

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Final Report: Oregon Child and Family Services Review
February 2008

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of Oregon. The CFSR is the Federal Government's program for assessing the performance of State child welfare agencies with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children and families. It is authorized by the Social Security Amendments of 1994 requiring the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to promulgate regulations for reviews of State child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSR is implemented by the Children's Bureau (CB) of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Oregon CFSR was conducted the week of September 10, 2007. The period under review for the case reviews was from April 1, 2006, to September 10, 2007. The findings were derived from the following documents and data collection procedures:

- The Statewide Assessment, prepared by the Child, Adult and Families Division (CAF) of the Oregon Department of Human Services
- The State Data Profile, prepared by CB, which provides State child welfare data for fiscal year (FY) 2003, FY 2004, and FY 2005
- Reviews of 65 cases (41 foster care cases¹ and 24 in-home services cases) at three sites throughout the State, including 31 cases in Multnomah County, 17 cases in Deschutes County, and 17 cases in Marion County
- Interviews or focus groups (conducted at all three sites and at the State level) with stakeholders, including but not limited to children, parents, foster parents, all levels of child welfare agency personnel, collaborating agency personnel, service providers, court personnel, and attorneys

Background Information

The CFSR assesses State performance on 23 items relevant to seven outcomes and 22 items pertaining to seven systemic factors. In the Systemic Factors section of the report, each item incorporated in each systemic factor is rated as either a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement, based on whether State performance on the item meets Federal policy requirements. Information relevant to each item comes from the Statewide Assessment and the stakeholder interviews conducted during the week of the Onsite Review. The overall rating for the systemic factors is based on the ratings for the individual items incorporated in the systemic factor. For any given systemic factor, a State is rated as being either in substantial conformity with that factor (i.e., a score of 3 or 4) or not in substantial conformity with that factor (a score of 1 or 2).

¹ The CFSR usually includes 40 foster care cases and 25 in-home services cases. However, during the Onsite Review, it was discovered that one of the in-home services cases involved a child who was in foster care. Therefore, the case was designated as a foster care case.

Items relevant to the seven outcomes are discussed in the Outcomes section of the report. An overall rating of Strength or Area Needing Improvement is assigned to each of the 23 items, depending on the percentage of cases that receive a Strength rating in the case reviews. An item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90 percent of the applicable cases reviewed are rated as a Strength. Performance ratings for each of the seven outcomes are based on item ratings for each case. A State may be rated as having Substantially Achieved, Partially Achieved, or Not Achieved the outcome. The determination of whether a State is in substantial conformity with a particular outcome is based on the percentage of cases that were determined to have substantially achieved the outcome. Specifically, for a State to be in substantial conformity with an outcome, 95 percent of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. A State that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome must develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas of concern associated with that outcome.

ACF has set very high standards of performance for the CFSTR. The standards are based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our country's most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be acceptable. The focus of the CFSTR process is on continuous quality improvement, and high standards are set to ensure ongoing attention to the goal of achieving positive outcomes for children and families with regard to safety, permanency, and well-being.

It should be noted, however, that States are not required to attain the 95 percent standard established for the CFSTR Onsite Review at the end of their PIP implementation. ACF recognizes that the kinds of systemic and practice changes necessary to bring about improvement in particular outcome areas often are time-consuming to implement. Also, improvements are likely to be incremental rather than dramatic. Instead, States work with ACF to establish a specified amount of improvement or implement specified activities for their PIPs. That is, for each outcome or item that is an Area Needing Improvement, each State (working in conjunction with CB) specifies how much improvement the State will demonstrate and/or the activities that it will implement to address the Areas Needing Improvement and determines the procedures for demonstrating the achievement of these goals. Both the improvements specified and the procedures for demonstrating improvement vary across States. Therefore, a State can meet the requirements of its PIP and still not perform at the 95 percent (for outcomes) or 90 percent (for items) level as required by the CFSTR.

The second round of the CFSTR assesses a State's current level of functioning with regard to achieving desired child and family outcomes by once more applying high standards and a consistent, comprehensive case-review methodology. This is intended to serve as a basis for continued planning in areas in which the State still needs to improve. The goal is to ensure that program improvement is an ongoing process and does not end with the closing of the PIP.

