



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Don Jordan, Secretary

House Social Services Budget Committee
January 21, 2009

Performance Measures in Foster Care

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Chairperson Mast and members of the Committee, I am Don Jordan, the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss SRS Child Welfare performance measurement. Performance measurement is a critical component at SRS in managing child welfare programs, assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of our staff and contractors, and in continuing to improve our services for children and families.

Overview of Child Welfare

The child welfare system in Kansas is governed by the Federal Administration for Children and Families and the Kansas Code for Care of Children. The system is an intricate design of checks, balances and partnerships that help protect the rights of parents while ensuring that children are safe from harm. Good outcomes for individual children and families depend upon systemic accountability.

SRS contracts with community based non-profit organizations to provide Reintegration/Foster Care services in Kansas. When the Court places a child in the custody of the Secretary, the Child Welfare Contractor provides temporary foster care and works with the child and their family on a successful reunification or alternative permanency. Oversight of the Child Welfare providers consists of quarterly case reads for service quality and compliance with federal and state policies and practice requirements. Verification that each provider continues to be accredited by a national organization as well as remain in good standing with KDHE provide additional safeguards for the quality of care. Within the checks and balances the legislature has provided and under the oversight of the court, SRS works for the well being of each child.

Child Welfare Outcome Measures

The Child Welfare outcome measures are organized under the four SRS outcomes that measure how well we are achieving our mission of Protecting Children and Promoting Adult Self-Sufficiency. These four outcomes are:

- Children thrive
- Families and individuals achieve maximum self-sufficiency
- Families and individuals live in safe, stable and supportive environments; and
- Customers are satisfied with services

Under each child welfare outcome there are several goals, each of which has a specific indicator that we are measuring. Each indicator displays an established threshold, actual agency performance in FY 2007 and FY 2008, and projected performance in FY 2009 and FY 2010. The indicators reflect process and program measures for efficiency and effectiveness. The Federal Administration of Children and Families has extensive reporting requirements for child and family safety, permanency and well-being, and much of what we measure is mandated by these requirements. Data for the Child Welfare outcome indicators come from quarterly case reviews completed by agency staff and information reported in the Child Welfare Family and Child Tracking System (FACTS). Case review instruments are located on the agency website

<http://www.srs.ks.gov/agency/cfs/Pages/CFSOutcomesandReports.aspx> .

Outcomes Based Contracting – Child Welfare

As mentioned earlier, a significant amount of our work in child welfare is done through contracting partners. During the recent negotiation of the FY2010 Child Welfare contracts, efficiencies were gained resulting in a savings of \$14.1 million in FY2010. By examining outcomes, costs, and scope of services in contracts for foster care and family preservation, efficiencies were gained reducing administrative costs of foster care case management into one contract in each of the 5 regions rather than having foster care services as a requirement in both the contracts of family preservation and foster care.

Kansas enjoys a history of performance outcomes that measure safety and permanency of children and families in the child welfare system. In the past ten years, Kansas developed a framework of outcomes, measures, standards, and success indicators that reflect national, widely-shared performance objectives in child welfare practice. At the national level, Section 203(a) of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) requires reporting of child welfare outcomes. The federal government uses a Child and Family Services Review to assess the performance of each state in achieving positive outcomes for youth and families.

Kansas pioneered performance outcomes through the state's child welfare contracts before federal reporting of outcomes was developed. Many outcomes that Kansas established in our initial child welfare contracts were incorporated when federal measures were developed. Kansas also captures features beyond federal requirements including accountability measures for child protective services and success indicators for well being.

The outcomes and indicators for Kansas child welfare are contained in the table below. Performance is published on the agency website <http://www.srskansas.org/CFS/datareports09.html> . For the federal outcomes below, the national standards are based on calculations at the 75th percentile and median performance of all states.

