Utah's Division of Child and Family Services

Northern Region Report

Qualitative Case Review Findings

Review Conducted

February 13-16, 2012

A Report by

The Office of Services Review, Department of Human Services

I. Introduction

The Northern Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR) for FY2012 was held the week of February 13-16, 2012. Reviewers were selected from the Office of Services Review, the Division of Child and Family Services, community partners and other interested parties. There were two out-of-state representatives from Los Angeles County who participated as full week reviewers, one from the Department of Children and Family Services and the other from the Department of Mental Health. Reviewers also included individuals from the following Utah organizations and agencies:

- Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- Fostering Healthy Children
- Juvenile Justice Services
- Northern Region Quality Improvement Committee
- Court Appointed Special Advocates
- Alpine School District

There were 35 cases randomly selected for the Northern Region review. The case sample included 27 foster care cases and 8 in-home cases. All five offices in the region had cases selected as part of the random sample, which included the Bountiful, Brigham City, Clearfield, Logan, and Ogden offices. A certified lead reviewer and shadow reviewer were assigned to each case. Information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents or other guardians, foster parents (if child was placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. Additionally, the child's file, including prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

Staff from the Office of Services Review met with region staff on April 24, 2012 in an exit conference to review the results of the region's QCR. Scores and data analysis were reviewed with the region.

II. Stakeholder Observations

The results of the QCR should be considered within a broad context of local and regional interaction with community partners. Each year Office of Services Review staff members interview key community stakeholders such as birth families, youth, foster parents, providers, representatives from the legal community, other community agencies, and DCFS staff. On February 8, 2012 members of the OSR staff interviewed individuals and groups of DCFS staff and community partners. DCFS staff who were interviewed included the Regional Director, region administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers. Community partners interviewed included a guardian ad litem, assistant attorney general, and representatives from the Orange Duffel Bag Project, Archway Youth Services, Christmas Box House, Northern Region Quality Improvement Committee, and Weber Human Services (WHS). Strengths and opportunities for improvement were identified by the various groups of stakeholders as described below.

ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL AND GUARDIAN AD LITEM

Strengths

The GAL's have a very good relationship with DCFS. They have the common goal of trying to reunify families.

Judges in the region respect the opinions of the Child and Family Teams; the judges don't make unilateral decisions. Judges trust the judgment of the AG's and GAL's because they know they've taken the time to learn what is going on in the case.

The AG's office has an outstanding relationship with workers. They hold trainings for workers to help them learn their roles and when to consult with them.

The legal partners described the relationship between themselves and region administration as "beautiful." There are monthly meetings between the Region Director, Associate Region Director, GAL's and AG's. All parties are constantly aware of important issues.

Improvement Opportunities

The lack of services due to budget cuts is alarming. Domestic violence services are gone and DCFS doesn't do domestic violence assessments. Local providers charge so much that parents can't afford to complete the services they're required to do.

The service provided by the new drug testing provider has not been very good. The hours they're open are limited, which makes it difficult for clients to test. Also, some clients have been turned away when they've shown up to test because of technicalities with the referral.

AG's see DCFS struggling to adequately explain to teens what adoption does and does not mean. Just asking teens whether or not they want to be adopted doesn't sufficiently explore the teen's

feelings about it. They see lots of teens with the goal of Individualized Permanency although there is no compelling reason for not having Adoption as the primary goal.

There is a lack of all types of foster families: families that want to adopt, families willing to take sibling groups, basic level homes, structured homes, etc.

It's difficult to do kinship placements in the Hispanic community because many families are undocumented. There needs to be more collaboration with the Mexican Consulate. Sometimes the Consulate is adversarial with DCFS and they don't seem to understand that working with DCFS would have served the family better.

Office of Licensing is too "ticky-tacky" on their requirements; for example, children can't be placed in homes if there's square footage lacking in the bedroom.

PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The providers and community partners who were interviewed represented Christmas Box House, the Orange Duffel Bag Project, Weber Human Services, and Archway Youth Services.

Strengths

They had a summit for TAL youth that was very effective. The TAL Coordinator works amazingly well with the youth. They have created a support group for youth who are in foster care.

The Region Director has an open door policy. She really cares what's going on and she wants feedback from the community. She continually asks community partners how things are going and she wants their ideas on how to make things better.

The Northern Region Quality Improvement Committee works well because of the support they get from the Region Director. She is very invested in the committee. There are representatives from Christmas Box House, foster parents, Utah Foster and Adoptive Families, GAL's, AG's, Ogden School Board, DCFS staff, other community partners and various state agencies.

Northern Region has some of the best, most innovative public sector employees in the state. They do far more than they are paid to do. They are a fantastic group of individuals.

Northern Region works with community partners on the Orange Duffel Bag Project. It targets youth 14 and older, especially those who are transitioning out of foster care and making decisions about high school graduation, college, career, etc. They made a presentation at the University of Utah with more than 200 youth in attendance. They create vision and provide direction and life coaching around what youth want to do with their lives, then help them discover talents and give them a process to accomplish their goals.

The partnership between Tranquility Home and DCFS has been wonderful. Mothers who have lost custody, usually due to drug use, can be reunified with their children while they are living there. A DCFS supervisor sits on the Advisory Council for Weber Human Services. He's instrumental in deciding what services are offered, and he gives feedback on existing services.

There is good collaboration between DCFS, Archway, the court, and school districts.

Improvement Opportunities

There is a need to work on communication with the schools.

Clinicians at Weber Human Services don't feel comfortable sharing information with DCFS caseworkers because of HIPPA laws.

WHS has had to cut back on providing non-Medicaid services that used to be offered through the schools. They've had to tighten their belts because their budget has been cut.

Autism seems to be more prevalent than it has been, and this is where WHS struggles most because Medicaid won't pay to treat just autism; the child has to have another mental health disorder, too. They have been having great outcomes from their school-based programs and wish they could provide more of those services.

WHS has been concerned about the unbundling of services in Juvenile Justice Services (JJS). The youth are all being treated by different private providers. WHS would like to see consistency in providing services for JJS youth. They would like to take all the JJS youth back and serve this population, but they don't think they could handle the workload. The program would have to gradually be built up over a period of time.

In the last three years, Archway has lost one-fourth of its staff due to budget cuts. The biggest issue right now is the threat of more staff cuts. It becomes a safety issue when there are fewer staff with the older youth population. Many of the youth are angry and volatile. Good staff ratios are necessary to keep everyone safe.

DCFS ADMINISTRATORS, SUPERVISORS, and CASEWORKERS

Strengths

A transitional therapist is now available. She interviews children, parents and foster parents to help the children transition to placements so they and the foster families don't feel they've been put together too hastily. She does an assessment of why the child is in care, the child's strengths, and what kind of foster parents the child needs. She also assures that foster parents get important information about the children prior to placement. The therapist goes into foster homes and helps foster parents deal with difficult behaviors. The goal is to prevent early disruptions of foster placements.

The transition of cases from a CPS worker to a permanency worker is going well. The caseworker meets with the family to talk about services before they get ordered by the court. They usually do a Child and Family Team Meeting within the first five days, and Child and Family Plans that used to get done in 40 days are now done in the first couple of weeks.

Drug Court is going very well. DCFS meets regularly with the entire Drug Court team. The team meets every other week for each court. They have had great success with Drug Court. Visitation for parents expands more quickly in Drug Court cases.

The workers, supervisors, and administrators are all very capable. Caseworkers are making good things happen in spite of large caseloads. They put in extra hours to make sure children are safe.

DCFS has good support from the community and allied agencies such as Mental Health.

The post-adoption team is doing some amazing work around permanency. They have expanded resources and found permanency for some children who had been in care for a long time. They have kept adoptive families from giving up on children and kept children in their adoptive homes.

The region is working to support kinship placements. Within five days of removal they start to make connections between the kinship families and services. There is a class kin attend to learn how to apply for funds and services. Graduate students are used to complete home studies so there is quicker turnaround.

Multi-agency Council meetings are a strength. DCFS teams with Mental Health and JJS. They've done a lot to keep placements stable and find solutions for children and foster families.

The region has designated specialists on the administrative team to handle things like interacting with the Mexican Consulate and handling ICWA cases. This has taken a load off of the caseworkers.

DCFS has been able to start hiring again, which has led to lower caseloads.

The region is looking forward to the implementation of the in-home practice model that's being worked on, although it will require shifting resources and lowering caseloads. Everybody seems to be coming together to emphasize in-home cases rather than foster care cases. That is a shift child welfare practice needs to make. There are active efforts to free up money and move it to wrapping services around families.

Improvement Opportunities

There are lots of challenges in the Spanish-speaking community because there are limited options for services such as parenting classes. It's hard to find providers to do various types of

assessments. There is no domestic violence treatment for Spanish speakers. Interpreters are necessary for things like routine doctor appointments.

There are never enough Spanish speaking foster homes or Level 3 (structured) homes.

Children have horrendous histories of neglect and abuse and their behaviors are more difficult than they used to be. For example, they are dealing with very young sexual perpetrators.

Experienced caseworkers believe new caseworkers really need mentors. New workers need help, but experienced caseworkers don't have time to help them.

Every time supervisors go to meetings, the supervisors feel they come away with a list of more things the caseworkers are required to do, but nothing ever gets taken away.

The Structured Decision Making (SDM) model is getting a mixed reception in the region. Many DCFS staff feel there are too many new tools like SDM being thrust on workers, and the new tools just duplicate what caseworkers are already doing. Others have seen SDM work and see some potential positives as long as the DCFS State Office doesn't push SDM too far.

