



Child and Family Services Reviews

Virginia

Final Report

2017



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

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Final Report: Virginia Child and Family Services Review

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Virginia. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and (3) assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Federal law and regulations authorize the Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, to administer the review of child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSRs are structured to help states identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their child welfare practices and programs as well as institute systemic changes that will improve child and family outcomes.

The findings for Virginia are based on:

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Division of Family Services (DFS), Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), and submitted to the Children's Bureau on February 1, 2017. The statewide assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan
- The results of case reviews of 70 cases (44 foster care and 26 in-home cases) conducted via a State Conducted Case Review process in Accomack, Charlotte, Fairfax, Pulaski, Roanoke, and Tazewell counties, and the cities of Norfolk, Harrisonburg/Rockingham, and Richmond, Virginia, between April 1, 2017, and June 1, 2017.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
 - Attorneys representing the agency, parents, and children/youth
 - Child welfare senior managers and program managers
 - Child welfare case workers and supervisors
 - Consortium for Resource, Adoptive, and Foster Family Training
 - Foster and adoptive parents
 - Judges and representatives from the court system and Court Improvement Project
 - Licensing staff
 - Parents
 - Private placement agency staff
 - Quality Assurance and Accountability staff and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) committee members

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- Representatives from the advisory committee for Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and Criminal Justice Act (CJA) programs
- Representatives from the Office of Children’s Services (OCS)
- Representatives from state agencies administering other state and federal programs
- Service providers
- Tribal representatives
- Youth served by the agency

In Round 3, the Children’s Bureau suspended the use of the state’s performance on the national standards for the 7 statewide data indicators in conformity decisions. For contextual information, Appendix A of this report shows the state’s performance on the 7 data indicators. Moving forward, the Children’s Bureau will refer to the national standards as “national performance.” This national performance represents the performance of the nation on the statewide data indicators for an earlier point in time. For the time periods used to calculate the national performance for each indicator, see 80 Fed. Reg. 27263 (May 13, 2015).

Background Information

The Round 3 CFSR assesses state performance with regard to substantial conformity with 7 child and family outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Each outcome incorporates 1 or more of the 18 items included in the case review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on an evaluation of certain child welfare practices and processes in the cases reviewed in the state. With two exceptions, an item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90% or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies to those items. For a state to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome.

Eighteen items are considered in assessing the state’s substantial conformity with the 7 systemic factors. Each item reflects a key federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on how well the item-specific requirement is functioning. A determination of the rating is based on information provided by the state to demonstrate the functioning of the systemic factor in the statewide assessment and, as needed, from interviews with stakeholders and partners. For a state to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors, no more than 1 of the items associated with the systemic factor can be rated as an Area Needing Improvement. For systemic factors that have only 1 item associated with them, that item must be rated as a Strength for a determination of substantial conformity.

The Children’s Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round of reviews and in response to feedback from the child welfare field. As such, a state’s performance in the third round of the CFSRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round. Appendix A provides tables presenting Virginia’s overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Virginia’s performance in Round 2.

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I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Virginia 2017 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes and Systemic Factors

None of the 7 outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity.

The following 4 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Statewide Information System
- Quality Assurance System
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

Children's Bureau Comments on Virginia Performance

In recent years, the VDSS devoted significant time and resources to support a number of collaborative efforts, initiatives, and projects targeted toward improving the safety, permanency, and well-being of children served by the agency. These collaborations and initiatives are driving changes at the practice, program, and systems levels to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families throughout the state.

Practice changes in Virginia include the development of a Child Welfare Practice Model, reorganization of the state's Quality Assurance and Accountability (QAA) team with the design and implementation of a new process, and a focus on strengthening the staff training program. Important practice initiatives include the Safe Sleep 365 campaign, and a joint initiative with the Court Improvement Program (CIP) to improve permanency outcomes for children. Program changes include the development of the Fostering Futures program to extend title IV-E benefits to youth up to age 21, a revitalization of the youth advisory council, and overall enhanced youth engagement. System enhancements include updates to OASIS (On-line Automated Services Information System) to capture information related to the well-being of children to target improvements, and the development of a comprehensive child welfare information system (CCWIS).

