



ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT
of the
FFY 2015 – 2019
ND CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN

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Children & Family Services Division
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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Collaboration

The Children and Family Services Division (see [Attachment A](#)) of the North Dakota Department of Human Services has engaged statewide partners in substantial, ongoing and meaningful collaboration in the implementation of the 2015-2019 CFS. Ongoing service coordination has continued through this past year with all stakeholders as described on pages 101-105 and 111 of the 2015-2019 CFSP. Additional involvement of various partners specific to the accomplishment of the goals will be described in section 3 of this report.

In preparation for the development of the 2016 APSR, CFS reached out to multiple stakeholder groups, including the County Director's Association, the Children and Family Services Committee (CFS Committee) on two separate occasions, and the County Supervisor's Committee. CFS also expressly sought the feedback from partners, tribes, courts who assisted in the development of the CFSP through email. Due to budget limitations and schedules, a face to face meeting was not feasible. However, feedback was sought and received which proved valuable to the completion of the 2016 APSR.

While reviewing the Vision, Mission and Goals with the CFS Committee, recommendations were received to recognize the role that communities have in assisting the child welfare community to achieve its vision. There is no change to the Vision and Mission statement, and the following represents the revised Values & Principles:

Vision

Safe Children - Strong Families

Mission

To work together to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families by engaging and educating communities and systems to jointly provide services.

Values & Principles

- Safety of children is paramount
- Unconditional commitment to working with families and children is provided
- Families are full and active partners and colleagues
- Healthy communities offer both formal and informal supports to families which helps to prevent harm to children
- Services are culturally responsive

- The process is team driven
- Services focus on strengths and competencies of families, not on deficiencies and problems
- Service plans are outcome-based
- Services and plans are individualized to meet the needs of children and families
- Resources and supports, both in and out of the family, are utilized for solutions
- Family engagement is essential to achieving safety, permanency and well-being for children
- Workforce development and training are critical for the efficient and effective delivery of child welfare services

II. UPDATE ON ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

1. SAFETY

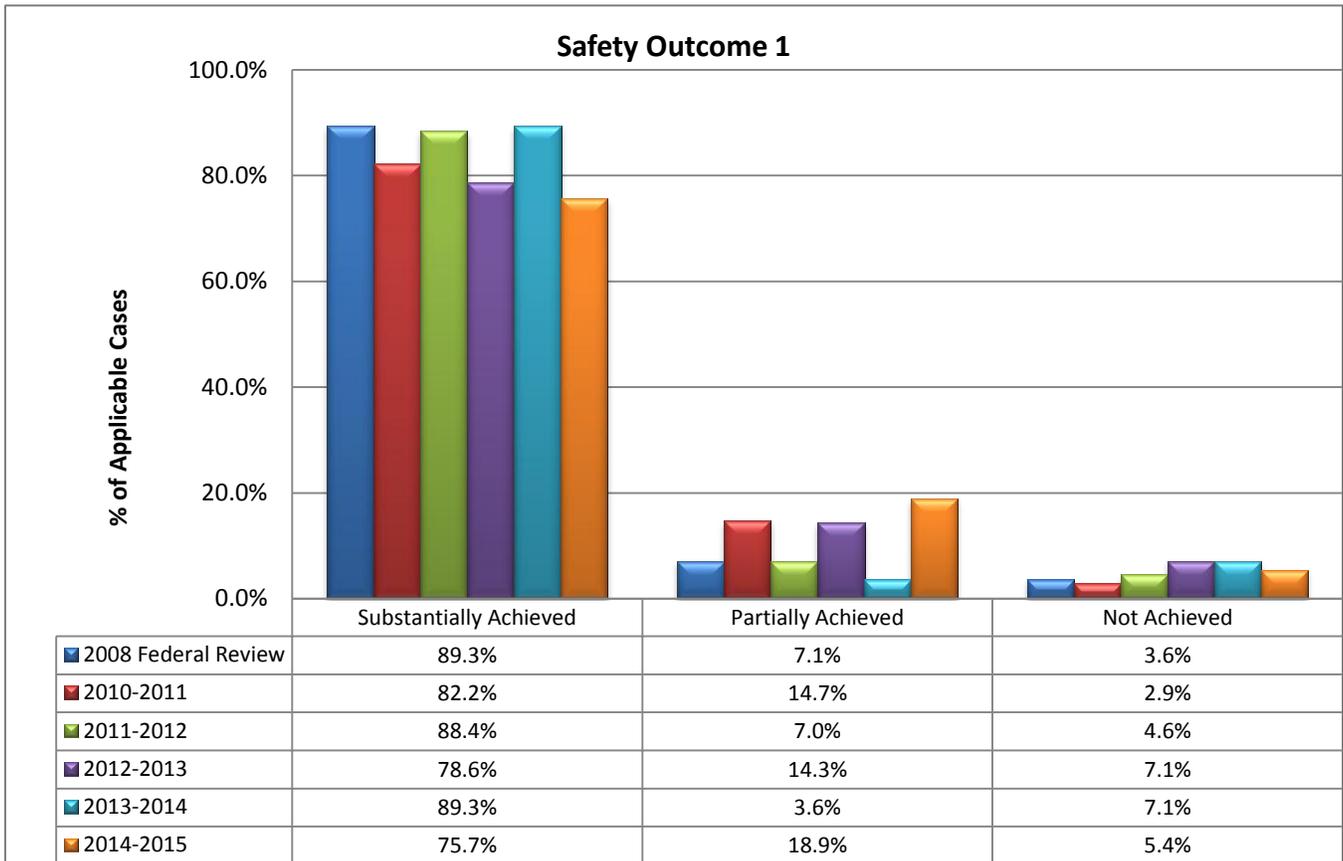
A. 3rd Round Statewide Data Indicators for Safety Outcome 1:

1. **Maltreatment in foster care:** The number of victimizations per 100,000 days in foster care
 - a. National Standard = 8.50
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 3.33 (met)

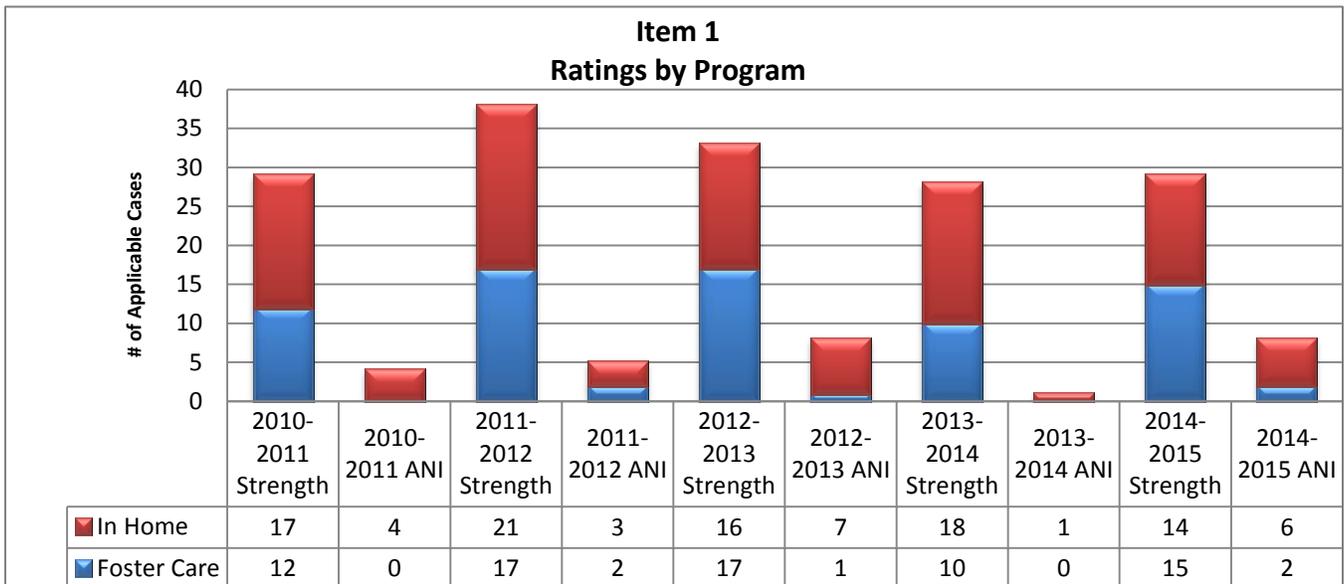
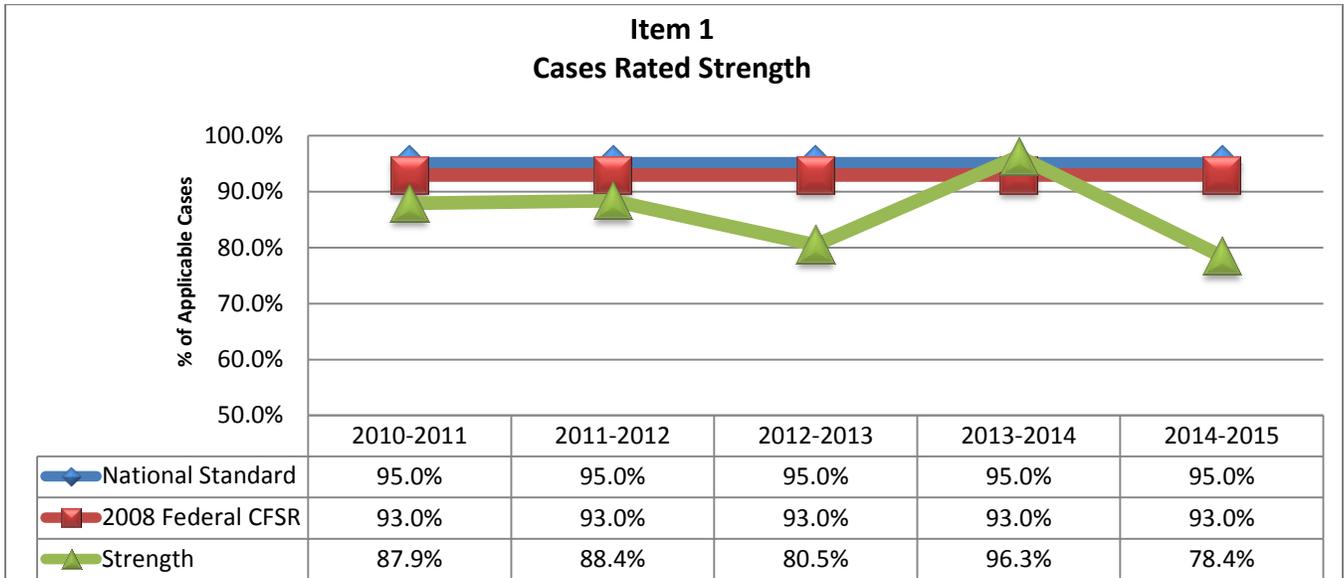
2. **Recurrence of maltreatment:** Percentage of children who experience recurring maltreatment within 12 months
 - a. National Standard = 9.1%
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 5.2% (met)

B. 2015 ND Case Review Data:

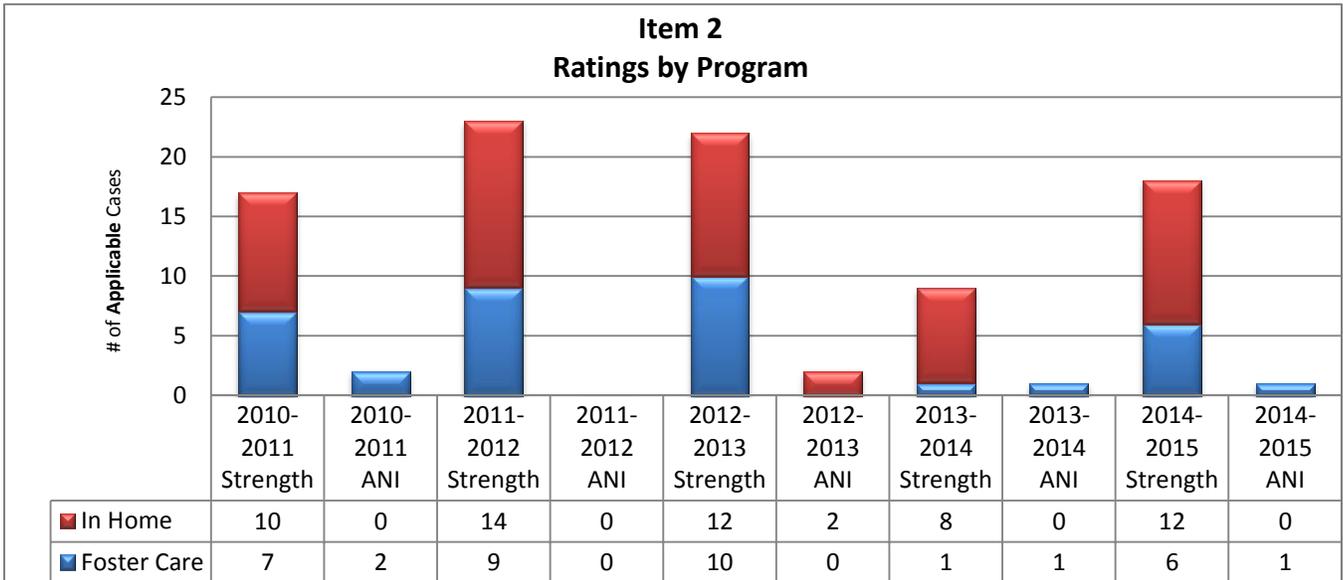
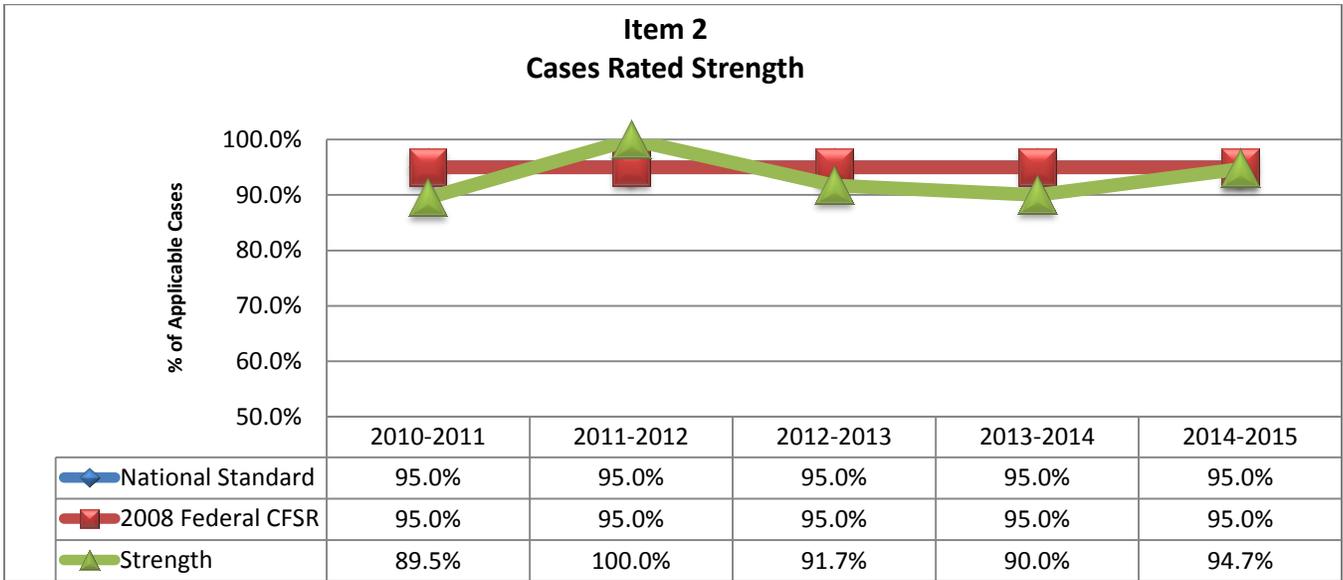
1. **Safety Outcome 1:** Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect



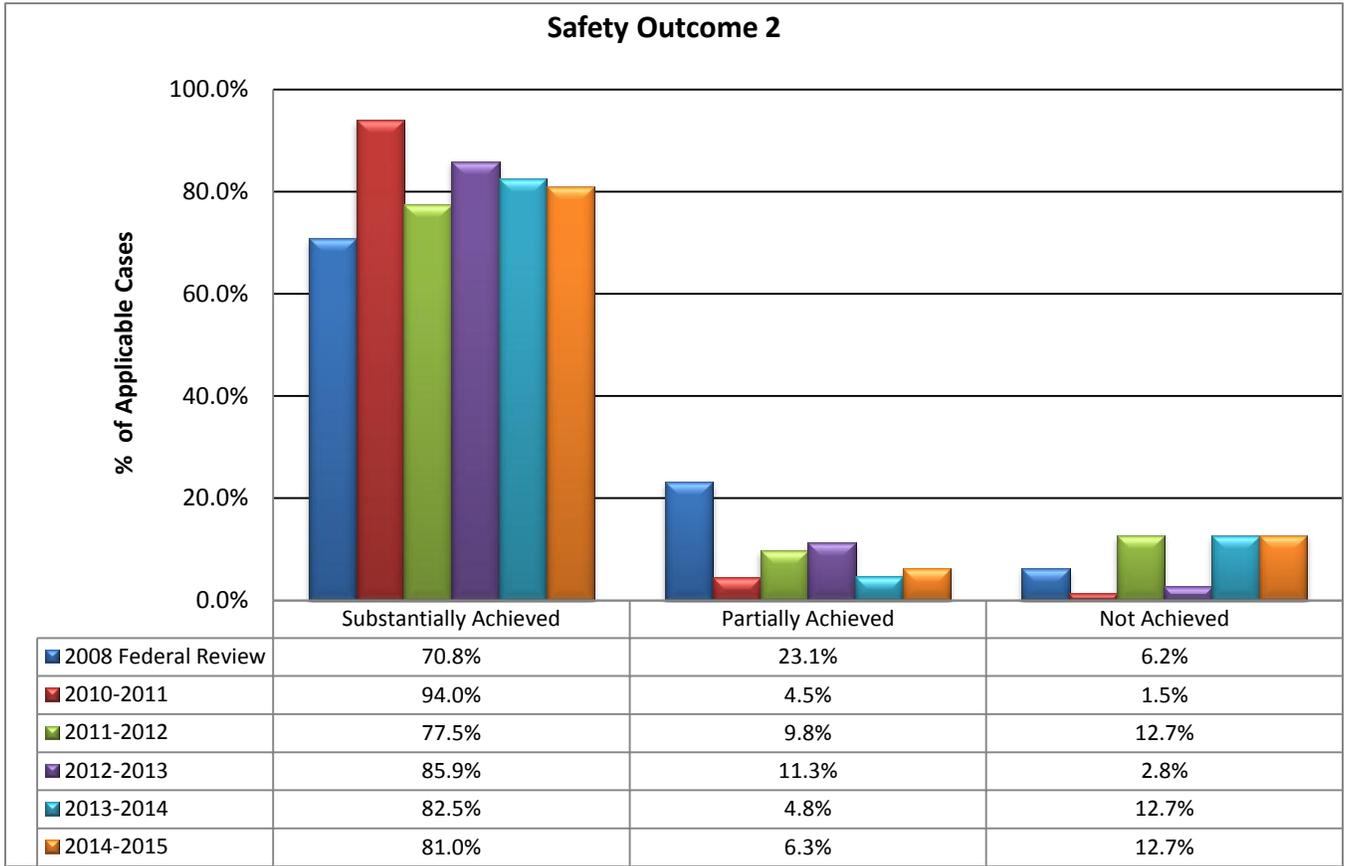
- a. **Item 1, timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment:** This item was rated Strength in 86% of the applicable cases reviewed since 2010.



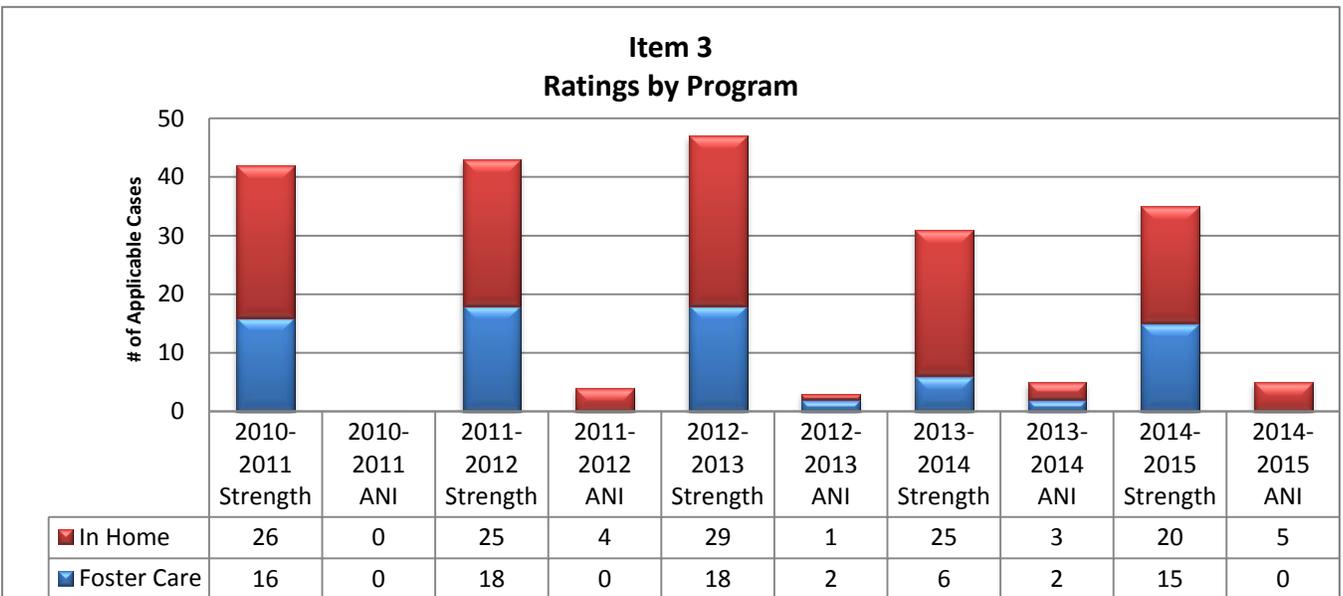
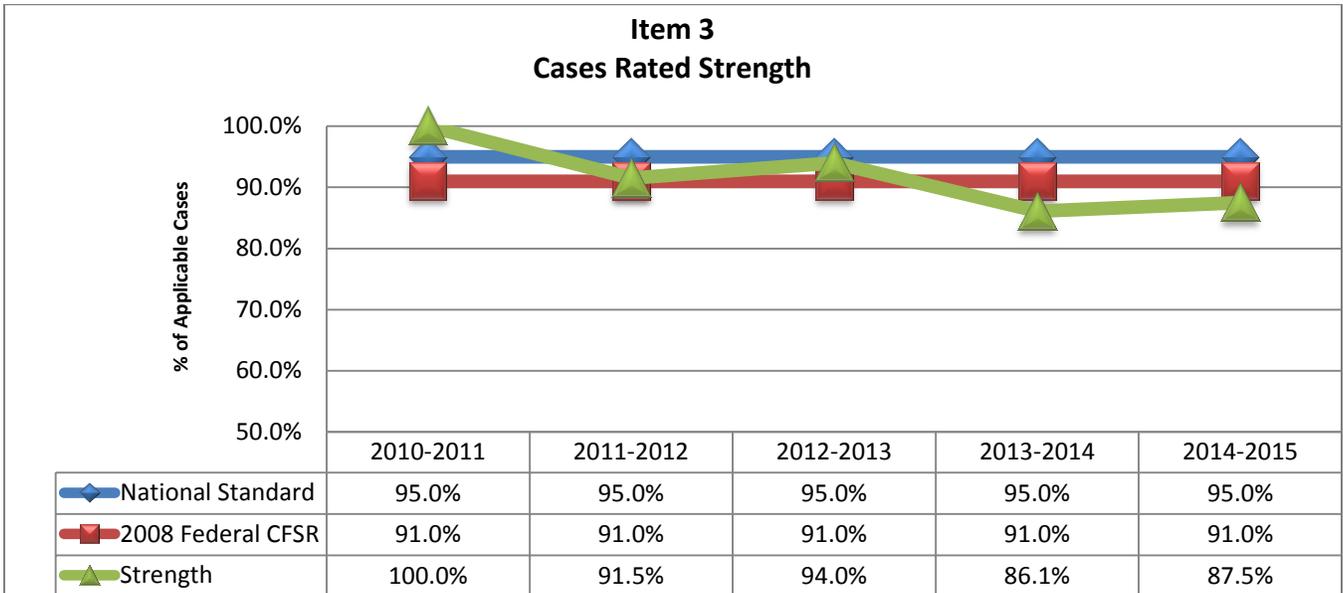
b. Item 2, repeat maltreatment: This item was rated Strength in 94% of the applicable cases reviewed since 2010. This item was not applicable in most cases reviewed; therefore, the data is based on a small sample size.



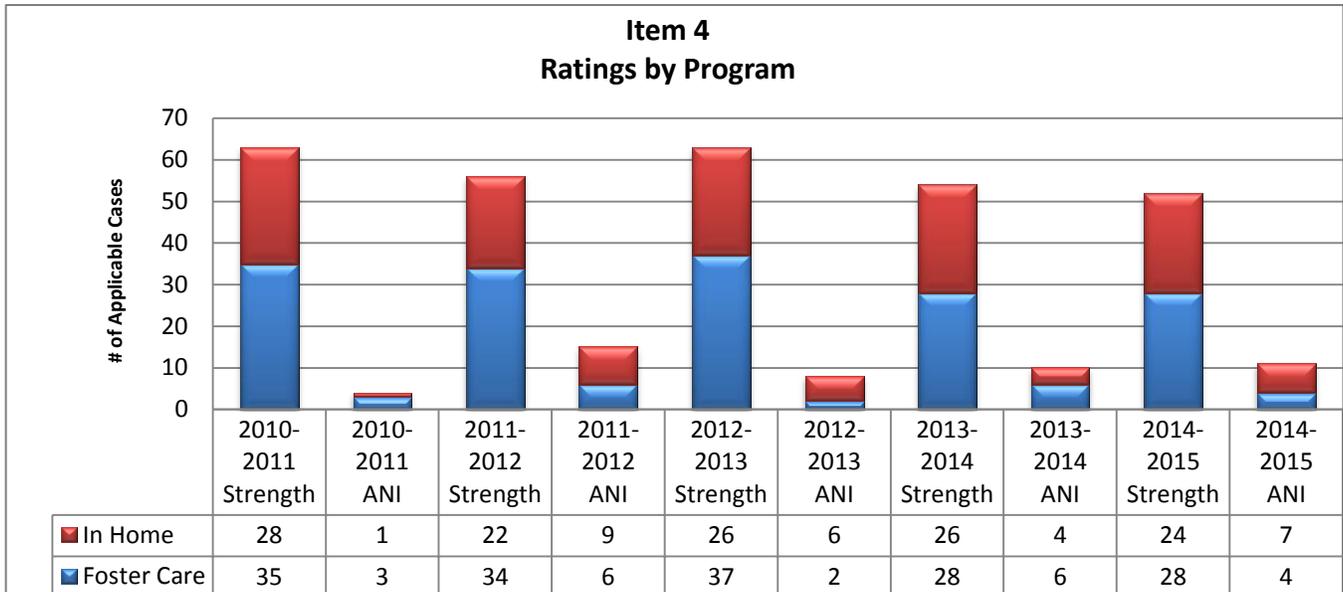
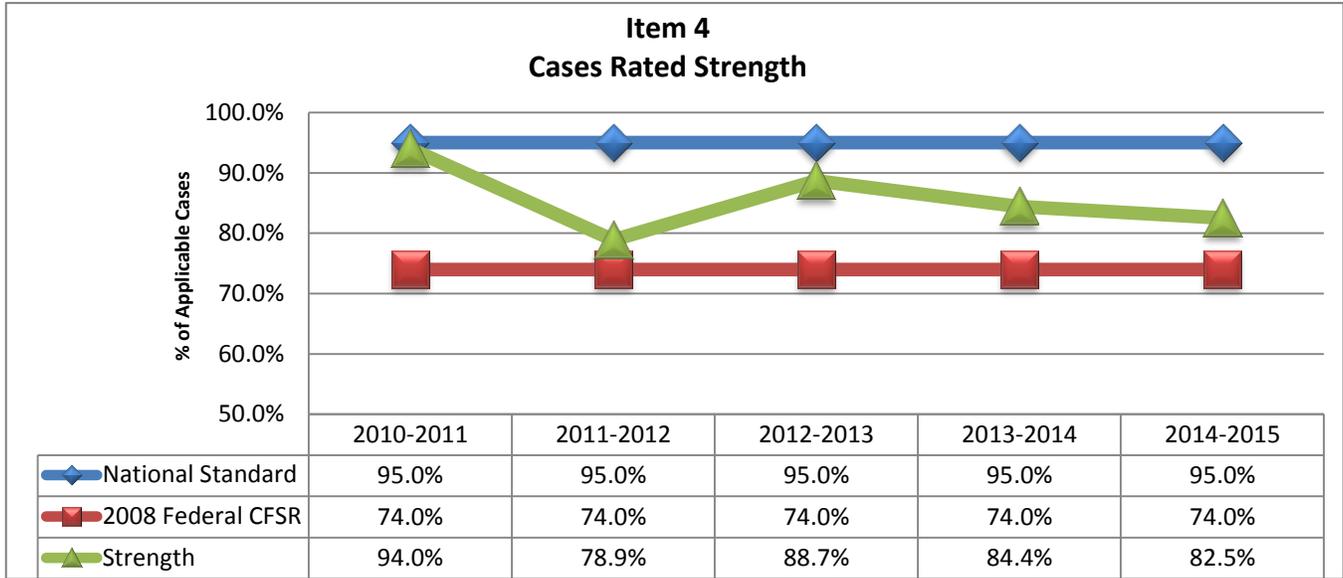
2. Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate



- a. **Item 3, services to the family to protect the child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care:** This item was rated Strength in 92% of the applicable cases reviewed since 2010.