Because many changes have been made in the onsite CFSTR process based on lessons learned during the first round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a State's performance in the second round of the CFSTR is not directly comparable to its performance in the first round, particularly with regard to comparisons of percentages. Key changes in the CFSTR process that make it difficult to compare performances across reviews are the following:

- An increase in the sample size from 50 to 65 cases
- Stratification of the sample to ensure a minimum number of cases in key program areas, resulting in variations in the number of cases relevant for specific outcomes and items
- Changes in criteria for specific items to increase consistency and to ensure an assessment of critical areas, such as child welfare agency efforts to involve noncustodial parents

Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes

The 2007 CFSR identified three areas of high performance in Oregon with regard to achieving outcomes for children. The State achieved overall ratings of Strength for the individual indicators pertaining to foster care reentry (item 5), placing children in close proximity to their parents (item 11), and placement with siblings (item 12).

The CFSR identified several areas of concern with regard to achieving outcomes for children and families. The State did not meet the two national standards for the safety-related data indicators—one pertaining to recurrence of maltreatment within a 6-month period and one pertaining to maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff members. The State also did not meet the national standards for any of the four data composites pertaining to permanency. These include the timeliness and permanency of reunification (Permanency Composite 1), the timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2), achieving permanency for children in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3), and placement stability (Permanency Composite 4).

In addition, case review findings indicated the following:

- Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) was substantially achieved in only 46.3 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs) was substantially achieved in only 38.5 percent of the cases.
- Safety Outcome 2 (Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate) was substantially achieved in only 60.0 percent of the cases.
- Safety Outcome 1 (Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect) was substantially achieved in only 62.5 percent of the cases.

The State's low performance with regard to child outcomes may be due, in part, to a lack of key services and to delays in service provision across the State. Concerns about service delays and gaps were particularly apparent with regard to mental health services, substance abuse treatment services, and affordable services for parents without health insurance. The scarcity of services was found to affect the State's effectiveness in maintaining children safely in their own homes. Case review findings indicated that many children remained at risk of harm in their own homes because the services provided to the families often were not sufficient to address all of the safety and risk issues in the home. Both the case reviews and stakeholder interviews indicated that, although needs assessments generally are conducted, the services recommended through the assessments are not always provided, often because of a scarcity of

these services. Lack of sufficient substance abuse treatment services for parents also was identified as a concern with regard to achieving permanency for children in a timely manner, and lack of sufficient mental health services for children was noted to contribute to a lack of placement stability for many children in the cases reviewed.

Another key finding, as noted in the Statewide Assessment, is that Oregon began a new statewide practice in March 2007 called the Oregon Safety Model (OSM) to address safety concerns. This model was intended to provide caseworkers with critical thinking tools to better assess the key factors necessary to develop in-home safety and service plans and to determine if children can be maintained safely in their own homes. However, stakeholders reported that the OSM is not being implemented consistently across the State.

The State's low performance on many of the outcomes also may be attributed, in part, to the lack of frequent and meaningful contact between caseworkers and the children and parents in their caseloads. Caseworker contacts with children were found to be of sufficient frequency and quality in only 55 percent of the cases reviewed, and contacts with parents were found to be of sufficient frequency and quality in only 39 percent of the cases reviewed. This lack of contact makes it difficult to ensure children's safety while they are in their own homes or in foster homes, and it also makes it difficult to engage parents of children in foster care in services to meet the requirements of their case plan so that children can return home. In addition, the case reviews found that parents and age-appropriate children were involved in case planning in only 44 percent of the cases.

Another key issue identified in the Oregon CFSR pertained to the safety of children in foster care. Not only did the State not meet the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to maltreatment in foster care, but in 6 (15 percent) of the 41 applicable foster care cases, reviewers indicated that there were maltreatment concerns in the foster home and that these concerns were not adequately addressed by the agency. A related concern was voiced by stakeholders interviewed during the onsite CFSR, who indicated that in many areas of the State, foster homes are operating over capacity. These stakeholders said that "exceptions" to the policy are routinely sought and approved because of the extreme shortages of foster homes. They also noted that, although policy requires that foster homes operating over capacity be monitored every 90 days, there is no way of tracking the homes that have more than the required number of children and, therefore, there is no way of ensuring that the 90-day monitoring visits are being made.