The new drug testing program has been a nightmare. It's more difficult to get tests set up and approved, the results don't come in a timely manner, and there's more paperwork to do. That's made the caseworkers' job more difficult, and DCFS is paying more for a poorer quality service than they used to receive. It's demoralizing to see funds wasted like this when they could be used to help families instead.

The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment isn't being taken seriously because the Placement Committee overrides what the CANS assessment indicates the child needs. The assessment itself is very time consuming. Supervisors believe children can be appropriately placed without spending the time to do the CANS. They don't believe CANS should be required on every child, especially very young children where the level of placement needed is obvious. Workers can manipulate the CANS to get children placed where they want them. Caseworkers are asked to do lots of different kinds of assessments, and they don't have the time or patience to do them all. Caseworkers have to do the CANS, SDM, Ansell-Casey, Child and Family Assessment, developmental screenings, etc.

The loss of DSPD services is tragic. It's now a waste of time to keep applying for DSPD services for children because the agency has lost so much funding.

III. Child and Family Status, System Performance, Analysis, and Trends

The QCR findings are presented in graphic form to help quantify the observations of the qualitative review. Graphs show a comparison of scores for past years' reviews with the current review. The graphs of the two broad domains of Child and Family Status and System Performance show the percent of cases in which the key indicators were judged to be "acceptable." A six-point rating scale is used to determine whether or not an indicator is judged to be acceptable. Reviewers scored each of the cases reviewed using this rating scale. The range of ratings is as follows:

1: Completely Unacceptable
2: Substantially Unacceptable
3: Partially Unacceptable
4: Minimally Acceptable
5: Substantially Acceptable
6: Optimal Status/Performance

Child and Family Status and System Performance are evaluated using 15 key indicators. Graphs presenting the overall scores for each domain are presented below. They are followed by graphs showing the distribution of scores for each indicator within each of the two domains.

Child and Family Status Indicators

Overall Status

Northern Child Status									
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators except Safety which is 85% Standard: Criteria 85% on overall score	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	**FY12 Current Scores**	**Trends**
Safety	31	4	89%	96%	83%	87%	88%	**89%**	Improved and above standard
Child's Safety from Others	35	0	100%				96%	**100%**	Improved and above standard
Child's Risk to Self or Others	31	4	89%				92%	**89%**	Decreased but above standard
Stability	26	9	74%	70%	92%	65%	83%	**74%**	Decreased but above standard
Prospect for Permanence	26	9	74%	74%	88%	61%	88%	**74%**	Decreased but above standard
Health/Physical Well-being	33	2	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%	**94%**	Decreased but above standard
Emot./Behavioral Well-being	29	6	83%	91%	96%	83%	88%	**83%**	Decreased but above standard
Learning	31	4	89%	91%	83%	96%	96%	**89%**	Decreased but above standard
Family Connections	23	2	92%					**92%**	Improved and above standard
Satisfaction	33	2	94%	96%	83%	96%	83%	**94%**	Improved and above standard
Overall Score	**30**	**5**	86%	**96%**	**83%**	**87%**	**88%**	**86%**	Decreased but above standard
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%						

Safety

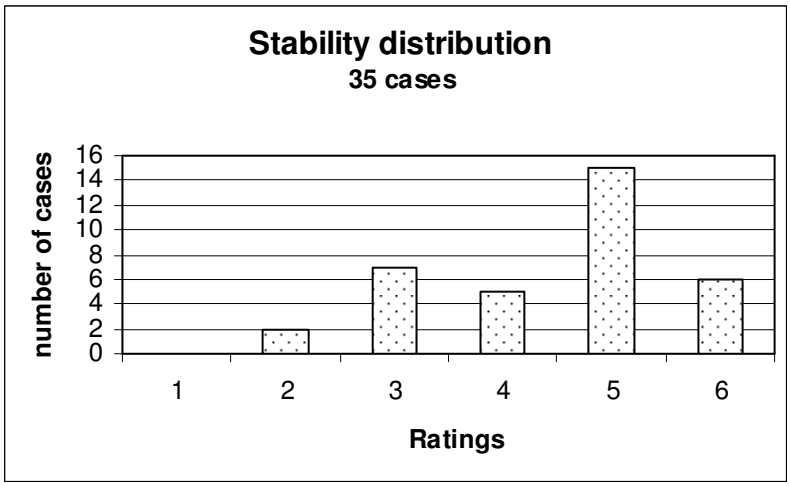
Summative Questions: Is the child safe from threats of harm in his/her daily living, learning, working and recreational environments? Are others in the child's daily environments safe from the child? Does the child avoid self-endangerment and refrain from using behaviors that may put self and others at risk of harm?

Findings: 89% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a one point increase over last year's score of 88% and above standard. Out of the 35 cases reviewed, only four had unacceptable scores on Safety. In all four cases the child was Safe; however, the child had put themselves or others at risk. One of the cases involved a teen who was assaulting others, another case was a young child assaulting others, another was a latency age sexual perpetrator who acted out on an even younger child, and the last was a youth who put herself at risk by running away from her placement.

Stability

Summative Questions: Has the child's placement setting been consistent and stable? Are the child's daily living and learning arrangements stable and free from risk of disruption? If not, are appropriate services being provided to achieve stability and reduce the probability of disruption?

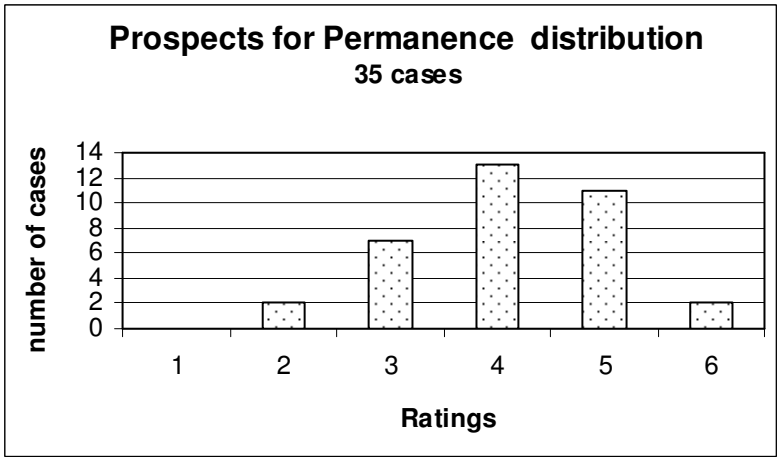
Findings: 74% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 83%, but the score remained above standard.



Prospects for Permanence

Summative Questions: Is the child living with caregivers that the child, caregivers, and other stakeholders believe will endure until the child becomes independent? If not, is a permanency plan presently being implemented on a timely basis that will ensure that the child will live in enduring relationships that provide a sense of family, stability, and belonging?

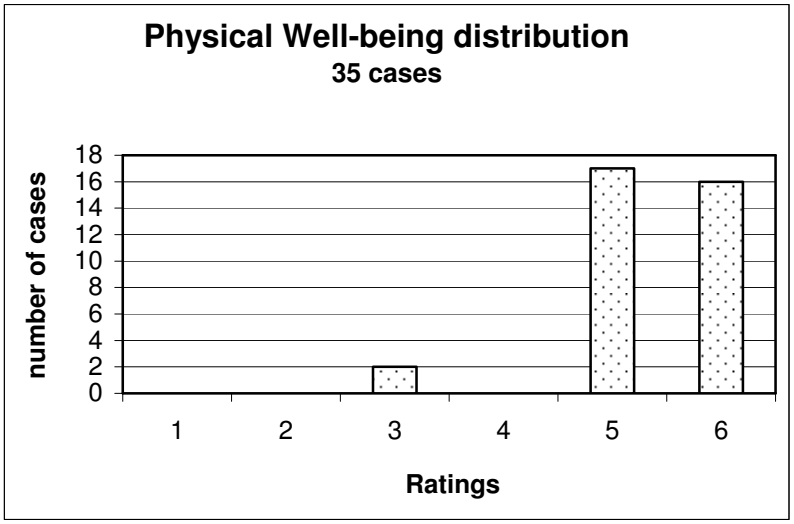
Findings: 74% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 88% but above the 70% standard.



Health/Physical Well-Being

Summative Questions: Is the child in good health? Are the child's basic physical needs being met? Does the child have health care services, as needed?

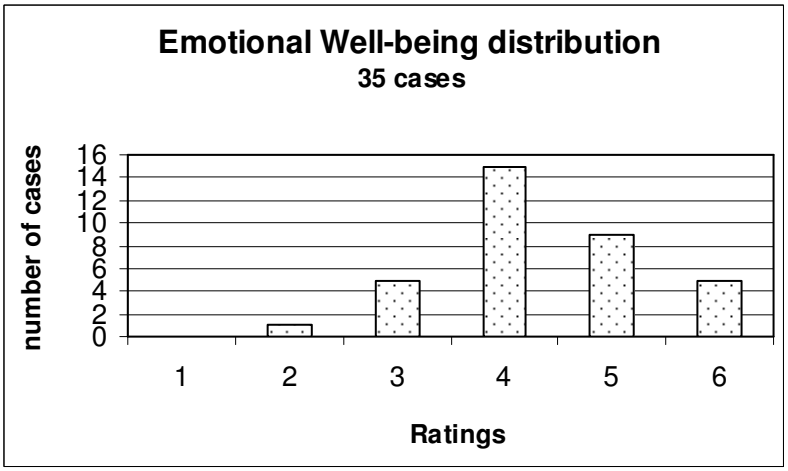
Findings: 94% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is slightly lower than last year's score of 100% but well above standard.