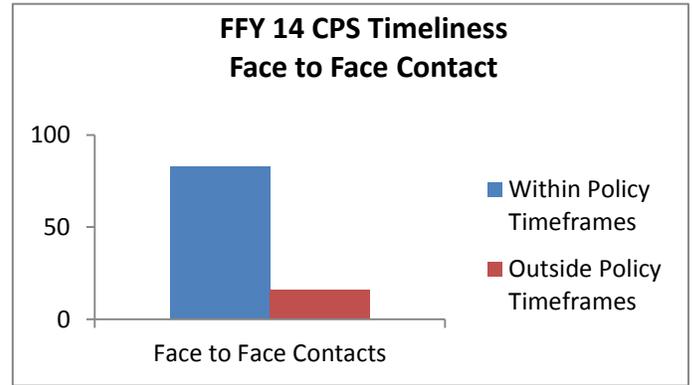
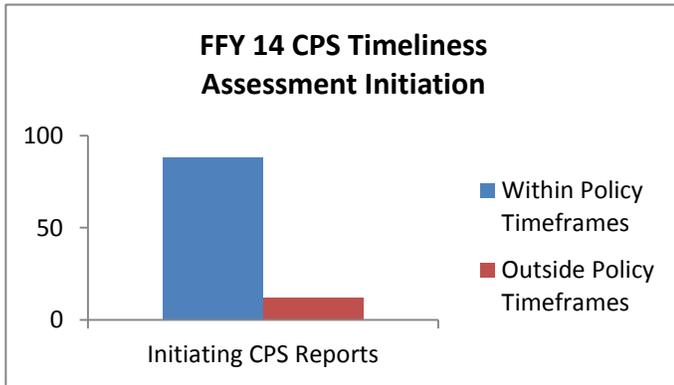


b. Item 4, risk assessment and safety management: Of the 336 cases reviewed since May 2010, 280 (83%) received a rating of Strength. Of the 153 in-home cases, 126 (82%) received a rating of Strength. Of the 183 foster care cases, 162 (89%) received a rating of Strength.



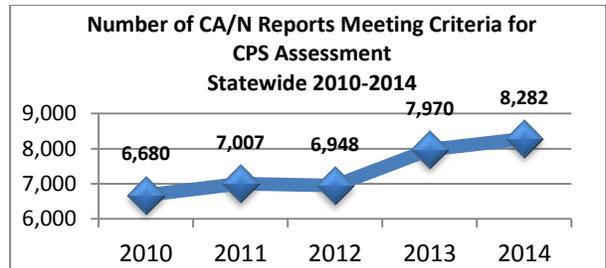
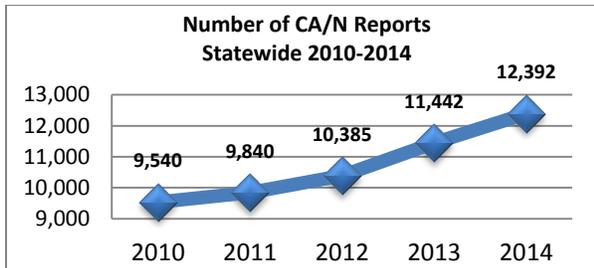
C. ND Data regarding Timeliness of Initiating CPS Reports and Face to Face Visits

Recent data from the state’s information system indicated that the majority of CPS reports (88%) were being responded to within North Dakota’s policy timeframes and face-to-face contact was being made in accordance with the state’s timeframes in 83% of the cases. In the coming year, the state plans to learn more about the barriers in this area.



D. Safety: Practice & Systemic Strengths and Challenges

The strengths and challenges remain as described in the 2015-2016 CFSP Assessment of Performance. North Dakota has experienced an 8% increase in the number of CPS reports and an almost 4% increase in full assessments in the past year. As noted in the CFSP, population growth has contributed to the rise in reports and assessments. Another contributing factor may be a rise in the number of mandated reporters participating in online mandated reporter training. Nearly 900 mandated reporters registered and completed the online training in calendar year 2014. See NCANDS data trends below.



2. PERMANENCY

A. Statewide Data Indicators for Permanency Outcome 1:

1. Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care
 - a. National Standard = 40.5%
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 38.9% (not met)

2. Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months
 - a. National Standard = 43.6%
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 38.5% (no difference)

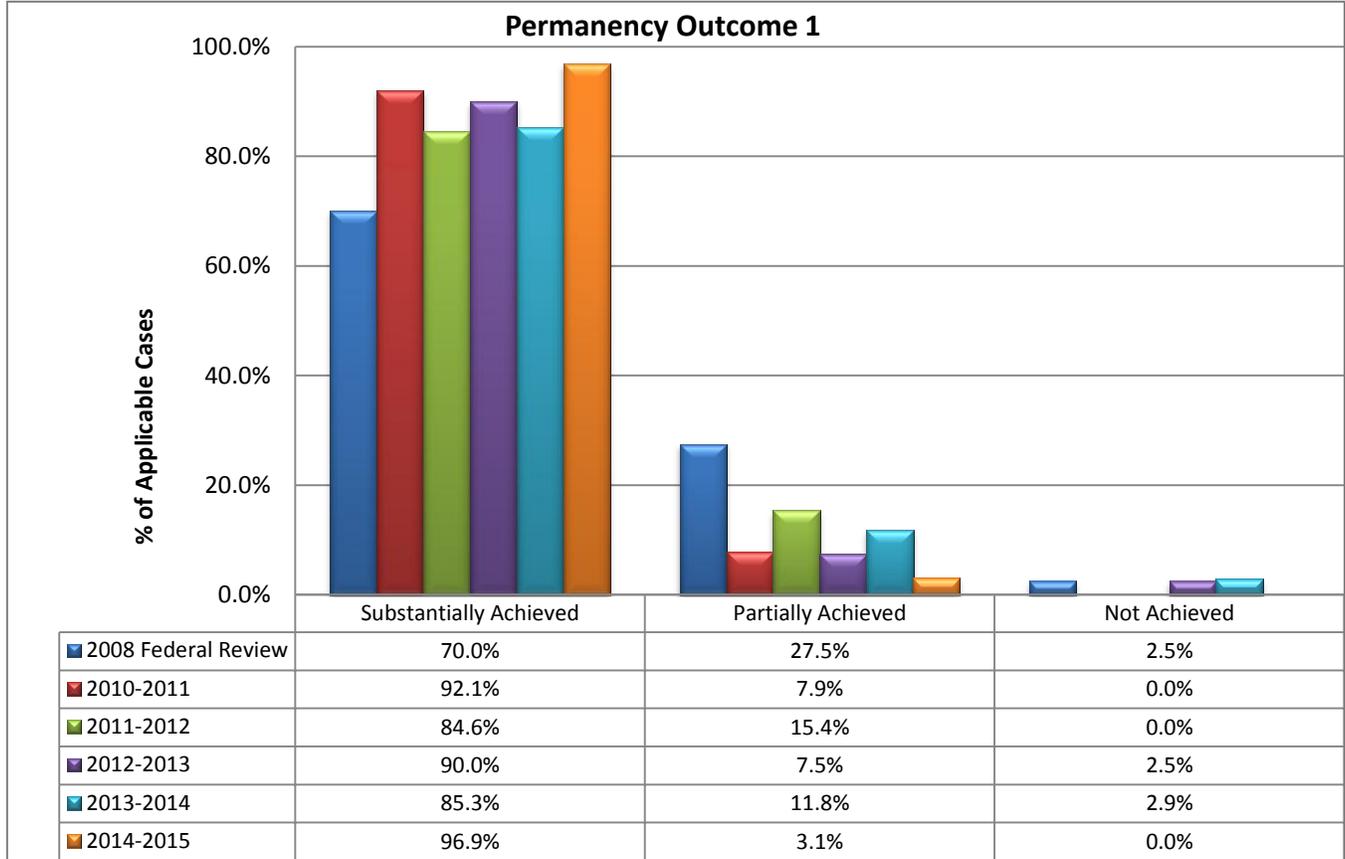
3. Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more
 - a. National Standard = 30.3%
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 18.9% (not met)

4. Re-entry to foster care in 12 months
 - a. National Standard = 8.3%
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 6.8% (no difference)

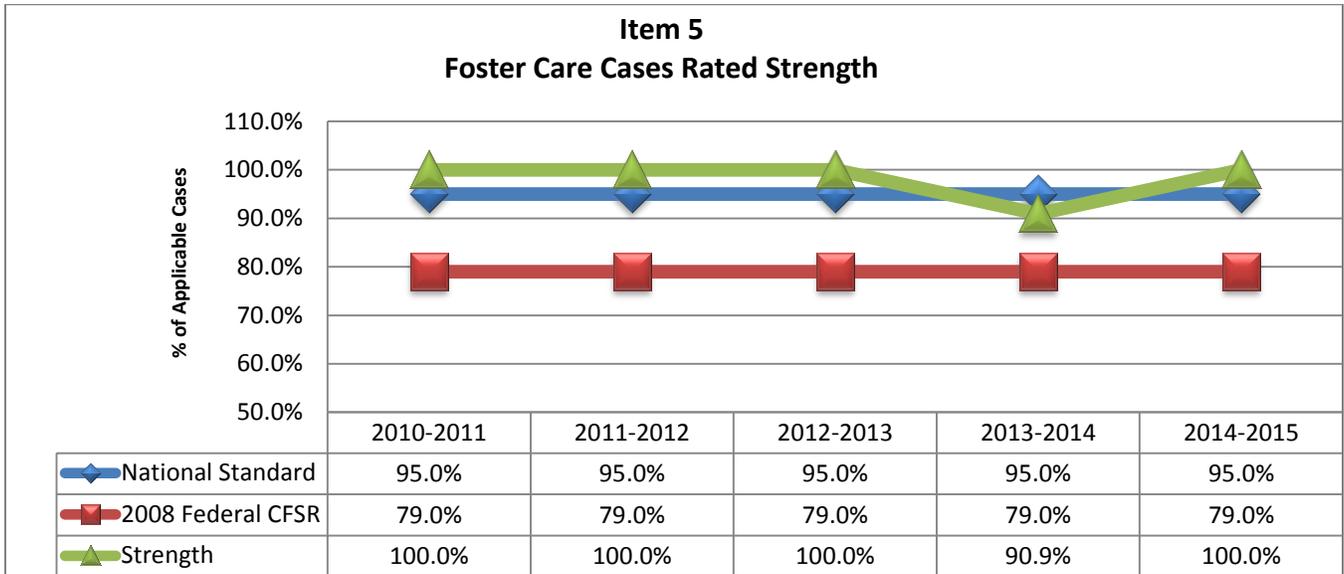
5. Placement stability: The number of moves per 1,000 days in foster care
 - a. National Standard = 4.12
 - b. ND Observed Performance = 5.40 (not met)

B. ND Case Review Data

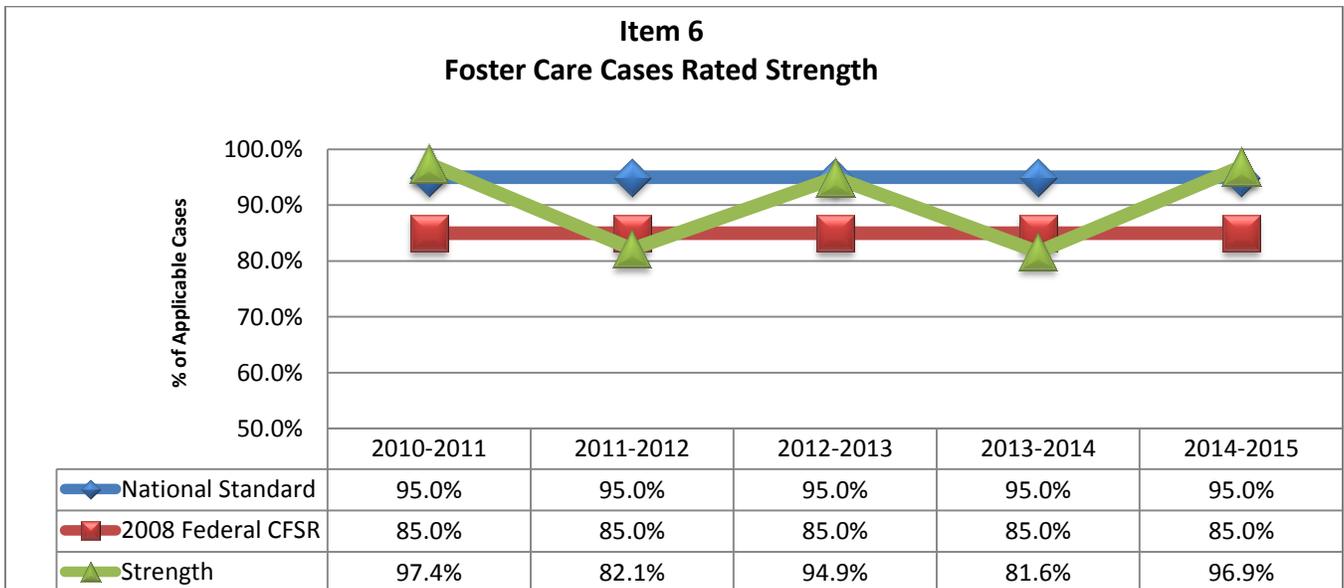
1. Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations



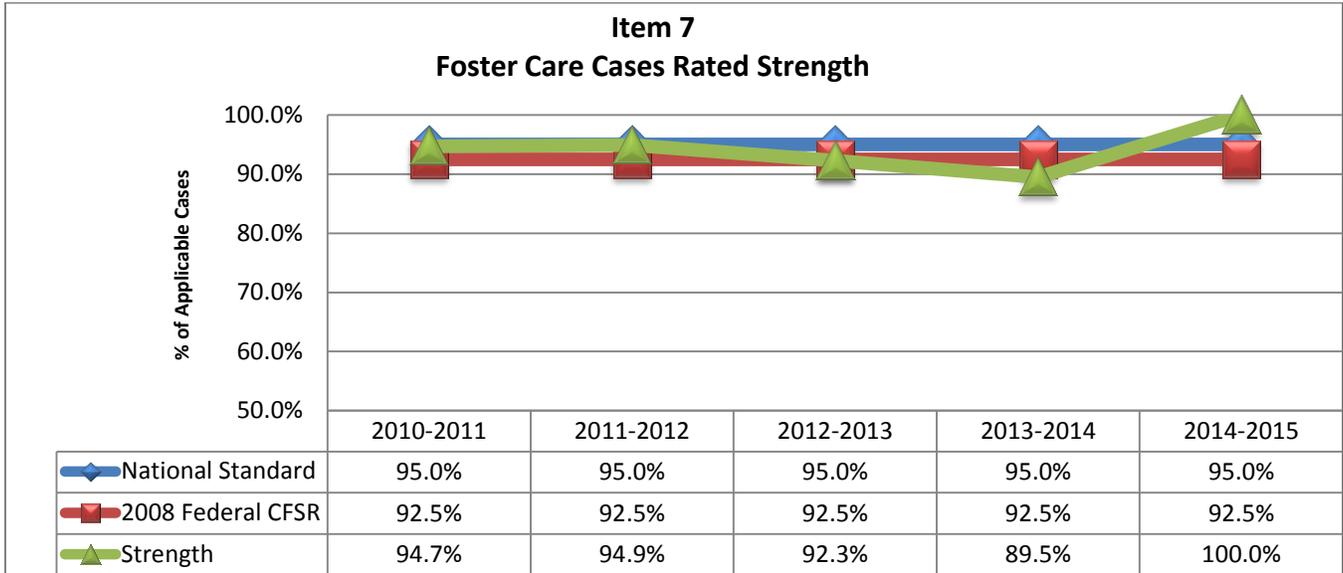
- a. **Item 5, foster care re-entries:** In the past five years 1 out of 85 applicable cases was rated ANI. Thus, 99% of the cases reviewed received a rating of Strength.



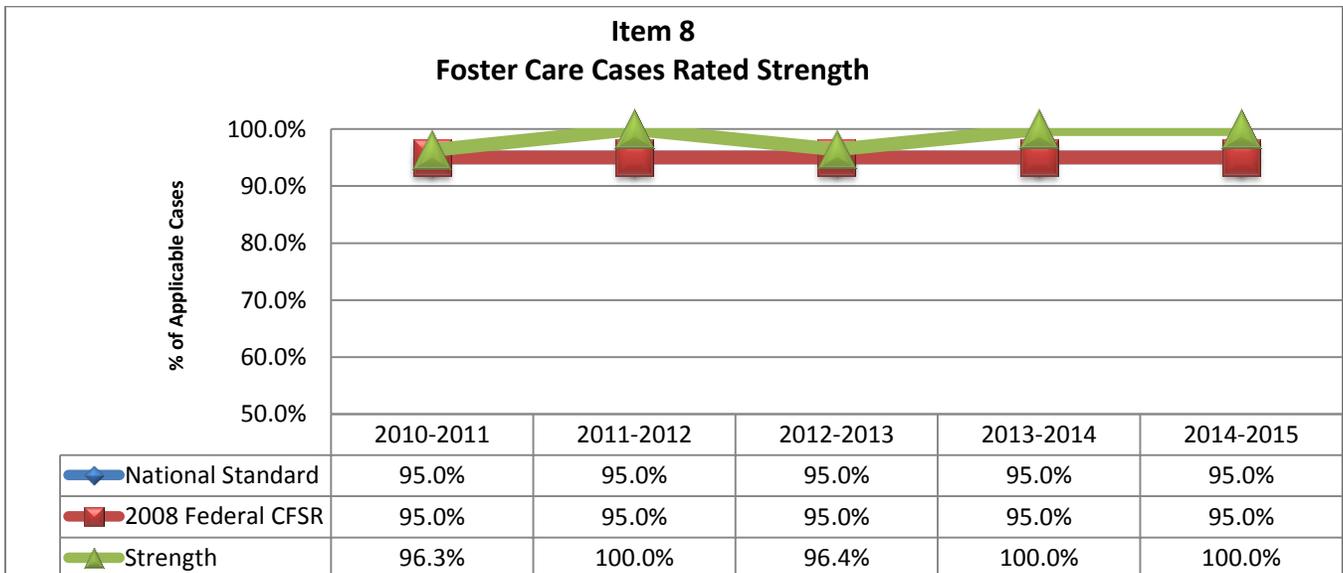
- b. **Item 6, stability of the foster care placement:** This item was rated Strength in 90% of the applicable cases reviewed since 2010.



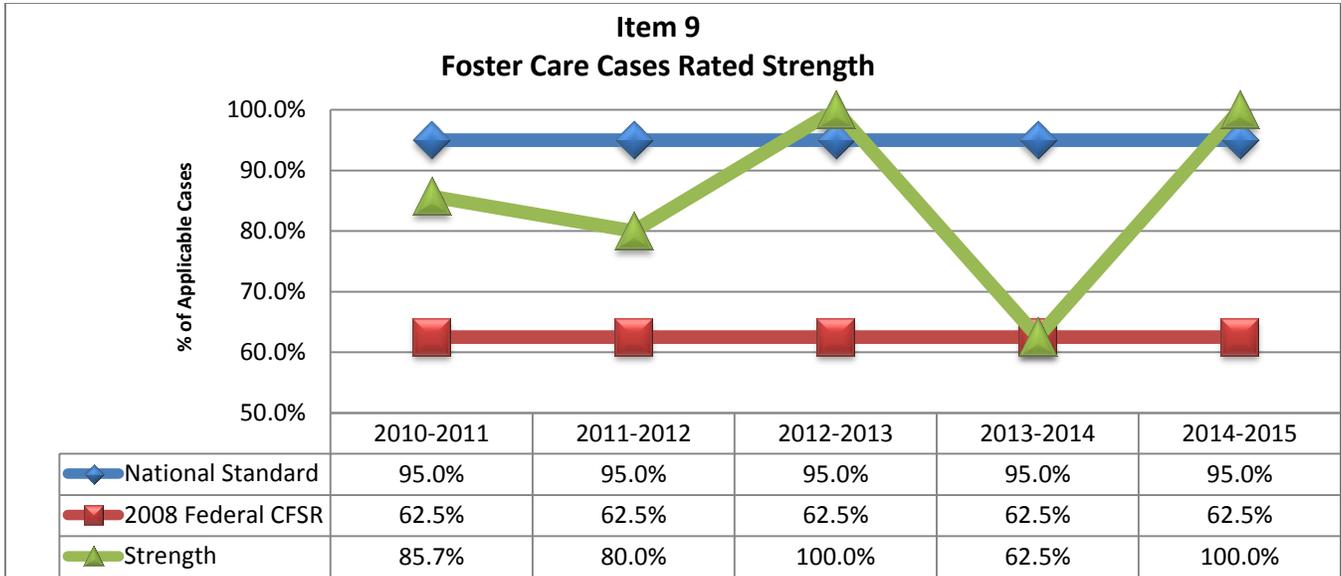
c. Item 7, permanency goal for the child: This item was rated Strength in 93% of the applicable cases reviewed since 2010.



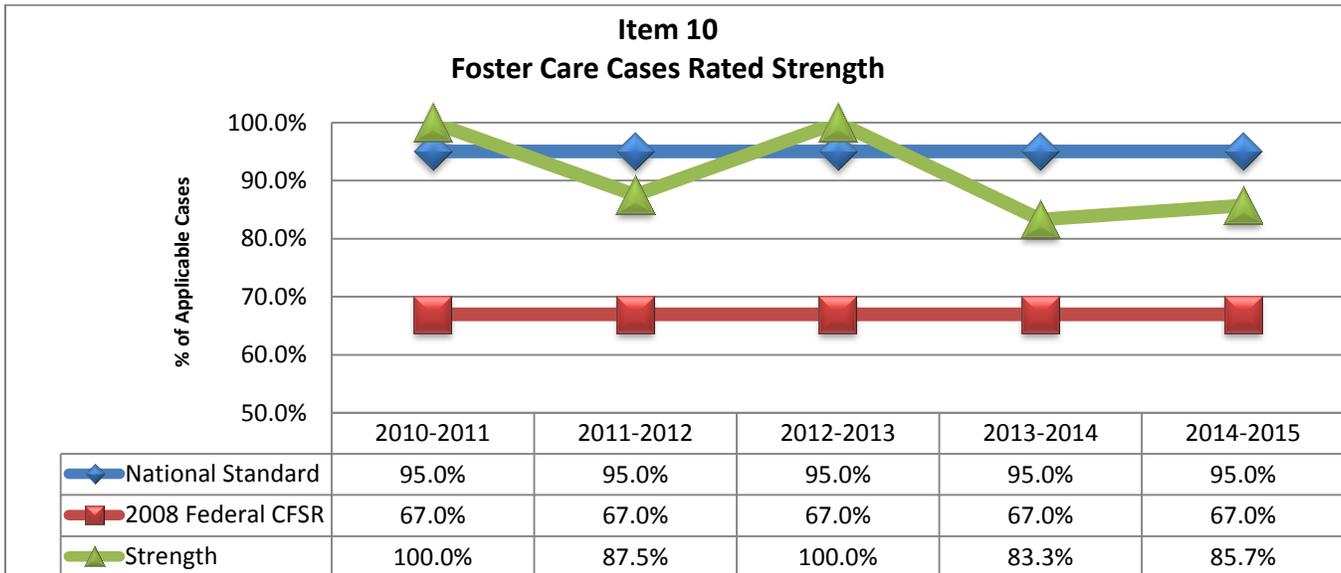
d. Item 8, reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives: Of the 100 applicable foster care cases reviewed over the past five years, 103 (97%) received a rating of Strength for this item.