Key CFSR Findings Regarding Systemic Factors

With regard to systemic factors, Oregon was found to be in substantial conformity with the factors of Quality Assurance System, Training, and Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Oregon was not in substantial conformity with the systemic factors of Statewide Information System; Case Review System; Service Array; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

The specific findings with regard to the State's performance on the safety and permanency outcomes are presented in table 1 at the end of the Executive Summary. Findings regarding well-being outcomes are presented in table 2. Table 3 presents the State's performance with regard to the seven systemic factors assessed through the CFSR. In the following section, key findings are summarized for each

outcome and systemic factor. Information also is provided about the State's performance on each outcome and systemic factor during the 2001 CFSSR.

I. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

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

Safety Outcome 1 incorporates two indicators. One pertains to the timeliness of initiating a response to a child maltreatment report (item 1), and the other relates to the recurrence of substantiated or indicated maltreatment (item 2).

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 62.5 percent of the applicable cases, which is less than the 95 percent or higher required for a rating of substantial conformity. Performance varied across sites. The outcome was substantially achieved in 89 percent of Marion County cases, compared to 55 percent of Multnomah and Deschutes County cases.

Oregon also did not meet the national standards for the two data indicators relevant for Safety Outcome 1. These indicators pertain to the absence of maltreatment recurrence and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity for Safety Outcome 1 during its first CFSSR conducted in FY 2001. The following key concerns were noted in the 2001 CFSSR:

- A lengthy screening process delayed assignment of cases to an intake caseworker.
- There was inadequate documentation in the case files of the intake and investigation timelines.
- Repeat maltreatment was found in some of the in-home services cases.

To address these concerns, Oregon implemented the following strategies during its PIP:

- Developed specialized data reports regarding timeliness of investigations and repeat maltreatment and disseminated them to the field to be used to monitor performance in these areas
- Revised agency policy to ensure consistent practice with regard to screening maltreatment reports and determining dispositions
- Supported implementation of new policies and practices through developing online applications of the new tools and procedures and incorporating them into the agency's information technology system
- Provided staff training for current staff on the new policies and also incorporated this training into the training for new caseworkers

The key concerns identified in Oregon's 2001 CFSSR were not found in the 2007 CFSSR for Safety Outcome 1. In particular, few cases in 2007 involved concerns regarding the timeliness of the screening process and assigning cases for investigation. The key concerns

identified in the 2007 CFSSR pertained to a lack of timely initiation of investigations. Most (77 percent) of the cases rated as an Area Needing Improvement for timeliness of investigation involved reports that were given a 5-day timeframe for initiation of response.

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

Performance on Safety Outcome 2 is assessed through two indicators. One indicator (item 3) addresses the issue of child welfare agency efforts to prevent children's removal from their homes by providing services to the families that ensure children's safety while they remain in their homes. The other indicator (item 4) pertains to the child welfare agency's efforts to reduce the risk of harm to the children.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 60 percent of the cases reviewed, which is less than the 95 percent or higher required for a rating of substantial conformity. Performance on this item varied across sites. The outcome was substantially achieved in 76 percent of Marion County cases, 55 percent of Multnomah County cases, and 53 percent of Deschutes County cases.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity for Safety Outcome 2 in the 2001 CFSSR. The following concerns relevant to this item were noted in the 2001 CFSSR:

- In some cases, services did not address pertinent risk factors such as co-occurring drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence.
- There was little evidence that risk was assessed on an ongoing basis or that it was adequately assessed at case closure.
- Stakeholders expressed concern about the adequacy of safety plans.
- Stakeholders expressed concern about the availability of post-reunification support services.
- In some cases, when new potential maltreatment information was received on an open case, it was noted in the case record, but it was not formally reported or investigated.

