

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Final Report: Kansas Child and Family Services Review
March 2008

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of Kansas. 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 Kansas CFSR was conducted the week of June 11, 2007. The period under review was from April 1, 2006, to June 11, 2007. The findings were derived from the following documents and data collection procedures:

- The Statewide Assessment, prepared by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS)
- 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 64 cases at three sites throughout the State, including 31 cases in Sedgwick County, 16 cases in Lyon County, and 17 cases in Douglas County¹
- 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 CFSR. 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 Although the CFSR usually involves a review of 65 cases, during the Onsite Review, one case in Lyon County was eliminated because it did not meet the requirements of the sample.

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 CFSR. 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 CFSR process is on continuous quality improvement; 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 CFSR 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 PIP. 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 CFSR.

The second round of the CFSR 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 CFSR 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 CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the first round, particularly with regard to comparisons of percentages. Key changes in the CFSR process that make it difficult to compare performance 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

Special Features of the Kansas Child Welfare System

There are two somewhat unique features of the Kansas child welfare system that are useful to understand in reviewing the CFSR Final Report. One feature is that many of the child welfare services in Kansas are provided by private agencies through Child Welfare Community Based Services (CWCBS) contracts. Kansas has implemented this privatized service delivery system since 1996. Currently, contracts are awarded in five regions of the State. The CWCBS contractor agencies are responsible for providing family preservation, foster care, reunification, and adoption services throughout the life of a case. Once a child is referred to a CWCBS agency, the agency assumes full case management responsibilities and provides all necessary services to the child, family, and foster family, including foster care placement and collaboration with community resources to ensure community-based service delivery.

The SRS, through its regional offices, directly manages the child abuse and neglect investigations and the in-home services cases; provides overall management, quality assurance, and direction to the child welfare program; and monitors CWCBS agency performance and adherence to contract requirements. It should be noted that the CFSR process is designed to assess State child welfare systems, including contracted service providers when they are delegated to have full case management responsibilities. Therefore, it should be understood that for the cases in which the CWCBS agencies have full case management responsibilities, the CFSR process assesses those cases based on the actions and case practice of the CWCBS agencies. When reference is made to caseworkers who are providing foster care or adoption-related services, these caseworkers are employees of the CWCBS agencies. Throughout this CFSR Final Report, the contracted agencies are referred to as CWCBS agencies.

A second somewhat unique feature of the Kansas child welfare system is that, for a substantial number of children who come into contact with the child welfare system in the State, the primary reason for agency involvement is the child's behavior rather than abuse or neglect. In addition, a key "child behavior" problem that brings children into contact with the Kansas child welfare system is truancy. In the sample of cases reviewed for the 2007 CFSR, 15 (35.5 percent) of the 40 foster care cases involved children whose primary reason for contact with the child welfare system was noted to be "child's behavior"; in 8 of these cases, the presenting problem was identified as truancy. In 10 (42 percent) of the 24 in-home services cases, the reason for the family's contact with the agency was identified as "child's behavior," and in 2 of these cases, the presenting problem was truancy.

Performance on Outcomes: Summary of CFSR Findings

The 2007 CFSR identified several areas of high performance in Kansas with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children. Kansas data for FY 2005 meet the national standards for the safety-related data indicators pertaining to absence of maltreatment recurrence and

the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff members. Kansas also meets the national standard for Permanency Outcome 3: Permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods.

Although Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with any of the seven CFSR outcomes, there were three outcomes in which 90 percent or more of the cases were found to have substantially achieved the outcome, although the percentages did not quite meet the standard of 95 percent or higher. The highest level of performance occurred for Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect. That outcome was substantially achieved in 94 percent of the cases. A high level of performance also was found for Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs, with that outcome substantially achieved in 91 percent of the cases. Finally, the CFSR found that Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved, was substantially achieved in 90 percent of the cases reviewed.

In addition to its high level of performance on these outcomes, the State received overall ratings of Strength on the following indicators:

- Timeliness of investigations (item 1)
- Repeat maltreatment (item 2)
- Services to prevent the removal of children from their homes (item 3)
- Foster care reentry (item 5)
- Proximity of placement (item 11)
- Placement with siblings (item 12)
- Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care (item 13)
- Relative placement (item 15)
- Relationship of child in foster care with parents (item 16)
- Physical health of child (item 22)

The CFSR also identified areas in which improvements are needed to achieve better outcomes for children and families. One of the key areas of concern pertains to the State's performance on Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. This outcome was substantially achieved in only 51 percent of the cases reviewed. In addition, Kansas did not meet the national standards for three of the four data composites associated with Permanency Outcome 1. These are Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and permanency of reunification, Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of adoption, and Permanency Composite 3: Placement stability.