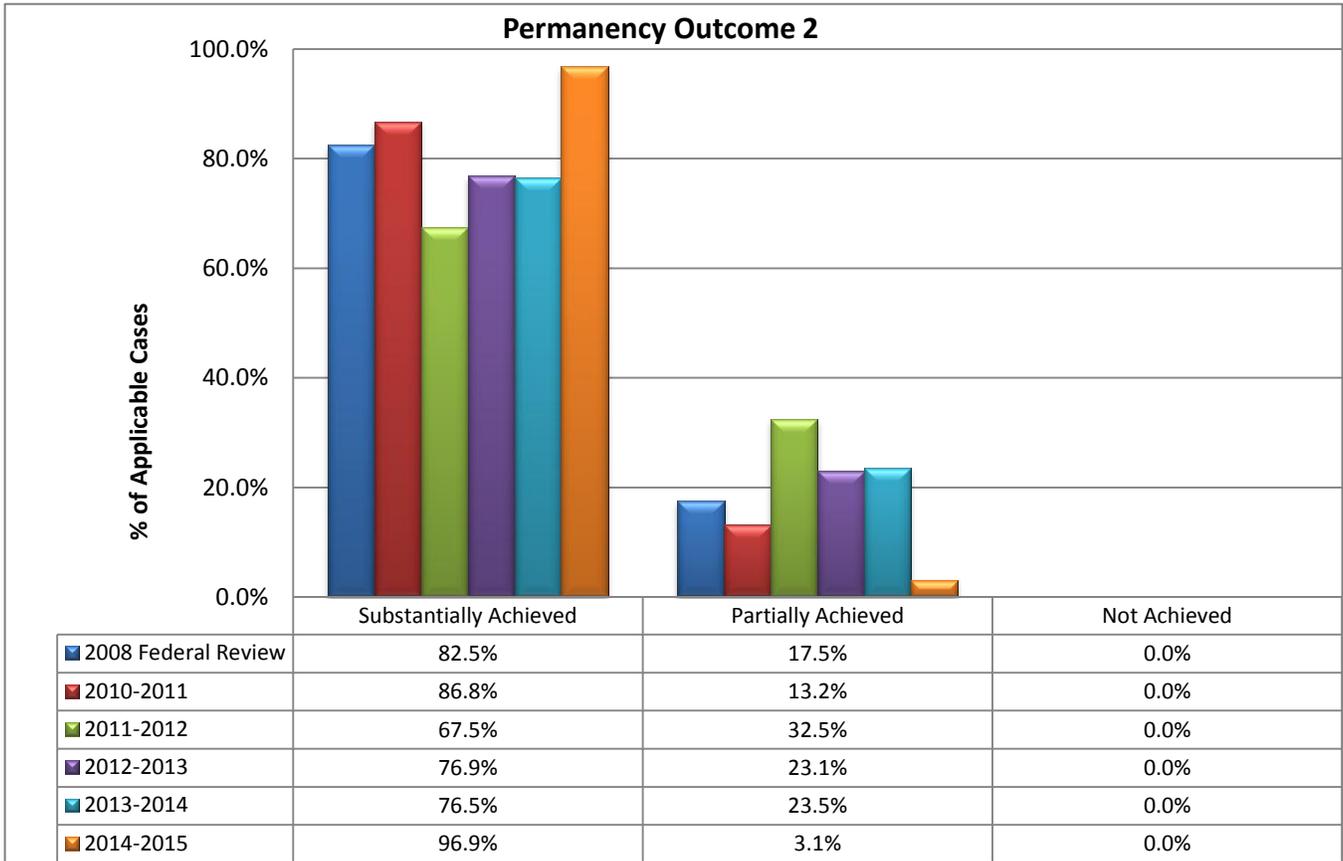
e. Item 9, adoption: Very few foster care cases reviewed have this permanency goal as either the primary or concurrent. Over the past five years, 35 cases were applicable for this item and 30 (86%) of these cases received a rating of Strength.



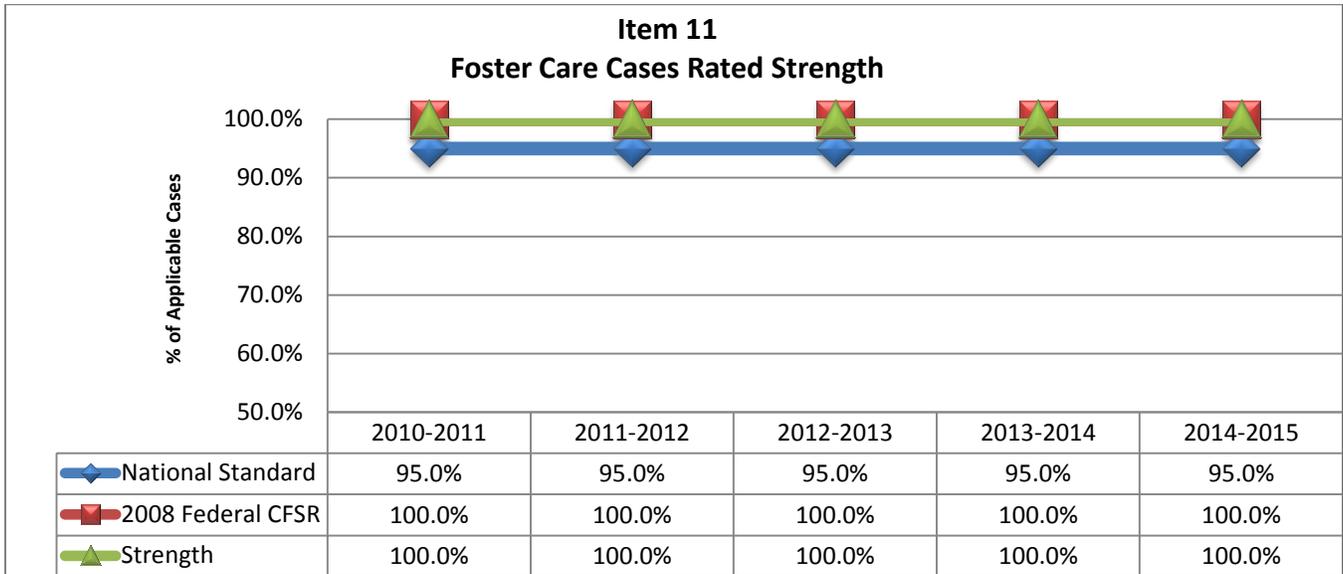
f. Item 10, other planned permanent living arrangement: This item was not applicable in most foster care cases reviewed; therefore, the data is based on a small sample size. Out of the 62 applicable cases reviewed over the past five years, 57 (92%) received a rating of Strength.



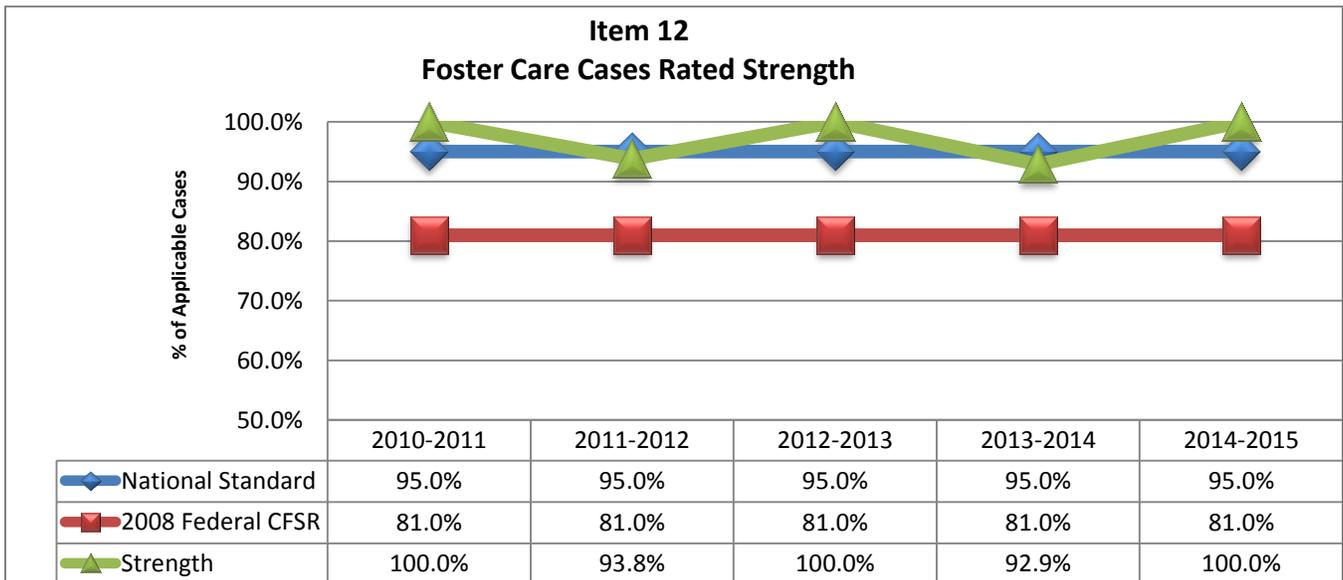
2. Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children



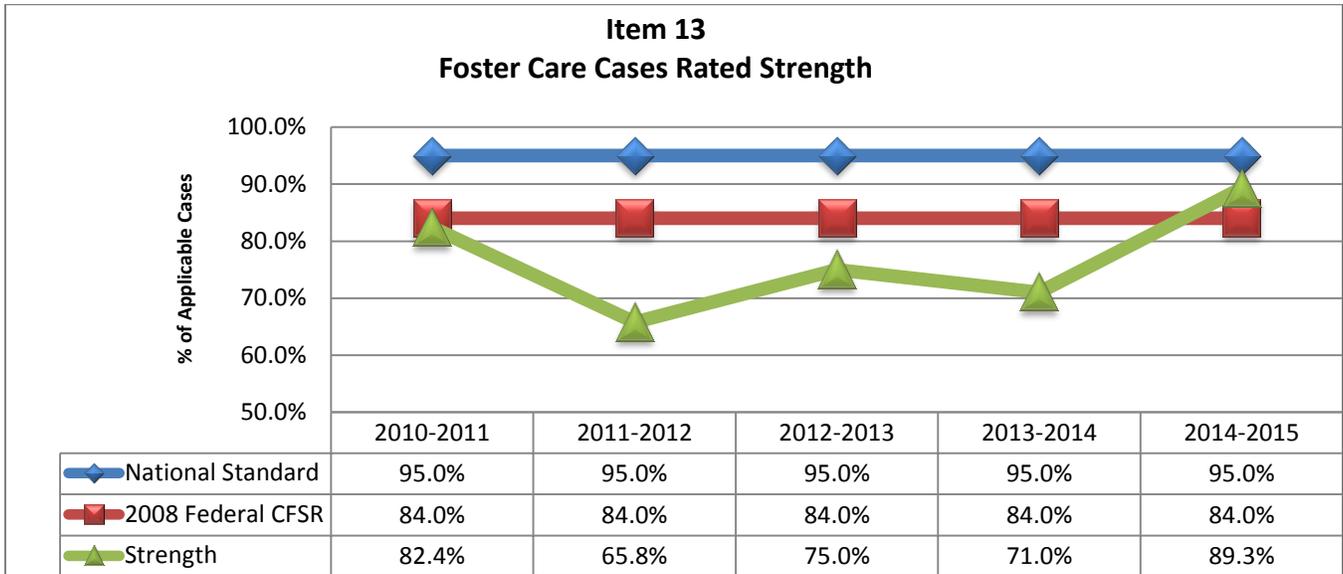
- a. **Item 11, Proximity of the foster care placement:** Over the past five years, all applicable foster care cases (100%) received a rating of Strength for this item.



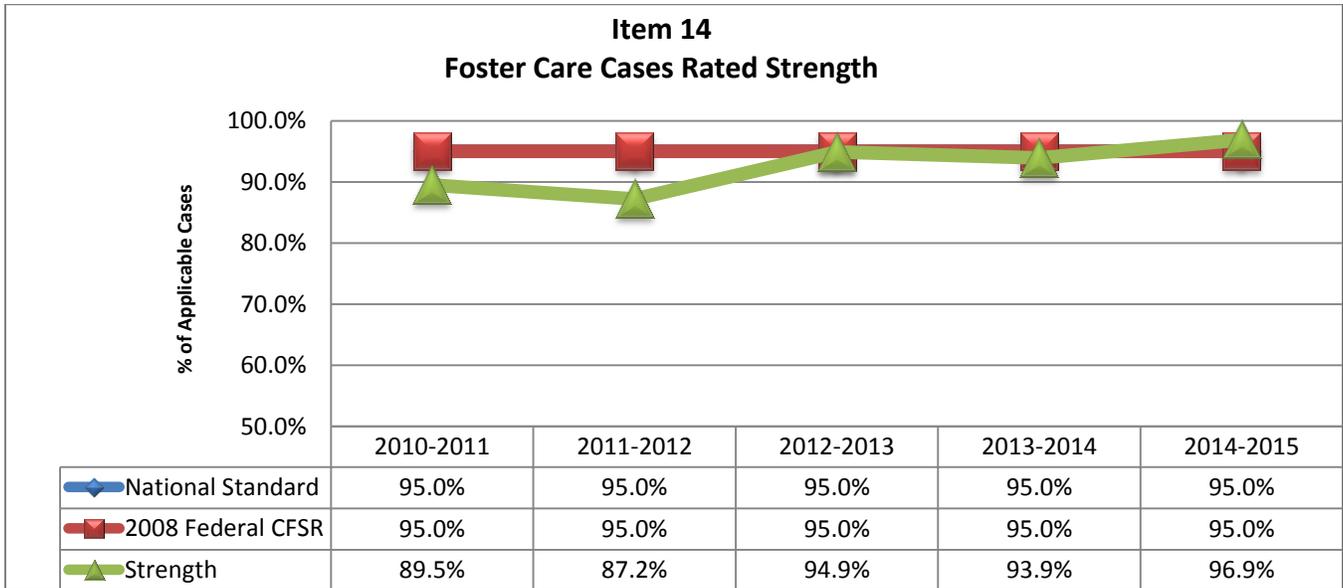
- b. **Item 12, placement with siblings:** This item was not applicable in most cases reviewed; therefore, the data is based on a small sample size. Of the applicable cases reviewed over the past five years, 97% received a rating of Strength.



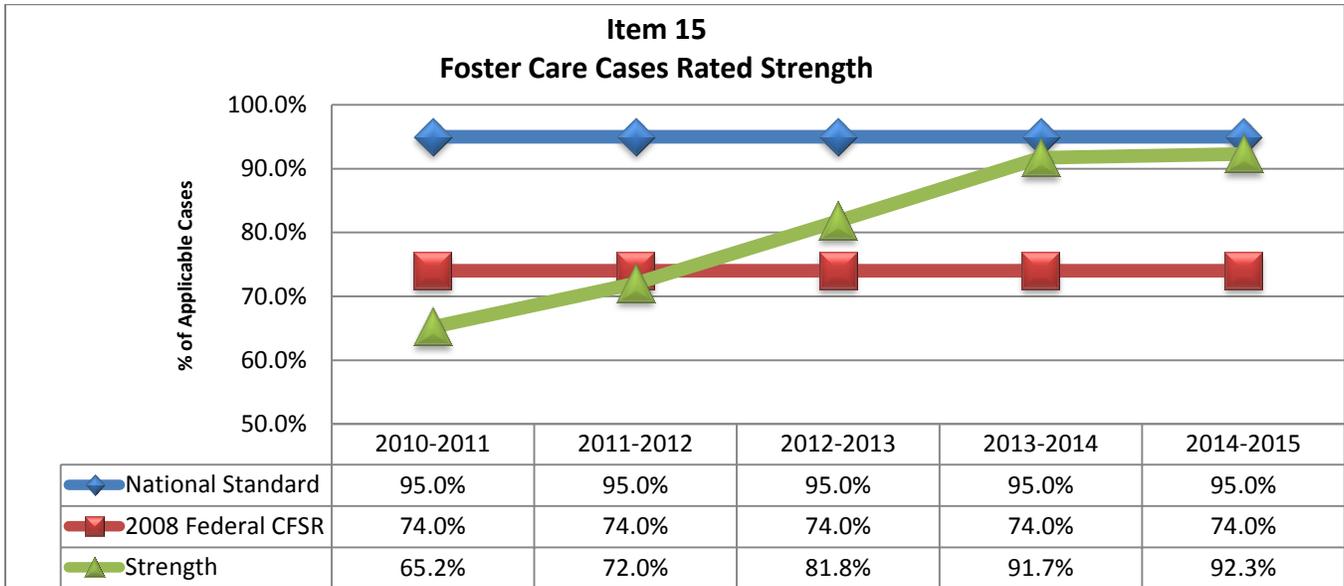
- c. Item 13, Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care:** Of the applicable foster care cases reviewed in the past five years, 77% received a rating of Strength for this item.



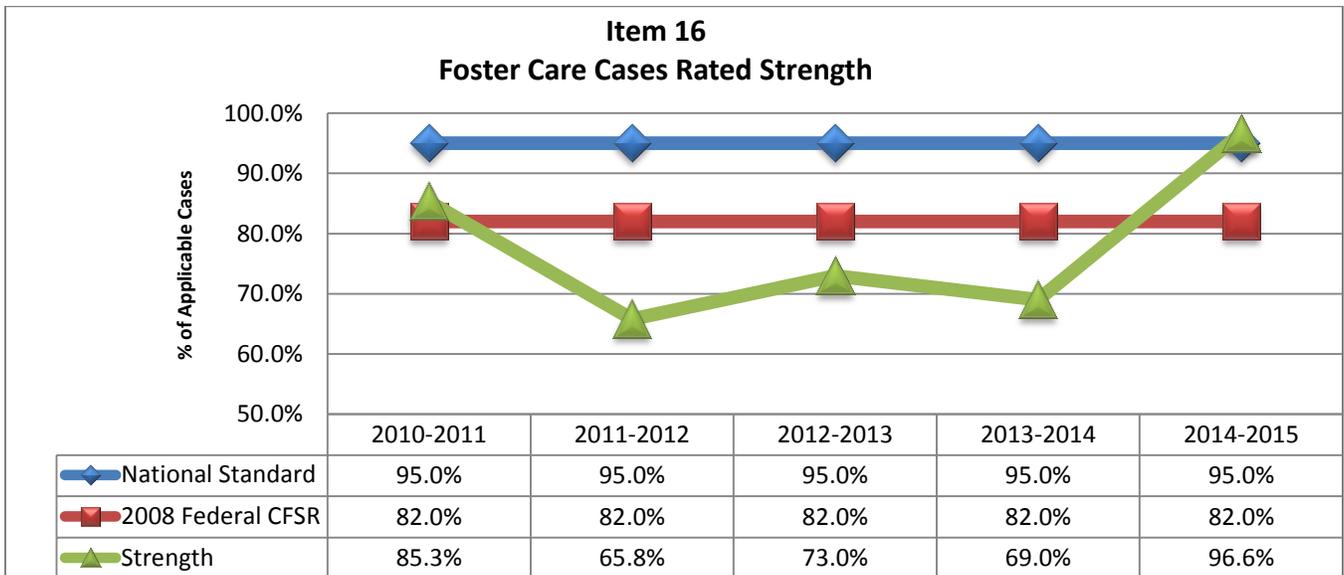
- d. Item 14, preserving connections:** Of the applicable foster care cases reviewed, 92% received a rating of Strength for this item.



- e. **Item 15, relative placement:** Just over half of the foster care cases were applicable for this item. Of the applicable foster care cases reviewed, 81% received a rating of Strength.



- f. **Item 16, relationship of child in care with parents:** Of the applicable foster cases reviewed, 78% received a rating of Strength for this item.



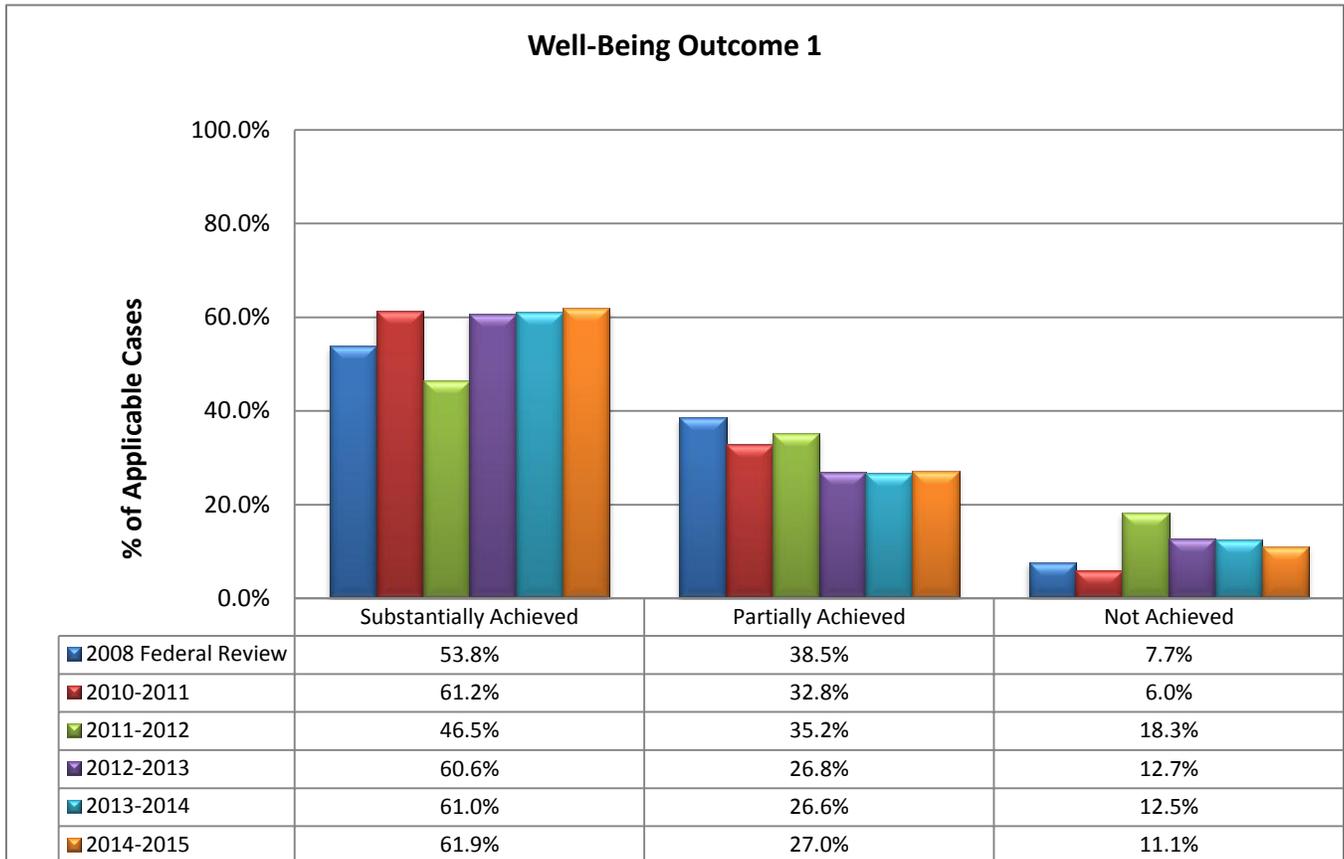
C. Permanency: Practice & Systemic Strengths and Challenges

The strengths and challenges remain as described in the 2015-2016 CFSP Assessment of Performance.

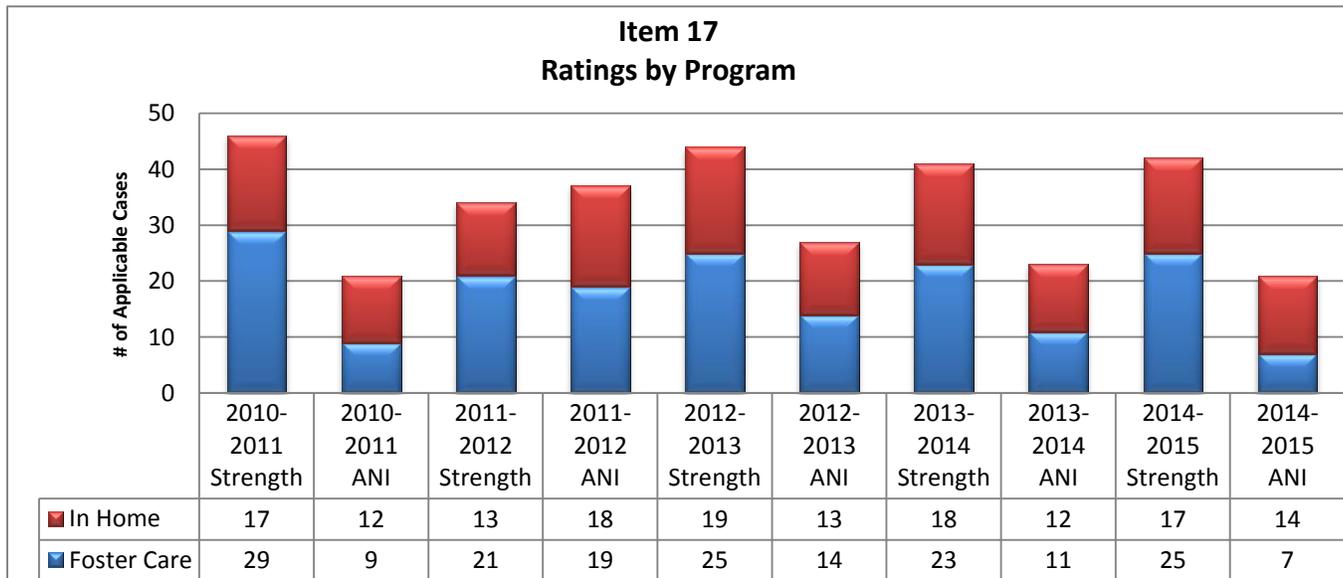
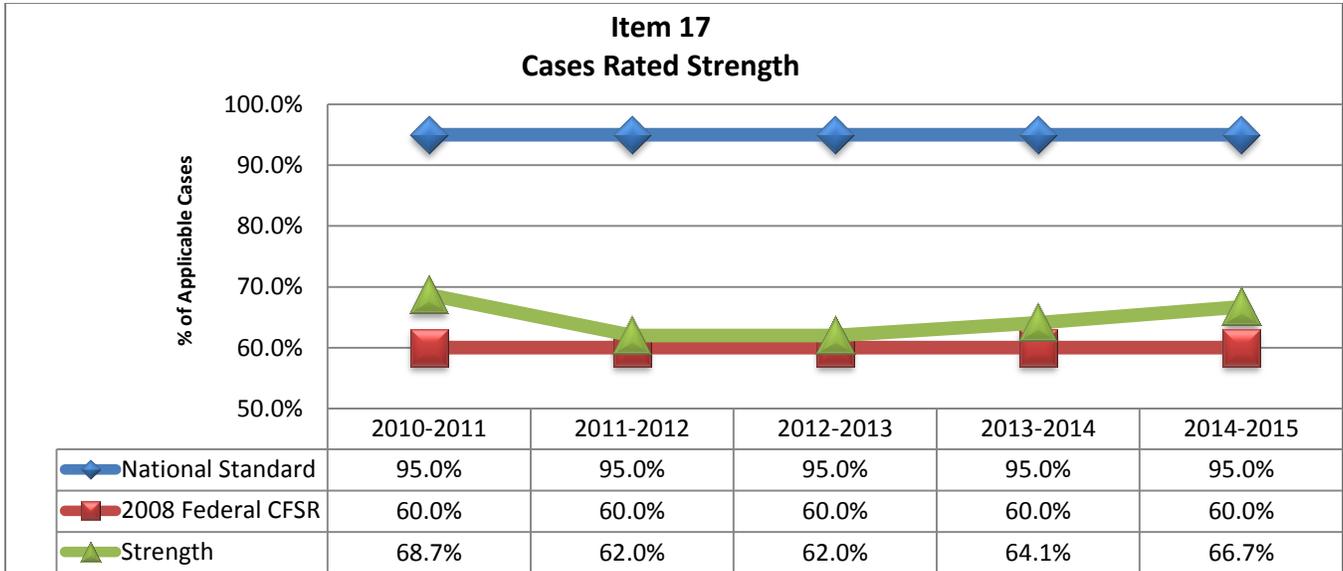
3. WELL-BEING