The state engaged multiple partners in developing and implementing the Child Welfare Practice Model and Practice Profiles. The Practice Profiles consist of 11 key skill sets that are implemented through a coaching method. Skill sets include advocating; assessing; collaborating; communicating; cultural competence; documenting; engaging; evaluating; implementing; partnering; and planning. There is currently a study underway across the state to determine the extent to which the model is improving case outcomes. Virginia has the opportunity to use the results from this study to further analyze and evaluate the specific findings of the CFSR to inform the ongoing implementation of the Child Welfare Practice Model.

In recent years, the media has been critical of the response by local departments of social services to reports of child abuse and maltreatment in a number of high-profile cases in Virginia. Several key partners interviewed during the CFSR reported great variation

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in how local agencies are administering child welfare programs, dependent upon factors such as geography, local funding resources, staff turnover, supervision, and access to training. These variations, accompanied by a high percentage of local child welfare staff not completing initial and ongoing training, reportedly resulted in inconsistent practice and differences in outcomes for children and families. As a result of these concerns, and as part of the state's ongoing improvement efforts, DFS introduced significant changes in its approach to overseeing the 120 local departments of social services (LDSS) that administer child welfare services and programs in the state.

Cross-cutting concerns identified by VDSS in the statewide assessment and confirmed in CFSR case reviews include high rates of caseworker turnover, low rates of staff completion of mandated training, and inconsistent practice throughout the state. At this time, staff turnover for the DFS is approximately 30%. Field staff are leaving positions before completing the 2-year mandatory training. Agency training staff are actively assessing the relationship between the lack of training and poor staff retention in Virginia to target improvement efforts in this area.

The results of the cases reviewed and stakeholder interviews also highlighted the inconsistency in case practice and performance, resources, and services across local departments of social services. Variation in the interpretation of laws, policies, and standards, as well as funding and resources, may contribute to the identified inconsistencies in practice and outcomes. Although consistency in a state-supervised/locally administered child welfare system is challenging, a focus on standardizing training requirements across all child welfare-related job descriptions, and ensuring compliance with mandatory staff training statewide, as well as assessing effectiveness of training standards, would help to address these variations. Identifying and prioritizing improvements in these systemic areas would also positively affect outcomes for children and families.

The CFSR case review findings highlighted concerns with assessment and monitoring of risk and safety issues and the limited engagement of families in completing comprehensive assessments of needs and the provision of services. The frequency and quality of caseworker engagement of families in the assessment and case planning processes varied overall statewide. Inconsistent engagement of incarcerated parents in the case planning process was identified as a significant challenge, with some local agencies needing to make improvements while others performed well.

The achievement of all permanency goals, including reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA), was a challenge statewide as well. Despite evidence of frequent, quality court reviews and permanency hearings, the cases reviewed identified concerns with ensuring that appropriate permanency goals for children were established timely and with delays in achieving permanency. A lack of concurrent planning was noted as a contributing factor in some cases. While concurrent planning has been required in Virginia for every foster care case since July 1, 2015, the practice of true concurrent planning was not found in the cases reviewed. Stakeholders consistently reported that it is challenging to institutionalize policy and practice improvements in Virginia's locally administered child welfare system. Delays in making the required updates in OASIS were also identified as a barrier by stakeholders interviewed. Additionally, the necessary revisions to the foster care case plan in OASIS to incorporate concurrent planning are not scheduled for release until later in 2017.

Stakeholders consistently reported concerns with the availability of and access to services, including substance abuse, mental health treatment, and housing. Many removals of children from their homes were attributed to parental mental health and substance abuse

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concerns. Large gaps in the availability of services to address these issues resulted in waiting lists, or the absence of quality services, in some localities. The need for better access to trauma-focused treatment was also identified as a concern. The ability of the agency and courts to ensure the safety of children and achieve permanency is affected by the availability of services in many areas of the state. These gaps also impede the ability of families to effectively resolve the issues that put their children at risk of placement or keep them in foster care. These concerns have cross-cutting implications for all outcomes and case types, including foster care, Child Protective Services (CPS) ongoing, and family assessment cases. Strategies should be developed to ensure that families are engaged in the case planning process, caseworkers complete quality initial and ongoing assessments, and families have access to services to meet their individual needs. Virginia is encouraged to build upon recent accomplishments to ensure that case plans are individualized and that services necessary to address the issues that brought a family to the attention of the agency, or to achieve permanency for a child, are available and accessible statewide.