A primary concern pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1 was the lack of placement stability for children in foster care. This item was rated as a Strength in only 67 percent of the cases reviewed. In addition, the State performed below the median on all three national measures of placement stability included in the national data composite. Another primary concern pertained to the timeliness of adoptions. This item was rated as a Strength in only 47 percent of the cases reviewed. Case reviewers and stakeholders interviewed during the onsite CFSR suggested that the State's performance on this item may be attributed in part to the lack of concurrent planning.

It was noted that although concurrent planning is established in policy, and concurrent goals often are established for children early on in a case, most caseworkers focus on these goals sequentially rather than simultaneously.

The State's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, also indicates that this is an area needing improvement. This outcome was substantially achieved in only 65.6 percent of the cases reviewed, and all items incorporated in the outcome were rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Key concerns with regard to this outcome were found for item 17, which pertains to meeting the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents. The item was rated as a Strength in only 69 percent of the cases. Case review findings, however, revealed that in over 90 percent of the cases, the agency was effective in meeting the needs of children in both the foster care and in-home services cases and in meeting the needs of foster parents. However, the agency was somewhat less effective in meeting the service needs of the mothers and substantially less effective in meeting the service needs of fathers.

Another area of concern within Well-Being Outcome 1 pertains to caseworker visits with the parents of the children in their caseloads (item 20). This item was rated as a Strength in only 64 percent of the cases. Again, the case reviews found that although the agency was somewhat effective in establishing frequent and meaningful contact with mothers, it was not at all effective in this regard with fathers. Reviewers found that caseworkers had infrequent contact or no contact at all with fathers in 47 percent of the applicable cases.

Performance on Systemic Factors: Summary of Findings

Kansas was found to be in substantial conformity with four of the seven systemic factors assessed during the 2007 CFSR. These were Statewide Information System; Quality Assurance System; Agency Responsiveness to the Community; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention.

Case Review System, Training, and Service Array were the three systemic factors that were not in substantial conformity. The two primary issues identified in connection with the Case Review System have to do with concerns about engaging fathers in case planning and information from the Statewide Assessment reporting that permanency hearings were held in a timely manner only 82.6 percent of the time in State FY 2006. For Training, identified issues included the significant differences between preservice training requirements for SRS caseworkers and caseworkers for the CWCBS agencies. In addition, for ongoing training, it was noted that quality assurance is an issue because of the number of agencies providing different models of training. One of the most salient issues that emerged from the CFSR pertaining to Service Array was the lack of accessibility to appropriate mental health and substance abuse services for children and parents. Another concern pertained to the lack of key services in the western part of the State and in the more rural areas of the State.

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 the well-being outcomes are presented in table 2. Table 3 presents the State's performance on the seven systemic factors assessed during the CFSR. In the following section, key findings are summarized for each outcome.

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).

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. Although both items included in the outcome were rated as a Strength, taken together, the percentage of cases determined to be substantially achieved did not reach the required 95 percent. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 94 percent of the applicable cases, which is very close to the 95 percent or higher required for a rating of substantial conformity. This outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 100 percent of Lyon County and Sedgwick County cases and 78 percent of Douglas County cases. Kansas met the national standards for the safety-related data indicators pertaining to the absence of maltreatment recurrence and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

Kansas was not in substantial conformity with this outcome for its 2001 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its PIP. The key concern identified in the 2001 CFSR was that in some of the cases reviewed, there were extensive delays in assigning reports to an investigative caseworker. The agency addressed this concern in its PIP by developing and implementing policy requiring that all reports must be screened within 24 hours of receipt. Kansas met its target goal for this outcome by the end of its PIP implementation period.

The concern pertaining to timely screening and assignment of reports that was found in the 2001 CFSR was not found in the 2007 CFSR. The 2007 CFSR found that reports were investigated in a timely manner, and there was little evidence of recurrence of maltreatment within a 6-month period. Stakeholders attributed the low rate of maltreatment recurrence to agency efforts to provide crisis management services and family-based services to address all existing concerns.

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 risk of harm to children.

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 75 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 counties. The outcome was substantially achieved in 71 percent of Douglas County cases, 56 percent of Lyon County cases, and 87 percent of Sedgwick County cases. Kansas was in substantial conformity with this outcome for its 2001 CFSR and was not required to address the outcome in its PIP.