A. Case Review

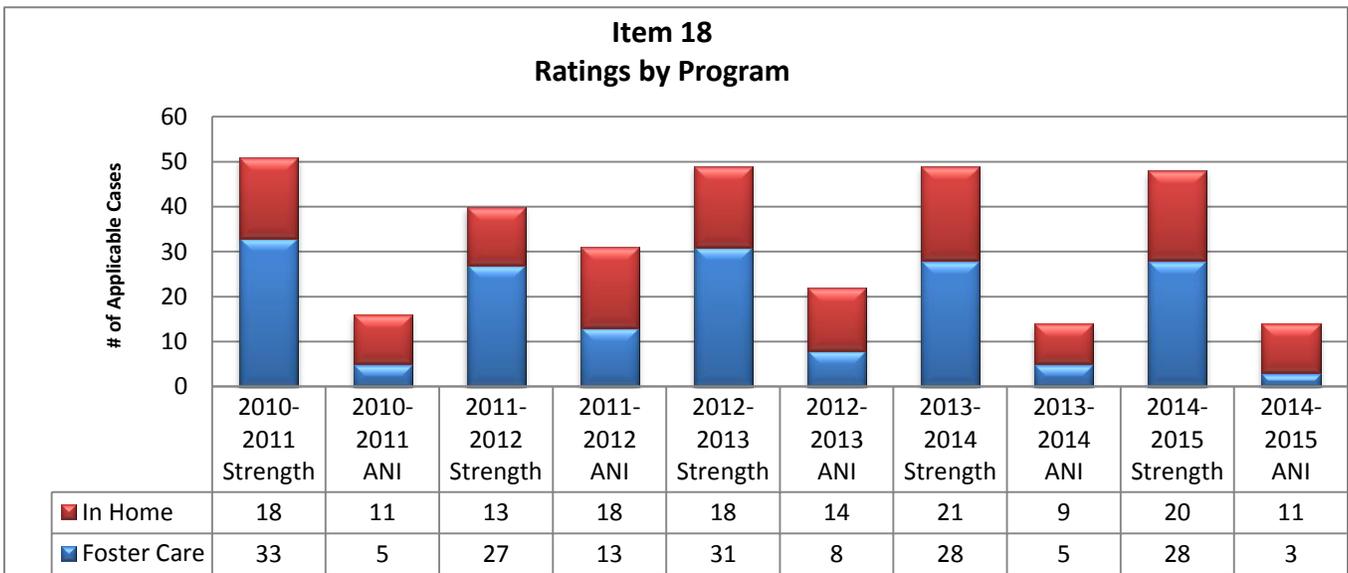
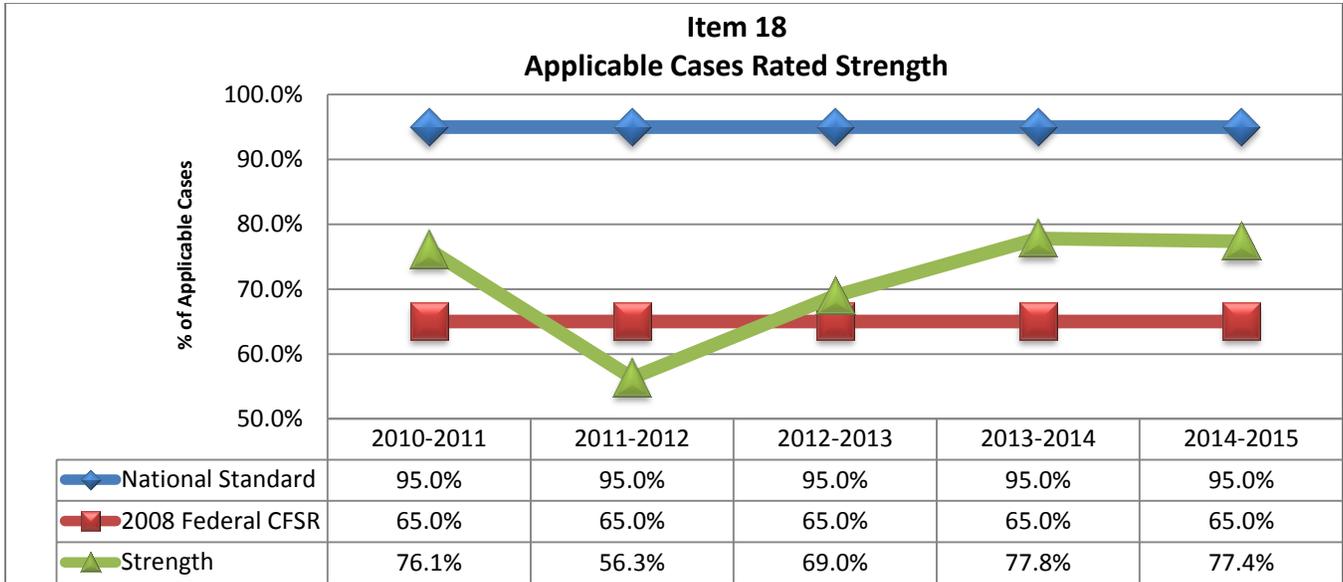
1. Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs



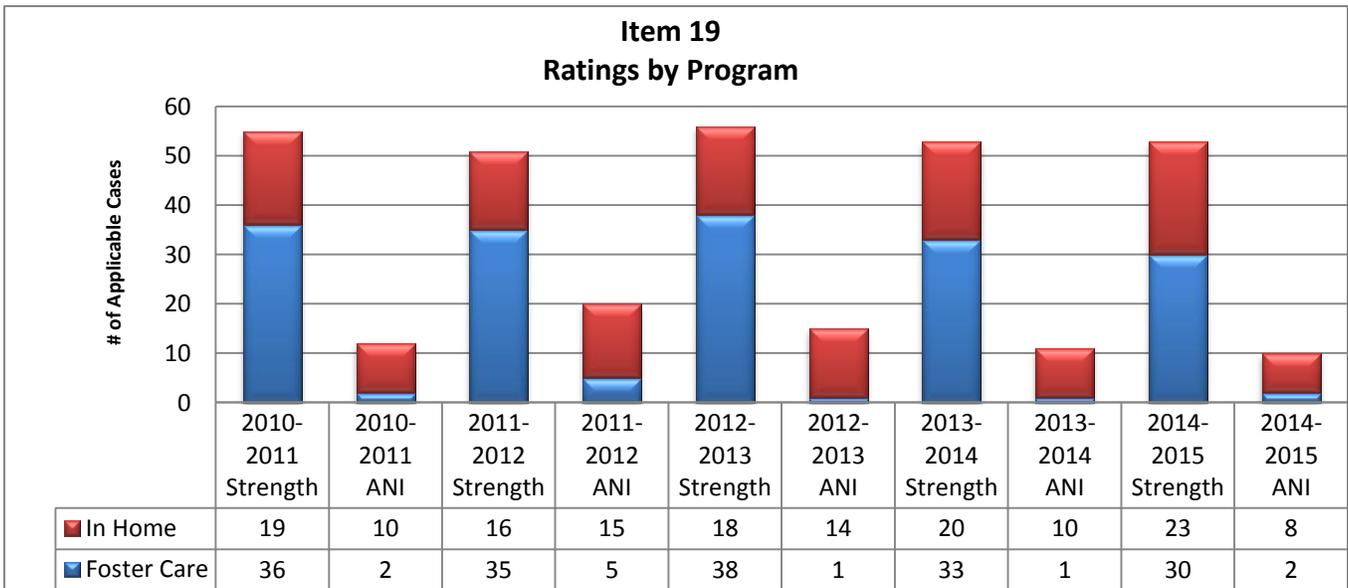
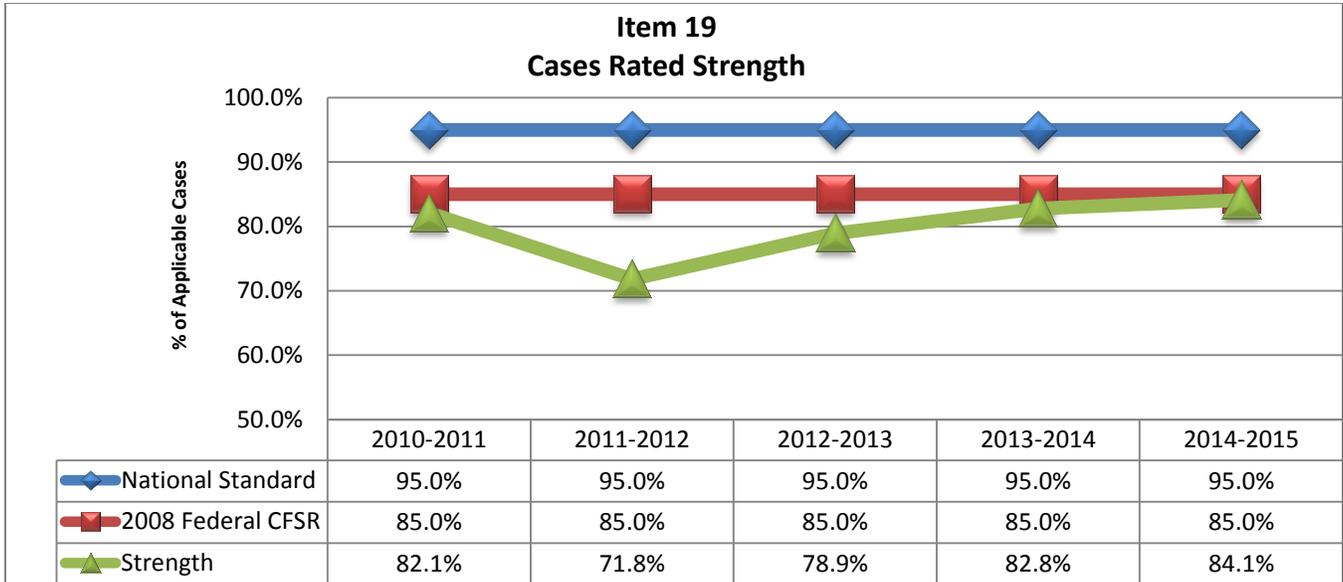
- a. **Item 17, Needs and services of child, parents and foster parents:** Of the cases reviewed since May 2010, 65% received a rating of Strength. Of the in-home cases, 55% received a rating of Strength. Of the foster care cases, 67% received a rating of Strength.



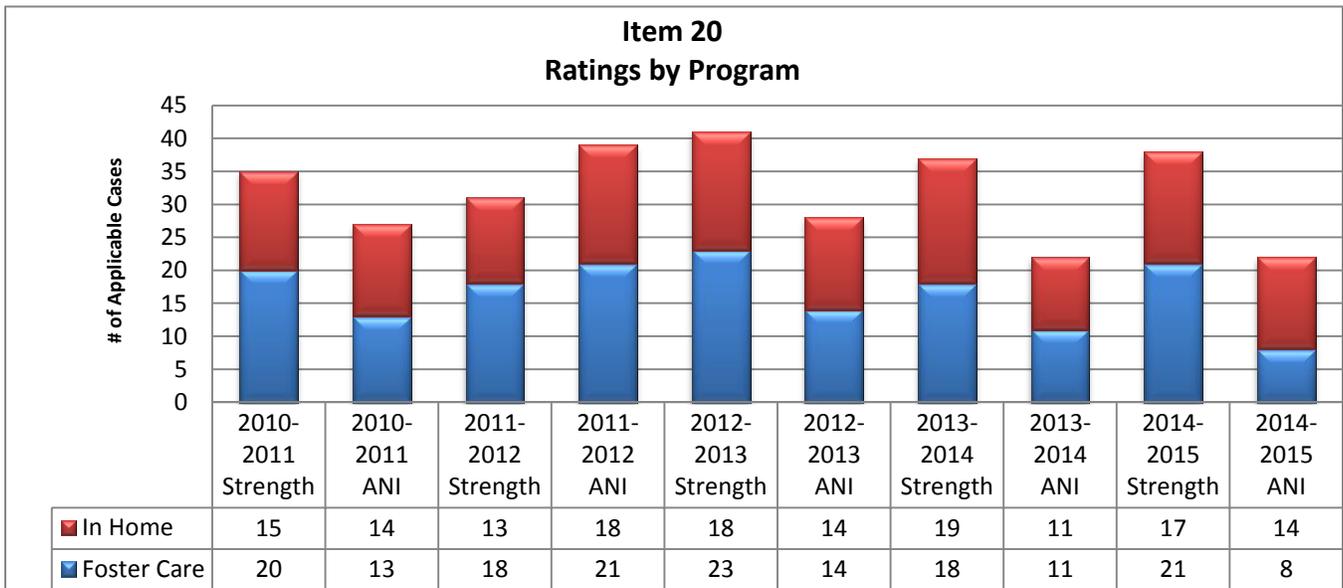
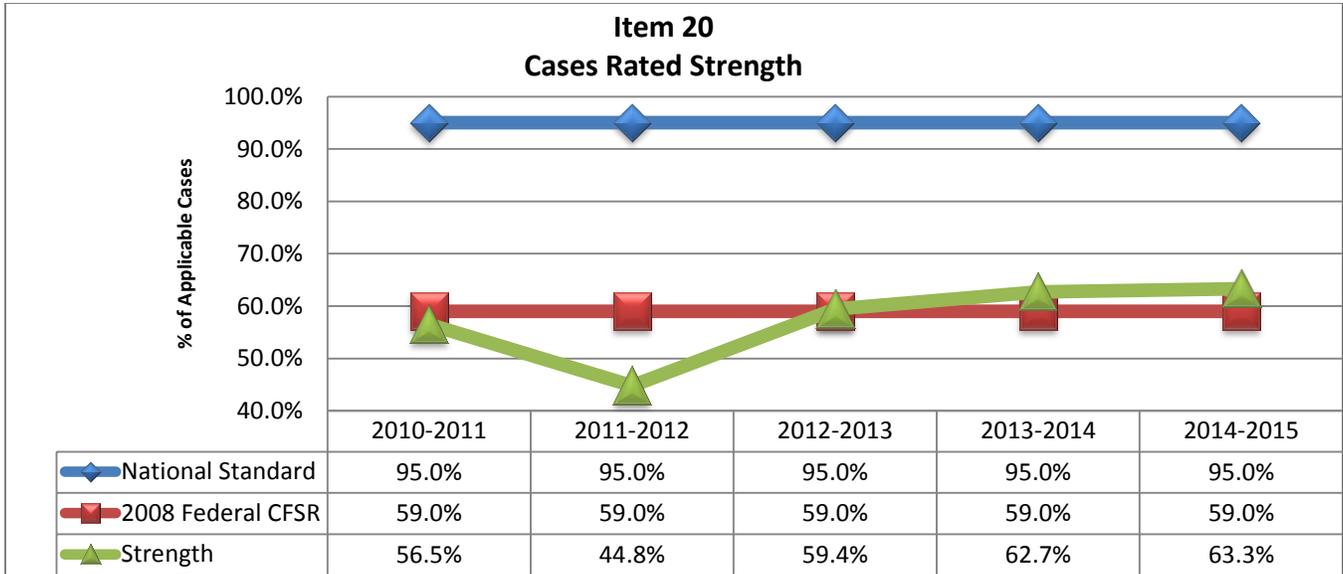
b. Item 18, child and family involvement in case planning: Of the applicable cases reviewed since May 2010, 71% received a rating of Strength. Of the in-home cases, 59% received a rating of Strength. Of the foster care cases, 81% received a rating of Strength.



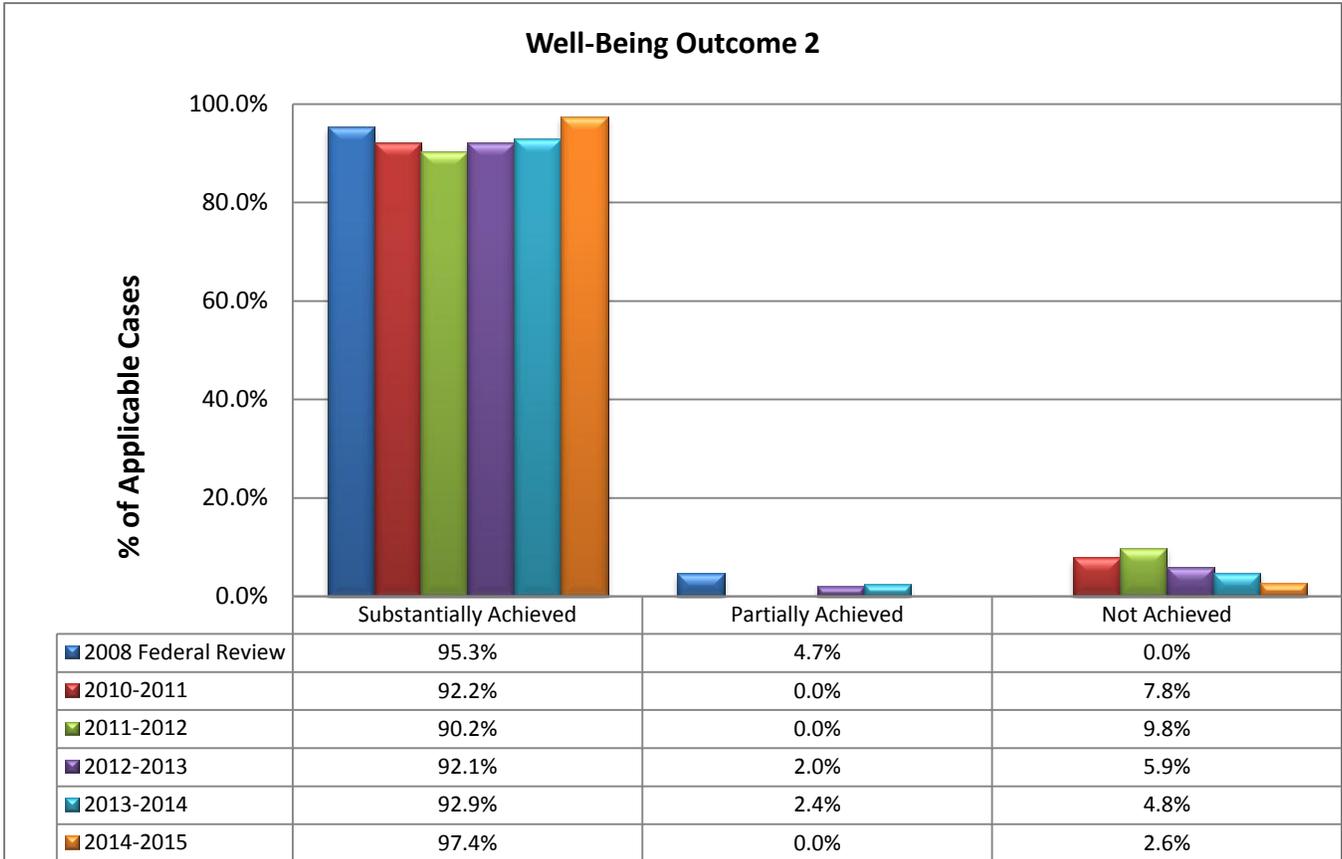
- c. Item 19, caseworker visits with child:** Of the cases reviewed since May 2010, 80% received a rating of Strength. Of the in-home cases, 63% received a rating of Strength. Of the foster care cases, 94% received a rating of Strength.



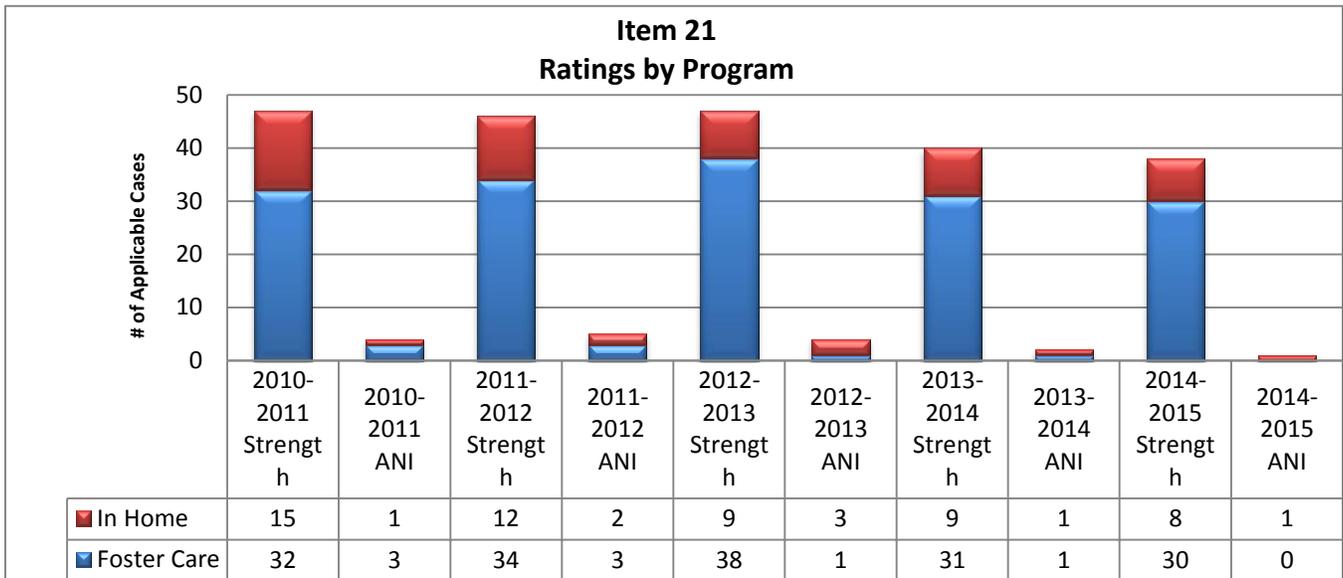
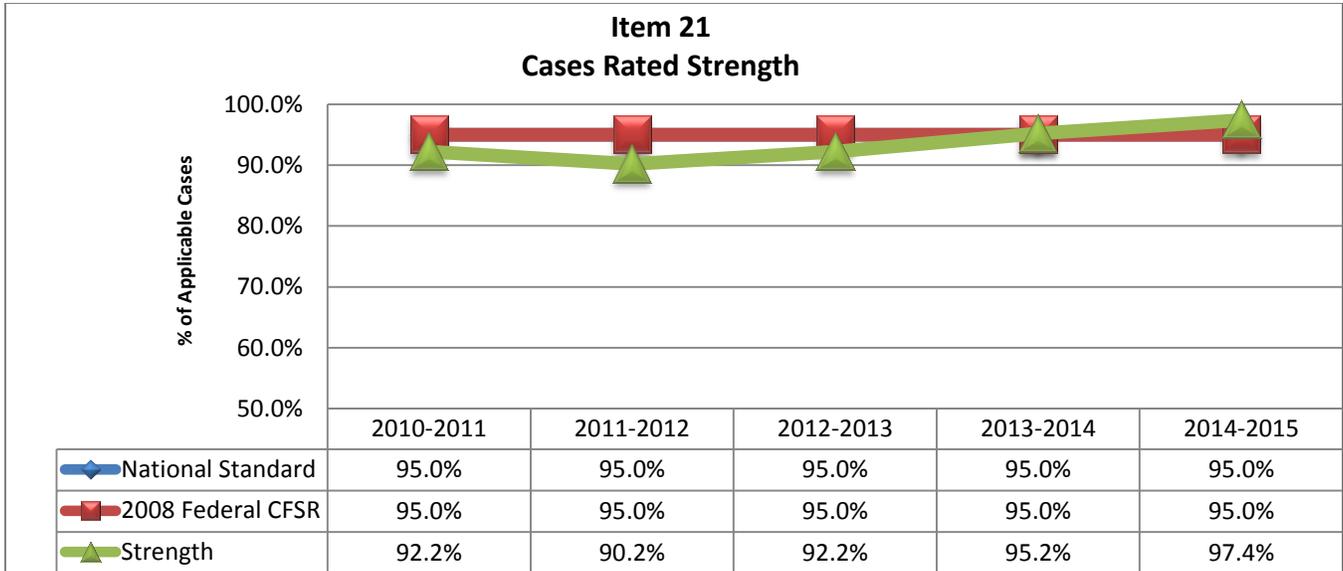
d. Item 20, caseworker visits with parent(s): Of the applicable cases reviewed since May 2010, 57% received a rating of Strength. Of the in-home cases, 54% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable foster care cases, 60% received a rating of Strength.



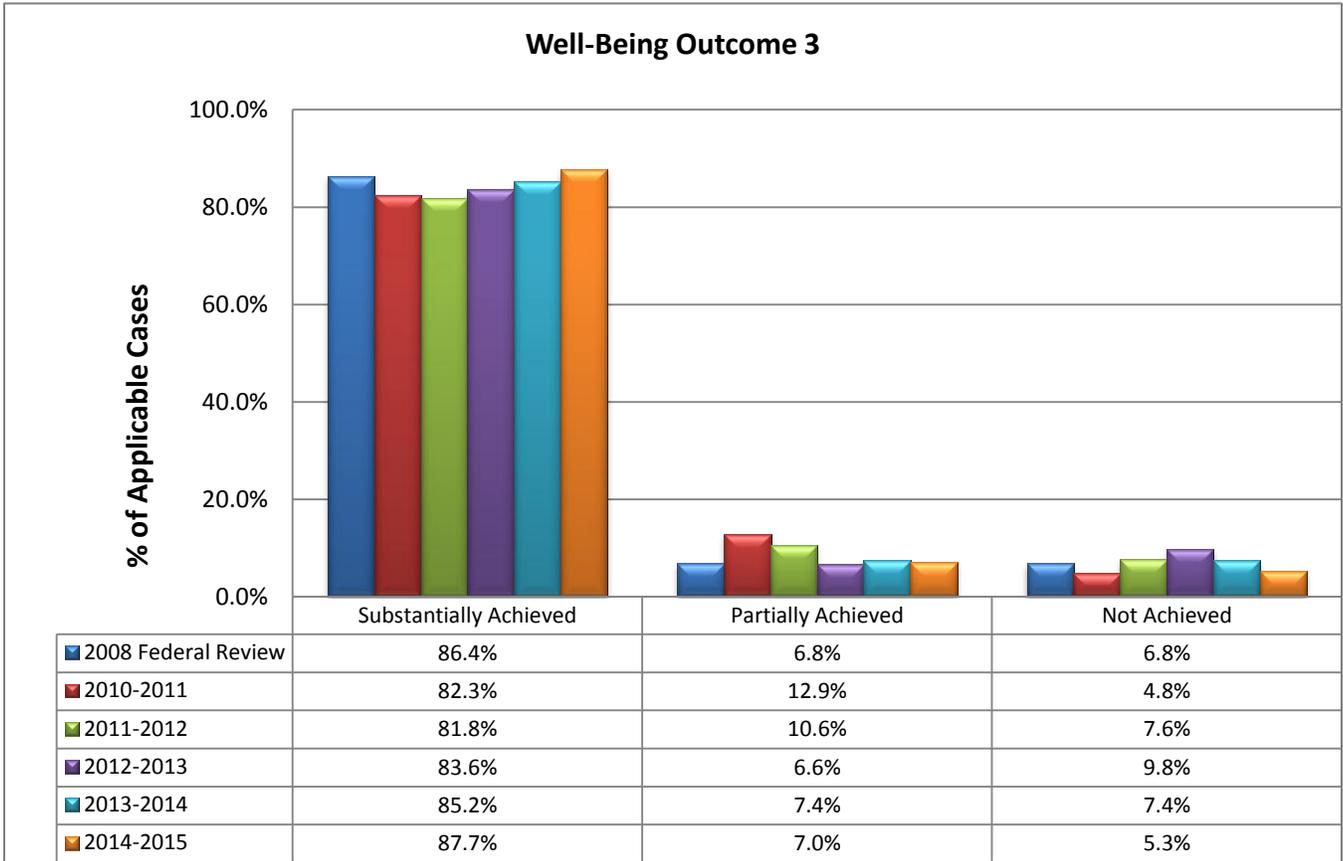
2. Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs



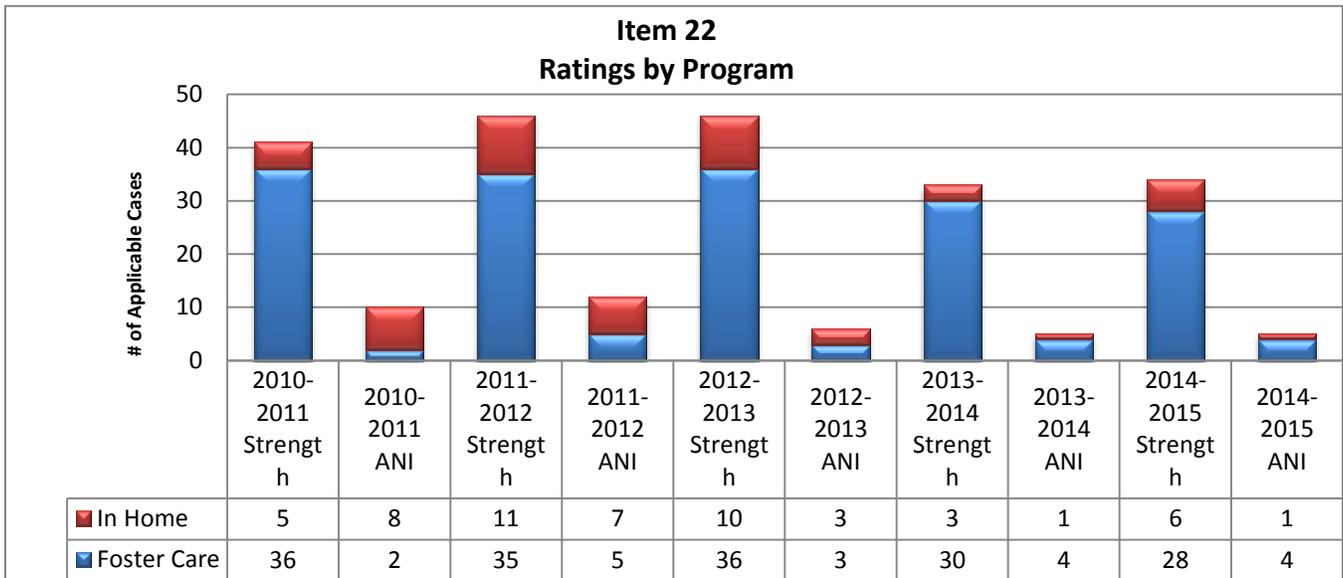
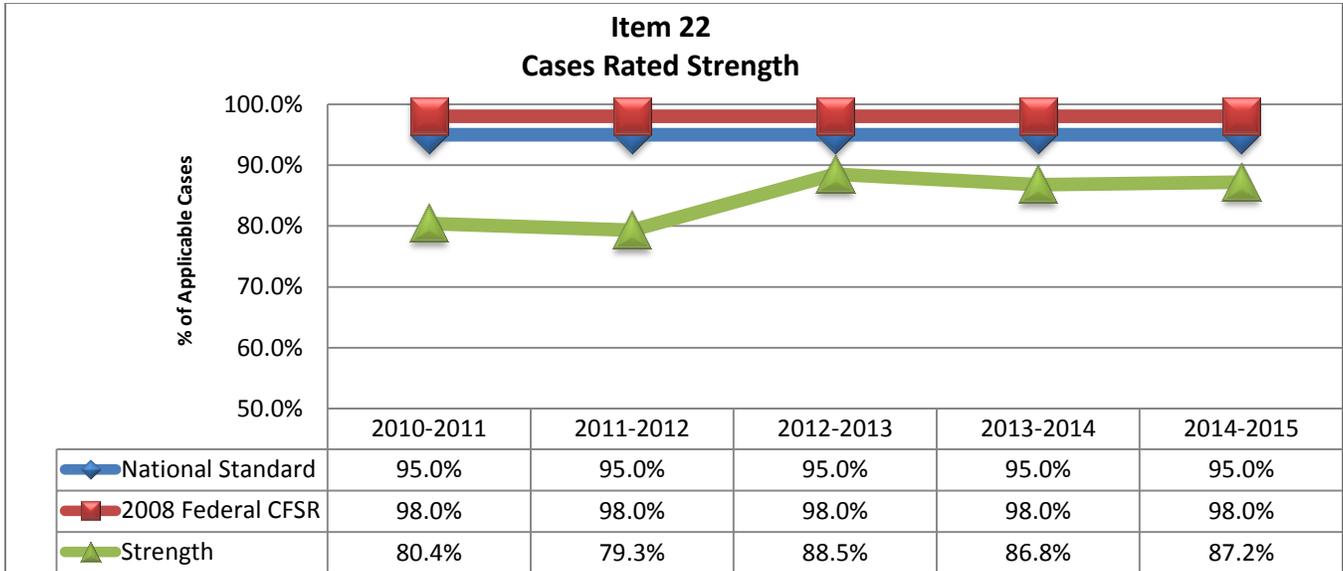
- a. **Item 21, Educational needs of the child:** Of the applicable cases reviewed since May 2010, 93% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable in-home cases, 87% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable foster care cases, 95%)received a rating of Strength.