To address these concerns, Oregon implemented the following strategies in its PIP:

- Developed standards for treatment service providers requiring them to document parent behavior changes for parents in both the in-home services cases and the foster care cases, including a specific requirement that behavior changes were to be assessed for parents prior to a reunification decision
- Developed a Guided Assessment Process (GAP) and needs-planning process that includes standards, tools, and procedures for assessing safety and risk on an ongoing basis and at critical case junctures
- Revised agency policy to support comprehensive ongoing assessments and safety planning

In the 2007 CFSSR, one of the key concerns noted in the 2001 CFSSR continued to be a concern in the 2007 CFSSR. This pertains to providing services to families after reunification. Other key findings of the 2007 CFSSR were the following:

- The agency was appropriately removing children from the home without service provision to the family prior to removal due to safety concerns for the child.

- In many cases, although the agency provided services, they were not sufficient to adequately address the safety issues in the home, and the children remained at risk in their homes.
- There was a lack of adequate safety and risk assessments in the child's home and in the foster home.

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

There are six indicators incorporated in the assessment of Permanency Outcome 1, although not all of them are relevant for all children. The indicators pertain to the child welfare agency's efforts to prevent foster care reentry (item 5), ensure placement stability for children in foster care (item 6), and establish appropriate permanency goals for children in foster care in a timely manner (item 7). Depending on the child's permanency goal, the remaining indicators focus on the child welfare agency's efforts to achieve permanency goals (such as reunification, guardianship, adoption, and permanent placement with relatives) in a timely manner (items 8 and 9) or to ensure that children who have Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as a case goal are in stable placements and adequately prepared for eventual independent living (item 10).

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. This determination was based on the following findings:

- The outcome was substantially achieved in 46.3 percent of the cases, which is less than the 95 percent required for an overall rating of substantial conformity.
- The State Data Profile indicates that Oregon did not meet the national standards for any of the four data composites.

Oregon's performance on the individual measures included in each composite is presented in the discussion of the items related to each measure. Although Oregon's performance on this outcome was low in all sites, there was variation across sites. The outcome was found to be substantially achieved in 60 percent of Deschutes County cases, 50 percent of Marion County cases, and 38 percent of Multnomah County cases.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1 in its 2001 CFSR. The following concerns were identified in the 2001 CFSR:

- Some reunification decisions were not based on a determination that a substantial change had occurred in the family, thus potentially increasing the likelihood of reentry.
- There were insufficient post-reunification services to prevent reentry.
- There were delays in establishing permanency goals in a timely manner that were attributed to changes in caseworker assignments and the lack of concurrent planning. Even when concurrent goals were established, caseworkers often did not work toward the goals simultaneously.
- Children were in foster care for long periods of time prior to a finalized adoption due to delays in adoption home studies, delays in the paperwork required for finalization after termination of parental rights (TPR), and insufficient legal assistance prior to TPR.
- When efforts to reunify were continued for long periods of time without success, the plan often was changed to a goal of APPLA "by default" rather than the agency considering other possible options. The APPLA plan often was established because concurrent

planning had not been ongoing during the efforts to reunify, so that by the time the agency gave up on reunification efforts, the child was considered “unadoptable” either because of the child’s age or behavior problems. The APPLA plan also frequently was established because foster parents had the perception that money and services would be lost if they adopted the child in their care.

- Judges were found to be reluctant to approve a petition for TPR if there was no adoptive resource for the child.
- In some cases, children with severe behavioral problems had case plans that focused on remediation of the problems and delayed efforts to work toward permanency until the child’s behavioral problems had improved.
- Independent living program (ILP) services were not available in all areas of the State.

The following strategies were implemented in the Oregon PIP to address these concerns:

- Developed policy and training on concurrent planning and decision-making regarding TPR
- Enhanced the ILP by increasing access for youth to ILP providers throughout the State, conducting additional training throughout the State, and establishing specialized consultant staff at each service delivery office to serve as community liaisons and consultants for agency staff
- Conducted a pilot study of specific groups of children to determine whether factors such as age, length of stay in foster care, and other characteristics contributed to delays in achieving permanency
- Established protocols for expediting adoptions and provided legal assistance to caseworkers in the adoption process
- Identified statewide system barriers to adoption
- Created a standardized checklist with timelines to monitor each child’s progress through the adoption process, and developed and disseminated management reports providing tracking information
- Improved the legal process for freeing children for adoption
- Developed specific criteria for determining when adoption is not an appropriate permanency goal

The State met its target goals for this outcome by the end of the PIP implementation period.