Key findings of the case reviews conducted in the 2007 CFSR were the following:

- The agency generally is effective in preventing the removal of children from their homes through provision of services to the family.
- The agency was not consistent with regard to conducting risk and safety assessments both initially and on an ongoing basis.
- In some cases, services were not provided to address risk and safety issues, or the services that were provided were not adequate to address the concerns in the family.

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 Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangements (OPPLA) as a case goal are in stable placements and adequately prepared for eventual independent living (item 10).

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

- The outcome was substantially achieved in 52.5 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 for FY 2005, the State did not meet the national standards for Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and permanency of reunification, Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of adoptions, or Permanency Composite 4: Placement stability.

However, the State did meet the national standard for Permanency Composite 3: Permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods.

Although performance on this outcome was low in all sites, there was some variation across sites. The outcome was found to be substantially achieved in 40 percent of Douglas County cases, 50 percent of Lyon County cases, and 60 percent of Sedgwick County cases.

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with this outcome during its 2001 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its PIP. Kansas implemented the following strategies in its PIP to address these concerns:

- Developed transitional planning for youth aged 16 and older
- Improved the agency's communication to youth in foster care about the services that are available to them
- Developed statewide training for staff to address the issue of placement stability
- Developed specialized training for foster parents to address placement stability
- Developed training focusing on concurrent planning and establishing appropriate permanency goals
- In collaboration with the courts, conducted a study of the termination of parental rights (TPR) process to determine the causes of delays in achieving TPR

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

With the exception of item 5, all items included in Permanency Outcome 1 were rated as Areas Needing Improvement in the State's 2007 CFSR. Some of the concerns identified in the 2001 CFSR also were found in the 2007 CFSR. For example, in the 2007 CFSR, children in many of the cases reviewed did not experience placement stability; in many cases, appropriate permanency goals were not established in a timely manner; and, although concurrent planning is now specified in policy, in practice, caseworkers are not focusing on achieving the concurrent goals simultaneously. Instead, one goal is not pursued until efforts to attain the other goal have been exhausted.

Other key findings of the 2007 CFSR case reviews were the following:

- There was little evidence in the cases reviewed of reentry into foster care within a 12-month period.
- The goal of OPPLA is used frequently, and it is not clear that all other permanency options are carefully considered and ruled out before establishing this goal.

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 (1) placing children in foster care in close proximity to their parents and close relatives (item 11); (2) placing siblings together (item 12); (3) ensuring frequent visitation between children and their parents and siblings in foster care (item 13); (4) preserving connections of children in foster care with extended family, community, cultural heritage, religion, and schools (item 14); (5) seeking relatives as potential placement resources (item 15); and (6) promoting the relationship between children and their parents while the children are in foster care (item 16).

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. The outcome was rated as Substantially Achieved in 90 percent of the cases, which is close to the 95 percent or higher required for substantial conformity. There was some variation in

performance on this item across sites. The item was determined to be substantially achieved in 100 percent of Douglas County cases and 95 percent of Sedgwick County cases, compared to 70 percent of Lyon County cases.

Kansas was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2001 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its PIP. Key concerns identified in the 2001 CFSR were the following:

- The number of foster homes was insufficient to accommodate sibling groups, resulting in siblings not being placed together.
- Agency policies regarding visitation between children and parents and among siblings were not being followed consistently.
- Connections with previous foster homes were not being preserved when children moved to a new placement.

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

- Implemented practices and policies to ensure that siblings are placed together at their initial placement
- Developed policy that mandates that when siblings are placed separately, a plan must be established for their eventual placement together, if appropriate
- Established policy pertaining to the frequency of in-person parent-child visits and in-person sibling visits (Note: Current policy requires at least weekly face-to-face parent-child visits unless parental rights have been terminated or visits are not in the best interests of the child)
- Developed an action plan that included specific strategies for ensuring that family connections, including connections with previous foster families, are preserved

Kansas met its target goal for this outcome by the end of its PIP implementation period.

The key concerns identified in the 2001 CFSR were not noted in the 2007 CFSR. For example, in the 2007 CFSR, case reviews found that siblings were placed together when appropriate in 100 percent of the cases reviewed. Case reviews also found that the CWCBS agencies were adhering to policy regarding the frequency of parent-child visits and sibling visits. Also, the concern regarding the lack of connections with previous foster homes was not identified in the 2007 CFSR.