There are a significant number of children in Virginia who have been in foster care longer than 24 months for whom parental rights have not yet been terminated and no permanent placement identified. Key stakeholders interviewed shared information about a new joint initiative to decrease this number. Through the review of a sample of approximately 800 cases, challenges will be identified for those cases that are first heard in Juvenile and Domestic Relations (JDR) courts; as JDR courts are not the courts of record in Virginia, the court's termination of parental rights is automatically appealed. The agency, courts, and key partners are considering how this may be resolved, including the designation of JDR courts as a court of record to avoid these delays. Tailored presentations will be made to the Best Practice Courts to address this issue.

The VDSS established strong collaborations with its key partners, including courts, private providers, youth, and other state agencies, to achieve positive outcomes for children and families across the state. The agency has also developed positive partnerships with agencies administering other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population to ensure coordination of services and benefits. The agency's partnerships with the Departments of Education and Medical Assistance Services were identified as contributing factors to positive ratings in related items during case reviews. Additionally, updates have been made to OASIS to capture Well-Being item information such as educational stability and medical and dental appointments. These collaborations, including with agencies overseeing education, health, and mental health services in the state, can be further leveraged to support improvements in all outcomes for children and families.

The case review results and stakeholder interviews did indicate, however, a need for better coordination between VDSS and attorneys representing parents and children to improve outcomes for children in foster care. The need for clarification of case plan and agency requirements, and concerns about collaboration with the child welfare agency by some attorneys in different roles, were seen as cross-cutting themes throughout the review. An example of these concerns was found during the agency's preparation of cases for this review; several cases were eliminated because family members had been advised by their attorneys not to participate in case-related interviews. The CFSR and the state's QAA case reviews are opportunities for parents to provide their input for improvements. Support by attorneys for active parental involvement in case planning would strengthen this process.

Additionally, throughout case reviews it was found that termination of parental rights petitions were not filed timely based on the recommendation of some agency attorneys due to concerns the agency would not prevail. Stakeholder interviews also found conflicting understandings of the requirement that caretakers be notified of hearings and their right to be heard during proceedings.

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Clarifying federal requirements and addressing the reluctance to file petitions in accordance with established time frames would improve the agency's ability to achieve timely permanency for children.

Virginia's commitment to CQI was evidenced by the functioning of the state's QAA system. Virginia's dedicated team of QAA and CQI staff are continuing to develop processes to ensure that statewide data and information are collected, analyzed, and used to inform strategic improvements at the local level and throughout the state. The ongoing development and continued integration of CQI principles in these efforts can serve as a foundation for improving the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in the state.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide performance summaries from the case review findings. The CFSR relies upon a case review of an approved sample of foster care cases and in-home services cases. Virginia provides an alternative/differential response to, in addition to a traditional investigation of, incoming reports of child maltreatment or children in need of services. Where relevant, we provide performance summaries that are differentiated between foster care, in-home, and in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

This report provides an overview. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Details on each case rating are available to VDSS. The state is encouraged to conduct additional item-specific analysis of the case review findings to better understand areas of practice that are associated with positive outcomes and those that need improvement.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Item 1.

State Outcome Performance

Virginia is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 67% of the 24 applicable cases reviewed.

Safety Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated, and face-to-face contact with the child(ren) made, within the time frames established by agency policies or state statutes.