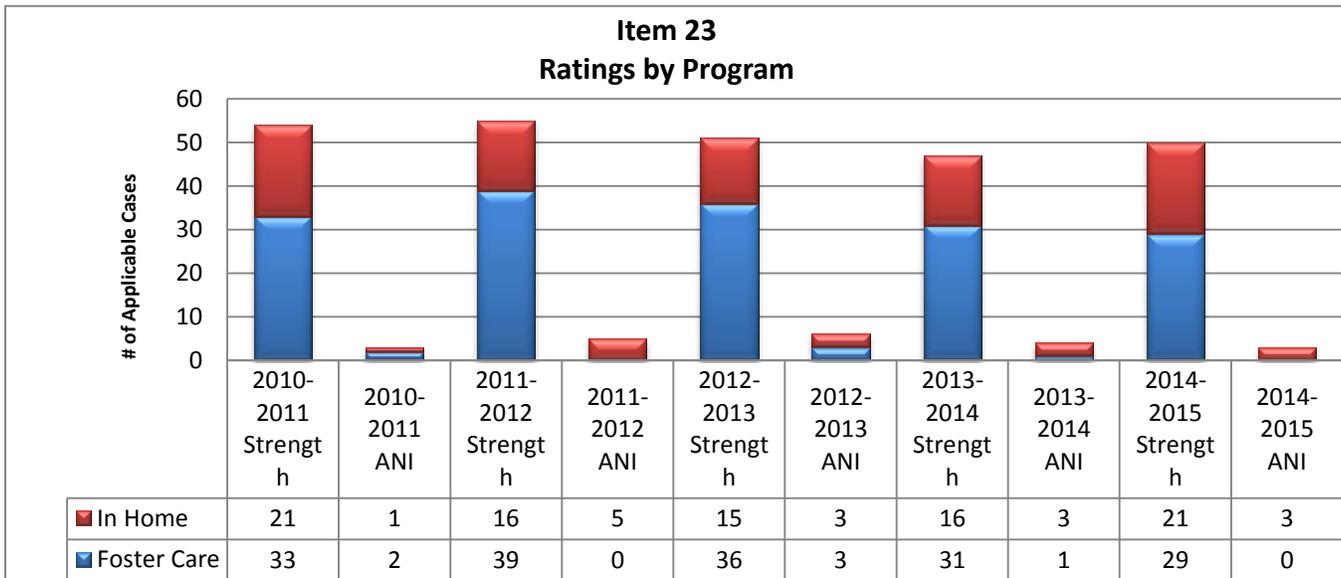
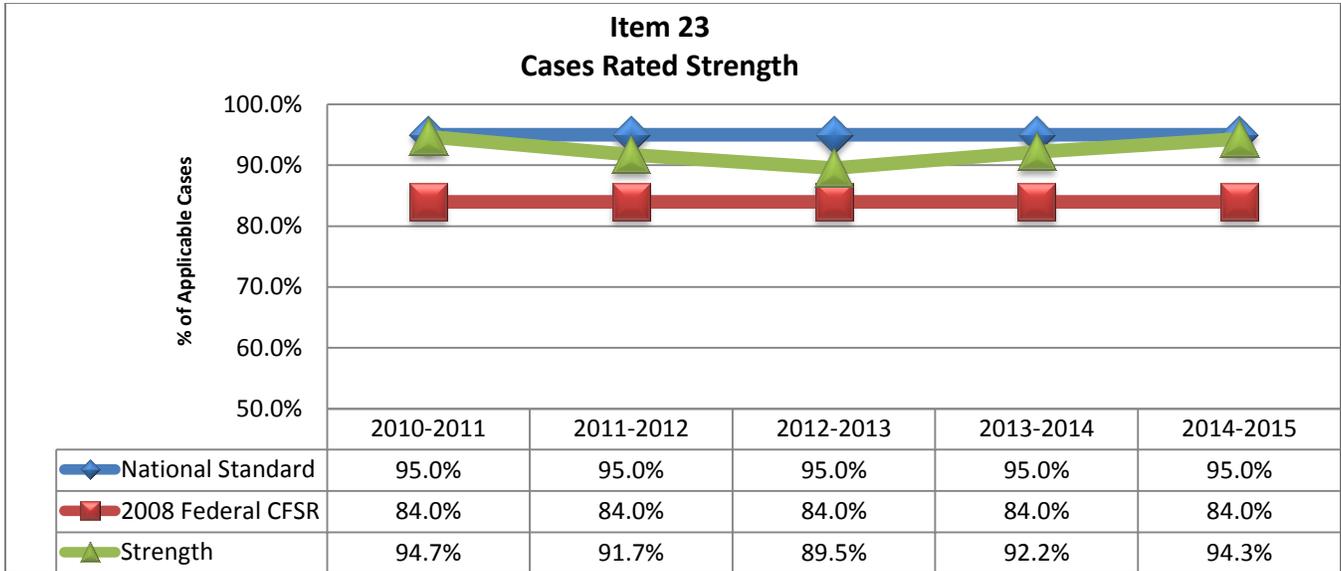
3. Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs



- a. Item 22, Physical health of the child:** Of the applicable cases reviewed since May 2010, 84% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable in-home cases, 64% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable foster care cases, 89% received a rating of Strength.



b. Item 23, Mental/behavioral health of the child: Of the applicable cases reviewed since May 2010, 92% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable in-home cases, 86% received a rating of Strength. Of the applicable foster care cases, 97% received a rating of Strength.



B. Well-Being Practice & Systemic Strengths and Challenges

The strengths and challenges remain as described in the 2015-2016 CFSP Assessment of Performance. Additionally, stakeholder feedback received in the past year identified the following themes as it relates to case practice:

- Practice Strengths

- Case managers are creative in finding meaningful ways to address the needs of children, parents and foster parents to ensure case plan goals are met
- Practice Challenges
 - Behavioral health services are lacking in many areas of the state
 - RESPONSE: An interim study was conducted by Legislative Management in 2014, and subsequent legislation to expand services throughout the state was introduced during the 2015 Legislative Session.

SYSTEMIC FACTORS - UPDATES

1. INFORMATION SYSTEM

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.

A. Data and information

Information from the 2015-2019 CFSP for this systemic factor remains accurate. As the state's Information System, FRAME is able to identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for the placement of every child who is or was in foster care. The state is challenged, however, in gathering the data to show how well this system is functioning in this regard. Efforts through FFY 16 will include efforts to have accurate and timely data and information to assess performance for this systemic factor. Efforts discussed thus far have included the option of regional supervisors conducting a random audit of cases to verify these core elements or including the audit of FRAME information while conducting the case review for files pulled for the state's CFSR process.

2. CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

The state's case review system has procedures in place that provide for a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s); a periodic review of the status of each child no less frequently than once every six months; assurance that each child in foster care has a permanency hearing no later than 12 months for the date the child entered foster care and every 12 months thereafter; a process for termination of parental rights proceedings; and foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care with notice of and a right to be heard in permanency hearings and periodic reviews.

A. Data and Information

Written Case Plan: Please refer to the 2015-2019 CFSP for information on case planning requirements. Recent ND data reveals that during the 2014-2015 CFSRs, 90% of foster care cases received a rating of Strength for child and family involvement in case planning, which includes the documentation of an individualized written case plan, and 65% of in-home services cases received a rating of Strength. Most ANI ratings for were due to lack of concerted efforts to engage the absent parent in the case planning process. Apart from the CFSR, quantitative data is not currently captured specifying if case plans are developed jointly with the child's parents. Today, case managers are required by state policy to note Child and Family Team meeting participation; who was invited and attended. Case managers then complete a meeting summary indicating the changes and updates to the plan which best meet the needs of the child. This qualitative data would support the ND wraparound model and does invite youth to provide insight and feedback to their individualized case plan. When CFS is asked to staff cases, the functionality of case planning statewide is then randomly sampled as state Administrators are asked to view case plans, CFT meeting participation, etc.

PL 113-183 "Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act" does require states to develop policy and procedures to ensure case planning is done in conjunction with the child. In addition, the new legislation requires states to provide the opportunity for youth to invite two personally selected individuals other than a parent, foster parent, and case manager to assist in case planning. ND is currently adapting already established policy to meet full federal law compliance as well as to assist in empowering our youth with positive youth development skills; advocacy and leadership.

In preparation for the FFY 2017 Statewide Assessment, ND plans to use additional quantitative survey and FRAME data to determine if each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child and parents including the required provisions.

Periodic Reviews: Please refer to the 2015-2019 CFSP for information on the policy requirements for periodic case reviews. Currently, the data available for analysis regarding how the child welfare system is functioning is through case reviews, specifically Item 18 of the Round 2 federal CFSR instrument. In 2014-2015, virtually all foster care cases reviewed convened child and family team meetings quarterly. These meetings are closely monitored by the Regional Supervisors, to ensure all areas of safety, permanency, and well-being are adequately covered. A challenge with this area has been the agency's need to keep the meetings brief, and therefore time does not allow for lengthy discussion ongoing. Therefore, it has been observed that case managers use monthly visits with the children and family as a supplement to the case planning process. For in-home cases, the practice expectation is the same. However, it was noted in some areas that the in-home case meetings did not occur consistently, nor did

they include key case participants. In preparation for the FFY 17 Statewide Assessment, ND plans to continue the already established process and engage in further conversations to address the need to include key case participants in in-home cases.

Permanency Hearings: Please refer to the 2015-2019 CFSP for information on the policy requirements for permanency hearings. During the 2014-2015 CFSRs, 100% of foster care cases received a rating of strength for item 7, which measures if permanency goals were established in a timely manner, if the permanency goals are appropriate to the needs of the case, if AFSA criteria for TPR is followed, and if compelling reasons for not following the TPR provisions are in the case file. For the upcoming 3rd round federal CFSR Statewide Assessment, CFS plans to work with the Court Improvement Project (CIP) in gathering data on how this area is functioning in ND. During the 2015 ND state legislative assembly, ND Century Code 27-20-02 was amended to meet full compliance with federal PL 113-183 prohibiting the use of APPLA as a permanency goal for youth under the age of 16. In addition, the APPLA judicial determinations were placed into state law and forwarded to our legal partners.

Process for Termination of Parental Rights: Please refer to the 2015-2019 CFSP for information on the policy requirements for termination of parental rights. For the upcoming 3rd round federal CFSR Statewide Assessment, CFS plans to work with the CIP to gather data on how this area is functioning in ND. During the 2015 ND state legislative assembly, CFS amended ND Century Code 27-20-45, the Uniform Juvenile Court Act, regarding proceedings for termination of parental rights. The proposed changes required the clerk of district court or juvenile court to provide a copy of the petition and summons to the Department at least 10 days prior to a hearing on the petition. CFS determined this would be warranted as most children subject to termination of parental rights will be placed in the custody of the Department. The Department receives notice of adoption petitions under North Dakota Century Code Chapter 14-15; the amendment to NDCC 27-20-45 is now consistent with existing provisions.

Right to be Heard: Please refer to the 2015-2019 CFSP for information on policy related to the right to heard. During the 2015 ND state legislative assembly, ND Century Code 27-20-38 was amended to meet the notification of relatives as well as create a definition of "sibling of the child entering foster care" to mean:

- a. A brother or sister who has at least one biological or adoptive parent in common;
- b. A fictive brother or sister with a significant bond as identified by the child or parent; or
- c. A child that would have been considered a sibling but for the termination or other disruption of parental rights, including a death of a parent.

In preparation for the FFY 17 Statewide Assessment, ND plans to continue to soliciting feedback through Stakeholder meetings and surveys to determine how this is functioning in the ND child welfare system.

B. Strengths

ND continues to work diligently to ensure that the functionality of case reviews statewide is completed effectively and efficiently. PL 113-183 has allowed North Dakota the opportunity to reflect on current policies and strengthen procedures to best accommodate the long term outcomes of the case. ND has historically encouraged youth engagement in case planning, placement with siblings, acknowledged youth rights, provided notification of relatives, and has allowed youth involvement in extracurricular activities, as well as provided hard copies of transition documentation to youth upon discharge. PL 113-183 has given North Dakota the opportunity to further develop these areas of policy.

ND was also very cognizant of the timeliness of incorporating federal law changes from PL 113-183 into ND state law. CFS worked quickly to submit and testify on behalf of three legislative bills in the 2015 legislative assembly; all three bills accommodated changes to federal law and were passed unanimously. SB 2063 provided consistency in laws regarding notification of TPR. SB 2064 amended APPLA permanency goal requirements, notification of relatives including a statutory definition of sibling. SB 2081 provided immunity from liability for foster care providers who engage in reasonable and prudent parenting standards.

C. Concerns

ND state law changes to accommodate the PL 113-183 federal requirements are in effect August 1, 2015. The majority of the federal law does not go into effect until September 29, 2015; however, this is still limited time to ensure all parties have adequate information. A concern going forward would be to ensure education and awareness is offered to our courts to accommodate the APPLA judicial determinations. North Dakota will look to the CIP to collaborate in educating our ND legal partners to ensure court orders are adequate and in full compliance.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The state has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care placement are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children and is operating an identifiable quality assurance system as described in the CFSP that: (a) is in place in the jurisdictions within the State/Tribal service area where services included in the CFSP are provided; (b) is able to evaluate the adequacy and quality of services provided under the CFSP; (c) is able to identify the strengths and needs of the service delivery system it evaluates; provides reports to agency administrators on the quality of services evaluated and needs for improvement; and (d) evaluates measures implemented to address identified problems.

For this CFSP Self-Assessment, review the 2014 APSR assessment of the state's QA/CQI system and CB's CQI status letter to the state concerning how the state CQI system could be enhanced. The state must provide an updated assessment and describe strengths concerns and enhancements to the QA/CQI system.

A. Assessment of the State's current QA/CQI system:

1. Fundamental Administrative Structure:

The Department strives to develop and support a strong Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system in North Dakota. Much of the focus during FFY 15 has been on re-visioning the case review process as described in other parts of this 2016 APSR. Fundamental to this activity, however, is a strong organizational value in growing a strong CQI system at all levels of the child welfare continuum.

2. Quality Data collection:

Quality data collection efforts as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP remain. In addition to these efforts, the Department has been exploring additional reporting capabilities through the data warehouse and in consultation with the data analysis division. Improved reporting capabilities are anticipated in the next year which is intended to improve the timeliness and accessibility of administrative child welfare data.

3. Method for conducting ongoing case reviews:

The state's method for conducting case reviews is currently under review. The state recognized that while there was a well-developed system for conducting case reviews and some desired results were being achieved, there remained room for improvement. A process modeled after the Wraparound Practice Model which could better foster and support practice improvement is the desired end product. The CFSP Task Force, as described in Goal 2 (page 56) best highlights the progress and current assessment for this component.

4. Analysis and Dissemination of Quality Data:

There have been no major changes to how the state analyzes and disseminates data since the completion of the 2015-2019 CFSP. A new

report was added to FRAME this past year which assists with the review of timely initiation and completion of CPS assessments. This report was well-received by our county and regional partners and will add to the available tools to support the overall CQI process in North Dakota.

5. Feedback to Stakeholders and Decision-Makers and Adjustment of Programs and Process:

Efforts to disseminate available data continue, such as providing updates regarding the NYTD report and surveys continue to the field, as well as other available data. Additionally, during the current federal fiscal year, efforts include providing relevant child welfare data to the state's Legislature in an effort to maintain and increase funding for services in the coming biennium

An example of a recent CQI activity which resulted in an adjustment to policy and practice is what is transpiring regarding the state's policy on repeat maltreatment. The CPS Task Force recently reviewed data and standards for the definition of "Repeat Maltreatment." The state has previously defined "repeat Maltreatment" as the point in time where four or more reports of suspected maltreatment have been received on a single family, triggering review of the case. Subcommittee members identified that this process is not meaningful or productive and not aligned with the CFSR process or established national standards. The subcommittee recommended that the repeat maltreatment definition be changed to comply with the definition used in the CFSR National Standards and a new process and tools be developed. These steps have been completed. The new process has been pilot tested and approved by participating counties and regions. System changes to accommodate this process are pending. The policy is poised for release in the coming year.

B. Training or Technical Assistance anticipated

North Dakota anticipates requesting Capacity Building Collaborative service to support the work of enhancing the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts within the state. As noted in Goal 2 of the CFSP, the state seeks to strengthen all five core components of a CQI system as identified in ACFY-CB-IM-12-07. The expertise available through the Collaborative will be requested to guide these efforts.

C. Update on QA/CQI results that have been used to update goals, objectives and interventions or use of funds in the 2016 APSR.

The findings of the 2010-2015 ND CFSR reviews have provided North Dakota with important information related to statewide child welfare practice themes. Among the most notable practice challenges is that of Well-Being 1, as it pertains to engagement with the absent parent (refer to data on pages 21-25). This challenge is being addressed through our first CFSP Goal; *Families will have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.*

D. For states that will undergo a CFSR in FYs 2016-2018 describe the state's current case review instrument and whether the state is using or plans to begin using the federal OSRI Describe how many and the types of cases that are reviewed annually as part of the state's ongoing case review process and any plans to increase or decrease the number of cases.

North Dakota's 3rd round federal CFSR has been scheduled for September 12-16, 2016. CFS has elected to use the federal OSRI for all regional CFSRs, slated to begin October 2015. In April & May 2015, CFS administrators trained 210 workers, supervisors, partner providers, and other CFS administrators on the new instrument and process. About two-thirds of those trained committed to becoming certified CFSR Case Reviewers by completing additional training requirements on the Online Management System (OMS). Certified case reviewers will be called upon to assist with future regional CFSRs. A subsequent training on the first level QA process is scheduled to convene in August & September 2015 and those successfully completing that training will become certified first level QA Team Members.

CFS has the opportunity to convene reviews across the state prior to the 2016 Federal CFSR. In doing so, we will obtain important insight into the practice and systemic strengths and challenges as we complete our Statewide Assessment.

CFS plans to review 74 cases annually. Due to limited people and fiscal resources, it is not possible to increase the number of cases at this time. Of these, 25% will be in the largest metropolitan area, Cass County. Approximately 60% of the cases reviewed will be foster care cases and approximately 40% will be in-home services cases.

4. STAFF TRAINING

The state is operating a staff development and training program that: (a) supports the goals and objectives in the agency's CFSP; (b) addresses services provided under both subparts of title IV-B and the training plan under Title IV-E of the Act; (c) provides training for all staff who provide family preservation and support services, child protective services, foster care services, adoption services and independent living services soon after they are employed and that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions; (d) provides ongoing training for staff that address the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP; and (e) provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and the staff of State/Tribal-licensed or State/Tribal-approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving assistance under Title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to caring for foster and adopted children.

A. Initial Staff Training

1. Data and Information

CFS continues to contract with the UND Department of Social Work, to operate the Children Family Services Training Center (CFSTC). This training center provides most of the child welfare training in ND. CFSTC offers a Child Welfare Certification Program, which is a competency-based training curriculum. The training is delivered as a four-week curriculum (over 100 hours of training) offered in both spring and fall. Through the established contract with the Department, CFSTC covers the costs of all expenses for the training participants except mileage, which is the responsibility of the employing agency.

Social workers with PATH of ND and the AASK program agencies are also required to attend. Tribal child welfare personnel are invited and encouraged to attend. Between 60 and 70 new case managers complete the training annually. During the SFY 2015, 40 case managers completed the training.

The four weeks of training cover the areas detailed in the ND Training Plan (ATTACHMENT E)

Parent Aide Training is delivered to newly hired parent aides who assist in providing direct services to families where child abuse and neglect has been identified. In SFY 15, 8 parent aides were trained.

Wraparound Certification Training (second week of Child Welfare Certification) is a required training for all Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) case managers, Children's Mental Health, and private partner agencies providing contracted services through the Department. During SFY 15, 67 participants completed Wraparound Certification Training. All PATH foster parents and staff are required to attend a 12-hour session on Non-Violent Crisis Intervention presented by certified trainers in the CPI model. In addition, it is a PATH requirement that all treatment foster parents attend an annual refresher course reviewing the major elements of the CPI model. In SFY 15, 81 participants were trained.

The Native American Training Institute (NATI) also provides training opportunities for ongoing staff development. They organize an Annual Indian Child Welfare Conference; host Cultural Awareness workshops, as well as offering additional training curriculums aimed at improving services to Native American communities.

The Department's contract with Catholic Charities ND to provide adoption services via the AASK program provides that all AASK adoption workers complete the NCWRC for Adoption's Adoption Competency Curriculum (AAC) within the first six months of employ. Within the first year of employment they

must additionally complete the ND Child Welfare Certification Training, the ND Wraparound Certification Trainings, the ND PRIDE Train the Trainer's Program and the PRIDE Mutual Family Assessment Training.

Of seventeen current staff, all have attended the Child Welfare Certification Training, thirteen have attended PRIDE Train the Trainer, and twelve have attended the PRIDE Mutual Family Assessment Training. Recently, seven newer staff have completed the initial portion of the AAC (Family Assessment and Preparation and Child Assessment and Preparation). In the fall, eight staff will attend training on the remainder of the modules. Additionally, eleven staff have completed training on Trauma Informed Care.

In preparation for the upcoming 3rd Round CFSR in September 2016, the state anticipates developing a survey for child welfare agencies to gather data regarding the number of new case managers and to determine of that number, how many completed the initial training requirements. Additionally, the state will work with the CFST to address how well the curriculum is covering basic skills and knowledge needed by staff to carry out their duties.

2. Strengths

ND Social Work Department and CFS are collaborating to establish a formalized state-wide child welfare supervisor and mentor training program. Support for this initiative is being provided by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute through funding from the Children's Bureau. Shari Doe, ND Child Welfare Director and Carenlee Barkdull, Chair of the UND Social Work Department are participating in the NCWWI Leadership Academy for Director and Deans (LADD). The work of the LADD initiatives is expected to foster transformational change across agency-university partnerships and enhance workforce outcomes. North Dakota's change initiative is to implement a sustainable program for multi-level supervisory training and mentoring that will serve the entire state of North Dakota. This initiative is targeted for completion by September 30, 2017.

The emphasis on upfront training of AASK staff has resulted in a highly trained adoption workforce who specializes in the permanent placement of children from foster care, including those with significant special needs.

3. Concerns

The Behavioral Health Services Division (formerly the Mental Health Substance Abuse Division) System of Care (SOC) Expansion Grant will end June 30, 2015. This grant was used to develop statewide, cross-systems trauma informed system of care training. Despite the fact this grant ended, CFSTC has incorporated trauma informed practice principles into Child Welfare Certification so every worker completing the certification will be exposed to trauma-informed principles. However, trauma training for workers not going through the Child Welfare Certification has been provided hit and

miss. It was hoped the SOC grant would assist in getting all county child welfare workers training in trauma inform system of care. This training will be incorporated in other trainings workers have access to throughout the year.

In January 2015, the ND's Human Resource Management System adopted a new position classification – Family Support Specialist. This position adds to the pool of workers within the North Dakota child welfare workforce. Family Support Specialists are required to complete the child welfare certification training and become certified in the Wraparound process. Because this classification of worker does not have social work education, a more comprehensive initial certification training may be needed. The need for additional training for Family Services Specialist is currently being assessed.

Because of increasing demands for child welfare certification training, class sizes are becoming increasingly large. Additionally, it is becoming more difficult to provide the required training within the four weeks. Many other national models have a six-week based program so as the need to increase content continues the length of the certification training will need to be a factor considered by North Dakota. With that said, participants and supervisors have also expressed concerns about the amount of time in training and out of the office. This often places a burden on the worker if their agency is unable to provide adequate back up support while the worker is training. More research is being done on the availability and the appropriateness of on-line training to achieve the goals of child welfare certification.

The amount of required training within the first year for adoption staff is very difficult to achieve. It is expensive for the program, both in terms of staff time as well as financial expense. It is difficult for trainers to schedule the ACC modules for a very few new staff, so the training often gets delayed until there are more staff needing the module.