Most of the concerns identified in the 2001 CFSR also were noted in the 2007 CFSR. Key findings of the 2007 review included the following:

- Although many children experience placement stability, a substantial number of cases occurred in which the child was not in a stable placement at the time of the onsite CFSR and in which the child had experienced placement changes that were not in the child’s best interest nor intended to further attainment of the child’s permanency goal.
- The agency was inconsistent with regard to its effectiveness in establishing appropriate permanency goals in a timely manner.
- Although concurrent goals were established frequently, caseworkers were not working on the goals simultaneously.
- Children were assigned the goal of APPLA at very young ages. Four children with this goal were younger than age 13 at the onset of the period under review, and two children were younger than age 7. In addition, there was a lack of adequate consideration of other permanency options before establishing this goal.
- There were extensive delays in achieving adoptions in a timely manner.

- Although most reunifications were determined to occur in a timely manner, this was not consistent across cases.

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

Permanency Outcome 2 incorporates six indicators that assess the child welfare agency's performance with regard to the following:

- Placing children in foster care in close proximity to their parents and close relatives (item 11)
- Placing siblings together (item 12)
- Ensuring frequent visitation between children and their parents and siblings in foster care (item 13)
- Preserving connections of children in foster care with extended family, community, cultural heritage, religion, and schools (item 14)
- Seeking relatives as potential placement resources (item 15)
- Promoting the relationship between children and their parents while the children are in foster care (item 16)

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. The outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 70.7 percent of the cases, which is less than the 95 percent or higher required for substantial conformity. Performance on this outcome varied slightly across sites. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 76 percent of Multnomah County cases, 70 percent of Marion County cases, and 60 percent of Deschutes County cases. Oregon was in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2001 CFPSR and therefore was not required to address the outcome in its PIP.

The 2007 case reviews resulted in the following findings:

- Most of the children in the cases were placed in close proximity to their parents or other relatives (item 11).
- Most of the children in the cases were placed with siblings, if appropriate and safe (item 12).
- There were seven cases in which the frequency of visitation between the child and parents and between siblings was inadequate to meet the needs of the child (item 13).
- For the most part, the agency made concerted efforts to preserve the child's connections with extended family members (e.g., through telephone contacts and visits) (item 14).
- The agency was not consistent with regard to seeking both maternal and paternal relatives as potential placement resources for the child (item 15).
- The agency was not consistent with regard to making concerted efforts to support the relationship between children and their mothers and fathers (item 16).

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

Well-Being Outcome 1 incorporates four indicators. One pertains to the child welfare agency's efforts to ensure that the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents are assessed and that the necessary services are provided to meet identified needs (item 17). A second indicator examines the child welfare agency's efforts to actively involve parents and children (when appropriate) in the case

planning process (item 18). The two remaining indicators examine the frequency and quality of caseworker's contacts with the children in their caseloads (item 19) and with the children's parents (item 20).

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. The outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 38.5 percent of the cases reviewed, which is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. Performance on this outcome varied across sites, although performance was low in all sites. The outcome was substantially achieved in 48 percent of Multnomah County cases, 35 percent of Deschutes County cases, and 23 percent of Marion County cases. The outcome also was substantially achieved in 44 percent of the foster care cases, compared to 30 percent of the in-home services cases.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity for this outcome in its 2001 CFSR. The following concerns were noted for this outcome during the 2001 CFSR:

- In many cases, the service needs of children were not adequately assessed or met, particularly the needs of older youth in care.
- In many cases, there was insufficient assessment of parents' needs.
- In some cases, there was a lack of effort to engage parents in services.
- Caseworkers rarely had face-to-face contact with the parents in the in-home services cases and relied on contracted treatment providers to contact the families.

Oregon implemented the following strategies to address these concerns:

- Developed a tool called a Needs Planning Guide, which was designed to assist caseworkers in working with parents and foster parents by providing guidance in how to assess for needs and how to plan for service delivery to address needs
- Developed policies and procedures related to using the Needs Planning Guide and provided training to staff on using the guide
- Revised policy to clarify agency standards with regard to the frequency, location, and purpose (i.e., what the caseworker should be assessing during the visit) of caseworker visits with children and parents
- Incorporated prompts in the State's information system to ensure that caseworkers were entering data into the system regarding their visits with children and parents

The State met its target goals for this outcome by the end of the PIP implementation period.