Emotional/Behavioral Well-Being

Summative Questions: Is the child doing well emotionally and behaviorally? If not, is the child making reasonable progress toward stable and adequate functioning, emotionally and behaviorally, at home and school?

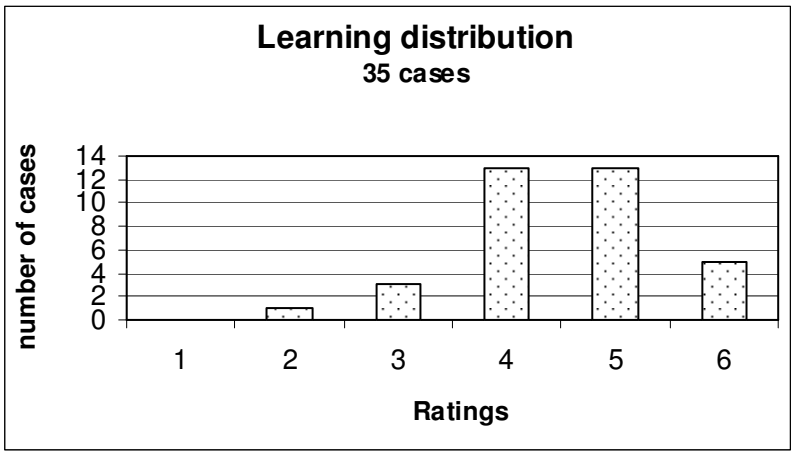
Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 88% but well above standard.



Learning Progress

Summative Question: (For children age five and older.) Is the child learning, progressing and gaining essential functional capabilities at a rate commensurate with his/her age and ability? Note: There is a supplementary scale used with children under the age of five that puts greater emphasis on developmental progress. Scores from the two scales are combined for this report.

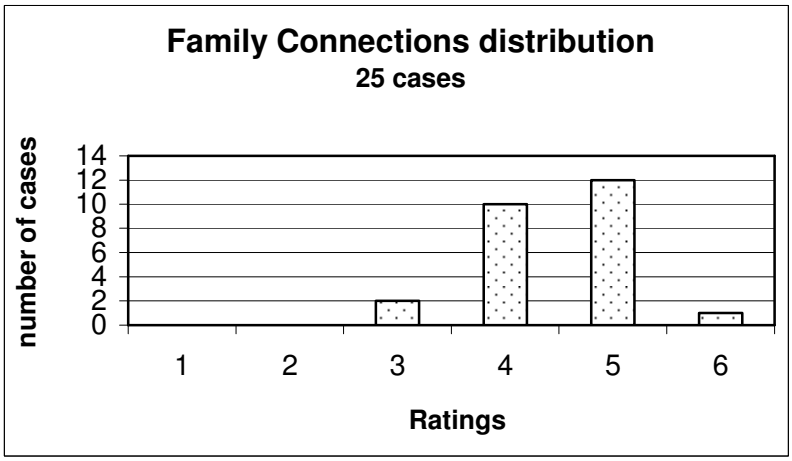
Findings: 89% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a little lower than last year's score of 96% but well above standard.



Family Connections

Summative Question: While the child and family are living apart, are family relationships and connections being maintained through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies, unless compelling reasons exist for keeping them apart?

Findings: 92% of cases scored acceptable on Overall Family Connections. This is a new indicator so there is no comparative data from the previous year. This indicator measures whether or not the relationship between the child and the mother, father, siblings, and other important family members is being maintained. The scores for the mother and siblings were identical at 89%. The score for fathers was slightly lower at 82%. Northern region is doing an excellent job of keeping fathers nearly as well connected to children as mothers.

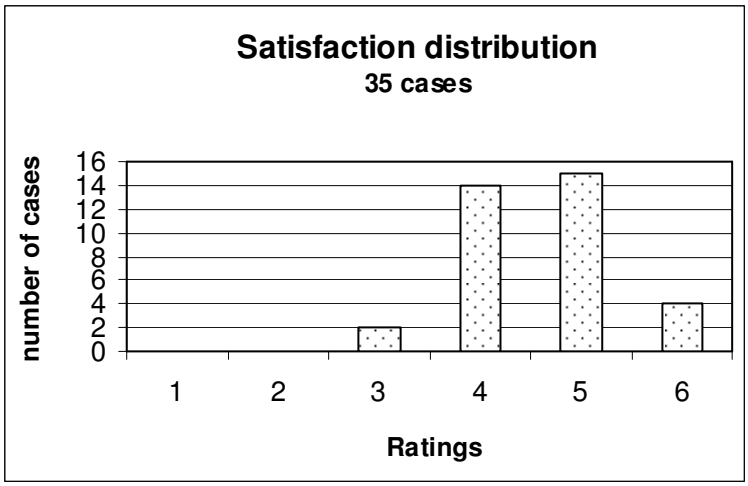


Family Connections			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	**FY12 Current Scores**
Overall Connections	23	2	**92%**
Sibling	8	1	**89%**
Mother	16	2	**89%**
Father	9	2	**82%**
Other	17	1	**94%**

Satisfaction

Summative Question: Are the child, parent/guardian, and substitute caregiver satisfied with the supports and services they are receiving?

Findings: 94% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6) on the overall Satisfaction score. This is a double-digit improvement from last year's score of 83% and substantially above standard. Reviewers rated the satisfaction of children, mothers, fathers, and caregivers. Scores for the individual parties ranged from 92% for caregivers to 83% for mothers. The Satisfaction scores for all parties were above standard.

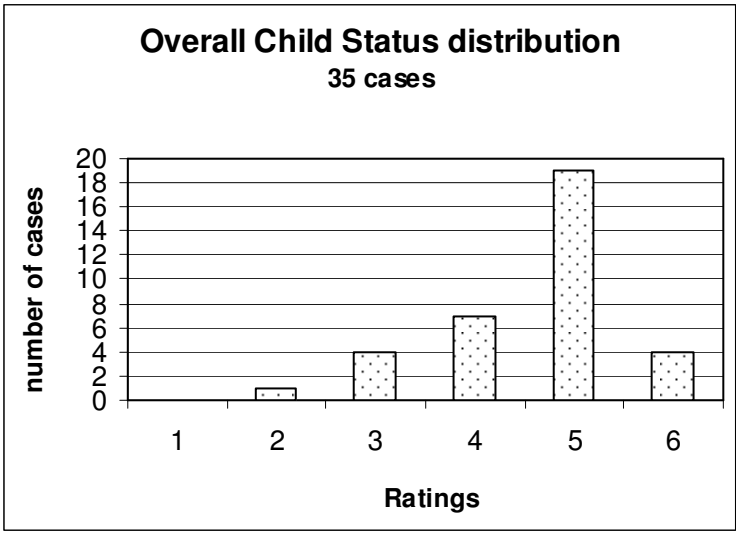


Satisfaction			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	**FY12 Current Scores**
Satisfaction	33	2	**94%**
Child	17	2	**89%**
Mother	15	3	**83%**
Father	7	1	**88%**
Caregiver	24	2	**92%**

Overall Child and Family Status

Summative Questions: Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for the Child and Family Status indicators, how well are this child and family presently doing? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall Child and Family Status using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the first seven status indicators (minus Satisfaction) must score acceptable in order for the Overall Score to be acceptable. A unique condition affects the rating of Overall Child and Family status in every case: The Safety indicator always acts as a "trump" so that the Overall Child and Family status rating cannot be acceptable unless the Safety indicator is also acceptable.

Findings: 86% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). The overall Child and Family Status score decreased from last year's score of 88% but remained just above the 85% standard.



System Performance Indicators

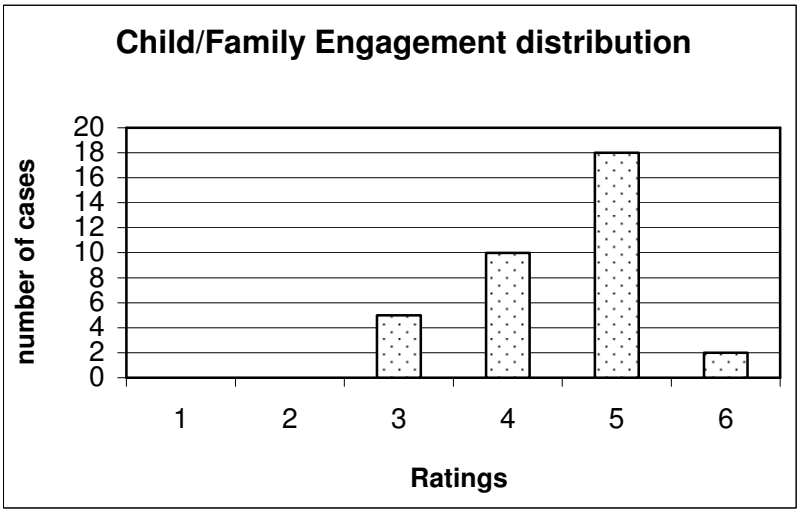
Overall System

Northern System Performance									
				FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	**FY12**	
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators Standard: 85% on overall score					**Current Scores**	**Trends**
Engagement	30	5	86%	83%	96%	83%	83%	**86%**	Improved and above standard
Teaming	28	7	80%	83%	88%	74%	71%	**80%**	Improved and above standard
Assessment	29	6	83%	70%	79%	78%	79%	**83%**	Improved and above standard
Long-term View	26	9	74%	83%	83%	74%	83%	**74%**	Decreased but above standard
Child & Family Plan	25	10	71%	87%	88%	78%	67%	**71%**	Improved and above standard
Intervention Adequacy	31	4	89%	87%	92%	96%	83%	**89%**	Improved and above standard
Tracking & Adapting	34	1	97%	78%	88%	100%	83%	**97%**	Improved and above standard
Overall Score	**29**	**6**	83%	**91%**	**96%**	**96%**	**88%**	**83%**	Decreased and below standard
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%						

Child and Family Engagement

Summative Questions: Has the agency made concerted efforts to actively involve parents and children in the service process and in making decisions about the child and family? To what extent has the agency used rapport building strategies, including special accommodations, to engage the family?