B. Ongoing Staff Training

1. Data and information

Licensed Social Workers are required to complete 30 Continuing Education Credits every two years to retain their license. In addition, child welfare staff who provide case management services, along with PATH and AASK workers, are required to be certified in the Wraparound process and must be recertified every two years. 67 participants completed Wraparound Certification Training in SFY 2015.

Child welfare case managers are encouraged to identify, with their supervisors, any training needs as part of ongoing supervision. At the present time there is no “advanced” training curriculum in the state specific to child welfare practice. However, there are a number of ongoing training opportunities available to staff throughout the year that are designed to

strengthen knowledge, skills and competencies consistent with the goals of the CFSP. These ongoing opportunities are detailed in the Training Plan.

Ongoing supervisory training is provided to county child welfare supervisors during their regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. This past year, supervisor training focused on case supervision, individual clinical supervision and group clinical supervision. In total, five sessions were provided and a total of 29 supervisors participated.

2. Strengths and Concerns

Strengths and concerns remain largely as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP. Additional resources have been designated to increase training opportunities for facility and group home staff. Using Community Based Standard (CbS) outcome data, training needs can be more specific and targeted based on the facilities need. The Department of Human Services SFY 16 budget includes additional funds to provide training for group facilities.

NATI has been a key partner in the provision of ongoing staff development opportunities. The North Dakota Indian Child Welfare Conference has grown and developed over the years and now attracts national participation. The ND Indian Child Welfare conference is a primary means to increase the child welfare workforce knowledge of policies and practice opportunities when working the Native American communities.

While reviewing the information from the past year, a critical need identified by stakeholders through statewide pre- legislative session strategic planning sessions included the need for training on topics related to mental and behavioral health issues. It was specifically noted the lack of training on high aggressive behaviors and trauma impacts on children and families curtails the workers ability to adequately provide services for families. Ideas and suggestions offered during this meeting included an increased use of on-line training opportunities.

There is a lack of training specifically for administrators in child welfare. This continues to be seen as a need and is currently being addressed through a collaborate effort between the University of North Dakota School of Social Work and CFS.

C. Foster & Adoptive Parent Training

1. Data and Information

No significant changes were made in how the state provides foster and adoptive parent training in the past year and the information contained in the 2015-2019 CFSP remains relevant. In the past year, 363 individuals completed the PRIDE Pre-service training, 89 individuals participated in the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training, 74 individuals participated in the

Treatment Foster Care Training and 378 individuals participated in other training activities coordinated through the UND Children and Family Services Training Center.

Additional training opportunities for foster parents during SFY 2015 included an annual ND Foster Parent Conference: The 2014 North Dakota Foster and Adoptive Parent Conference that was held in Fargo in October 2014 and 335 people participated in the event.

The AASK program has developed a new emphasis in providing the Trauma Informed Parenting Training to potential adoptive parents. In the past year, approximately 25 prospective adoptive parents have attended this training.

2. Strengths and Concerns

Strengths and concerns noted in the 2015-2019 CFSP continue to be an accurate reflection on this systemic factor's strengths and challenges.

CFSTC continues to issue a regular online newsletter for foster and adoptive parents. A recent version of this newsletter can be found at <http://und.edu/centers/children-and-family-services-training-center/may-2015.pdf>. The AASK Program also issues a regular electronic newsletter, The Heart Times, which features an educational component to supplement the recruitment opportunities provided by such a publication. The Heart Times is made available to all current foster families and families who have adopted through the AASK program and is available on their website at www.aasknd.org.

It is anticipated that the emphasis on providing Trauma Informed Parenting for waiting families will increase the pool of available families for the hardest to place children, as prospective adoptive parents become more comfortable with the nature of the behaviors of these children and feel an increased ability to parent them.

5. SERVICE ARRAY

The state has in place an array of services that includes, at a minimum: services to assess the strengths and needs of children and families assisted by the agency and are used to determine other service needs; services that address the needs of the family, as well as the individual child, in order to create a safe home environment; services designed to enable children at risk of foster care placement to remain with their families when their safety and well-being can be reasonably assured; services designed to help children achieve permanency through reunification where appropriate, or placed for adoption, guardianship, or other planned permanent living arrangement and through post adoption services; services that are individualized to meet the unique needs children and families served through the agency.

Please see Service Description in North Dakota's 2015-2019 CFSP on pages 94-101 for a complete list of services available through North Dakota's child welfare system. There have been no significant changes to the service array as described. It should be noted that Child Advocacy Centers continue to operate in three communities in North Dakota; the fourth community location has not yet opened.

A. Data and Information

Services provided under Title IV-B Sub Parts 1 & 2, CHAFEE, ETV, CAPTA, Title IV-E, CBCAP, Adoptions and Legal Guardianship Incentive Funds, and State General Fund appropriations to CFS have been identified under the following categories:

Category 1: Services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs

In-Home Case Management Services
Family Group Decision Making
Family Team Decision Making
Intensive In-home Family Therapy
PATH Therapeutic Foster Care
Residential Facilities
Chafee Foster Care Independence Living Program (PATH)
Youthworks Shelter Care

Category 2: Services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment

Child Protection Services
The Nurturing Parent Program
Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota
Parent Resource Centers
Child Advocacy Centers
In-Home Case Management Services
Parent Aide
Intensive In-Home Family Therapy
Safety Permanency Funds
TANF Kinship Care Program

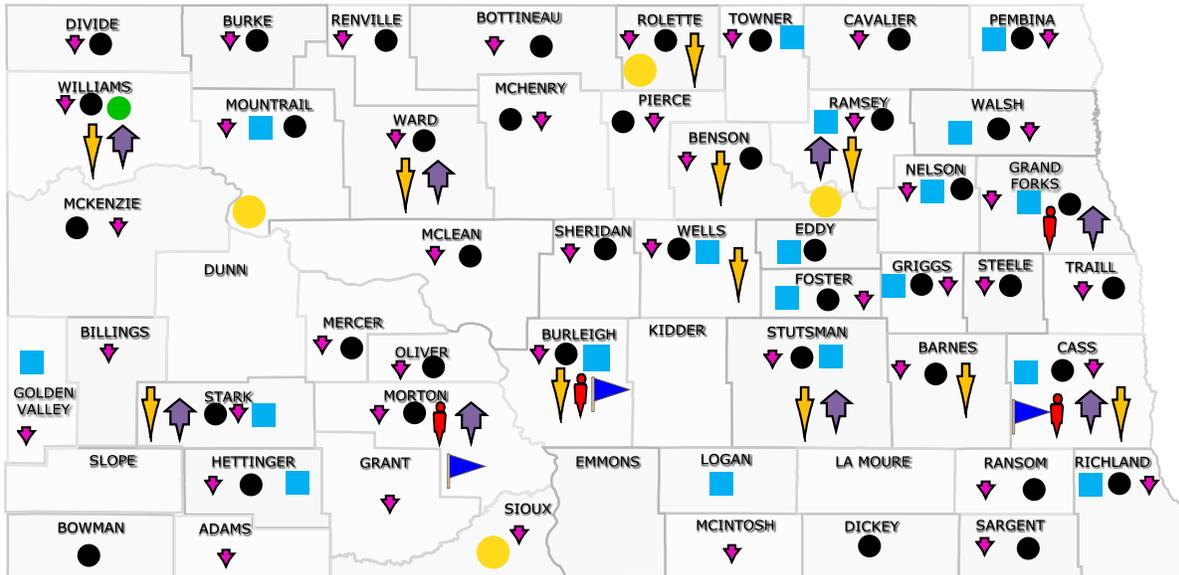
Category 3: Services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable

In-Home Case Management Services
Intensive In-home Family Therapy
Parent Aide
Prime Time Care
Safety Permanency Funds
Tribal Family Preservation Services
Respite Care

Category 4: Services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency

- Foster Care Case Management Services (county, DJS, tribal IV-E)**
- Safety Permanency Funds**
- AASK (Adults Adopting Special Kids)**
- In-Home Case Management Services**
- Intensive In-home Family Therapy**
- Subsidized Guardianship**

Those listed with **bold type** in the above list are available statewide. It should be noted that In-Home Case Management Services are available statewide, however, only the counties noted on the map below currently receive funding from federal or state funding sources. Services that are available in certain jurisdictions are as follows:



Family Preservation Services Funded Through Children and Family Services

	<i>In-Home Case Management</i>		<i>Parent Aide</i>		<i>Nurturing Parenting Program</i>		<i>Tribal Family Preservation</i>
	<i>Prime Time Childcare</i>		<i>Family Team Decision Making</i>		<i>Parent Resource Centers</i>		<i>Respite Care</i>
							<i>Youthworks</i>
<p><i>Symbols designated with and "R" indicate the service is offered region-wide.</i></p>							

The CFS Division utilizes state general funds to provide Family Preservation Services contracts with each of the four federally recognized tribes in the state.

Each tribal social services office has the option to select which Family Preservation service or services they will offer. In FFY 14 tribal social service offices reported the following data:

- Three Affiliated Tribal Social Services provided parent aide services to 19 families and prevented out of home placements in 84% of the cases.
- Turtle Mountain Tribal Social Services provided in-home/Wraparound case management and parent aide services to 55 families and prevented out of home placements in 76% of the cases.
- Spirit Lake Tribal Social Services provided parent aide services. Data was not available at the time of this writing.
- Standing Rock Tribal Social Services provided parent aide services to 241 families and prevented out of home placements in 56% of the cases.

Individualized Services

The ND Wraparound Practice Model values speak to ensuring that services are individualized to meet the child and family needs. Comments made by reviewers during the debriefing of cases during the CFSR reflect the observation that local agencies and case managers are tailoring services to meet the unique needs of children and families. However, no quantifiable data is currently available. Data from the state's CFSR case reviews for item 17, *Needs and Services of Children, Parents and Foster Parents*, reflect that overall the item is an area needing improvement, yet as noted, a majority of those cases are lack of concerted efforts to engage with the absent parent. North Dakota plans to utilize the Online Monitoring System (OMS) for its cases reviewed in FFY 16, and therefore, it is anticipated that data relating to the needs and services addressed in the new item 12 and the Stakeholder Interview Guide (SIG) will provide the state on meaningful data for this systemic factor. Future plans also include the use of a survey to clients to better inform if their individual needs are being addressed through the services they received.

B. Strengths and Concerns

North Dakota's child welfare services also utilize services funded and supported through other federally and state supported programs, such as Medicaid, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), along with multiple behavioral and mental health services. Many of these services are available statewide, yet also represent services for which there is a gap in services across all political jurisdictions. In this past year, Child and Family Services Division participated in a statewide effort to study behavioral and mental health services in the state. The study was commissioned through the Legislature. A copy of this report can be found at the following link: <http://www.ndpanda.org/news/docs/20140722-behavioral-health.pdf>. While this study and recommendations were not specific to Children and Family Services, the coordination and collaboration of all divisions will be necessary to meet the needs of children and families in the state.

Specific comments and concerns noted in the CFSR Stakeholder groups during this past year include the following themes:

- Out of home placement resources are in limited supply. Concerns related to the limited number of foster family homes able to take large sibling groups, the number of youth being placed out of state in order to meet their treatment needs.
- More services to prevent removal are needed. Concerns related to waiting lists for intensive in-home services, for parent aide services to be more available prior to a foster care placement, more post-adoption services to support permanency, a request from many jurisdictions to have Family Team Decision Making Services available statewide.
- Services to address addiction needs are in limited supply and hard to access in most parts of the state.
- Accessing mental health services, especially in the rural parts of the state, are challenging.
- Difficulties finding dentists who accept Medicaid.

During the current year, Children and Family Services (CFS) supported efforts to enhance behavioral and mental health services as well as requested the Legislature provide additional allocations to support an increase in Family Team Decision Making (see goal 1). While not all these efforts were met with success, CFS will continue to partner with other agencies and community organizations to address the gaps in service noted.

6. AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

The state, in implementing the provision of the CFSP, engages in ongoing consultation with a broad array of individuals and organizations representing the State/Tribal and county/local agencies responsible for implementing the CFSP and other major stakeholders in the service delivery system including, at a minimum, Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child and family serving agencies; there is evidence that the agency's goals and objectives included in the CFSP reflect consideration of the major concerns of stakeholders consulted in developing the plan and on an ongoing basis.

During FFY 15, the state has engaged multiple partners and stakeholders in the implementation of the 2015-2019 CFSP and the services provided. Documentation of many of these efforts can be found throughout this report, including the section of reviewing and updating the Plan for Improvement. In addition, connections with the Court Improvement Project and the State and Tribes Enhancing Partnership Strategies (STEPS) Committee are critical components to the state's responsiveness.

Another area where the state is responding to the feedback from the community has been an effort to explore the possibilities that developing a Differential Response or an Alternative Response in the state's child protection program. With the support of funding from Casey Family Services, a small team of

stakeholders (herein after referred to as the DR team) attended a national conference in the fall of 2014 on Differential Response. After the conference, the DR team met to begin mapping out how a DR model in North Dakota could look. Each team member took responsibility for a key piece of DR including: necessary NDCC changes; practice changes; community buy-in; and finance. In July 2015, the DR team intended to make a site visit to Ohio to observe the DR process in a couple of counties. Because ND is very early in the mapping process, it was decided to postpone a site visit and work on developing strategies ND needs to explore before taking the team on a site visit. The alternative to making a site visit will be, with Casey Family Services support, to have someone from Ohio come to North Dakota to meet with the team to share lessons learned. DR response is in the early stages of planning and as such, a specific goal or objective has not yet been added to the 5-year plan.

The state develops, in consultation with these or similar representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.

A. Data and Information

Participants contacted to provide feedback during the development of the 2016 APSR include representation from: County Director’s Association, Regional Human Service Center Supervisors, Residential Child Care Association, Private agency service providers (The Village Family Service Center, Lutheran Social Service Center ND, PATH ND, Inc., Catholic Charities North Dakota- AASK, Prevent Child Abuse ND), University of North Dakota/Children & Family Services Training Center, Division of Juvenile Services, North Dakota Court Improvement Project, North Dakota Juvenile Court, North Dakota Foster Adoptive Parent Association, Tribal Social Service Directors, Native American Training Institute, Children’s Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Prevent Child Abuse ND, individuals representing parents and residential group and treatment facilities.

There is evidence that the services under the plan are coordinated with services or benefits under Federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same populations to achieve the goals and objectives in the plan.

A. Data and Information

Information contained in the 2015-2019 CFSP on pages 73-77 remains relevant and accurate. No new planning or coordination efforts with other federally–assisted program were initiated during FFY 15 or are planned for FFY 16.

B. Strengths and Concerns

The strengths and concerns listed in the 2015-2019 CFSP remain an accurate reflection of this systemic factor. North Dakota continues to have strong collaborations and partnerships with statewide partners.

During the 2015 state legislative session, a bill was passed which will remove the local county share for certain social service expenses, including certain family preservation services, foster care services and adoption assistance agreements. This bill, known as SB 2206, also authorized a study of how social services are delivered in North Dakota. This study will be conducted over the next two years.

7. FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

The State has established and maintains standards for foster family homes and child care institutions that are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards. The standards so established are applied by the State to every licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.

A. Data and Information

Standards for licensing foster family homes and child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds continues to function as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP. There have been no changes in the past year. The APSR 2016 allows North Dakota the opportunity to reflect the following data recognizing the number of licensed providers utilized to meet placement needs for ND foster children:

ND Foster Care Placement Options	
3-31-2015	
Provider Type	Licensed
ND Family Foster Care Homes	736
ND Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCF)	11
ND Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)	6
ND Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) – Foster Care only	1
ND Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) – Foster/ Adoption Agency	2
ND Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) – Adoption Agency	3
Out of State – Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCF)	11
Out of State – Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)	9
Out of State – Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA)	6
Out of State – ND children placed in licensed family homes	77
Totals include only licensed or approved Providers. In state providers are licensed by the North Dakota Department of Human Services. Out of state providers are licensed by the out-of-state agency and documentation is sent to ND as proof of licensing compliance.	

The chart below reflects each ND provider level, licensing duration, when licensing compliance is viewed and by whom. The functionality of offering fair and equal standards to all ND providers is going very well. NDCC 50-11, NDAC chapters, and state policy drive the standards.

Equal Licensing Standards Statewide		
Provider Level	Licensing Duration	Onsite Licensing Compliance Reviews
Family Homes	1 year license	County office completes onsite visits Regional office approves the license
RCCF	1 or 2 year license	Children & Family Services complete onsite visit annually Random onsite visits can occur throughout the year
PRTF	1 or 2 year license	Behavioral Health Services complete an onsite visit when application for licensing renewal is required.
LCPA	1 or 2 year license	Children & Family Services complete onsite visit when application for licensing renewal is required.

B. Strengths and Concerns:

The strengths and challenges remain as described in the 2015-2016 CFSP with the following additions:

Recruitment & Retention Outcomes: North Dakota will be better able to analyze recruitment and retention efforts ongoing. Regional outcomes will be collected at the end of each state biennium. ND will have a reflection of the foster –adopt recruitment and retention outcomes data during the APSR 2017. The data will be provided to Children & Family Services in August 2015 representing data from July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2015.

Facility Training: In the past, access to training for facility staff has been a challenge. However, ND secured \$77,000 in state general funds this past legislative session to support facility training needs for the 2015-2017 biennium. These training funds will offer RCCF providers additional opportunities to best meet the needs of children in placement; secondary trauma training for staff, reduction of restraint, positive behavior modification techniques, trauma informed care practices, etc.

Equal Standards: ND continues to work diligently to ensure that standards, compliance, and licensing requirements are applied equally to all providers regardless of the region in which the provider resides. Facility providers statewide have the same Licensing Administrator from the state office, where foster homes have different licensors viewing the home, completing the study, and having licensing paperwork approved by the Regional Supervisor for state approval. ND locations could be a challenge, but state policy and training drives consistency.

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.

A. Data and Information

The state continues to comply with these requirements as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP. The implementation of updates to North Dakota Administrative Code 75-03-16-12.2 as referenced in the CFSP was accomplished with no concerns. Facilities were able to make the choice to hire a potential employee while waiting for the completed background check. The change to administrative code allowed creditable candidates the opportunity to start training. This change did not allow prospective employees to have contact with children in placement until the background check came back approved for facility employment.

ND does have a plan to make adjustments in 2016 to create consistency in all foster care and adoption programming ND Administrative Code Chapters (NDAC 75-03-14, NDAC 75-03-16, NDAC 75-03-17, and NDAC 75-03-36). The intent would be to ensure that all criminal conviction sections are the same in each chapter.

During this past year, the Criminal Background Check Unit (CBCU) completed a record-setting number of background checks. The functionality of the CBCU has greatly improved over the past five years; not only are the number of checks completed today higher in number, but the attention to detail and timeliness from CBCU administration is efficient and effective, benefiting providers.

ND Criminal Background Check Unit FFY 14 Data	
Provider Level	Total Checks Completed
Foster Care - RCCF / GH Employees	207
Foster Care - PRTF Employees	197
Foster Care - Family Home	862
Adoption - Domestic	228
Adoption - Special Needs	253
Adoption - International	50
LCPA Employees	108
Fingerprint Check Totals	1905
Child Abuse & Neglect Index checks CY 14	10,264 855 Monthly Average

B. Strengths and Concerns

The strengths and challenges continue as described in the 2015-2016 CFSP. However, it should be noted that ND does randomly select files for quality assurance throughout the year. ND peer reviewers have found that criminal background check clearances were completed in all cases per the federal and state requirement. Criminal background check results are viewed in the file to ensure compliance; all licensed and approved providers were found to be in full compliance having proper documentation on file for each provider, provider employee, etc. See chart below:

Provider Level	Files Reviewed Annually
Family Foster Homes	All Annual reviews to issue a new license.
RCCF Employee Files	75 files # varies depending on the size of the facilities being reviewed.
LCPA Employee Files	30 files # varies depending on the size of the agencies being reviewed.

In addition, Title IV-E Eligibility Administration has updated file review policy in May 2015. The policy reinforces that each year, NDDHS will have a peer review team auditing over 200 child files; inclusive of fiscal match codes IV-E, EA, and Regular Match codes. In May 2015, 70 files were reviewed and all were found to have the required criminal background check license information in the case record.

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 foster and adoptive homes are needed.

A. Data and Information

North Dakota continues to embrace the opportunity to ensure diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families reflecting the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. This component of the systemic factor continues to operate as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP. Additional details can be found in the state’s Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment and Retention Plan (Attachment B). Below are some highlights of what changed in the past year and any planned changes in 2016:

One Church – One Child Recruitment Initiative Update

The 2015-2019 CFSP described a seed grant to support a pilot project utilizing the national “One Church, One Child” model in rural faith-based communities. The UND Training Center (UND-TC) and Children and Family Services worked to collaborate with Dr. Melanie Sage to pilot this 12 month project, which just recently was completed and will not be continued into 2016.

The project allowed for targeted foster care recruitment outreach to church communities in Nelson and Pembina counties. These counties were chosen since they have the least amount of licensed foster homes in the northeast region of North Dakota. The goal of this pilot project was to conduct one on-site church outreach event per month. The outreach resulted in one foster family being licensed with three pending families in Pembina. Nelson County was more difficult to engage; there were no foster families recruited in Nelson County. However, several presentations were made and participants said that their knowledge and awareness of fostering had increased.

Wendy's Wonderful Kids

North Dakota was the recipient of a grant for two full time Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiters, one located in the eastern and one in the western part of the state. The western ND recruiter was added in the last year with a primary focus on child specific recruitment for Native American children. At this time, (July 1, 2014 through May 2015) these two recruiters have facilitated the placement of three children and the finalization of three children's adoptions.

B. Strengths and Concerns

Based on stakeholder comments received, the FRAME Foster Care Demographics report utilization has grown. This report provides data on key demographics, such as age and race for the foster care universe. Limitations related to the reports ability to identify sibling groups and children with special needs continue. However, the state continues to reflect on regional increases, needs, race, gender, age demographics to best match children to families. In addition, CFS does receive a quarterly report on foster homes based on data reported by the regional coalitions.

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

A. Data and Information

The state continues to comply with these requirements as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP. The ND Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) administration works diligently to ensure the safe and timely placement is complete. Within our state, local workers and supervisors are well aware of the time frames in which home studies need to be completed. However, at times there are exceptions and extensions must be granted past 60 days in order to complete the studies to the highest quality.

Data below does show the state's process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.

Interstate Compact on Placement of Children Home Studies		
Data is reflective of the 17 adoption requests received from other states in FFY 14		
	Home studies completed within 60 days	Home studies <u>NOT</u> completed within 60 days
Approved	8	5
Denied	1	1
Withdrawn	1	1
TOTAL	10	7

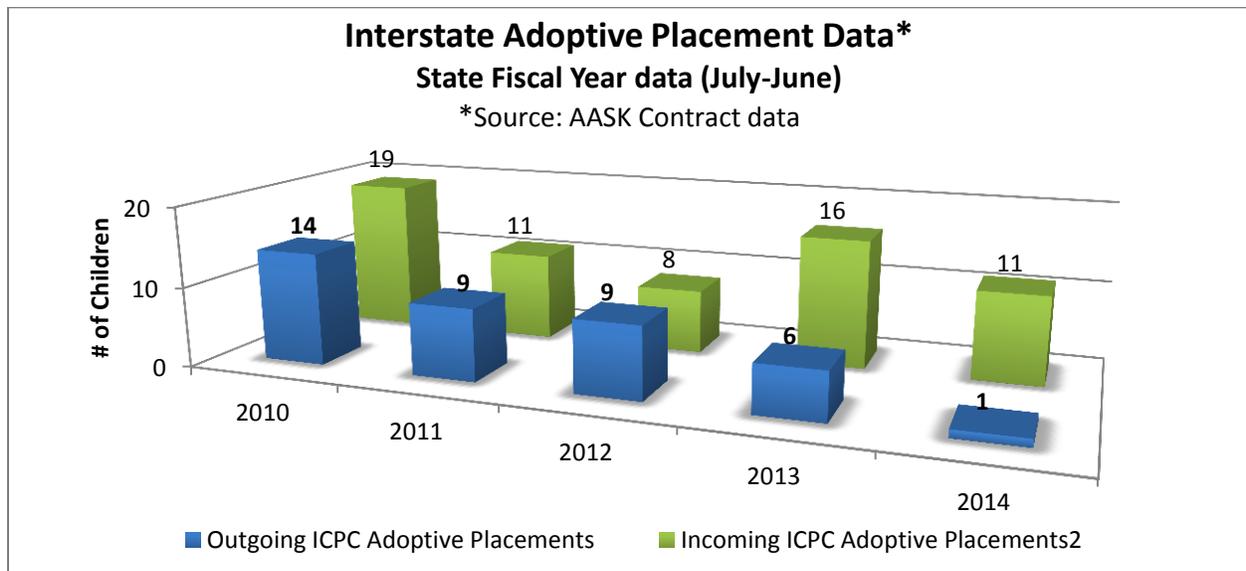
Data indicates that approximately 59% of the adoption related cases are completed within the 60 day time period. Anecdotally, reasons for not meeting the time requirements have included delays related to criminal records background checks, families returning the necessary paperwork, time needed to thoroughly complete the assessment process, or staffing challenges. The state plans to further analyze this data in the coming year.

Additional Data from the AASK Program:

The following data regarding children leaving and children entering the state for the purpose of adoption are as follows:

- SFY 2013, sixteen children were placed into ND from other states and six ND children were placed into other states.
- SFY 14, eleven children were placed into ND from other states and one ND child was placed outside of ND.

These numbers vary year by year. We do not specifically recruit to either bring children into ND or to send them out, so these numbers reflect the varying circumstances of each case.



B. Strengths:

While most of the strengths mentioned in the 2015-2019 CFSP remain, it is noteworthy that in the past year, North Dakota realized the increase of an additional full-time recruiter for the AASK Program funded through the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program of the Dave Thomas Foundation. This position will focus on the western part of the state, with special focus on service to Native American children. Through the partnership with the Dave Thomas Foundation, additional training was provided to the AASK program and foster care licensors which focused on strengthening recruitment and retention efforts.

North Dakota continues to have a strong Heart Gallery movement which provides a traveling gallery of waiting children that are viewed across the state and nationally in an online format.

ICPC Administration has changed in North Dakota; formerly administered by two employees who divided the effort of foster care and adoption ICPC. At this time, ND has one ICPC Administrator covering all foster care and adoption ICPC cases. The consistency and knowledge of one Administrator will continue to strengthen the ICPC program in North Dakota.

C. Concerns:

The concerns presented in the 2015-2019 CFSP remain a challenge for North Dakota. Efforts this past year focused on making changes to the information system (CCWIPS) to have the system better capture data that is required and gathered during the licensing process, while eliminating data fields that are no longer required. This will simplify the licensing process and reduce duplication. Efforts to streamline the overall foster to adoptive process will continue. This concern, however, is symptomatic of a larger information systems challenge and likely will take a longer period of time to rectify.

III. UPDATE TO THE PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT AND PROGRESS MADE TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES:

A. Update to the Plan for Improvement (see pp. 55-61)

The Children and Family Services Plan for 2015-2019 has been reviewed and updated on the following pages. The Goals remained the same with slight modifications to the benchmarks for some of the interventions noted. Additional narrative details will be provided in subsequent sections of this APSR.