The case reviews in the 2007 CFSR resulted in the following findings:

- The agency was not consistent with regard to assessing and meeting the services needs of mothers, fathers, children, and foster parents. Fathers were less likely than the others to have needs assessed and met.
- The agency was not consistent with regard to involving mothers, fathers, and age-appropriate children in developing the case plan, with fathers being less likely to be involved than mothers or children.
- The frequency and quality of caseworker visits with children were not consistent across cases.
- There was a lack of sufficient caseworker visits with mothers and fathers, but particularly with fathers.

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

There is only one indicator for Well-Being Outcome 2. It pertains to the child welfare agency's efforts to address and meet the educational needs of children in both foster care and in-home services cases (item 21).

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. Reviewers determined that 76.9 percent of the cases reviewed substantially achieved this outcome. This is less than the 95 percent or higher required for substantial conformity. There were only slight differences in performance on this outcome across sites. The item was determined to be substantially achieved in 81 percent of Multnomah County cases, 78 percent of Deschutes County cases, and 67 percent of Marion County cases. Only 6 of the 24 in-home services cases were determined to be applicable for an assessment of this outcome.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity for this outcome in its 2001 CFSR. The following concerns were noted for this outcome at that time:

- Some foster youth who were not in school or GED courses were not having their educational needs addressed.
- In some cases, caseworkers did not follow up on identified educational service needs.
- Over one-half of the applicable case records did not have school records.
- Many foster parents did not receive educational records and education-related information at the time the child was placed in the home.

Oregon addressed these concerns in its PIP strategies by providing training to agency staff, foster parents, and ILP contractors in such areas as how to effectively advocate for children to facilitate access to early childhood development services such as special education and Head Start. The State met its target goals for this outcome by the end of the PIP implementation period.

A key finding of the 2007 CFSR was that, although many children did have their educational need met, there were concerns in many other cases that educational needs were identified but no services were provided to address those needs.

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

This outcome incorporates two indicators that assess the child welfare agency's efforts to meet children's physical health (item 22) and mental health (item 23) needs.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 68.3 percent of the applicable cases, which is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. Performance on this outcome varied somewhat across sites. The outcome was substantially achieved in 81 percent of Marion County cases, 64 percent of

Multnomah County cases, and 62.5 percent of Deschutes County cases. There also was variation as a function of type of case. The outcome was substantially achieved in 76 percent of foster care cases, compared to 53 percent of in-home services cases.

Oregon did not achieve substantial conformity for this outcome in its 2001 CFSR. The following key concerns were identified in the 2001 CFSR.

- Some children with identified treatment needs did not receive the services they needed.
- Some treatment was not consistent or adequate to meet the child's needs.
- There was a lack of follow-up in some cases to ensure that services were provided.

To address these concerns, Oregon implemented the following strategies in its PIP:

- Increased enrollment into managed care plans
- Provided agency staff and foster parents with training on how to access mental health services and advocate for services in an effective manner

A key finding of the 2007 CFSR was that the agency was generally effective in meeting children's physical health needs, although there were concerns regarding access to dental services. However, the agency was less effective in meeting children's mental health needs. In many cases, children's mental health needs were not assessed, and in many other cases, needs were assessed but services were not provided to address those needs.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Statewide Information System

Substantial conformity with the systemic factor of a Statewide Information System is determined by whether the State is operating a statewide information system that can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for children in foster care.

Oregon is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of a Statewide Information System. Although the system provides many useful reports, it is not able to quickly and accurately identify the location and address of children in foster care under CAF responsibilities in the following circumstances: (1) the child's placement is funded by the agency for Seniors and People With Disabilities (SPD), and (2) the child is in a foster home that is supervised by a child-placing agency. Oregon was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2001 CFSR.

Case Review System

Five indicators are used to assess the State's performance with regard to the systemic factor of a Case Review System. The indicators examine the development of case plans and parent involvement in that process (item 25), the consistency of 6-month case reviews (item 26) and 12-month permanency hearings (item 27), the implementation of procedures to seek TPR in accordance with the timeframes established in the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (item 28), and the notification and inclusion of foster and pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers in case reviews and hearings (item 29).