Findings: 86% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a slight increase from last year's score of 83% and above standard. Separate scores were given for child, mother, father and guardian. An overall score was then selected by the reviewer. Scores for the various groups ranged from a high of 96% for the child to 80% for fathers.

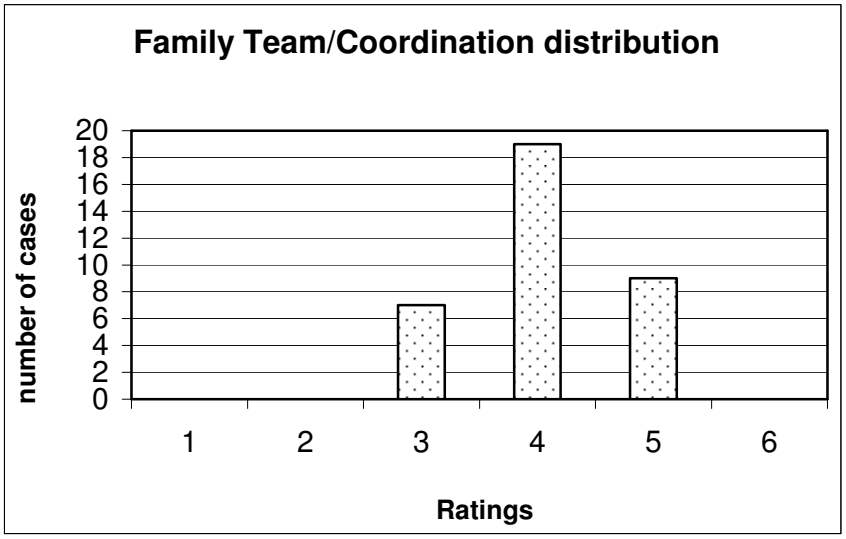


Engagement			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	**FY12 Current Scores**
Overall Engagement	30	5	**86%**
Child	27	1	**96%**
Mother	19	4	**83%**
Father	12	3	**80%**
Guardian	8	1	**89%**

Child and Family Teaming

Summative Questions: Do the child, family, and service providers function as a team? Do the actions of the team reflect a pattern of effective teamwork and collaboration that benefits the child and family? Is there effective coordination in the provision of services across all providers?

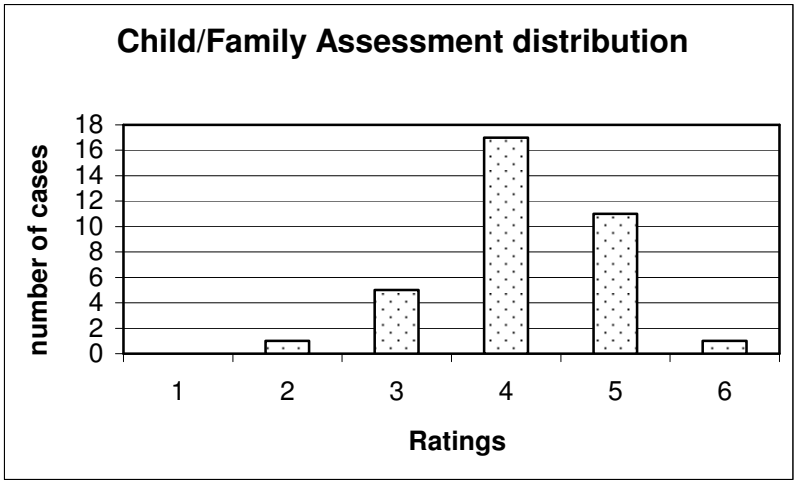
Findings: 80% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 71% and is above standard.



Child and Family Assessment

Summative Questions: Are the current, obvious and substantial strengths and needs of the child and family identified through existing assessments, both formal and informal, so that all interveners collectively have a "big picture" understanding of the child and family? Do the assessments help the team draw conclusions on how to provide effective services to meet the child's needs for enduring permanency, safety, and well-being? Are the critical underlying issues identified that must be resolved for the child to live safely with his/her family independent of agency supervision or to obtain an independent and enduring home?

Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 79% and well above the 70% standard. Individual scores were given for this indicator. The highest score was the Caregiver score at 96%. The Child score was ten points lower at 86%. The Mother score was 70% while the Fathers score trailed at 53%.

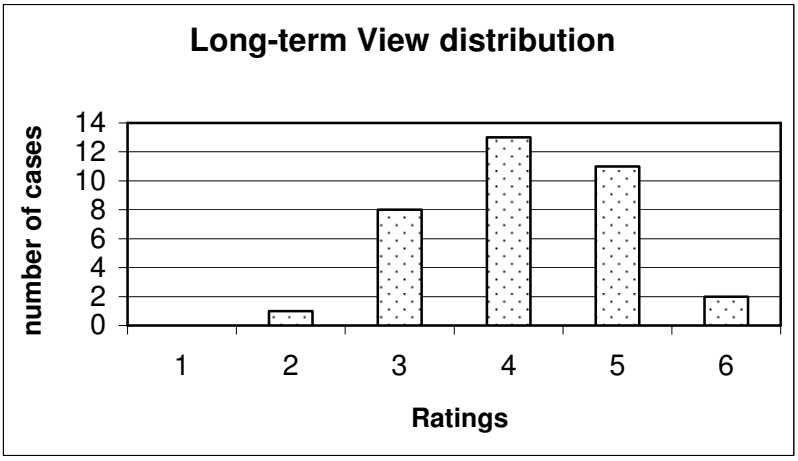


Assessment			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	**FY12 Current Scores**
Overall Assessment	29	6	**83%**
Child	30	5	**86%**
Mother	16	7	**70%**
Father	9	8	**53%**
Caregiver	25	1	**96%**

Long-Term View

Summative Questions: Is there a path that will lead the family and/or child toward achieving enduring safety and permanency without DCFS interventions? Is it realistic and achievable? Does the team, particularly the child/family, understand the path and destination? Does the path provide steps and address the next major transition(s) toward achieving enduring safety and permanence independent of DCFS interventions?

Findings: 74% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 83%.



Child and Family Plan

Summative Questions: Is the Child and Family Plan individualized and relevant to needs and goals? Are supports, services and interventions assembled into a holistic and coherent service process that provides a mix of elements uniquely matched to the child/family's situation and preferences? Does the combination of supports and services fit the child and family's situation so as to maximize potential results and minimize conflicting strategies and inconveniences?

Findings: 71% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a modest improvement over last year's score of 67% and just above standard.

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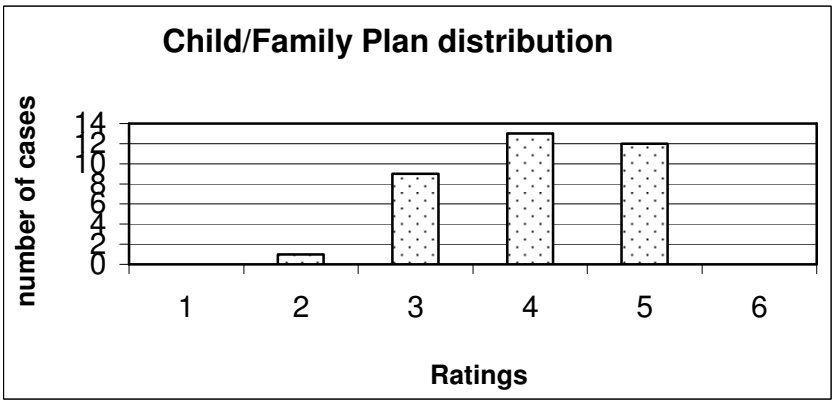
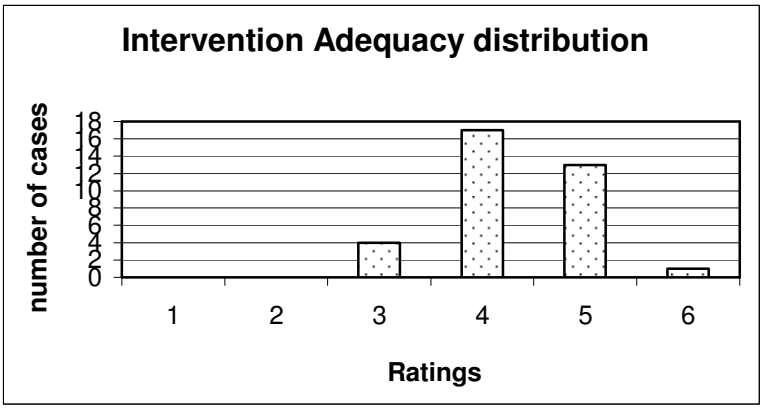


Intervention Adequacy

Summative Questions: To what degree are the planned interventions, services, and supports being provided to the child and family of sufficient power (precision, intensity, duration, fidelity, and consistency) and beneficial effect to produce results that would enable the child and family to live safely and independent from DCFS?

Findings: 89% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 83% and well above standard. This indicator was scored separately for Child, Mother, Father, and Caregiver. The scores for Child and Caregiver exceeded the Overall Score at 91% and 100% respectively. The score for Mother was substantially lower at 68% and the score for Father was only 54%.