NORTH DAKOTA 2015-2019 PLAN FOR IMPROVEMENT

GOAL I: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.			
MEASURE: 73% of all cases reviewed receive a substantially achieved rating for Well Being Outcome 1 by July 2019. This reflects a 10% increase based upon current performance.			
OBJECTIVES & INTERVENTIONS	EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION	RESPONSIBLE	QUARTER DUE
1. Build capacity of Family Team Decision Making services.	1.a. The availability of Family Team Decision Making Services in unserved areas of the state are increased.	1.a. CFS	1.a. Qtr 12
2. Explore and partner with national efforts to address disparity and disproportionality in foster care with research evidenced-based national approaches to realize an increase to the number of Native American children remaining out of the foster care system.	2.a. Involvement with national advisory groups or convened task forces will be demonstrated.	2.a. CFS	2.a. Qtr 9
	2.b. Options will be discussed and document in partnership with tribal representatives	2.b. CFS, NATI	2.b. Qtr 12
3. Out of home provider resources in the state will meet the needs of more youth, requiring fewer out of state placements.	3.a. Analysis will document recommendations to address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current policies that limit in-state placement • Recommendations for policy changes. • Identification of additional resources needed • Consideration of performance-based contracting • Incentives for facilities to follow up services post-discharge. • Alternative approaches to providing foster care services • Opportunities in kinship care 	3.a. CFS, BHSD, CFS Committee, RCCF, PRTF, TFC providers	3.a. Qtr 10
	3.b. Based on recommendations, a plan is identified, resources secured, the plan is implemented and monitored.	3.b. CFS	3.b. Qtr 12

Data source(s): AFCARS Data Profile, CFSRs (Items 17-20), CFSR Stakeholder meetings & CFSP Strategic Planning meetings (qualitative).

GOAL II: A comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement process will support a strong practice base in accordance with the North Dakota Wraparound Practice Model.			
MEASURE: North Dakota's comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement process is established by September 2019.			
OBJECTIVES & INTERVENTIONS	EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION	RESPONSIBLE	QUARTER DUE
<p>1. Strengthen the fundamental administrative structure of North Dakota's Child Welfare System.</p> <p>1.a T/TA to assist in comprehensive assessment of ND CQI system.</p> <p>1.b Determine who's directly responsible for CQI in ND (state office, system partners – county, region, DJS, etc.).</p> <p>1.c Establish written and consistent standards, policies, procedures and practices for ND CQI process.</p> <p>1.d Training process for CQI staff, including any contractors or stakeholders conducting CQI activities.</p>	<p>1.a T/TA approved by CB has been received.</p> <p>1.b Roles regarding CQI are identified, communicated, and understood. "CQI Champions" are identified and supported.</p> <p>1.c Policy is manualized.</p> <p>1.d CFS Division Staff have trained all regions on CQI.</p>	<p>1.a CFS</p> <p>1.b CFS</p> <p>1. c CFS</p> <p>1.d CFS</p>	<p>1.a Qtr 12</p> <p>1.b Qtr 16</p> <p>1.c Qtr 16</p> <p>1.d Qtr 17</p>
<p>2. Enhance the system's ability to gather, maintain and utilize quality data.</p> <p>2.a Identify what qualitative and quantitative data will drive the ND CQI process.</p> <p>2.b Analyze the current management information system (MIS) in ND to evaluate its effectiveness and capacity, and identify what we need in a system.</p> <p>2.c The MIS will better meet the needs of the child welfare system.</p>	<p>2.a List of qualitative and quantitative data measure used in ND's CQI process is approved and disseminated.</p> <p>2.b Vendor has completed review of MIS resulting in a specific action plan including timelines.</p> <p>2.c An enhanced MIS system is implemented.</p>	<p>2.a CFS, DHS, Counties, Stakeholders</p> <p>2.b CFS, DHS</p> <p>2.c DHS, CFS, Counties, Stakeholders</p>	<p>2.a Qtr 5</p> <p>2.b Qtr 11</p> <p>2.c Qtr 19</p>

OBJECTIVES & INTERVENTIONS	EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION	RESPONSIBLE	QUARTER DUE
<p>3. The state’s case record review process is enhanced.</p> <p>3.a A CFSR Task Force is convened to review & enhance the CFSR process.</p> <p>3.b CFS will develop policies and procedures for the CFSR process addressing the recommendations of the CFSR Task Force.</p>	<p>3.a Task Force has reviewed CFSR process and submitted recommendations.</p> <p>3.b Written policies are manualized and disseminated.</p>	<p>3.a CFS, DHS, Counties, DJS, Tribes</p> <p>3.b CFS, DHS, Counties, DJS, Tribes</p>	<p>3.a COMPLETED</p> <p>3.b Qtr 5</p>
<p>4. A process is established for the analysis and dissemination of quality and timely data on all Performance Measures.</p> <p>4.a Identify mechanisms for gathering, organizing and tracking information and results related to outcomes.</p> <p>4.b A protocol for analyzing data which includes stakeholder, tribal, court input is defined within the ND CQI Process.</p> <p>4.c Quarterly and annual reporting of outcome information is shared with all stakeholders.</p>	<p>4.a Mechanisms are identified so that we have a template developed for the ND outcome measurements report.</p> <p>4.b Process defined as evidenced through established policy.</p> <p>4.c Data is shared in accordance with established policy and evidenced by CQI reporting.</p>	<p>4.a CFS, DSS, ITS</p> <p>4.b CFS, DSS, ITS, Tribes, Court</p> <p>4.c CFS, DSS, ITS, Tribes, Court</p>	<p>4.a Qtr 5</p> <p>4.b Qtr 16</p> <p>4.c Qtr 18</p>
<p>5. The state’s CQI system maintains the ability to provide feedback to Stakeholder and Decision-makers and, as needed, uses information to adjust programs and processes.</p> <p>5.a Newsletter publication highlighting practice strengths/improvements in an electronic format.</p> <p>5.b T/TA to identify processes/models for providing feedback to stakeholders and decision-makers.</p>	<p>5.a Newsletter publication distributed</p> <p>5.b CQI program establishes specific action planning process inclusive of timeframes, formats and structures.</p>	<p>5.a CFS, DHS, Public Info Liaison</p> <p>5.b CFS</p>	<p>5.a Qtr 4</p> <p>5.b Qtr 12</p>

Data source(s): CFSR Stakeholder meetings & CFSP Strategic Planning meetings (qualitative)

GOAL III: North Dakota will have a thriving child welfare workforce.			
MEASURE: County & state child welfare staffing levels will be strengthened through recruitment and retention efforts by September 2019.			
OBJECTIVES & INTERVENTIONS	EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION	RESPONSIBLE	QUARTER DUE
<p>1. Identifying child welfare workforce capacity and shortages within the county and state child welfare service continuum.</p>	<p>1.a Baseline data for current approved FTE's and vacancies are identified.</p> <p>1.b Data from child welfare workforce (county, state staff) is retrieved from an annual survey and workforce needs are identified.</p>	<p>1.a CFS, DHS, DSS, CFS Committee</p> <p>1.b CFS, DHS, DSS, CFS Committee</p>	<p>1.a COMPLETED</p> <p>1.b Qtrs 5,9,13,17</p>
<p>2. Recruit & retain additional county and state child welfare staff through partnership with UND.</p> <p>2.a Utilize the funding for stipends to offset tuition costs to gain a bachelor's or master's degree in social work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Partner with UND to implement their National Child Welfare Workforce Institute grant. ✓ Partner with UND to continue IV-E stipends. <p>2.b Promote the available funding opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To current child welfare field staff ✓ To broader audience to recruit social workers 	<p>2.a.1 Quantitative data regarding number of students enrolled or graduated through stipend opportunities is gathered, reviewed and disseminated.</p> <p>2.a.2 Data on how many stipend students become employed or are retained by county or state child welfare providers is shared.</p> <p>2.b Marketing plan regarding the stipend application process is employed.</p>	<p>2.a CFS Director & UND Social Work Dept</p> <p>2.b DHS CFS, Public Info Liaison, HSC, UND Social Work Dept, Counties</p>	<p>2.a. Qtrs 4,8,12,16,20</p> <p>2.b. Qtrs 4,8,12,16,20</p>

<p>3. Partner with DHS and Child Welfare Workforce service providers to advance employment recruitment initiatives.</p>	<p>3.a Recruitment tool developed & disseminated.</p> <p>3.b Partnership with Job Service ND, ND Chamber of Commerce and affiliates regarding recruitment opportunities has been explored.</p>	<p>3.a CFS, DHS, Public Info Liaison, Counties, CFS Committee</p> <p>3.b CFS, Counties</p>	<p>3.a Qtr 13</p> <p>3.b Qtr 12</p>
<p>4. Strengthen local agencies ability to provide professional supports for their child welfare staff.</p>	<p>4.a Direct Services and Supervisory workload standards will be defined based on evaluated information.</p> <p>4.b Child Welfare workforce members will report increased satisfaction with the support received through annual surveys.</p>	<p>4.a DHS CFS, HSC, County Directors, County Supervisors</p> <p>4.b CFS, DHS, DSS</p>	<p>4.a Qtr 4</p> <p>4.b Qtrs 1,5,9,13,17</p>

Data source(s): CFSR Stakeholder meetings & CFSP Strategic Planning meetings (qualitative)

Revisions to Goals, Objectives, and Interventions

Goal 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs

There has been no change to this overall Goal and measurement. Results of the Assessment of Performance confirm the need to strengthen families' capacity to provide for their children's needs, Well-Being Outcome 1. The first objective/intervention also remains the same while extending the date for completion.

The significant change to the objectives/interventions for this goal is in the use of the "Intervention Selection Teams" originally identified. Since this concept was originally identified during the building of the plan, there have been many barriers to being able to form and proceed with this approach. Staff and time resources have posed the biggest challenges. In addition, planning efforts were hindered by efforts requiring the attention of CFS staff members following the passage of P.L. 113-183, Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. Additional challenges were noted as a result of staff retirements and turnover at the Department and partner agencies.

Progress was made in the area of addressing the needs relating to the Out of Home Placement Resource objective, which will be discussed later in greater detail. However, similar challenges were noted in the ability to move forward with the Intervention Selection Team approach. It was learned that there are other complementary groups addressing similar issues, so the changes in these objectives and interventions are made to maximize and streamline resources.

Goal 2: A comprehensive CQI process will support a strong practice base in accordance with the North Dakota Wraparound Practice Model

There has been no change to this overall Goal and measurement. Stakeholder feedback received during this review as affirmed the need to further develop a comprehensive CQI process for North Dakota.

The primary changes to this goal are adjustments to the timeline for when objectives and interventions will be completed.

Goal 3: North Dakota will have a thriving child welfare workforce

Goal 3 seeks to strengthen North Dakota's child welfare workforce and there are no substantive changes to the goal, objectives or interventions. During the course of the strategic planning meeting, much qualitative feedback was received from all participants regarding the limitations placed on ensuring positive outcomes for children and families when agencies are struggling to recruit and retain their workforce. Even when agencies have allocated funding for position, several other challenges have been noted by partners such as, but not limited to: housing, transportation, competing with private sector jobs, especially in the oil-impacted counties. As a county-administered, state-supervised child welfare system, the complexities involved in addressing this issue are significant. Thus, the interventions and strategies selected are based on a collaborative approach.

Update on Progress Made to Improve Outcomes

Goal 1: Families have enhanced Capacity to provide for their children's needs

Following is an update on the progress of Goal 1:

- **1.a** DHS and several partner agencies advocated with for additional funding to support the expansion of Family Team Decision Making Services to unserved areas of the state. This service has been requested by many county agencies and it is an approach that has worked well for North Dakota. Additional funding was not allocated by the 64th Assembly of the ND Legislature, so the timeline for this objective has been extended so efforts can continue in the next session.
- **2.a & 2.b** The objective and intervention has shifted from forming an Intervention Selection Team to teaming up with other statewide and national efforts to still address the issue of overrepresentation of Native American children in North Dakota's foster care system. The stated objective of increasing Native American families' ability to care for their children in their own home remains a need the Department seeks ways to impact this challenge. CFS will work with State & Tribes Enhancing Partnership Strategies (STEPS) to review the information learned and to select strategies ultimately selected to mitigate this challenge.
- **3.a & 3.b** The objective and intervention has shifted from forming an Intervention Selection Team to partnering with other statewide efforts underway addressing this issue. CFS will partner with the Region VII Out of Home Placement Task Force and the Behavioral Health Study group of stakeholders. These groups share the goal of this particular objective and are comprised of largely the same members. CFS will document the analysis completed and secure a plan to address these challenges based on the recommendations documented.

Goal 2: A comprehensive CQI process will support a strong practice base in accordance with the North Dakota Wraparound Practice Model

Following is an update on the progress of Goal 2:

- **1.a-1.d** The state maintains the stated objectives and interventions noted in the 2015-2019 CFSP. This particular objective and intervention is scheduled to occur in later years of the plan and there is no update to provide for this year's report.
- **2.a** A list of qualitative and quantitative data measure used in ND's CQI process continues to be gathered. This particular step is being discussed as part of the re-visioning of the state's case record review process. Discussion to date has focused on utilizing the federal measures at a state and local level. Use of the national data standards in a more meaningful way to the state is anticipated. It is anticipated that this step will be accomplished at the end of the 5th quarter, as opposed to the 3rd quarter which was noted in the 2015-2019 CFSP.
- **2.b – 2.c** The state did not receive authorization to pursue a major technology project such as replacing the current management information system (MIS)

known as FRAME and CCWIPS. However, there is support within the state to continue this objective and intervention in the coming years. Efforts will be made in the coming two years to develop the business case to present at the next Legislative session to secure such authorization and funding. CFS staff will continue to partner with the Information Technology Services (ITS) staff to accomplish this task.

- **3.a** In FFY 14, the CFSR Manager and Infrastructure Administrator convened a CFSR Task Force with representation from the following groups: regional supervisors; DJS supervisors; county social services directors, supervisors, and caseworkers; tribal social services directors; CFS training center staff; and private providers. This group met over a 6-month period from October 2014-March 2015 to revision the state's CFSR process. The group provided the following recommendations to CFS:
 1. CFSR instrument: continue to use the federally developed instrument, as in the past. For the coming year, it will be the 2015 Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) on the CFSR Online Monitoring System (OMS).
 2. Model the federal CFSR process by convening interviews with key case participants for each case reviewed.
 3. Increase the number of cases reviewed to 100.
 4. Hold fewer CFSRs each year by reviewing 2 regions at a time.
 5. Consider the largest metropolitan area, Cass County, as one regional review site, rather than convening quarterly reviews.

The CFSR Task Force members were responsible to share these recommendations with their respective groups to solicit feedback, and report back to the task force.

Once all the recommendations were final, the CFS Management Team met to review them and determine if they were feasible. The decision was made to modify the recommended plan (due to challenges related to time, money, and people resources) to the following:

1. Use the OSRI on the OMS.
2. Convene interviews with key case participants for each case reviewed.
3. Review 74 cases per year.
4. Convene nine CFSRs per year – one in each of the eight North Dakota regions, and one in Cass County.

The CFSR Manager and Infrastructure Administrator developed a CFSR Training and subsequently convened two-day trainings in four ND sites in April and May 2015. Over 200 caseworkers, supervisors, and private providers were trained on the new instrument and recommended revisions to the ND CFSR Process. Of these, approximately 80 chose to be “certified” as case reviewers by completing additional work on the OMS. Concurrently, the CFS administrators met with the DHS Risk Manager regarding any potential liability issues concerning case reviewers going into family homes to complete case-related interviews. This

resulted in a meeting with several DHS administrators including legal administration, human resources, fiscal administration, and executive office administration. It was determined that because we “employ” a workforce to complete the case reviews, the reviewers would actually be employees of DHS, and the CFSR Manager would have to supervise them as contracted employees. Because the number of reviewers is large, it was determined this would not be a viable plan. Executive management recommended we contract with one of the state universities to complete the CFSRs. This recommendation is currently being studied by the CFS administrators. Because of this, the CFSR policy manual has not been written.

- **3.b** The CFSR policy has not yet been developed due to the circumstances described above. Therefore, the expected date of completion has been extended to Quarter 5.
- **4.a** This particular step of identifying a template for the ND outcomes measurements report is being discussed as part of the re-visioning of the state’s case record review process. Discussion to date has focused on utilizing the federal measures at a state and local level. Use of the national data standards in a more meaningful way to the state is anticipated. It is anticipated that this step will be accomplished at the end of the 5th quarter, as opposed to the 3rd quarter which was noted in the 2015-2019 CFSP.
- **4.b – 4.c** A protocol for analyzing data and the quarterly and annual reporting of outcomes information continues to be an objective of developing a comprehensive CQI program for ND. It is anticipate this step will be achieved in future years of this plan after training/technical assistance has been received.
- **5.a** The state remains committed to having an electronic publication highlighting positive practice outcomes. Early discussions on this topic by the state include preliminary plans for an “Outstanding in the Field” e-newsletter. The DHS Public Information Liaison has worked with the division and is currently writing the first edition. Plans were to have the publication released by June 30, 2015. However, due to multiple pressing demands, the timeline has been extended one quarter. A feature story has been identified and it is expected that once the initial set-up has been established, future publications will remain on track.
- **5.b** The state envisions a strong CQI process which provides meaningful feedback to stakeholders and decision-makers to be used in future policy and program development. This task remains in the plan and will be worked on in future years.

Goal 3: North Dakota will have a thriving child welfare workforce

Following is an update on the progress of Goal 3:

- **1.a** Establishing baseline data for current approved FTE's and vacancies was accomplished in Quarter 1. North Dakota has a FTE capacity for 313 social work positions - 70 of these positions were vacant and in need of being filled. This represents a vacancy rate of approximate 23%. Three regions in North Dakota exceed that percentage of vacancies: Region III including Devils Lake at 47% and Region VI – Jamestown at 29% and Region I – Williston at 26%. Region V (Fargo) has the lowest vacancy rate at 7%.

- **1.b** Developing an on-line survey tool for child welfare social workers is in progress through an agreement with a researcher at the UND Social Work Department. The survey tool design is being researched to achieve the maximum amount of information in the least intrusive manner. The plan is for a short succinct survey to allow for assessment of satisfaction and what the factors of satisfaction entail. It is expected the survey will be ready to send out by November 1, 2015 (within Quarter 5).

- **2.a** Efforts to recruit and retain additional county and state child welfare staff through partnership with UND is on track. Through the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) grant, a total of 10 social work students have been accepted into the program. Of the 10 students currently enrolled:
 - 1 graduated and is employed in Divide County.
 - 1 will graduate in December 2015 with a BSSW and plans to work in Mountrail County.
 - 1 will graduate in December 2015 with a MSW and will be placed at Ward County.
 - 1 will graduate May 2016 and will go to Stark County.
 - 1 MSSW student just started in January 2015 but will continue employment with Williams County.
 - 1 MSSW student also started in January 2015 and plans to go back to Stark County.
 - 1 BSSW student will graduate in December 2015 and work for Standing Rock.
 - 2 MSW students just began in May 2015 who both work for MHA Nation.

This project has the capacity for up to 22 students throughout the five year grant period, which ends June 2018.

- **2.b** The University has been marketing the availability of this funding opportunity to current students and through other student recruitment efforts conducted by the University of North Dakota. This marketing effort will continue throughout the five year plan. If stipend opportunities exceed demand, greater marketing efforts will be put into place (through the use of DHS Public Awareness liaison, the Human Service Center and counties).

- **3.a** No new information to report on the development of recruitment tools as this is a task not scheduled to be completed until Qtr. 12.
- **3.b** The partnership effort with DHS and Child Welfare Workforce service providers to advance employment recruitment initiatives is targeted for completion in Qtr. 13 and Qtr. 12. However, a change in North Dakota's employment classification system greatly expanded the pool of child welfare workers. In January 2015, a new classification was adopted by North Dakota's Human Resource Management System. The Family Support Specialist position will allow other than social work degreed individuals to provide child welfare work such as child protection services and foster care case management. Previous to the new classification, these positions were limited to licensed social workers. Since the classification was approved, 33 Family Support Specialist positions have been advertised by 13 different counties resulting in 24 filled positions. Prior to January 2015, these 33 positions would have had to be filled by a licensed social worker. North Dakota simply does not have the number of social workers able and willing to fill these difficult to fill positions. Child welfare work in rural oil booming North Dakota presents multiple challenges.

So this change, the University's social work recruitment efforts along with the regular IV-E stipend program have great promise in addressing the workforce shortage.

- **4.a – 4.b** Strengthen local agencies ability to provide professional supports for the child welfare staff. Direct service workload standards have been developed using the Child Welfare League of America guidelines. Supervisory standards have yet to be determined. This is a task that will be charged to the ND County Social Service Directors Children and Family Services committee. Measuring worker satisfaction will be an ongoing part of the surveys identified in number 1. Discovering what satisfaction indicators North Dakota workers value most will be an important recruitment and retention tool.

Implementation Supports

Training needs are addressed in the North Dakota Training Plan. Coaching for the case managers is offered through the local social service agencies and the human service center regional supervisors. County social service supervisors strengthen their coaching skills through the use of Learning Circles. The memoranda of understanding with other agencies needed to accomplish the goals are already in place. Policies, physical space and equipment are also important considerations that will impact the achievement of this plan. CFS anticipates staffing resources, financing, and data systems offer the greatest challenges to the state's ability to achieve the stated goals. No additional staffing resources were allocated following the 64th Legislative Assembly. CFS remains committed to partner with local agencies and divisions within the state agencies to advocate for and secure adequate resources.

Feedback Loops

CFS meets on a regular basis with partners and stakeholders through the following meetings: North Dakota Association of County Directors, CFS Committee, Regional Supervisors, STEPS, Court Improvement Project. In addition, email updates are provided to the field.

IV. UPDATE ON SERVICE DESCRIPTION

North Dakota provides the following services under title IV-B, subpart 2:

- **Family Preservation Services**

- **Parent Aide**

Parent Aide services are designed to improve parenting skills with parents who are at risk of abusing or neglecting their children, by reinforcing parents' confidence in their strengths and helping them to identify where improvement is needed and to obtain assistance in improving those skills. It uses the relationship between the parent and the parent aide as a tool to encourage, teach, and assist parents. These services are provided through memoranda of agreement in 40 North Dakota counties. At this time the amount of money budgeted does not allow for all 53 counties to receive funding from the Department. CFS monitors caseload data quarterly, and reallocates funding annually, in an effort to be as equitable as possible with the available money. Some counties supplement with their own funds to ensure families can receive this service.

- **In-Home Case Management Services**

In-home case managers provide services for families and children living in the home at risk of foster care placement, and for children returning to the home following reunification to prevent re-entry into foster care. This service is provided in all 53 counties, although during FFY 14 only 36 of these counties received funding through memoranda of agreement with the Department. CFS monitors caseload data quarterly, and reallocates funding annually, in an effort to be as equitable as possible with the available money. Because available funding does not meet the need, counties must supplement with their own funds to ensure families can receive this service.

- **Prime Time Child Care**

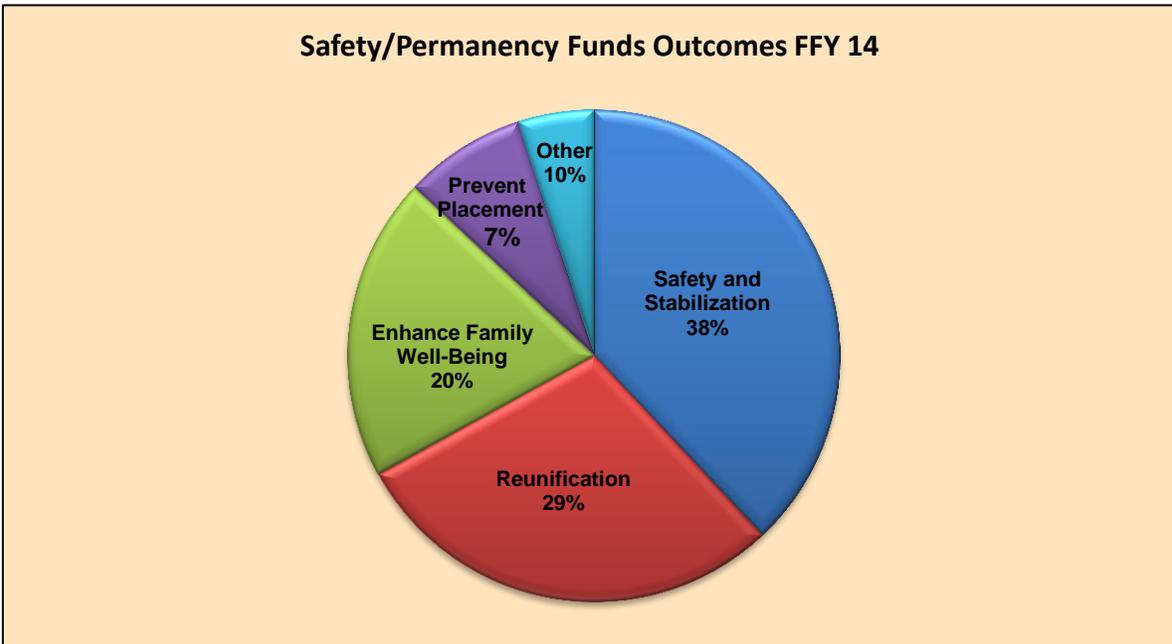
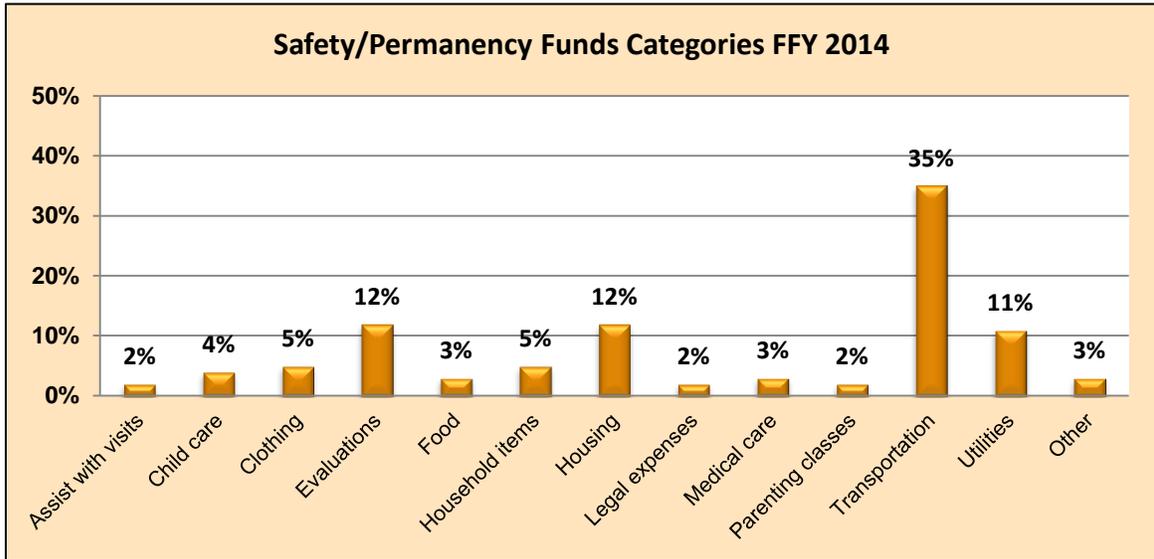
Prime Time Child Care provides temporary child care to children of families where child abuse and/or neglect have occurred or there is a risk of it occurring. It gives parents an opportunity to attend counseling, addiction treatment, or other needed services while their children are cared for in a licensed facility. During FFY 14, services were funded in 12 counties through memoranda of agreement. Additional counties could request this funding if the need arose.

- **Safety Permanency Funds**

Safety/Permanency Funds are flexible funding available to local county social service agencies to families who are having difficulty and are at risk of their children being placed out of their homes. Safety/Permanency Funds are

distributed each biennium to the eight regions in North Dakota in proportion to child population rates. The funds are managed by the Regional Supervisors with oversight by the Family Preservation Administrator.