State policy requires that reports accepted for either a family assessment or an investigation are assigned one of three priority responses based on the child's immediate safety or other factors. Reports assigned as Response 1 are initiated as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the date and time of the report. Reports assigned as Response 2 are initiated as soon as possible within 48

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hours of the date and time of the report. Reports assigned as Response 3 are initiated as soon as possible and within 5 working days of the date and time of the report.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 67% of the 24 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

For performance on the Safety statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

State Outcome Performance

Virginia is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 67% of the 70 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 70% of the 44 foster care cases, 44% of the 9 in-home services cases, and 71% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Safety Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 2. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children's entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 71% of the 31 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 62% of the 13 applicable foster care cases, 75% of the 8 applicable in-home services cases, and 80% of the 10 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 3. Risk and Safety Assessment and Management

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 67% of the 70 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 70% of the 44 applicable foster care cases, 44% of the 9 applicable in-home services cases, and 71% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6

State Outcome Performance

Virginia is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 18% of the 44 applicable cases reviewed.

Permanency Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 4. Stability of Foster Care Placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interests of the child and consistent with achieving the child's permanency goal(s).

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 70% of the 44 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 5. Permanency Goal for Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 64% of the 42 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 6. Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 25% of the 44 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

For performance on the Permanency statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

State Outcome Performance

Virginia is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 30% of the 44 applicable cases reviewed.

Permanency Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 7. Placement With Siblings

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 69% of the 26 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 8. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father,¹ and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 35% of the 31 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 50% of the 16 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation with a sibling(s) in foster care who is/was in a different placement setting was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

¹ For Item 8, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification. The persons identified in these roles for the purposes of the review may include individuals who do not meet the legal definitions or conventional meanings of a mother and father.

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- In 41% of the 27 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 44% of the 18 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

Item 9. Preserving Connections

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, Tribe, school, and friends.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 47% of the 43 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 10. Relative Placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 34% of the 44 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 11. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father² or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 30% of the 27 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 37% of the 27 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.
- In 39% of the 18 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.

² For Item 11, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

State Outcome Performance

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 34% of the 70 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 25% of the 44 foster care cases, 44% of the 9 in-home services cases, and 53% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Well-Being Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 12. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency (1) made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents,³ and foster parents (both initially, if the child entered foster care or the case was opened during the period under review, and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency's involvement with the family, and (2) provided the appropriate services.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 34% of the 70 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as Strength in 25% of the 44 foster care cases, 44% of the 9 in-home services cases, and 53% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

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

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 70% of the 70 cases were rated as a Strength.

³ For Sub-Item 12B, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable "mothers" and "fathers" for the period under review in the case.

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- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 66% of the 44 foster care cases, 67% of the 9 in-home services cases, and 82% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 33% of the 55 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 14% of the 29 applicable foster care cases, 56% of the 9 applicable in-home services cases, and 53% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 51% of the 55 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 32% of the 44 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of fathers.

Sub-Item 12C. Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 69% of the 39 applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 13. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents⁴ and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 48% of the 65 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 41% of the 39 applicable foster care cases, 44% of the 9 applicable in-home services cases, and 65% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 68% of the 40 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 60% of the 55 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 48% of the 42 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve fathers in case planning.

⁴ For Item 13, in the in-home cases, “Mother” and “Father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, “mother” and “father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency’s work with multiple applicable “mothers” and “fathers” for the period under review in the case.

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Item 14. Caseworker Visits With Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 77% of the 70 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 80% of the 44 foster care cases, 56% of the 9 in-home services cases, and 82% of the 17 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 15. Caseworker Visits With Parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers⁵ of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 40% of the 55 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 17% of the 29 applicable foster care cases, 56% of the 9 applicable in-home services cases, and 71% of the 17 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 49% of the 55 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 43% of the 42 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with fathers were sufficient.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Item 16.

State Outcome Performance

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

⁵ For Item 15, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" is typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable mother and fathers for the period under review in the case.

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The outcome was substantially achieved in 86% of the 43 applicable cases reviewed.