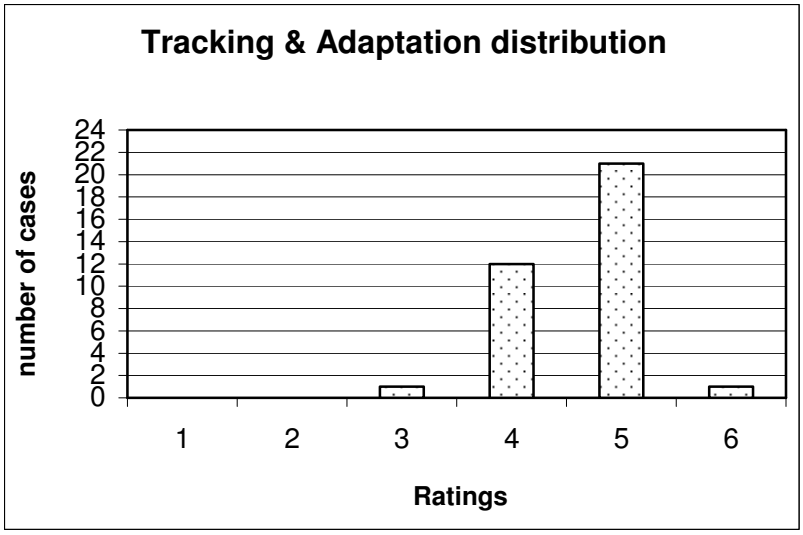


Intervention Adequacy			
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	**FY12 Current Scores**
Overall Intervention Adequacy	31	4	**89%**
Child	32	3	**91%**
Mother	15	7	**68%**
Father	7	6	**54%**
Caregiver	26	0	**100%**

Tracking and Adaptation

Summative Questions: Are the child and family status, service process, and progress routinely monitored and evaluated by the team? Are services modified to respond to the changing needs of the child and family and to apply knowledge gained about service efforts and results to create a self-correcting service process?

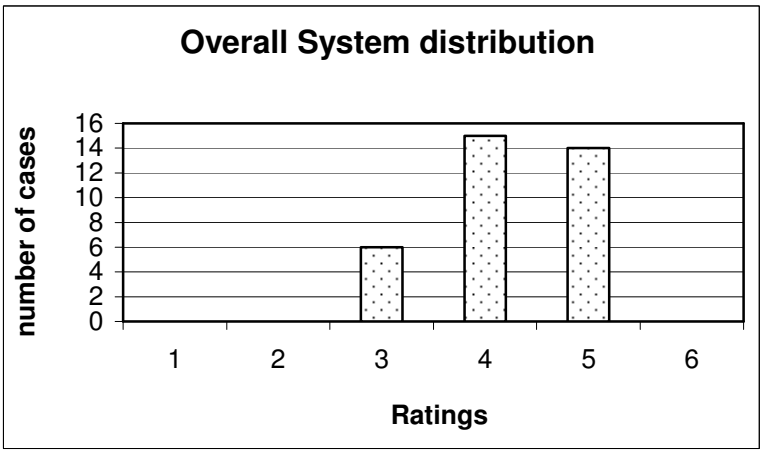
Findings: 97% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a substantial increase over last year's score of 83%.



Overall System Performance

Summative Questions: Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for System Performance indicators, how well is the service system functioning for this child now? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall System Performance using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the seven system performance indicators must score acceptable in order for the overall score to be acceptable.

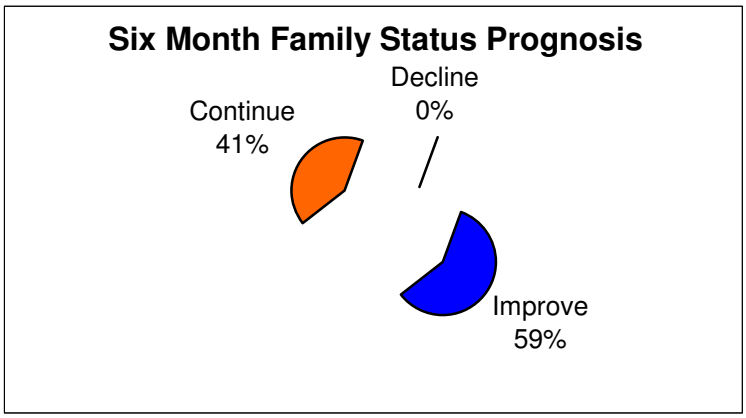
Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). The Overall System Performance score decreased from last year's score of 88% and fell just below the 85% standard.



Status Forecast

One additional measure of case status is the reviewers' prognosis of the child and family's likely status in the next six months, given the current level of system performance. Reviewers respond to this question: "Based on current DCFS involvement for this child, family, and caregiver, is the child's overall status likely to improve, stay about the same, or decline over the next six months?"

Of the 35 cases reviewed, 59% (21 cases) anticipated an improvement in family status over the next six months. In 41% (14) of the cases, family status was likely to stay about the same. There were no cases where the family's status was expected to decline over the next six months.



Outcome Matrix

The display below presents a matrix analysis of the service testing results during the current QCR. Each of the cells in the matrix shows the percent of children and families experiencing one of four possible outcomes:

- Outcome 1: child and family status acceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 2: child and family status unacceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 3: child and family status acceptable, system performance unacceptable
- Outcome 4: child and family status unacceptable, system performance unacceptable

The desired result is to have as many children and families in Outcome 1 as possible and as few in Outcome 4 as possible. It is fortunate that some children and families do well in spite of unacceptable system performance (Outcome 3). Experience suggests that these are most often either unusually resilient or resourceful children and families, or children and families who have some "champion" or advocate who protects them from the shortcomings of the system. Unfortunately, there may also be some children and families who, in spite of good system performance, do not do well (these children and families would fall in Outcome 2).

The outcome matrix for children and families reviewed during the Northern Region review indicates that 74% of the cases had acceptable ratings on both Child Status and System Performance. There were two cases that rated unacceptable on both Child Status and System Performance.

	Favorable Status of Child		**Unfavorable Status of Child**		
	Outcome 1		**Outcome 2**		
Acceptable	Good status for the child,		Poor status for the child,		
System	agency services presently acceptable.		agency services minimally acceptable		
Perfomance			but limited in reach or efficacy.		
	n=	26	n=	3	
		74.3%		8.6%	**82.9%**
Unacceptable	**Outcome 3**		**Outcome 4**		
System	Good status for the child, agency		Poor status for the child,		
Performance	Mixed or presently unacceptable.		agency presently unacceptable.		
	n=	4	n=	2	
		11.4%		5.7%	**17.1%**
		85.7%		**14.3%**	

V. Analysis of the Data

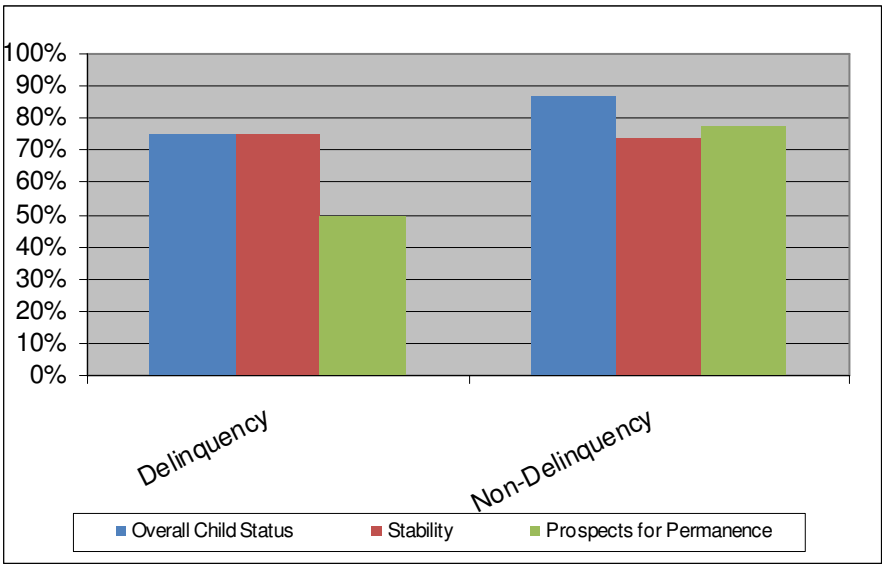
RESULTS BY CASE TYPE

The following tables compare how the different Case Types performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. There were no Family Preservation cases (PFP) and only one PSC case (voluntary services). The PSC case involved a child with very challenging behaviors who was placed at the State Hospital. Lack of communication between DCFS and the State Hospital led to several unacceptable System Performance scores. The court ordered In-Home services cases (PSS) performed significantly better on Overall Child Status than foster cases (100% versus 85%) but performed almost equally on Overall System Performance (86% to 85%). Child and Family Plan was the lowest performing indicator on foster care cases while Teaming was the low indicator on In-home cases.

Case Type		# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Foster Care	SCF	27	89%	70%	85%	81%	81%	85%	74%	70%	93%	96%	85%
In-Home	PSS	7	100%	100%	100%	100%	71%	86%	86%	86%	86%	100%	86%
In-Home	PSC	1	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
In-Home	PFP	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Collection of demographic information regarding cases included in the case sample includes the question, "Did the child come into services due to delinquency instead of abuse and neglect?" Only four of the 35 cases (11%) in the sample are reported to have entered services due to delinquency rather than abuse or neglect. The following table compares how cases identified as Delinquency cases and Non-Delinquency cases performed on Stability, Permanency, Overall Child Status, and Overall System Performance.