Oregon is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Oregon was not in substantial conformity with this factor during its 2001 CFSR and therefore was required to address the factor in its PIP. The following concerns relevant to the Case Review System were identified in the 2001 CFSR:

- Some of the cases reviewed did not have current or meaningful case plans.
- Permanency hearings did not address the issues and concerns necessary to move children toward permanency.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its PIP:

- Reviewed and enhanced the case plan narrative in the Family and Child Information System to (1) ensure that the guidance provided was sufficient to assist caseworkers in producing usable and meaningful case plans and (2) include an emphasis on ongoing examination of a child's permanency plan
- Developed appropriate programming for the enhanced case plan module, field-tested the module, and provided training materials to supervisors and branch staff to help prepare caseworkers for using the module and to ensure that case plan narratives were entered in a timely manner
- Revised the court report, in consultation with the Court Improvement Program (CIP) and judges, to ensure that case-relevant information presented to the court is sufficient to assist the court in decision-making
- Provided training on the new State case-plan format to the court through CIP presentations at local, regional, and statewide meetings and training sessions

Oregon met its target goals for this systemic factor by the end of the PIP implementation period.

Key concerns identified in the 2007 CFSR were the following:

- Stakeholder interviews and case record reviews indicated that parents are not consistently engaged in the development of their case plans.
- Stakeholder interviews and the case record reviews indicated that TPR petitions are not consistently filed in a timely manner and that compelling reasons for not filing are not documented in the case record in a consistent manner.

Despite these concerns, the 2007 CFSR also found the following:

- Foster care parents, relative caregivers, and preadoptive parents are consistently notified of reviews and hearings and are given a variety of opportunities to provide meaningful input into reviews and hearings.
- Timely and meaningful reviews of the status of each child in foster care are being conducted at least every 6 months by the courts and the Citizen Review Board.
- Permanency hearings are being held in a timely manner and are meaningful with regard to moving children toward permanency.

Quality Assurance System

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System is based on whether the State has developed standards to ensure the safety and health of children in foster care (item 30) and whether the State is operating a statewide quality assurance system that evaluates the quality and effectiveness of services and measures program strengths and areas needing improvement (item 31).

Oregon is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. During the 2001 CFSR, Oregon was in substantial conformity with this systemic factor and therefore was not required to address the factor in its PIP. Key findings of the 2007 CFSR were the following:

- The State has standards in place to ensure the safety and health of children in foster care.
- During the CFSR period under review, the State was operating a quality assurance system that identified the strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provided relevant reports, and evaluated program improvement measures.

Training

The systemic factor of Training incorporates an assessment of the State's new caseworker training program (item 32), ongoing training for child welfare agency staff (item 33), and training for foster and adoptive parents (item 34).

Oregon is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of training. The State was not in substantial conformity with this systemic factor in its 2001 CFSR and therefore was required to address the factor in its PIP. The following key concerns relevant to this systemic factor were identified in the 2001 CFSR:

- Most new caseworker hires were not receiving the initial inservice training prior to carrying cases.
- Many agency caseworkers and supervisors were not participating in ongoing training.
- The agency did not require caseworkers to participate in a specified number of ongoing training hours after completing the initial training.

To address these concerns, the agency implemented the following key strategies as part of its PIP:

- Established policy and statute requiring all newly hired caseworkers to complete a specified course of training prior to assuming a caseload
- Implemented a 3-week long training for supervisors called Supervising for Excellence

The State met its target goals for this systemic factor by the end of the PIP implementation period.

The key concern noted in the 2007 CFPSR was that State has not established a required minimum number of hours for staff to participate in advanced training and has not implemented efforts to ensure that caseworkers participate in advanced training to develop their knowledge and skills. However, the 2007 CFPSR found that the State has an initial 4-week preservice training program that must be completed by new caseworkers prior to carrying a full caseload. In addition, all foster parents including relative caregivers are required to receive initial training (Foundations Training) and complete ongoing training requirements (30 hours every 2 years) to develop their knowledge and skills to appropriately care for children.