Additional key findings in the 2007 CFSR with regard to this outcome were the following:

- For the most part, children were placed in close proximity to their parents or close relatives (item 11).
- The agency generally made concerted efforts to search for and assess relatives as potential placement resources (item 15).
- The agency was generally effective in supporting the relationship between children in foster care and their parents (item 16).
- The agency was not consistent with regard to ensuring that children's connections with extended family, community, school and friends, religion, and cultural heritage were preserved while the child was in foster care (item 14).

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).

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. The outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 65.6 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. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 53 percent of Douglas County cases, 63 percent of Lyon County cases, and 74 percent of Sedgwick County cases. Performance also varied slightly based on the type of case. The outcome was substantially achieved in 70 percent of foster care cases, compared to 58 percent of in-home services cases.

Kansas was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2001 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its PIP. The key concerns identified in the 2001 CFSR pertained to inadequate service delivery systems to meet the needs of children, parents, and foster parents, particularly service delivery systems that involved mental health, substance abuse treatment, and family-focused services. To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its PIP:

- Developed policy requiring that an initial team meeting be held within 24 hours of the child's or family's contact with the child welfare system to identify service needs early in a case
- Developed and implemented family group conferencing to promote a more family-focused service approach
- Developed a screening tool to identify children with intensive mental health needs and established a process for referring those children to community mental health centers and an automated case-review process to monitor these activities
- Strengthened services to foster parents to assist them in parenting children with severe emotional disorders or behavioral problems

The concern identified in the 2001 CFSR regarding a lack of adequate service delivery systems also was noted in the 2007 CFSR with regard to services to parents, but not with regard to services to children and foster parents. In the 2007 CFSR, case reviews indicated that the agency was effective in assessing and meeting the needs of over 90 percent of children and foster parents. Additional key findings of the 2007 CFSR were the following:

- The agency was more effective in assessing and meeting the service needs of children, mothers, and foster parents than it was in assessing and meeting the needs of fathers (item 17).
- The agency was more effective in engaging mothers and children in case planning than it was in engaging fathers in case planning (item 18).
- In many cases, caseworker visits with children were not of sufficient frequency or quality (item 19).
- There was insufficient contact between caseworkers and parents, although contact with mothers occurred more frequently than contact with fathers (item 20).

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).

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 91 percent of the cases reviewed. This is less than the 95 percent or higher required for substantial conformity, although it is very close to this requirement. There was little variation in performance on this outcome across sites. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 85 percent of Douglas County cases, 93 percent of Lyon County cases, and 95 percent of Sedgwick County cases. There also was no variation in performance based on the type of case. The outcome was rated as Substantially Achieved in 91 percent of foster care cases and 93 percent of in-home services cases. Kansas was in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2001 CFSR and, therefore, did not address the outcome in its PIP.

A key finding of the 2007 CFSR is that, in the vast majority of cases reviewed, the child's educational needs were appropriately assessed and services were provided, if necessary. A few stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed concern about delays in transferring school records when children have to move to another school, which results in delays in enrollment in the new school. However, stakeholders also noted that SRS has been working with the schools and the Department of Education on strategies to expedite this process.

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.

Kansas did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 85.5 percent of the applicable cases, which is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. There was little variation in performance on this outcome across sites. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 81 percent of Douglas County cases, 81 percent of Lyon County cases, and 90 percent of Sedgwick County cases. There was some variation in performance on the outcome by type of case. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 97.5 percent of foster care cases and 82 percent of the 22 applicable in-home services cases.

Kansas was not in substantial conformity with this outcome for its 2001 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its PIP. The key concerns identified during the 2001 CFSR with regard to Well-Being Outcome 3 were the following:

- A lack of dental health providers who accept Medicaid
- A lack of therapeutic foster homes to meet the needs of the children with special mental and behavioral health needs

- A lack of substance abuse treatment resources that can be provided while children remain in the family
- A lack of substance abuse treatment services for parents who do not have private insurance to pay for the treatment
- A lack of knowledge among caseworkers about drug and alcohol abuse and how to assess for problems and needs
- Inappropriate assessments of children's mental health needs and inadequate services to meet the identified level of intensity
- A lack of timely provision of mental health services

Kansas implemented the following strategies in its PIP to address these concerns:

- Collaborated with Oral Health Kansas in an effort to expand the number of sites where dental hygienists can perform assessments, cleaning, and fluoride treatments and apply sealants
- Collaborated with EDS, the Kansas Medicaid agent, in an effort to increase the number of dentists who are Medicaid providers
- Developed and implemented the Child Welfare/Mental Health Initiative, which included identifying gaps in mental health services and developing an assessment tool for mental health needs and training staff on implementing the tool

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

The concern identified in the 2001 CFSR with regard to a lack of dental health providers was not noted in the 2007 CFSR. In general, the case review findings indicate that children's health needs (medical and dental) were routinely assessed and services were provided as needed. However, concerns continued to be identified with regard to meeting children's mental health needs, particularly with regard to the timely provision of mental health services and to the appropriate assessment of children's mental health 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.

Kansas is in substantial conformity with this factor. Kansas also was in substantial conformity with this systemic factor in the 2001 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its PIP. The 2007 CFSR determined that Kansas has an effective integrated statewide information system that allows quick and direct access to the legal status, demographics, location, and goals for every child in foster care.

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).

Kansas is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of a Case Review System. Kansas was in substantial conformity with this factor during the 2001 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its PIP.

Key findings of the 2007 CFSR included the following:

- Although case plans are developed in a timely manner, there was a lack of consistency in involving fathers in case planning (item 25).
- Periodic case reviews are conducted at least every 6 months or more frequently in some cases (item 26).
- Permanency hearings are not consistently being conducted in a timely manner (item 27).
- The State has a process in place for filing TPR for children in foster care in a timely manner. This was attributed in large part to the involvement of SRS, judges, guardians *ad litem*, district attorneys, and attorneys in keeping track of the 15-month deadline (item 28).
- Foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers are routinely given notice regarding reviews and hearings and are encouraged to provide input during all reviews and hearings (item 29).

Quality Assurance System

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of a 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).

Kansas was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of a Quality Assurance System. Kansas received a rating of Strength for both items included in this systemic factor. Kansas was in substantial conformity with this factor during the 2001 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its PIP.

Key findings of the 2007 CFSR include the following:

- The State has developed and implemented licensing standards and other provisions that promote better protection for children in the foster care system (item 30).

- Several identifiable quality assurance systems are in operation in Kansas through contract management and through monthly case reads that are described as replicating the Federal CFSR process (item 31).

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).

Kansas was not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Training during the 2007 CFSR. Only one of the three items in the factor achieved a Strength rating. The State was not in substantial conformity with this systemic factor in its 2001 CFSR and was required to address the factor in its PIP. The following concerns were identified during the 2001 CFSR:

- Initial training was insufficient to meet the needs of the caseworkers and to support their duties and responsibilities.
- There was no comprehensive system for ongoing in-service training that focused on the needs of child welfare caseworkers from entry level to advanced caseworkers and supervisors.
- Foster parents were not receiving training in caring for special needs children.

To address these concerns, Kansas revised its training for new caseworkers and developed a more structured program of in-service training to meet staff needs. Kansas met its target goals for this systemic factor by the end of the PIP implementation period.

Key findings of the 2007 CFSR were as follows:

- Although a comprehensive pre-service training system is in place for SRS caseworkers and SRS caseworkers are required to complete training prior to carrying a caseload, the pre-service training and requirements provided by the CWCBS agencies do not adhere to the same requirements (item 32).
- The Child Welfare Resource Network, Children's Alliance of Kansas, the Butler Institute, and the University of Denver are partnering to provide ongoing staff training (item 33).
- Foster parent training is provided through the CWCBS agencies and the Children's Alliance of Kansas using the Model Approach to Parenting and Partnership (PS-MAPP), which is a 10-week pre-service training. Stakeholders commented that resource parents are required to complete this training before licensure is issued. Once licensed, foster parents are required to participate in 15 to 16 hours of ongoing training each year (item 34).

Service Array

The assessment of the systemic factor of Service Array addresses three questions: (1) 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)? (2) Are these services accessible to families and children throughout the State (item 36)? (3) Can services be individualized to meet the unique needs of the children and family served by the child welfare agency (item 37)?

Kansas is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and received a Strength rating for only one item included in this factor. The State was in substantial conformity with this systemic factor in the 2001 CFSR and was not required to address this factor in its PIP.