Case Type	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performance
Delinquency	4	75%	50%	75%	100%
Non-Delinquency	31	74%	77%	87%	81%



RESULTS BY PERMANENCY GOAL

The following table compares how the different Permanency Goals performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. There were five different Permanency Goal types represented in the case sample. All case types were above standard on Prospects for Permanence other than the cases with the goal of Individualized Permanency, where two of three cases fell below standard. Most case types were above standard on Overall Child Status except those with the goal of Adoption (9 of 11 acceptable) and Remain Home (3 of 4 acceptable). Adoption cases, Individualized Permanency cases and Remain Home cases were the case types that fell below standard on Overall System Performance (9 of 11 Adoption cases were acceptable, 2 of 3 Individualized Permanency cases were acceptable, and 2 of 4 Remain Home cases were acceptable).

Permanency Goal	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Adoption	11	91%	73%	82%	100%	82%	73%	73%	64%	91%	100%	82%
Guardianship (Non-Rel)	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Guardianship (Relative)	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Individualized Perm.	3	100%	33%	100%	67%	67%	67%	67%	33%	100%	100%	67%
Remain Home	4	75%	75%	75%	100%	50%	50%	50%	75%	50%	100%	50%
Reunification	16	88%	81%	88%	75%	88%	100%	81%	81%	94%	94%	94%

RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

Caseload

The following table compares how caseload affected some key child status and core system performance indicators. Caseloads in the sample were divided into two categories: caseloads of 16 cases or less and caseloads of 17 cases or more. The case sample shows that 83% of the caseworkers have caseloads of 16 cases or less (29 of 35 workers). The smaller caseloads performed better on Overall Child Status. The two caseload sizes were identical in their Overall System Performance scores.

Caseload Size	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
16 cases or less	29	90%	79%	90%	86%	79%	83%	76%	69%	90%	97%	83%
17 cases or more	6	83%	50%	67%	83%	83%	83%	67%	83%	83%	100%	83%

Worker Experience

The following table compares how Length of Employment as a caseworker impacts performance. One highlight of the chart is that four of the workers were hired within the past year. The majority of caseworkers included in the sample (80%) had more than two years experience as a caseworker. The caseworker's length of employment in their current position did not make much difference in the outcome of the overall scores, with the newest workers and the most experienced workers scoring fairly closely. The data suggests that an individual worker's level of performance is more of a factor in determining outcomes than the amount of time they have been employed as a caseworker.

Length of Employment in Current Position	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Less than 12 months	4	100%	100%	100%	75%	75%	100%	75%	100%	75%	100%	75%
12 to 24 months	3	67%	67%	67%	67%	100%	100%	67%	67%	100%	67%	100%
24 to 36 months	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
36 to 48 months	3	100%	67%	100%	67%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%
48 to 60 months	5	80%	60%	80%	80%	60%	80%	80%	80%	100%	100%	80%
60 to 72 months	4	50%	50%	50%	100%	100%	75%	75%	50%	75%	100%	75%
More than 72 months	16	100%	81%	94%	94%	75%	75%	75%	63%	88%	100%	81%

RESULTS BY OFFICE

The following table compares how offices within the region performed on some key child status and system performance indicators. Cases from all five offices in the Northern Region were selected as part of the sample. Logan office scored 100% on both Overall Child Status and Overall System Performance. Brigham City fell below standard on Overall Child Status due to one of its three cases falling below standard, but the other four offices scored above standard. The Bountiful, Clearfield, and Ogden offices scored below standard on Overall System Performance (2 of 3 acceptable in Bountiful, 5 of 7 acceptable in Clearfield, and 16 of 19 acceptable in Ogden).

Office	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Bountiful	3	100%	67%	100%	67%	67%	67%	33%	100%	67%	67%	67%
Brigham City	3	67%	67%	67%	100%	100%	67%	67%	67%	100%	100%	100%
Clearfield	7	86%	71%	86%	86%	86%	71%	71%	71%	86%	100%	71%
Logan	3	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%
Ogden	19	89%	74%	84%	84%	74%	89%	79%	68%	89%	100%	84%

RESULTS BY AGE

OSR looked at the effect of age on Stability, Permanency, Overall Child Status, and Overall System Performance. The scores on Stability and Permanency were highest for the youngest children. They were lowest for teens ages 13 to 15, with an especially big dip in Prospects for Permanency. The 13-15 age group also scored lowest on Overall Child Status and Overall System Performance.

Age	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performance
0-5 years	8	88%	100%	100%	100%
6-12 years	12	75%	92%	83%	83%
13-15 years	8	63%	25%	75%	63%
16 + years	7	71%	71%	86%	86%

SYSTEM CORE INDICATORS

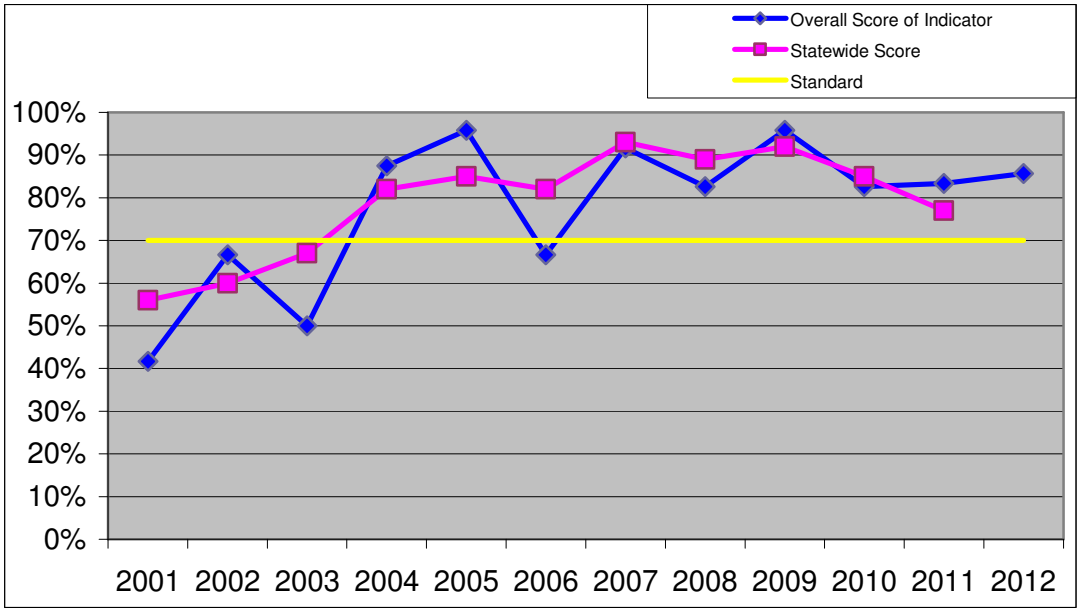
Below is data for all system indicators (Engagement, Teaming, Assessment, Long-term View, Child and Family Plan, Intervention Adequacy, and Tracking and Adaptation) over the last 12 years showing how the ratings of 1 (completely unacceptable), 2 (substantially unacceptable), 3 (partially unacceptable), 4 (minimally acceptable), 5 (substantially acceptable) and 6 (optimal) are trending within each indicator. The table for each indicator in the section below shows an average and percentage score for that indicator. The line graph represents the percentage of the indicator that scored within the acceptable range. The most ideal trend would be to see an increase in the average score of the indicator along with an increase in the percentage score. Statewide scores for FY2012 will not be available until the end of the year and therefore do not appear in the tables or charts.

Northern region's score on Overall System Performance has declined over the past three years; however, six of the seven System Performance indicators improved this year. The six indicators that improved this year were Engagement (83% to 86%), Teaming (71% to 80%), Assessment (79% to 83%), Plan (67% to 71%), Intervention Adequacy (83% to 89%), and Tracking and Adapting (83% to 97%). Only the Long-term View indicator declined (83% to 74%).

Child and Family Engagement

Both the average and the percentage scores on Engagement showed a slight increase this year. Northern region's score on this indicator alternated being above and below the state average for the past four years.

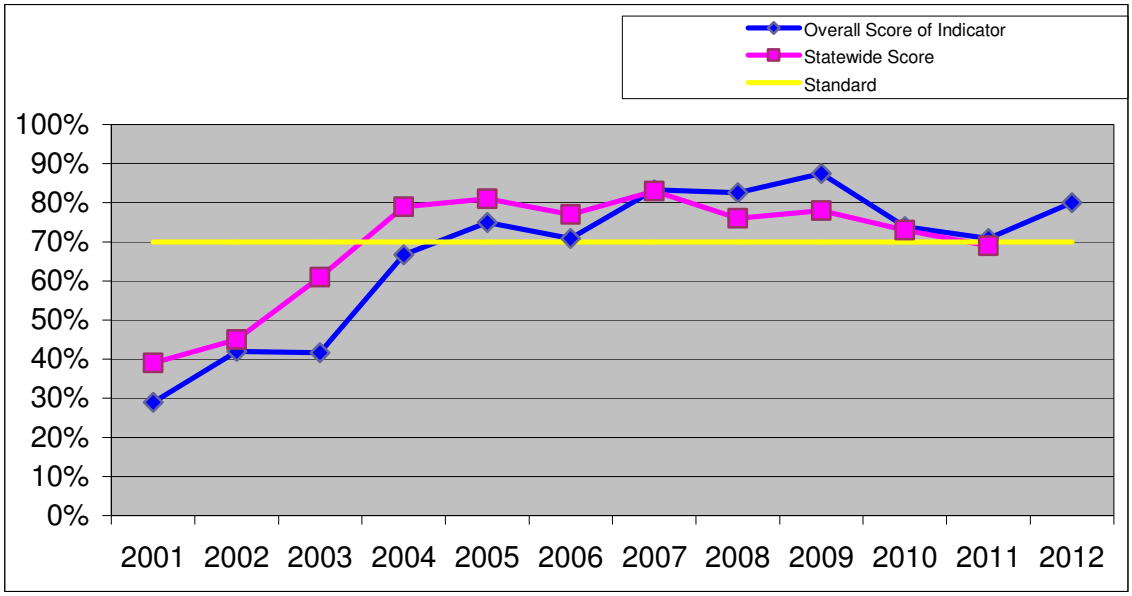
Engagement												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	3.21	3.54	3.21	4.17	4.54	3.79	4.46	4.22	4.46	4.35	4.46	4.49
Overall Score of Indicator	42%	67%	50%	88%	96%	67%	92%	83%	96%	83%	83%	86%
Statewide Score	56%	60%	67%	82%	85%	82%	93%	89%	92%	85%	77%	



Child and Family Team and Coordination

After falling nearly to the 70% standard last year, the Teaming score climbed to 80% which is 10 points above standard. Although the percentage score increased, the average scored dropped, meaning that although there were more cases that scored acceptable, they did not score as high as they did in past years. The region has trended above the state for the past four years.