Service Array

The assessment of the systemic factor of Service Array addresses three questions:

- Does the State have in place an array of services to meet the needs of children and families served by the child welfare agency (item 35)?
- Are these services accessible to families and children throughout the State (item 36)?
- Can services be individualized to meet the unique needs of the children and families served by the child welfare agency (item 37)?

Oregon is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array. The State was in substantial conformity with this systemic factor in the 2001 CFPSR and therefore did not address this factor in its PIP.

Key findings of the 2007 CFPSR were the following:

- Throughout the State, there are insufficient inpatient substance abuse treatment services, an inadequate continuum of mental health resources, and a serious shortage of foster homes and therapeutic foster homes.
- Services are not available in adequate supply in some areas of the State.
- Transportation to services is limited or unavailable in some parts of the State.
- Although the State has some flexible funding and can access community resources to provide wraparound services, both the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interview information indicate that the scarcity of services and the lack of adequate resources make it difficult to ensure individualization of services to meet unique needs.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community incorporates an assessment of the State's consultation with external stakeholders in developing the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) (items 38 and 39) and the extent to

which the State coordinates child welfare services with services or benefits of other Federal or Federally assisted programs serving the same population (item 40).

Oregon is in substantial conformity with the factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. The State also was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2001 CFSR. The general finding in the 2007 CFSR was that the State engages in ongoing consultation with key stakeholders to obtain their input regarding the goals and objectives of the CFSP. The CFSR also found that there is coordination between DHS and other Federal and Federally assisted programs to meet the service needs of the children and families served by the agency (item 40). However, the agency does not consistently engage stakeholders in the process of developing annual reports of progress and services delivered.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The assessment of this systemic factor focuses on the State's standards for foster homes and child care institutions (items 41 and 42), the State's compliance with Federal requirements for criminal background checks for foster and adoptive parents (item 43), the State's efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of foster children (item 44), and the State's activities with regard to using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate permanent placements for waiting children (item 45).

Oregon is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. During the 2001 CFSR, Oregon was in substantial conformity with this factor. Key concerns of the 2007 CFSR with regard to this systemic factor were the following:

- Although the State's standards for foster family homes and child care institutions are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards, these standards are not consistently adhered to in practice.
- The State does not have a statewide process in place to ensure the diligent recruitment of foster homes, despite significant shortages of all types of foster homes.

Despite these concerns, the 2007 CFSR also found the following:

- The State applies standards equally to all homes and does not claim title IV-E foster care payments until a full certification is in place.
- The State conducts criminal background clearances for foster and adoptive families as part of its certification and approval processes.
- The State is effective in using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely placements for children.

Table 3. Oregon CFSR Ratings for Systemic Factors and Items

Systemic Factors and Items	In Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Statewide Information System	NO	2	
Item 24: 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			ANI
Case Review System	NO	2	
Item 25: Provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parents that includes the required provisions			ANI
Item 26: Provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review			Strength
Item 27: Provides a process that ensures that 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 the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter			Strength
Item 28: Provides a process for TPR proceedings in accordance with the provisions of ASFA			ANI
Item 29: Provides a process for foster parents, preadoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child			Strength
Quality Assurance System	YES	3	
Item 30: The State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of children			Strength
Item 31: 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, evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures			Strength
Training	YES	3	
Item 32: The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under			Strength

Systemic Factors and Items	In Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.			ANI
Item 33: The State provides for 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			Strength
Item 34: The State provides 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, and the training addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children			
Service Array	NO	1	
Item 35: The State has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families, 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			ANI
Item 36: The services in item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP			ANI
Item 37: The services in item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency			ANI
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	YES	3	
Item 38: In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the State engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, services 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			Strength
Item 39: The agency develops, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP			ANI
Item 40: The State's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population			Strength
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	NO	2	
Item 41: The State has implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions that are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards			ANI

Systemic Factors and Items	In Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Item 42: The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds			Strength
Item 43: The State complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case-planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children			Strength
Item 44: The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom adoptive homes are needed			ANI
Item 45: The State has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children			Strength

*Scores range from 1 to 4. A score of 1 or 2 means that the factor is not in substantial conformity. A score of 3 or 4 means that the factor is in substantial conformity.

**Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement (ANI).