Well-Being Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 16. Educational Needs of the Child

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children's educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 86% of the 43 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 89% of the 35 applicable foster care cases, 80% of the 5 applicable in-home services cases, and 67% of the 3 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

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

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 using the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

State Outcome Performance

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

The outcome was substantially achieved in 57% of the 63 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 52% of the 44 applicable foster care cases, 43% of the 7 applicable in-home services cases, and 83% of the 12 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Well-Being Outcome 3 Item Performance

Item 17. Physical Health of the Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 82% of the 55 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 77% of the 44 foster care cases, 100% of the 4 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 7 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 18. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 51% of the 47 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 50% of the 34 applicable foster care cases, 20% of the 5 applicable in-home services cases, and 75% of the 8 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

For each systemic factor below, we provide performance summaries and a determination of whether the state is in substantial conformity with that systemic factor. In addition, we provide ratings for each item and a description of how the rating was determined. The CFSR relies upon a review of information contained in the statewide assessment to assess each item. If an item rating cannot be determined from the information contained in the statewide assessment, the Children's Bureau conducts stakeholder interviews and considers information gathered through the interviews in determining ratings for each item.

Statewide Information System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 19.

State Systemic Factor Performance

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

Statewide Information System Item Performance

Item 19. Statewide Information System

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

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

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- Information in the statewide assessment and obtained during interviews with stakeholders showed that Virginia's statewide information system is routinely functioning statewide to identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for every child in foster care. Virginia has established time frames for entering data and routinely assessing the quality of the data on a statewide basis. Several processes are in place to ensure the timeliness, accuracy, and reliability of the information in the statewide data system, and the state provides additional oversight through the Quality Assurance and Accountability (QAA) reviews and an assigned Data Analyst.

Case Review System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Virginia is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Two of the 5 items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Case Review System Item Performance

Item 20. Written Case Plan

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that although case plans are in place and Family Partnership Meetings are used to engage families in case planning, Virginia is challenged in ensuring that case plans are developed jointly with parents. Stakeholders shared concerns about the completion and quality of the case plans and noted that not all case plans include information related to the child's educational, physical, mental, and dental health.

Item 21. Periodic Reviews

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment demonstrated that Virginia routinely ensures that a periodic review by the court for each child in foster care occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months. All hearings in Virginia's case review process,

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regardless of the type, include the federal requirements for periodic reviews. The Children's Bureau report on the state's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2016 Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review highlighted periodic reviews as a strength based on the timely judicial determinations in the cases reviewed. Judicial hearings resulted in active court involvement to monitor case planning, contributing to goal achievement and permanency for children.

Item 22. Permanency Hearings

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information in the statewide assessment and confirmed during interviews with stakeholders showed that the average number of days until initial and subsequent permanency hearings is within the required time frames. The frequency of permanency hearings in Virginia was also cited as a strength during the 2013 and 2016 IV-E Reviews.

Item 23. Termination of Parental Rights

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

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Virginia did not provide information or data to support that the requirement to file a petition to terminate parental rights, or document compelling reasons not to do so in the case record, is occurring statewide in a timely manner. Stakeholders noted several barriers to timely filing petitions, including missing or absent parents, reluctance on the part of agency counsel to file in cases in which they may not prevail, and federal requirements previously not having been specified by state statute.

Item 24. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Virginia described the process for ensuring that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers are notified of hearings and the right to be heard. However, the state did not provide data or information to

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demonstrate that this process is occurring. While some stakeholders confirmed that notice is provided, others reported that the process is not occurring as described; notice is not consistently provided to resource parents and, at times, resource parents are not provided information on the right to be heard. Some stakeholders are unclear about the requirement and believe that foster parents must become a party to the case in order for them to be heard in court.

Quality Assurance System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 25.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Virginia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Quality Assurance System Item Performance

Item 25. Quality Assurance System

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The quality assurance system is functioning statewide to ensure that it (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and obtained during stakeholder interviews showed that Virginia conducts several quality assurance processes throughout the state and that, although some of the processes are relatively new, together they support a quality assurance system that meets federal requirements. Stakeholders confirmed that Virginia has implemented a quality assurance case review process that includes provisions for a continuous quality improvement (CQI) system as described in Children's Bureau Information Memorandum ACYF-CB-IM-12-07.