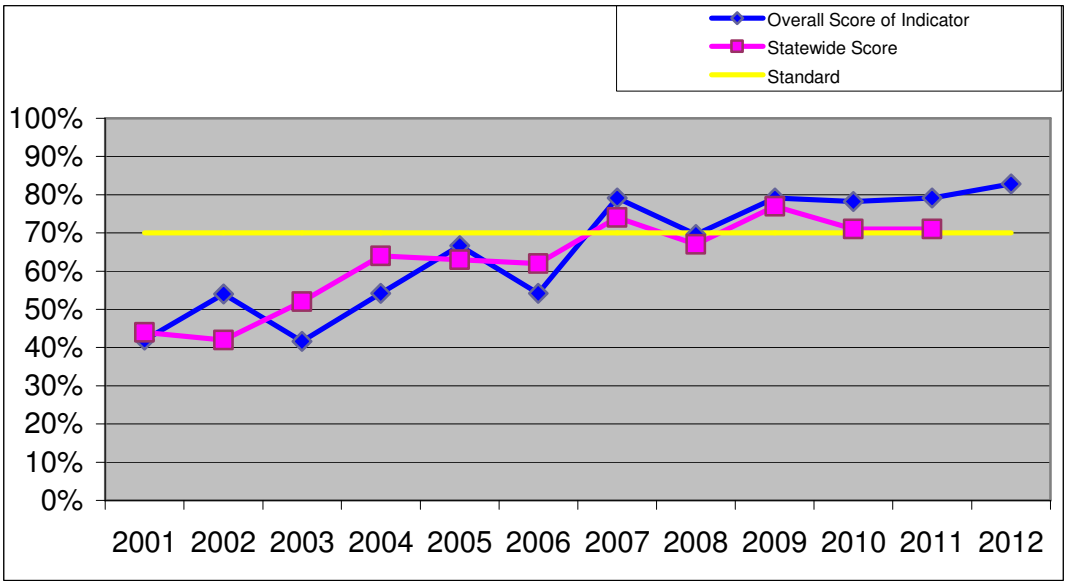
Teaming												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	2.96	3.46	3.38	3.83	4.08	3.96	4.25	4.17	4.21	4.04	4.21	4.06
Overall Score of Indicator	29%	42%	42%	67%	75%	71%	83%	83%	88%	74%	71%	80%
Statewide Score	39%	45%	61%	79%	81%	77%	83%	76%	78%	73%	69%	



Child and Family Assessment

As with Teaming, the percentage score on Assessment rose while the average score fell, meaning that while more cases scored in the acceptable range, they didn't score as high as they did in the past. The region has trended above the state since FY2007.

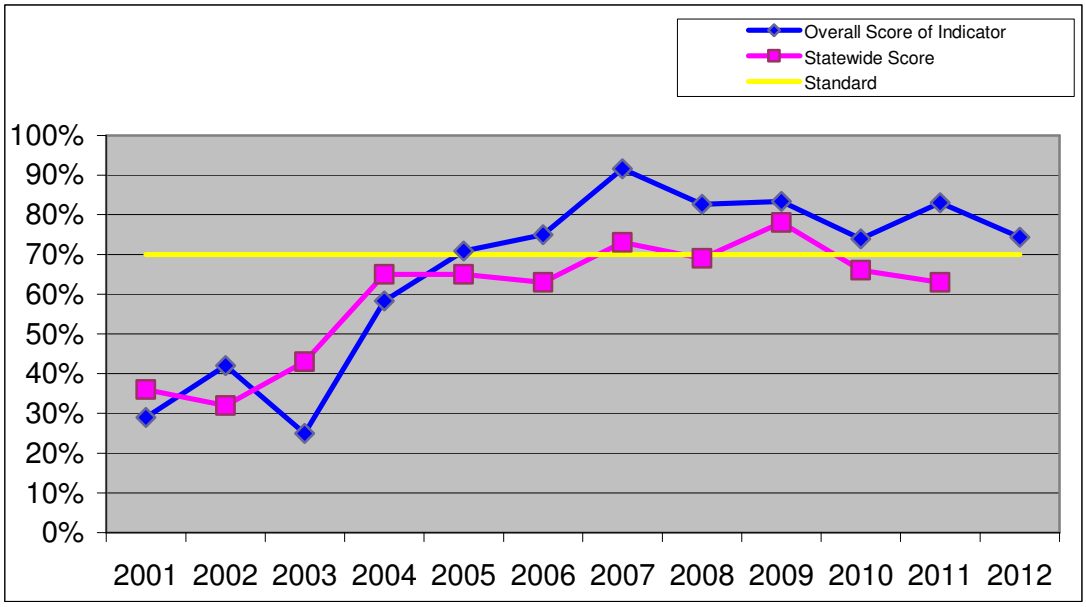
Assessment												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	3.25	3.54	3.21	3.63	3.83	3.54	4.00	3.91	4.00	4.09	4.21	4.17
Overall Score of Indicator	42%	54%	42%	54%	67%	54%	79%	70%	79%	78%	79%	83%
Statewide Score	44%	42%	52%	64%	63%	62%	74%	67%	77%	71%	71%	



Long-Term View

The Long-term View indicator, which rose to 83% last year as a result of the region's focus on permanency, fell to 74% this year. The average score also declined. The region has trended above the state average on Long-term View since FY2005.

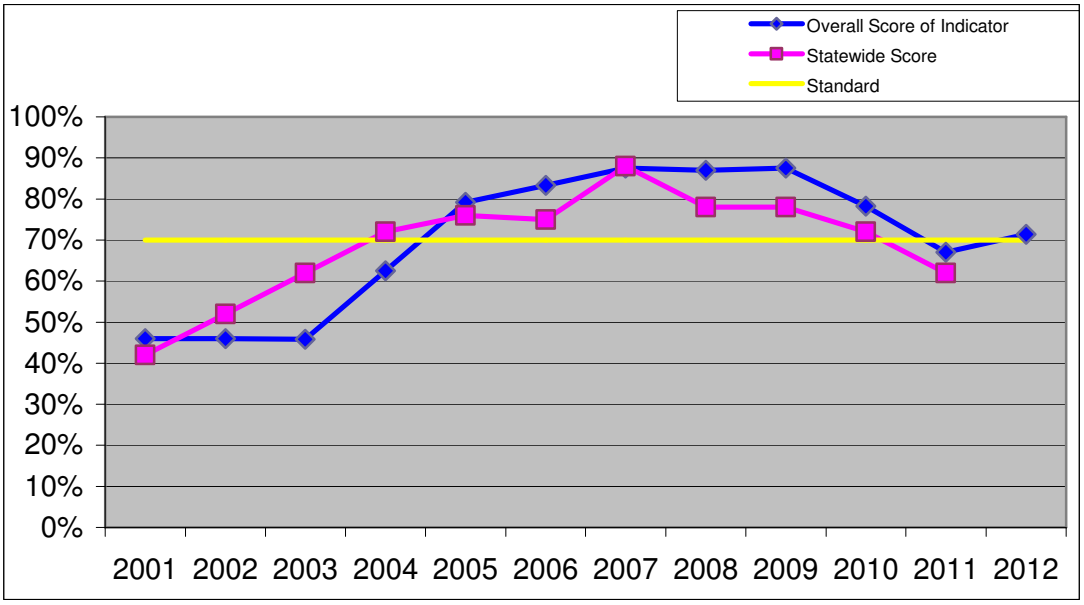
Long-Term View												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	3.13	3.25	3.04	3.58	4.00	3.83	4.17	4.09	4.25	3.91	4.21	4.14
Overall Score of Indicator	29%	42%	25%	58%	71%	75%	92%	83%	83%	74%	83%	74%
Statewide Score	36%	32%	43%	65%	65%	63%	73%	69%	78%	66%	63%	



Child and Family Plan

The Child and Family Plan indicator has been trending downward over the past few years with this year being the lowest score since FY2004. Nevertheless, the region has trended above the state average for the past several years.