Key findings of the 2007 CFSR with regard to Service Array are the following:

- The State does not have in place an array of services to assess the strengths and needs of children and families. In addition, the lack of a meaningful service array is a barrier to enabling children to remain safely with their parents when appropriate (item 35).
- Services are not accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). In particular, access to substance abuse treatment services and mental health treatment varies across the State. There also are waiting lists for providers who offer free or low-cost services. Because services are limited in rural areas, extensive travel often is required to access the services (item 36).
- Despite the identified concerns, the State has the ability to individualize services to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the child welfare system through use of flexible funding resources and wraparound community-based services.

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 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).

Kansas was found to be in substantial conformity with the factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community, and all items included in this systemic factor achieved Strength ratings. Kansas also was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2001 CFSR and did not need to address this factor in its PIP.

General findings in the 2007 CFSR included the following:

- Kansas engages in ongoing consultation with a broad array of individuals and organizations to obtain their input regarding the goals and objectives of the CFSP and to develop annual reports of progress and services (items 38 and 39).
- There is extensive collaboration between SRS and other Federal or Federally assisted programs to ensure a coordinated service delivery system for children and families who are served by multiple agencies (item 40).

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).

Kansas was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention, and all items received a rating of Strength. Kansas also was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2001 CFSR and did not need to address this factor in its PIP.

Key findings of the 2007 CFSR are as follows:

- Kansas has implemented licensing and approval standards for foster family homes and child care institutions, and the standards are applied equally to all approved and licensed homes receiving title IV-E and IV-B funding (items 41 and 42).
- Criminal background checks are completed for all persons seeking foster parent licensure. Those who have lived in Kansas less than 2 years are required to undergo a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal background check (item 43).
- Regional recruitment teams focus on recruitment and retention of resource families that reflect ethnic and racial diversity of children in their region that need placement. A special initiative to recruit African-American families resulted in a substantial increase in available African-American foster family homes (item 44).
- There is an identifiable recruitment process for intrastate and interstate resources with appropriate follow-up, including use of adoption exchanges and the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (item 45).

Table 1. Kansas CFSR Ratings for Safety and Permanency Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings			Item Ratings	
	In Substantial Conformity?	Percent Substantially Achieved*	Met National Standards?	Rating**	Percent Strength
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	No	93.8	Yes		
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations				Strength	97
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment				Strength	93
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	No	75.0			
Item 3: Services to prevent removal				Strength	95
Item 4: Risk of harm				ANI	77
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	No	52.5	Met 1, did not meet 3		
Item 5: Foster care reentry				Strength	91
Item 6: Stability of foster care placements				ANI	67
Item 7: Permanency goal for child				ANI	74
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives				ANI	82
Item 9: Adoption				ANI	47
Item 10: Other planned living arrangement				ANI	80
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	No	90.0			
Item 11: Proximity of placement				Strength	93
Item 12: Placement with siblings				Strength	100
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care				Strength	97
Item 14: Preserving connections				ANI	84
Item 15: Relative placement				Strength	91
Item 16: Relationship of child in foster care with parents				Strength	90

*95 percent 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.

**Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI). For an overall rating of Strength, 90 percent of the cases must be rated as a Strength.

Table 2. Kansas CFSR Ratings for Child and Family Well-Being Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings		Item Ratings	
	In Substantial Conformity?	Percent Substantially Achieved*	Rating**	Percent Strength
Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	No	65.6		
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents			ANI	69
Item 18: Child/family involvement in case planning			ANI	75
Item 19: Caseworker visits with child			ANI	73
Item 20: Caseworker visits with parents			ANI	64
Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs	No	91.5		
Item 21: Educational needs of child			ANI	91
Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs	No	85.5		
Item 22: Physical health of child			Strength	92
Item 23: Mental health of child			ANI	88

*95 percent 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.

**Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI). For an overall rating of Strength, 90 percent of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of item 21) must be rated as a Strength. Because item 21 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95 percent Strength rating applies.

Table 3. Kansas CFSR Ratings for Systemic Factors and Items

Systemic Factors and Items	In Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Statewide Information System	Yes	4	
Item 24: The State is operating a statewide information system that, at a minimum, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care			Strength
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			ANI
Item 28: Provides a process for TPR proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the ASFA			Strength
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	4	
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 implemented			Strength

Systemic Factors and Items	In Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Training	No	2	
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 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			ANI
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			Strength
Service Array	No	2	
Item 35: The State has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency			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			Strength
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Yes	4	
Item 38: In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the State engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP			Strength
Item 39: The agency develops, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP			Strength
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

Systemic Factors and Items	In Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Yes	4	
Item 41: The State has implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions that are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards			Strength
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			Strength
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)