> <p>Measure 3.5: Of all children exiting the system to emancipation, what percentage was age 12 or younger at the time of entry into care?</p> <p>Measure 4.1: Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage was reunified in the following time periods?</p> <p>(1) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from the home  (2) At least 12 months,</p>	<p>2. The continuity of family relationships and connections will be preserved for children</p>	<p>Permanency goal for the child</p> <p>Provision of independent living services</p> <p>Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement</p> <p>Proximity of current foster care placement</p> <p>Placement with siblings</p> <p>Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care</p> <p>Preserving connections</p> <p>Relative placement</p> <p>Current relationship of child in care with parents</p>

Goal	Final List Outcomes	Final List Measures *	Review Performance Outcomes	Review Performance Indicators **
	5. Reduce Time in Foster Care to Adoption	<p>but less than 24 months  (3) At least 24 months, but less than 36  (4) At least 36 months, but less than 48 months  (5) 48 or more months</p> <p>Measure 4.2: Of all children who entered foster care during the reporting period, what percentage re-entered care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode?</p> <p>Measure 5.1: Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in the following time periods?  (1) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from the home  (2) At least 12 months, but less than 24 months  (3) At least 24 months, but less than 36  (4) At least 36 months, but less than 48 months  (5) 48 or more months</p> <p>Measure 5.2: Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption and were age 3 or older at the time of entry into care, what percentage exited care in the following time periods?</p>		

Goal	Final List Outcomes	Final List Measures *	Review Performance Outcomes	Review Performance Indicators **
	<p>6. Increase Placement Stability</p> <p>7. Reduce Placements of Young Children in Group Homes or Institutions</p>	<p>(1) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from the home  (2) At least 12 months, but less than 24 months  (3) At least 24 months, but less than 36  (4) At least 36 months, but less than 48 months  (5) 48 or more months</p> <p>Measure 6.1: Of all children served who had been in care for the time periods listed below, what percentage had no more than two placement settings during that time period?  (1) Less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from the home  (2) At least 12 months, but less than 24 months  (3) At least 24 months, but less than 36  4) At least 36 months, but less than 48 months  (5) 48 or more months</p> <p>Measure 7.1: For all children who entered care during the reporting period and were 12 or younger at the time of their most recent placement, what percentage was placed in a group home of institution?</p>		

Goal	Final List Outcomes	Final List Measures *	Review Performance Outcomes	Review Performance Indicators **
Child and Family Well Being			1. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs  2. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs  3. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents  Child and family involvement in case planning  Worker visits with child  Worker visits with parents  Educational needs of the child  Physical health of the child  Mental health of the child

\* August 20, 1999 – Final List of Child Welfare Outcomes and Measures- “The following outcome measures will be used as the basis for the first and subsequent Annual reports to the Congress on the performance of each State in meeting the goals and objectives of the child welfare system”

\*\* Review Performance Measures - February 2000 - State/Regional Training Sessions on the New Child Welfare Regulations - Handouts – Pathway to Substantial Conformity – performance indicators and outcomes



## National Standards for Child and Family Services (CFS) Reviews

The following are the national standards for certain statewide data indicators that will be used, in part, to determine conformity of IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. States not operating in conformity can work toward program improvement prior to the withholding of any Federal funds. The standards were developed at the points where, as of the NCANDS 1997 and 1998 (calendar years) submission and the AFCARS 1998 (federal fiscal year) data, 25 percent of the states were above the standard and 75 percent of the states were below (for those states who could submit adequate data). State's CFS review is scheduled for the year 20XX.

Statewide Data Indicator	Description	National Standard	National Average	Name of State/County/Region Information
Recurrence of maltreatment	All children who were victims of substantiated child abuse/neglect during the first six months of the period under review, 6.1% or fewer children had another substantiated report within six months.	6.1% or less	8.8% (1998)	<b>Statewide</b> (1997) ____ (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>Region</b> (1997) ____ (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>County</b> (1997) ____ (1998) ____ (1999) ____
Incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care	Of all children in foster care in the state during the period under review, the percentage of children who were the subject of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff is 0.57% or less.	0.57% or less	0.7% (1998)	<b>Statewide</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>Region</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>County</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____
Foster care re-entries	Of all children who entered foster care during the year under review, 8.6% or fewer of those children re-entered foster care within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.	8.6% or less	11.1% (1999)	<b>Statewide</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>Region</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>County</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____

Statewide Data Indicator	Description	National Standard	National Average	Name of State/County/Region Information
Stability of foster care placements	Of all children who have been in foster care less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal, 86.7% or more children had no more than two placement settings.	86.7% or more	74.9% (1999)	<b>Statewide</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>Region</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>County</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____
Length of time to achieve reunification	Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 76.2% or more children were reunified in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home.	76.2% or more	63.1% (1999)	<b>Statewide</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>Region</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>County</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____
Length of time to achieve adoption	Of all children who exited foster care during the year under review to a finalized adoption, 32% or more children exited care in less than 24 months from the time of the latest removal from home.	32% or more	19.7% (1999)	<b>Statewide</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>Region</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____ <b>County</b> (1998) ____ (1999) ____

Source: Navina Forsythe, Information Analyst, Utah Department of Child and Family Services

## **Systemic Factors and Indicators**

### **1. Information System Capacity**

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

### **2. Case Review System**

2.1 Provides a process that assures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s) that includes the required provisions.

2.2 Provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child no less frequently than once every six months by either a court or administrative review.

2.3 Provides a process that assures each child in foster care under the supervision of the state has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date that the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

2.4 Provides a process for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with ASFA.

2.5 Provides a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers with notice of and an opportunity to be heard in any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

### **3. Quality Assurance**

3.1 The state has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care placements are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children

3.2 The state is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.

### **4. Staff and Provider Training**

4.1 The state is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives of the CFSP, addresses services provided under IV-B and IV-E and provided initial training for staff who deliver these services.

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

4.3 The state provides short-term training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

## **5. Service Array**

5.1 The state has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

5.2 Such services are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the state's CFSP.

5.3 Such services can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families.

## **6. Agency Responsiveness to the Community**

6.1 In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the state engages in ongoing consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court and other public and private child and family serving agencies, and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP.

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

6.3 The state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

## **7. Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention**

7.1 The state has implemented standards for foster family homes and childcare institutions which are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards.

7.2 The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or childcare institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.

7.3 The state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as relating to or approving foster care and adoptive placements, and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

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





## **Uses of Outcomes in Child Welfare**

- Improving services for children, youth and families
- Allocating and maximizing existing resources, including state/county and federal funds
- Evaluating staff performance
- Meeting federal requirements and expectations
- Meeting state and county requirements and expectations
- Creating a common vision
- Explaining that vision to stakeholders
- Setting goals and priorities
- Making plans
- Preventing duplication and conflicting activities
- Evaluating results
- Making day to day decisions