Staff and Provider Training

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Virginia is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. One of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

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Staff and Provider Training Item Performance

Item 26. Initial Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment. Virginia agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that staff generally agreed that initial staff training is helpful in supporting them in carrying out their roles as caseworkers and that such training is available to them within the required time frames. However, new staff do not routinely participate in these trainings.

Item 27. Ongoing Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff⁶ that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment. Virginia agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that although staff reported that the state provides quality training, staff are not consistently attending ongoing and supervisory staff training as required. Virginia is evaluating the training system to make improvements and ensure staff are attending and completing training on a regular basis.

Item 28. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

⁶ "Staff," for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP. "Staff" also includes direct supervisors of all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

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- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and obtained through interviews with stakeholders showed that Virginia has a robust foster parent training system. All resource parents, including relative caregivers, are required to complete Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education (PRIDE) training before being licensed, and follow the guideline of 10 hours of training annually for recertification. Stakeholders reported that training is accessible and there are no waiting lists. Training provides the information and skills necessary for foster and adoptive parents to carry out their responsibilities. Stakeholders confirmed that training for residential facility staff is standardized and provides the information and skills for facility staff to carry out their duties.

Service Array and Resource Development

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

State Systemic Factor Performance

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

Service Array and Resource Development Item Performance

Item 29. Array of Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP: (1) services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, (2) services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, (3) services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and (4) services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and obtained during stakeholder interviews showed that service availability and accessibility largely depends on the locality. Large portions of the state are rural, and in those areas transportation issues and waitlists are barriers to service delivery. Stakeholders noted some gaps in services, including children's psychiatric services, bilingual services, and parent coaching services. Services to meet the needs of certain populations of children and youth are also challenging in the state. Stakeholders reported services are lacking in many areas of the state for LGBTQ children and youth, developmentally challenged youth, and youth with other special needs.

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Item 30. Individualizing Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning statewide to ensure that the services in Item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment described the use of family partnership meetings to individualize services. Virginia provided data to demonstrate that diverse participation in family partnership meetings facilitates the individualization of services. However, stakeholders reported that the key participants necessary to individualize services, including parents, do not consistently participate in these meetings. Virginia uses state flexible funding to support the individualization of services and this funding source may not be consistently available. It is unclear whether local agencies are routinely accessing all available federal funds to more effectively individualize services.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Virginia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Both of the items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community Item Performance

Item 31. State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that, in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Virginia described the Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) that meets every other month and includes participants from local departments of social services, law enforcement, service providers, advocates, courts, local community service boards, and other state agencies. Stakeholders confirmed that the CWAC is the primary venue for communication, feedback, and involvement with the state on services included in the CFSP, Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), and other practice initiatives. Multiple stakeholders reported consistently open communication with the

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agency and said the agency is responsive to ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Stakeholders also confirmed that the agency shares information with parents, foster parents, and youth and seeks and considers their feedback.

Item 32. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed during interviews with stakeholders showed that DFS works with the other divisions under the umbrella agency of VDSS to coordinate benefits and services used most often by those whom DFS serves, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Child Support Enforcement, Newcomer Services, Licensing Programs, and Early Childhood Development. Often these division staff are co-located in the same offices, which facilitates access by families and collaboration among federal programs. In addition, VDSS collaborates with external partners who serve the same population, including those administering federal programs, such as the Virginia Department of Education, Healthy Families, Virginia State Police, Infant and Toddler Connection, and Court Improvement Program.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Virginia is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. Three of the four items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Item Performance

Item 33. Standards Applied Equally

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment.

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- In the statewide assessment, Virginia provided data and information showing that the state completes a 100% quality assurance review of title IV-E eligibility requirements for all foster care cases that includes assurance that licensing standards are applied equally to all foster homes and residential facilities. Virginia has regulations in place that govern the licensing of all child-placing agencies and the resource homes approved by those agencies, as well as residential treatment facilities and group homes.

Item 34. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data in the statewide assessment demonstrated that the federal requirements for criminal background checks are consistently being met statewide. Stakeholders agreed that there are adequate provisions in place for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children on an ongoing basis. These provisions include memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between local jurisdictions to investigate safety concerns in foster and adoptive homes, safety planning and monitoring processes, and CPS teaming with the state licensing agency to investigate allegations of safety concerns in residential facilities.