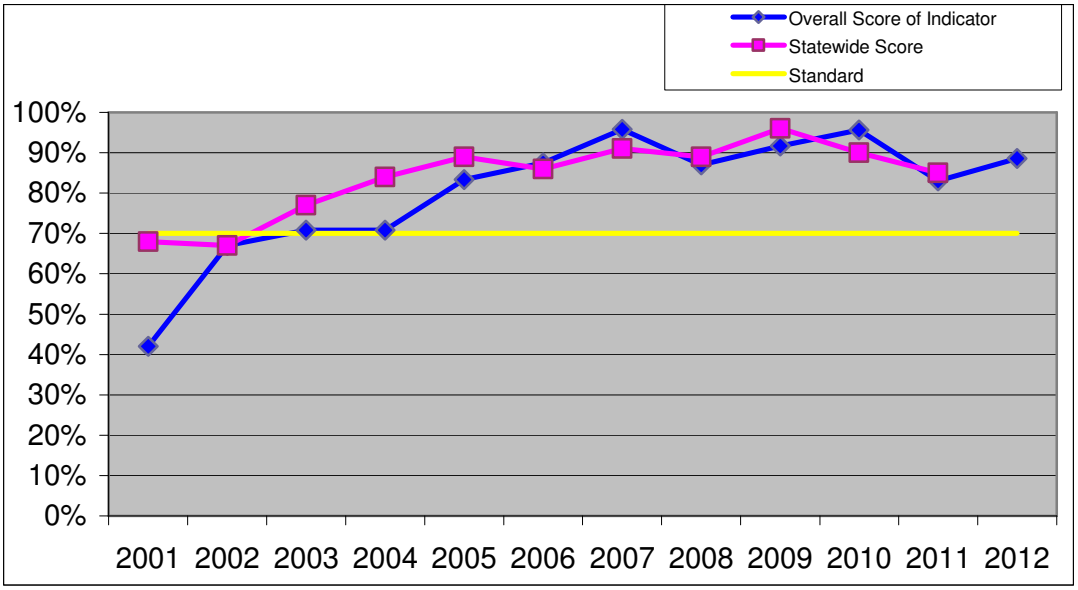
Child and Family Plan												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	3.42	3.25	3.33	3.79	4.21	4.08	4.33	4.17	4.38	4.17	4.21	4.03
Overall Score of Indicator	46%	46%	46%	63%	79%	83%	88%	87%	88%	78%	67%	71%
Statewide Score	42%	52%	62%	72%	76%	75%	88%	78%	78%	72%	62%	



Intervention Adequacy

Both the percentage and the average score for Intervention Adequacy rose this year. The region is on course to be above the state average this year.

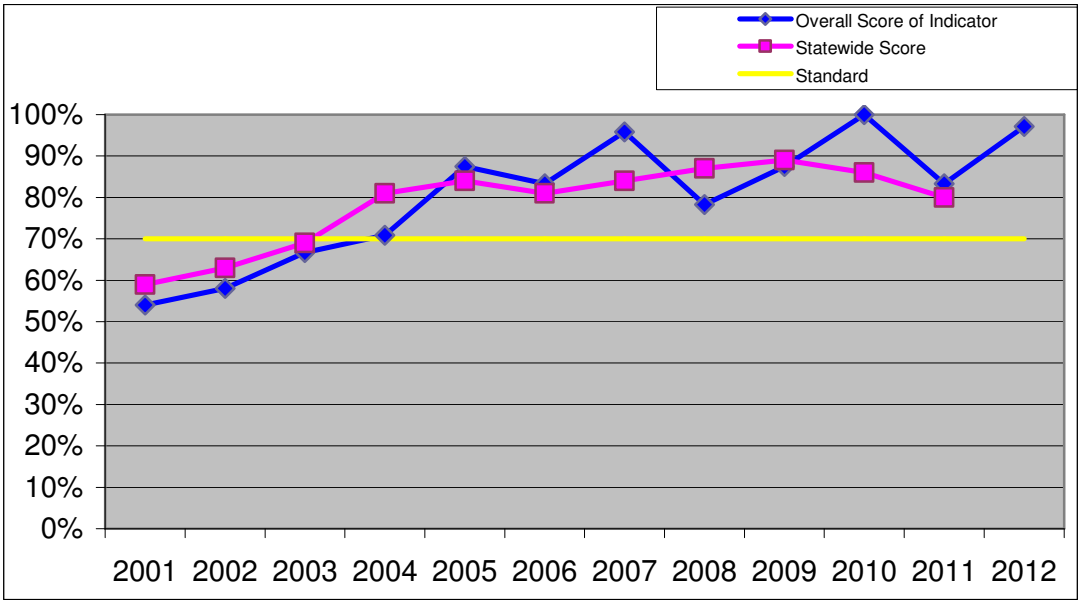
Intervention Adequacy												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	3.21	3.92	3.92	4.21	4.54	4.33	4.88	4.35	4.58	4.65	4.21	4.31
Overall Score of Indicator	42%	67%	71%	71%	83%	88%	96%	87%	92%	96%	83%	89%
Statewide Score	68%	67%	77%	84%	89%	86%	91%	89%	96%	90%	85%	



Tracking and Adaptation

Both the percentage and the average scores for Tracking and Adapting rose significantly this year. The percentage score soared to 97%. The region has had excellent scores on this indicator for the past several years.

Tracking and Adaptation												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator	3.67	3.92	3.83	4.08	4.58	4.38	4.75	4.22	4.50	4.61	4.46	4.63
Overall Score of Indicator	54%	58%	67%	71%	88%	83%	96%	78%	88%	100%	83%	97%
Statewide Score	59%	63%	69%	81%	84%	81%	84%	87%	89%	86%	80%	


Overall Score of Indicator
Statewide Score
Standard
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
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2008
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V. Summary and Recommendations

Summary

During the FY2012 Northern Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR), numerous strengths were identified about child welfare practice in the Northern Region. It is clear that there is significant commitment and hard work devoted to ensuring the safety and well-being of the children and families. During the QCR review, a few opportunities for practice improvement were also identified that could improve and enhance the services being provided.

In regards to the child status indicators, the Region exceeded the 85% standard for Overall Child Status with a score of 86%. This was a slight decrease from last's year's score of 88%. The Overall Child Status Score has been in the upper 80th percentile the past three years, ranging from 86% to 88%. Safety remained above the 85% standard, and all of the other seven Child Status indicators were above the 70% standard with scores ranging from 74% on Stability and Prospects for Permanency to 94% on Health/Physical Well-being and Satisfaction. The Safety score (89%) exceeded the Overall Child Status score (86%), meaning one of the cases had unacceptable status on a majority of indicators other than Safety.

After many years of above standard performance, Northern Region scored just below standard this year on Overall System Performance. They scored above the 70% standard on all seven of the individual system performance indicators, which is a very commendable accomplishment. Scores improved this year on Engagement, Teaming, Assessment, Child and Family Plan, Intervention Adequacy, and Tracking and Adaptation. Only Long-term View declined, but it was still above standard at 74%.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Northern Region use the 35 case stories as part of their ongoing effort to improve the services they provide to children and families. The case stories could be used to help sustain performance that is above standard and elevate performance that is below standard. Review of the case stories in which the indicators scored substantially well or optimal could be used as examples in an effort to help duplicate great work. Careful review of the case stories regarding the circumstances that resulted in the unacceptable ratings could be beneficial in formulating training opportunities or specific strategies to address those challenges. The region would benefit from focusing on the following indicators during the coming year.

Child Status

Permanency and Stability have traditionally been the indicators whose scores have lagged behind the other Child Status indicators. Although both of these indicators scores above standard (both at 74%), they were the two lowest scoring Child Status indicators and were not very far above standard. The region has been focusing on permanency, which led to big improvements in both the Permanency and Long-term View scores last year. Even with the decline this year,

Permanency remains significantly above the FY2010 score of 61%. The rise and fall in the Stability score mirrored the rise and fall in the Permanency score.

System Performance

Both Long-term View and Child and Family Plan scored above the 70% standard; however, they were in the lower 70th percentile. An evaluation of the explanations given by reviewers in the case stories of the nine cases with unacceptable scores on Long-term View and the 10 cases with unacceptable scores on Child and Family Plan revealed the following interesting reasons for the unacceptable scores.

Long-term View

In seven of the nine cases with unacceptable scores on Long-term View, reviewers found the permanency goal to be unachievable. In six of these cases the team was in conflict over what the permanency goal should be. Four of the cases cited a lack of path or steps to achieve the Long-term View, with a lack of assessment as the underlying cause of the lack of steps. The team wasn't sure what to do because there had been inadequate assessment of the child's needs or family's capacities. In three of the cases the reviewers mentioned that the next transition had not yet been identified. In four of the cases the team felt the Long-term View was probably not sustainable and there was a likelihood of disruption. Six of the nine cases with unacceptable scores on Long-term View also had unacceptable scores on Prospects for Permanency. Of the three cases that had acceptable scores on Prospects for Permanency, one was an in-home case in which the children had recently returned home on a trial home placement that was not expected to endure, and the other two were cases in which the team believed the child might remain in the foster home until emancipation.

Child and Family Plan

Five of the 10 cases (50% of cases) that had unacceptable scores on Child and Family Plan had the permanency goal of Adoption. In these cases reviewers described the plan as basic and generic, and most reviewers mentioned that the plan consisted of only Need 1 generated by SAFE with no articulation of the child's specific needs. Most of these cases were also missing steps to accomplish the adoption and/or a description of who would be involved in accomplishing the adoption or what supports would be in place after finalization of the adoption. The reviewers on the other five non-adoption cases also described those plans as generic or missing important pieces such as the needs of a grandmother who was to be the primary caregiver or the needs of the target child.