Outcome	Goal or Accountability Measure	✓ ¹	FY07	FY08	FY09 Projected	FY2010 Projected
Children Are Safe	94.6% or more of children are safe from recurrent maltreatment	✓	96.8%	97.3%	97.3%	97.3%
	99.68% or more of children are safe in foster care	✓	99.92%	99.9%	99.98%	99.9%
	95% of families in Family Preservation Program will have children safely maintained at home.		N/A	N/A	N/A	95%
Children have timely and permanent reunification	69.9% of children released from custody of the Secretary and reunified are released from custody within 12 months of entering foster care	✓	65.8%	69.5%	69.5%	69.5%
	Children discharged from custody and reunified have a median length of stay of 6.5 months or less	✓	8.6 months	8.2 months	8.2 months	8.2 mos.
	15% or less of children will not re enter custody within 12 months of release of custody .	✓	9.1%	8.1%	8.1%	8.1%
Children have timely adoption	26.8% or more of children released from custody of the Secretary for reason of adoption are adopted within 24 months of entering foster care.	✓	32.2%	28.9%	28.9%	28.9%
	Children discharged from custody for reason of adoption have a median length of stay of 32.4 months or less	✓	30.1 months	30.8 months	30.8 months	30.8 months
	20.2% or more of children will show progress toward adoption	✓	26.5%	25.2%	25.2%	25.2%
	8.8% or more of children will become legally free for adoption in a timely manner	✓	8.6%	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
	45.8% or more of children legally free for adoption are adopted timely	✓	35.3%	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
Children in care for a long period of time have timely permanency	25.0% or more of Children in foster care for two years will be released from custody before their 18 th birthday	✓	33.0%	32.1%	32.1%	32.1%
	96.8% or more of children adopted are adopted before their 18 th birthday	✓	91.8%	88.3%	88.3%	88.3%
	47.8% or less of young adults released from custody are in foster care for 3 years or longer	✓	28.8%	32.7%	32.7%	32.7%

¹A check mark ✓ indicates the measure is a federal outcome for which a national median is reflected as performance standard and federal fiscal year performance displayed.

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Outcome	Goal or Accountability Measure	✓	FY07	FY08	FY09 Projected	FY2010 Projected
Children in foster care have stable placements	83.3% of children in care less than 12 months have 2 or fewer placements in foster care	✓	72.7%	75.2%	75.2%	75.2%
	59.9% of children in care 12 -24 months have 2 or fewer placements in foster care	✓	52.3%	51.2%	51.2%	51.2%
	33.9% of children in care 24 months or longer have 2 or fewer placements in foster care	✓	28.3%	26.9%	26.9%	26.9%
Children in foster care reside in a family like setting	90% of children in foster care will reside in a family placement setting (not a group or residential facility) [National data is 82%]		91.5%	91.7%	91.7%	91.7%
Children remain in the same school when possible	Children age 6 and older removed into foster care will maintain attendance at the same school they attended prior to removal (respective to grade and promotion to middle or high school) (Note: There is no current performance standard for this success indicator)		16.6%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%
Children live with siblings whenever possible	Children in foster care who have siblings live with siblings (Note: There is no current performance standard for this success indicator)		72.3%	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%
Children live with relatives whenever possible	Children in foster care are placed with a relative (Note: There is no current performance standard for this success indicator. [National data is 25.7%)		25.5%	25.3%	25.3%	25.3%
Youth have a positive adult role model	Youth who leave foster care as an adult will have an adult in their life who is invested in their future.		97.1%	98.2%	98.2%	98.2%
Youth maintain a full set of credits each semester	Youth age 15 and older obtain a full set of credits each semester ((Note: There is not currently a performance standard for this success indicator)		N/A	N/A	N/A	75%
Youth achieve high school education	Youth who leave foster care as an adult will achieve a high school diploma or GED (Note: There is not currently a performance standard for this success indicator, national data is estimated at 50%)		N/A	N/A	N/A	80%

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Contractor performance is measured through outcomes. When outcomes are not met, contractors are required to develop program improvement strategies and demonstrate improved performance in accordance with the state's Children and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan. Failure to improve outcomes may result in contract termination.

Within SRS, outcomes-based contracting is most sophisticated for the child welfare system. However, outcome measures are also incorporated in other grants and contracts awarded by SRS. We have placed an increased focus in the last three years on developing staff capacity to define these measures and evaluate contractor performance based on outcomes.

In summary, as a public agency, we take accountability very seriously. Performance measurement focused on customer outcomes is critical in ensuring our efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out our responsibilities, and continuing to improve our services to Kansas citizens.