Item 35. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

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

- Virginia received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and confirmed during stakeholder interviews showed that Virginia does not have a single statewide foster and adoptive parent diligent recruitment plan. Each LDSS is responsible for developing its own recruitment plan to ensure that foster and adoptive families reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children for whom placements are needed. The state does not have aggregated racial or ethnic demographic data for approximately 50% of the statewide foster and adoptive parent population. As a result, the state is unable to ensure diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive parents statewide who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the children needing foster and adoptive homes.

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Item 36. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.

- Virginia received an overall rating of Strength for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment demonstrated that most Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) requests received from other jurisdictions were completed within the required time frame. Since April 2016, Virginia has participated in the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) system. The state continues to operate the Adoption Resource and Research Information System (ARRIS) as well for requests from those states not participating in NEICE. Both systems support the completion of ICPC requests within the required time frames.

Appendix A

Summary of Virginia 2017 Child and Family Services Review Performance

I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes and Items

Outcome Achievement: Outcomes may be rated as in substantial conformity or not in substantial conformity. 95% of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

Item Achievement: Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement. For an overall rating of Strength, 90% of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of Item 1 and Item 16) must be rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies.

SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 1 Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	Not in Substantial Conformity	67% Substantially Achieved
Item 1 Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	67% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 2 Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	67% Substantially Achieved
Item 2 Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	71% Strength
Item 3 Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	67% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 1 Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	18% Substantially Achieved
Item 4 Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	70% Strength
Item 5 Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	64% Strength
Item 6 Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	25% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 2 The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	30% Substantially Achieved
Item 7 Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	69% Strength
Item 8 Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	35% Strength
Item 9 Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	47% Strength
Item 10 Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	34% Strength
Item 11 Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	30% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Virginia 2017 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 1 Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	34% Substantially Achieved
Item 12 Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	34% Strength
Sub-Item 12A Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	70% Strength
Sub-Item 12B Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	33% Strength
Sub-Item 12C Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	69% Strength
Item 13 Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	48% Strength
Item 14 Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	77% Strength
Item 15 Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	40% Strength

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 2 Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	86% Substantially Achieved
Item 16 Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	86% Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Virginia 2017 CFSR Performance

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

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3 Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	57% Substantially Achieved
Item 17 Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	82% Strength
Item 18 Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	51% Strength

II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The Children’s Bureau determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the 7 systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The Children’s Bureau determines substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined on the basis of ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the Children’s Bureau must find that no more than 1 of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the Children’s Bureau must find that the item is functioning as required.

STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
Item 19 Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

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CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Case Review System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 20 Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 21 Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 22 Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 23 Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24 Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

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

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
Item 26 Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
Item 27 Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

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Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Item 28 Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
Item 31 State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 32 Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

Appendix A: Summary of Virginia 2017 CFSR Performance

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
Item 33 Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 34 Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 35 Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 36 State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment	Strength

III. Performance on Statewide Data Indicators⁷

The state's performance is considered against the national performance for each statewide data indicator and provides contextual information for considering the findings. This information is not used in conformity decisions. State performance may be statistically above, below, or no different than the national performance. If a state did not provide the required data or did not meet the applicable item data quality limits, the Children's Bureau did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.1%	Lower	2.8%	2.4%–3.4%	FY14–FY15
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	8.50	Lower	3.85	2.9–5.1	15A–15B, FY15

⁷ In October 2016, the Children's Bureau issued Technical Bulletin #9 (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/cfsr-technical-bulletin-9>), which alerted states to the fact that there were technical errors in the syntax used to calculate the national and state performance for the statewide data indicators. The syntax revision is still underway, so performance shown in this table is based on the 2015 Federal Register syntax.

Appendix A: Summary of Virginia 2017 CFSR Performance

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.5%	Higher	30.4%	28.6%–32.2%	13B–16A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	43.6%	Higher	32.7%	30.3%–35.3%	15B–16A
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	30.3%	Higher	28.6%	26.2%–31.1%	15B–16A
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.3%	Lower	7.2%	5.4%–9.7%	13B–16A
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.12	Lower	3.90	3.72–4.08	4.12

* Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) is derived from a multi-level statistical model and reflects the state's performance relative to states with similar children and takes into account the number of children the state served, the age distribution of these children and, for some indicators, the state's entry rate. It uses risk-adjustment to minimize differences in outcomes due to factors over which the state has little control and provides a more fair comparison of state performance against national performance.

** 95% Confidence Interval is the 95% confidence interval estimate for the state's RSP. The values shown are the lower RSP and upper RSP of the interval estimate. The interval accounts for the amount of uncertainty associated with the RSP. For example, the CB is 95% confident that the true value of the RSP is between the lower and upper limit of the interval.

*** Data Period(s) Used for State Performance: Refers to the initial 12-month period and the period(s) of data needed to follow the children to observe their outcomes. The FY or federal fiscal year refers to NCANDS data, which spans the 12-month period October 1 – September 30. All other periods refer to AFCARS data. "A" refers to the 6-month period October 1 – March 31. "B" refers to the 6-month period April 1 – September 30. The 2-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

Appendix B Summary of CFSR Round 2 Virginia 2009 Key Findings

The Children’s Bureau conducted a CFSR in Virginia in 2009. Key findings from that review are presented below. Because the Children’s Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a state’s performance in the third round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round.

Identifying Information and Review Dates

General Information
Children’s Bureau Region: 3
Date of Onsite Review: July 13–17, 2009
Period Under Review: April 1, 2008, through July 17, 2009
Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued: December 31, 2009
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: February 22, 2010
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: October 1, 2010

Highlights of Findings

Performance Measurements
A. The state met the national standards for three of the six standards.
B. The state achieved substantial conformity with none of the seven outcomes.
C. The state achieved substantial conformity with one of the seven systemic factors.

Appendix B: Virginia 2009 CFSR Key Findings

State's Conformance With the National Standards

Data Indicator or Composite	National Standard	State's Score	Meets or Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of maltreatment recurrence (data indicator)	94.6 or higher	97.9	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.79	Meets Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	118.3	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	75.1	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	102.5	Does Not Meet Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	102.3	Meets Standard

State's Conformance With the Outcomes

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

Appendix B: Virginia 2009 CFSR Key Findings

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

State's Conformance With the Systemic Factors

Systemic Factor	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Statewide Information System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

Appendix B: Virginia 2009 CFSR Key Findings

Key Findings by Item

Outcomes

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
2. Repeat Maltreatment	Strength
3. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-entry Into Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	Area Needing Improvement
5. Foster Care Re-entries	Strength
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	Area Needing Improvement
7. Permanency Goal for Child	Area Needing Improvement
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Permanent Placement With Relatives	Area Needing Improvement
9. Adoption	Area Needing Improvement
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	Area Needing Improvement
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	Strength
12. Placement With Siblings	Strength
13. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
14. Preserving Connections	Area Needing Improvement
15. Relative Placement	Area Needing Improvement
16. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
17. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents	Area Needing Improvement
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	Area Needing Improvement
19. Caseworker Visits With Child	Area Needing Improvement
20. Caseworker Visits With Parents	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix B: Virginia 2009 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
21. Educational Needs of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
22. Physical Health of the Child	Strength
23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

Systemic Factors

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
24. Statewide Information System	Area Needing Improvement
25. Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
26. Periodic Reviews	Area Needing Improvement
27. Permanency Hearings	Strength
28. Termination of Parental Rights	Strength
29. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Area Needing Improvement
30. Standards Ensuring Quality Services	Strength
31. Quality Assurance System	Area Needing Improvement
32. Initial Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement
33. Ongoing Staff Training	Area Needing Improvement
34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Area Needing Improvement
35. Array of Services	Strength
36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
37. Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement
38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength
39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Strength
40. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength

Appendix B: Virginia 2009 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
41. Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions	Area Needing Improvement
42. Standards Applied Equally	Area Needing Improvement
43. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
44. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Area Needing Improvement