During FFY 14, Safety/Permanency Funds requests totaled 1,112 in all eight North Dakota Regions. These funds were approved for the following reasons and to accomplish the following outcomes:



- **Family Support Services**

- **Prevention Networks, Public Awareness & Community Development and Outreach Services**

These services are provided through a contract with Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota (PCAND) and are available statewide. PCAND is not a direct service provider, yet is a key primary prevention organization. Prevention Networks are provided through PCAND's efforts to build on existing networks and connect new partners, as well as forming new networks for prevention of child abuse and neglect, including the North Dakota Home Visitation Network. Programing known as "Authentic Voices" networks survivors of childhood maltreatment and others to advocate on behalf of children. This effort began with the publication of "Authentic Voices: North Dakota Child Sexual Assault Survivors" publication. It has grown as a public awareness project utilizing a facilitators guide and theater adaptations of the work. They also coordinate the "Period of Purple Crying" initiative, an evidence-based infant abusive head trauma prevention program. Public Awareness efforts include coordination of statewide Child Abuse Prevention Month activities. Community Development and Outreach efforts include the Nurturing Healthy Sexual Development (NDSD), an engaging, interactive discussion-based training program developed to help adults better understand the sexual development of children and learn how to respond to children's sexuality in ways that promote healthy development. They also coordinate a Community Abuse Prevention Resource Team operating in Williston, ND.

- **Respite Care**

Respite Care is temporary child care for families with disabled children, including chronically or terminally ill children, children with serious behavioral or emotional difficulties, and drug-affected children. This service is intended to provide care givers with periods of temporary relief from the pressures of caring for children. Respite Care services were funded in one northwestern county through a state Memorandum of Agreement.

- **Time Limited Family Reunification**

- **Intensive In-home Family Therapy Services** are provided statewide through a contract with the Village Family Service Center.

- **Adoption Promotion and Support**

- **Foster and Adoptive Recruitment & Retention Coalitions**

The eight regional Recruitment & Retention coalitions apply for funding each biennium. The approved regional "Request for Funding" proposals identify both general and targeted recruitment activities to remain consistent with the Recruitment and Retention State Plan (**ATTACHMENT B**).

- **Adoption Services**

The CFS Division facilitates a contract with a private provider to provide adoption services to children in foster care and the families who adopt them. The contracted agency accepts referrals from the county social service agency when

the plan for a specific child is adopted (or there is a concurrent plan for adoption). The private agency then provides all adoption related services including child preparation and assessment, child specific recruitment, general family recruitment, family assessment and preparation, placement and post -placement services. The agency also assists families in applying for adoption assistance.

Please refer to Attachment F (Financial Documents) regarding data specific to each item for the following items:

1. The population(s) to be served;
2. The geographic areas where the services will be available; and
3. The estimated number of individuals and families to be served.

For FFY 16, the CFS Division has budgeted to spend 25% of IV-B, Subpart 2 funds for Family Preservation services, 22% for Family Support Services, 23% for Time Limited Family Reunification Services and 20% for Adoption Promotion and Support Services.

- **Populations at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment**

NCANDS data reveals that for FFY 15, 44% of all child victims were children age 5 and younger, representing a 1% decline from the data reported in the 2015-2019 CFSP. Services targeted to this population continue through referrals to Early Intervention programs for all children under age three identified as victims of child maltreatment, Health Track Screening for all children entering foster care, and referral to county case management services for individualized child and family service plans. No change in service delivery is planned for the coming year.

- **Services for Children Under the Age of Five**

North Dakota continues to have an accelerated permanency planning practice for all children in foster care, including those children under the age of five. Child and Family Team meetings provide the opportunity to review a child's permanency plan and status of reaching that goal every three months, as opposed to the required period review minimum of six months. In addition, the following steps continued during this past year as described in the 2015-2019 CFSP:

- Health Track (EPDST) screenings for all youth in foster care within 30 days of entry, which include developmental and mental health assessments,
- Training provided to foster and adoptive parents regarding the needs of this population,
- Continued work with the Head Start Collaboration Office to maintain awareness of the availability of Head Start and Early Head Start to young children in foster care,
- Continued referrals to early childhood intervention services pursuant to CAPTA requirements for all children under age 3 determined to be a victim of abuse or neglect, and
- Continued work with the regional Human Service Centers (HSC), which provides services to young children with developmental delays, to assess their capacity to serve all foster children needing assessment and services to assure developmental progress. Regional HSC have an array of services

available including developmental assessments and therapy for children in this age range.

Plans for organizing a collaborative effort to track this group of children and provide more specific data analysis continue into the next year. This effort was not able to be organized as intended in the past year. Recent available data, however, indicates the following information about this population:

All Children Less than 5 years of Age in Foster Care on Last Day of Reporting Period for AFCARS 2014B and 2015A

Age	9/30/2014 (2014B)	3/31/2015 (2015A)
Less than 1 Year	73	78
1 Year	77	95
2 Years	102	79
3 Years	78	84
4 Years	98	89
Total	428	425

Race	9/30/2014 (2014B)	3/31/2015 (2015A)
White	205	207
Alaskan Native/American Indian	139	139
2 or More Races	47	44
Black	13	11
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	4	4
Asian	1	0
Missing	19	20
Total	428	425

Gender	9/30/2014 (2014B)	3/31/2015 (2015A)
Male	215	210
Female	212	214
Unknown	1	1
Total	428	425

Permanency Goal	9/30/2014 (2014B)	3/31/2015 (2015A)
Reunify with Parent(s) or Principle Caretaker(s)	318	278
Adoption	74	83
Case Plan Goal Not Yet Established	12	38
Live With Other Relative(s)	3	6
Guardianship	3	6
Missing	18	14
Total	428	425

The total number for the foster care universe on the last day of each reporting period was 1,422 and 1,460 reflecting that children under the age of five represented 30% and 29% of the foster care universe respectively for these reported time periods.

- **Services for Children Adopted from Other Countries**

Although discreet post adoption services are rare in ND, adoption specialists provide information and referral services to families who inquire or present with a need. Family preservation services are available to families who are at risk for out of home placement and may be accessed through the local county child welfare agency. ND is making efforts to identify savings to the state that will be realized from the de-linking provisions of P.L. 110-351 and direct those percentages required toward post adoption services. Although not successful in obtaining state funding for these services in the latest legislative session, we did receive authorization for this service as a line item in the budget so that future savings can be directed to this effort and the services provided. Future post adoption services to be provided will be provided to internationally adopted children as well as those adopted from foster care.

V. PROGRAM SUPPORT

Please see the State's Training Plan (Attachment E) regarding the state's plan for training and technical assistance provided to counties and other local or regional entities that operate state programs and its impact on the achievement of CFSP/APSR goals and objectives since the submission of the 2015-2019 CFSP.

CFS was recently introduced to the Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative. The Capacity Building Collaborative takes the place of the National Child Welfare Resource Center. The Collaborative is designed to assist states increase coordination, leverage resources and provide more strategic services.

North Dakota anticipates requesting Capacity Building Collaborative service to support the work of enhancing the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts within the state. As noted in Goal 2 of the CFSP, the state seeks to strengthen all five core components of a CQI system as identified in ACFY-CB-IM-12-07. The expertise available through the Collaborative will be requested to guide these efforts. The CFS Division is committed to developing a program that informs program and policy decisions, yet would be a system that is meaningful to all levels of the service continuum.

Other areas CFS may look to the Capacity Building Collaborative for assistance includes: development of policies and implementation of P.L. 113-118; preparation for the 2016 federal CFR; and re-visioning the state's CFR process.

Evaluation And Research Activities

Casey Family Services funded a small research project to assess how the Family Team Decision model is being used in the state's three FTDM pilot counties. This research was conducted through focus groups at the three sites. The purpose of this research is to assess worker understanding and satisfaction of the FTDM process, and with the data, develop a statewide protocol for FTDM.

Another area of research will be social worker job satisfaction. CFS is working with a researcher from the University of North Dakota Social Work Department to develop, distribute and analyze the survey findings. This research will be used for child welfare workforce stabilization.

The state has undergone extensive efforts to revise the reporting logic used to report to AFCARS in an effort to improve the quality of data to assist in the evaluation of administrative data. Portions of the reporting logic for NCANDS were also modified during this past year. During the course of these efforts, additional system enhancements were noted in order to achieve the degree of improvement desired for these reports. Efforts are planned in FFY 16 to continue these efforts.

Please reference the Quality Assurance System Factor (page 35) and CFSP Goal #2 (page 56) for details about improvements to the state's quality assurance system that have been made since the implementation of the 2015-2019 CFSP.

VI. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN STATES AND TRIBES

Process Used to Gather Input from Tribes

North Dakota continues to maintain a strong working and collaborative relationship with four federally recognized Tribal Nations of North Dakota: Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara (MHA) Nation; Spirit Lake Nation; Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. CFS continues a partnership with NATI and the tribal social service agencies through STEPS meetings. Tribal social service directors: Renee Mayer, MHA Nation; Ina Olson, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa; Stephanie Isaak, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; and Delbert Hopkins, Jr., Spirit Lake Nation are regular attendees at STEPS meetings and actively engaged in sharing information on tribal concerns/issues. In addition, the CFS Director has direct communication with tribal social service directors on a regular basis regarding a variety tribal/state issues.

In the past year, the Department of Human Services entered into an agreement with Don Schmid, Title IV-E consultant, to evaluate and review the Tribes administrative claims process. The Tribes are not consistent in claiming IV-E administrative costs because of a number of systemic factors including, constant staff turnover, lack of training, etc. Mr. Schmid's charge is, to the extent possible, simplify and streamline the process, and establish consistency between the Tribes in how and when the claims are filed. The goal of this work is to assure Tribes are drawing down the maximum amount allowable for tribal administrative cost. Mr. Schmid's recommendations are expected to be received by June 30, 2015 with implementation targeted for SFY 16.

Ongoing Coordination and Collaboration with the Tribes

CFS plans for ongoing coordination and collaboration with the tribes includes:

- CFS continued partnership with NATI and the tribal social services directors through the STEPS meetings. CFS assists in the development of the STEPS meeting agenda and often hosts the meetings at a CFS location. STEPS meeting provide the means for CFS and tribes to discuss topics of importance including IV-E requirements, service array planning, caseworker visits, CFSR, CFSP progress and ICWA compliance.
- CFS continues to involve tribes in strategic planning meetings and annual reviews.
- CFS is watching with interest Senator Heitkamp's plan to create a Commission on Native Children that will work to identify the complex challenges faced by Native children in North Dakota and across the United States. An in depth study on chronic issues including high rates of poverty, unemployment, child abuse, domestic violence, crime, and substance abuse, will be tasked to the Commission. The Commission will make recommendations on how to assure Native children receive the protections, educational and economic tools necessary

to thrive. This Commission will also be an important driver on how state's address disproportionality in foster care.

- Casey Family Services has developed a strong presence in North Dakota to assist tribes. Issues Casey is addressing include: child protection protocols, IV-E eligibility, case management, foster home recruitment, and tribal/state agreements. CFS will continue to collaborate with Casey Family Services as they work with North Dakota tribes, particularly, Spirit Lake Nation.

Child Welfare Services for Tribal Children

Based on discussions with the tribes and the established State/Tribal Agreements, it is understood that the state is responsible for providing child welfare services and protection for all children under the state's jurisdiction (i.e. tribal children residing off the reservations). Tribes are responsible for providing child welfare and protection for tribal children under the tribal agency's jurisdiction (residing on the reservation). Children in tribal custody deemed eligible for Title IV-E remain under the jurisdiction of the tribal agency/court while the state maintains an oversight role to ensure all procedural safeguards afforded under the Title IVE agreements are in place. Additional services and protections provide by the state for ongoing service provision for tribal children include:

- A case review system in which Tribal IV-E cases are included in the state's Children and Family Review process, on-site case file reviews are conducted periodically by CFS staff.
- Access to the general funds for preventive services for children at risk of entering foster appropriated by the North Dakota Legislature. These services include parent aide, in-home case management services and safety and permanency funds.
- The state's regional human service child welfare supervisors conduct and participate in Title IV-E tribal child and family team meetings to facilitate reunifications, adoptions, guardianships or other planned, permanent living arrangement.
- Fund Title IV-E foster care maintenances costs and the state match for the IV-E eligible children living on the reservations.
- Continue funding of administrative IV-E dollars to the tribes. Provide technical assistance for completing and submitting IV-E administrative claims, including establishment of time study policies.
- Contract to provide IV-E training dollars to the tribal social service agencies through to the Native American Training Institute to conduct training on cultural competency, foster parent training for Native foster parents, maintenance of cultural resource service directory and the cultural resource guide for all tribes, ICWA compliance and financial support for the Indian Child Welfare Conference.
- Provision of training and technical assistance on IV-E related tribal issues. CFS will continue efforts underway to assist tribes with outside case management assistance through collaboration with Indian Affairs Commissioner's office and the private sector.
- CFS is continuing to work with DHS's IT and fiscal staff to establish a method to draw down the federal Tribal IV-E FMAP reimbursement rate. Code changes are

necessary to effect the change. It is expected the changes will be implemented by early 2016.

- To enhance consistency in the IV-E eligibility determination process, North Dakota continues to explore the feasibility of establishing a centralized IV-E eligibility determination process. Eligibility is now determined by counties neighboring a reservation. This results in differences in communicating rules to tribal social services, delays in establishing eligibility and some children missing out on eligibility because of lack of understanding of the eligibility rules. CFS did not receive any additional resources (staff or dollars) to create a centralized IV-E eligibility process. However, efforts to get a centralized process operational continue through discussions with the counties, tribes, and NATI.
- CFS will continue to obtain credit reports for all youth ages 16 and older in foster care, including the credit reports of tribal youth.
- The ND Chafee IL Administrator works with statewide Chafee IL Coordinators to ensure that CFCIP and ETV benefits are made available to Native American youth in tribal custody on the same basis as non-native foster care youth. In addition, the ND Chafee IL Administrator and Chafee IL Coordinators email program and contact information to the Tribal Directors ongoing to ensure adequate referral opportunities are available to tribal youth.
- Children & Family Services collaboratively works with tribal partners to update and retrieve necessary information to maximize resources and ensure opportunity for foster children statewide. The 18+ Continued Care program allows for Tribal Title IV-E youth to remain in, or return to, foster care if desired. This extension of services is beneficial to youth as they transition to living independently as adults.
- The state's contracted adoption provider, AASK, works collaboratively with the tribes when placing Native American children for adoption. AASK places children with the ICWA order of preference unless "good cause" has been established by the court to do otherwise, or the child's tribe has approved placement outside to ICWA order of preference.
- The CFS Director continues to serve as an advisory member on the board of the Native American Training Institute.
- The Department of Human Services, through an agreement with the University of North Dakota, provides an IV-E stipend program. The stipends are offered to social work students who agree to do child welfare work in the state, particularly rural and/or tribal areas, after graduation.
- The Court Improvement Project data subcommittee is looking into collecting data to analyze the number of abuse deprivation filings and neglect deprivation filings to better understand how cultural sensitivity may play a part in Native American children entering foster care. This data could serve as a basis for tribal families (targeted prevention) training and culturally sensitivity training based on Native American family dynamics to prevent unnecessary removals.
- The CFS Division will provide electronic copies and links to the 2016 ACFSP to the Tribal child welfare workers when submission is finalized. The ACFSP will be discussed at the fall STEPS (September 2015) meeting with the four tribal child welfare directors and NATI staff. Tribal social service directors will review and discuss their CFSP during STEPS meeting and post electronically as able.

Annual Progress and Services Reports will be shared in this same manner during the course of the next four years.

- The Court improvement Project and CFS will work collaboratively in getting P.L. 113-118 requirements communicated to tribal courts and tribal social services. A session on P.L. 113-118 will be conducted during the July 2015 Children's Symposium. This symposium reaches court staff as well as tribal courts and tribal social services. This will be the first of several other training opportunities for Tribes on the roll out of this law and will include:
 - The APPL limits as a permanency plan to youth age 16 and older.
 - Document at each permanency hearing the efforts to return a child home or with a relative, a guardian or adoptive parent.
 - Ensuring the child is asked about his/her desired permanency outcome at each permanency hearing and that APPLA is the best permanency plan with compelling reasons why it's not in the best interest of the child to be returned home, placed with relative, guardian or adoptive family.
 - Documenting at the permanency hearing that the foster family or child care institution follows the "reasonable and prudent standard" and the child's opportunities to engage in "age or developmentally appropriate activities".
 - Children age 14 and older have case file documentation of his/her health, education, court participation rights, credit report rights, and that the youth has a signed acknowledgement of such rights.
 - Evidence the child has been offered the opportunity to participate in the case planning along with two members who are not the case worker or foster parent.
 - Describe in case plan the services provided that assist the youth transition to a successful adulthood.
 - A copy of credit report and assistance in fixing any credit report inaccuracies.

ICWA Compliance

CFS plans for ongoing coordination and collaboration with the tribes in monitoring and improvement of the state's compliance with ICWA through a variety of methods including:

- ICWA compliance is reviewed in every randomly drawn CFSR case where ICWA applies in the eight regional CFSR's around the state. Beginning in May 2013, CFS began reviewing tribal social services cases as part of the CFSR – this practice will continue throughout the five year CFSP. CFS provided a day-long training on the CFSR instrument with four tribal social service agencies. Training on the CFSR instrument will be ongoing as needed. Additionally, the state has reached out to tribal partners inviting tribal representation on the North Dakota Child and Family Service Reviews as a state reviewer. Furthermore, a representative from each of the four tribal social service agencies has agreed to serve a Federal Reviewer for the Title IV-E Eligibility Review held in August 2014.
- The Court Improvement Project's ICWA subcommittee commissioned an ICWA Qualitative Observations audit of court case files for ICWA compliance. This audit involves a case file review of all cases from removal through adoption from

October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. The Court Improvement Project ICWA sub-committee met with the auditors during the ICWA Conference in February 2014. The auditors reported their findings so far and their timeline for completion. If auditors identify potential ICWA issues, they notify the Court Improvement Project staff person who then notifies the ICWA sub-committee. Solutions, both long and short term, will be discussed and implemented as appropriate. Recently, the auditors suggested a hard card of required ICWA language would likely resolve language issues identified in some findings and orders. The sub-committee approved the creation of a hard card and asked that it be distributed to all persons who may have input into findings and orders, such as attorneys, social services, court staff, etc. The audit has been completed, reviewed by the CIP ICWA sub-committee and forwarded to the full CIP Committee. The CIP Committee will present the audit to the North Dakota Supreme Court Administrative Council. After reviewed by the Council it will be available to the public.

- Throughout this audit, it became apparent that part of the information necessary to assess ICWA standards compliance is not included in court documents. County case files are often the file of record for many ICWA standards. Consequently, the auditors who completed the court audit are now in the process of auditing county case files to augment the information obtained from the court files. It is expected this will provide a more accurate and complete assessment of North Dakota Court's compliance with ICWA.
- The University of North Dakota Children and Family Training Center includes curriculum on ICWA compliance as part of the 4 week child welfare certification process.
- The Court Improvement Project and CFS will continue to fiscally support NATI's annual "North Dakota Indian Child Welfare Conference." This conference provides a pre-session entitled "ICWA 101" as well as a variety of other ICWA-specific sessions. CFS Division Staff serve on the planning committee for the this conference.
- Continuing training and education on ICWA furthers the state's child welfare workforce ability to comply with ICWA which furthers CFS's ability to monitor compliance.

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program with the Tribes

Consultation and Coordination with the tribes regarding Chafee Independent Living Services is found on page 90 of this APSR.

Exchange of 2016 APSRs

The CFS Division will provide electronic copies and links to the 2016 APSR to the Tribal child welfare workers when submission is finalized. The 2016 APSR results will be discussed at the fall STEPS (September 2015) meeting with the four tribal child welfare directors and NATI staff.

VII. MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITS FORMULA GRANTS

The following chart and legend reports information pertaining to monthly case worker visitation for the most recently completed FFY 14:

10-1-13 to 9-30-14 FFY-14 TOTAL FOR ALL AGENCIES		
CASE COUNT	1876	
MONTHS IN FOSTER CARE	14,733	
VISIT MONTHS	14,037	
IN HOME VISIT MONTHS	10,721	
VISIT MONTHS CASE COUNT	14,037/14,733	95.3%
VISITS IN HOME MONTHS	10,721/14,037	76.4%
LEGEND		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASE COUNT = total number of cases in care at least one full calendar month • MONTHS IN FOSTER CARE = number of full calendar months in care for cases included in the CASE COUNT • VISIT MONTHS = total number of months in which a visit occurred (subset of the MONTHS IN FOSTER CARE) • PERCENT = ratio of VISIT MONTHS CASE COUNT to the CASE COUNT • VISITS IN HOME MONTHS = total number of months in which an in-home visit occurred, out of the cases included in the VISIT MONTHS CASE COUNT • PERCENT = ratio of VISITS IN HOME MONTHS to the VISIT MONTHS 		

North Dakota met the performance standard for FFY 15. This effort continues to be monitored and tracked by the Foster Care Administrator and Regional Supervisors. Data from the trailing 12 month period of 5-1-14 through 4-30-15 shows a case count of 1,975. This equates to 15,256 months in foster care. There were 13,277 visit months during this time frame for a total of 87% visitation. Of those visits, 9,964 took place in the youth’s primary residence, for an in-home percentage of 75%. Efforts to ensure compliance with the performance standard for FFY 15 and FFY 16 will continue.

MONTHLY CASE WORKER VISITATION FORMULA GRANTS

Monthly case worker visitation formula grants have continued to be utilized to help agencies purchase laptop computers for their case workers. It is felt that enabling the workers to have a portable means to conduct and document the content of their case visitations will both save them time, and improve the quality of the visit/documentation. Some of the grant monies will also continue to be utilized to help support the University of North Dakota Children and Family Services Training Center (UND CFSTC). Specifically, the required four week Child Welfare Certification program will continue to focus on case worker training surrounding assessment and decision making concerning the safety, permanence and well-being of foster youth. Other monies are earmarked to offset the costs of foster care case managers to attend the annual CFS Conference. This specialized training will focus on increasing the quality of case worker visitation surrounding safety, permanence, and well-being of the foster child. Providing this

equipment and training will help to recruit, more thoroughly train and prepare case workers, leading to increased retention of well trained and effective case workers.

VIII. ADOPTION and LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

No Adoption Incentive Funds were received for FFY 13, as reported by ACFY Adoption Incentive Earning History by State: FY 1998-2013 updated September 2014. Traditionally these funds have been used to fund North Dakota's special needs adoption collaborative, the AASK Program. Services provided by this program include recruitment, training and assessment of families, child preparation and placement, child-specific recruitment, and post placement follow up services. In the 2015 Legislative Session the Department was able to secure authorization to use any federal funds received from adoption incentives or the de-linking savings for post adoption services as instructed by recent federal policy issuances. Should the state receive future Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Funds, those dollars will be funneled to specific post adoption services; in particular, the provision of case management services in concert with the Wraparound practice model for those post finalization families who are in need of the service.

IX. CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES

North Dakota does not have an approved child welfare demonstration project.

X. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYTEM

Please see Update on Assessment of Performance Section, Quality Assurance Systemic Factor, page 35.

XI. CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT (CAPTA) STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS AND UPDATE

Please see [Attachment G](#) for CAPTA Annual Report

XII. CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM (CFCIP)

The North Dakota Department of Human Services, Child & Family Service Division administers the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) grant and supervises the Regional CFCIP and ETV Programs across the state. PATH ND is the CFCIP statewide provider; the Chafee IL Coordinators are located in seven of the eight regional PATH offices statewide. Chafee Independent Living Coordinators deliver service to eligible current foster care youth and Foster Care Alumni statewide. In North Dakota, all youth who are at least 14 years of age, are not yet 21 years of age, and who are or were in foster care after the age of 14 are eligible for components of CFCIP. In addition, all youth in foster care, age 16 and older, are required to have their independent living needs assessed. CFCIP does not have a case load standard;

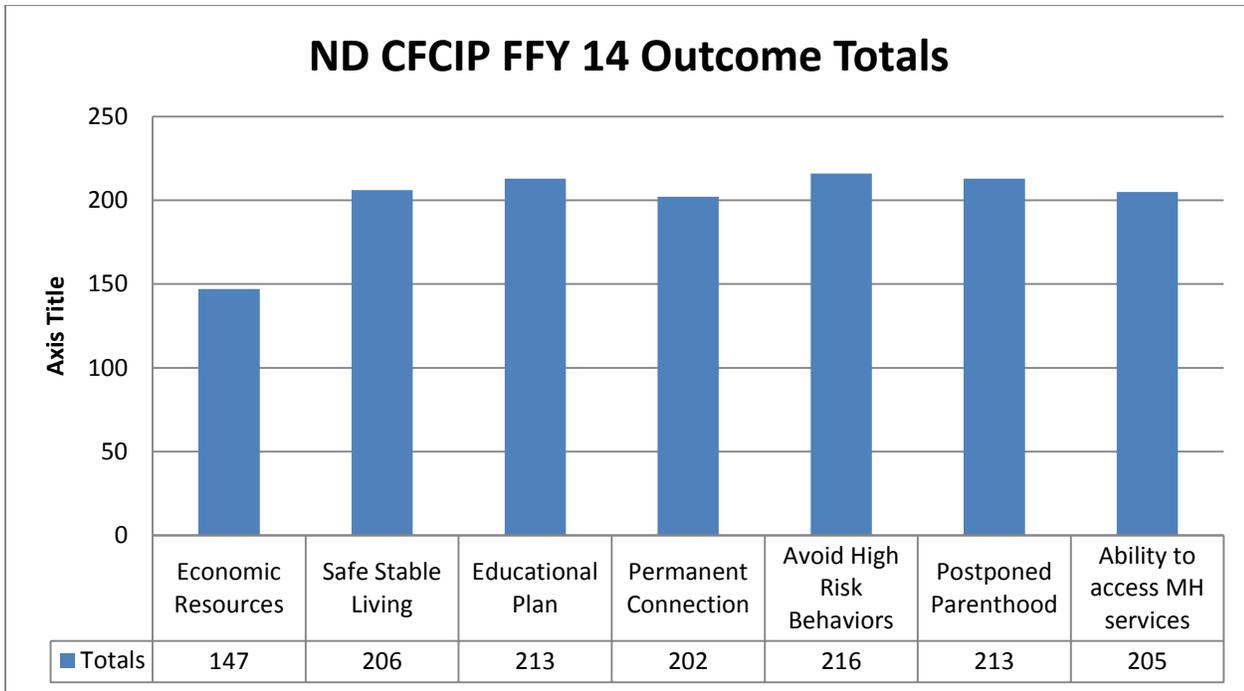
caseloads for the Chafee IL Coordinators range from 25 to 45 open youth participants at one time.

North Dakota continued serving youth across the state ensuring that all political subdivisions in the eight regions and 53 counties were served by the CFCIP, including tribal youth and youth in custody of the Division of Juvenile Services. Below is data reflecting CFCIP participation in ND. There was program growth of 39 youth served in the last twelve months.

FFY Totals	CFCIP Youth	Current Foster Care Youth	Foster Care Alumni	Priority 1 Youth Served	Priority 2 Youth Served	Native Americans Served
FFY 13 Total	399	232	167	267	132	87
FFY 14 Total	438	252	186	312	126	101

North Dakota foster care policy requires all foster care youth over the age of 16 have an independent living needs assessment completed and an independent living care plan in place. Custodians are responsible to complete these requirements, with access to CFCIP as one way to help accomplish the task. All ND CFCIP youth participants are given two assessments. ND has embraced the use of the Casey Life Skills Assessment <http://caseylifeskills.org> for youth ages 14 to 18, as well as the use of the state developed ND CFCIP Assessment (recently updated in 2014). The ND CFCIP Assessment was created by ND Children and Family Services and is to be administered on all youth at the age of 17, and must be repeated annually for all participating Chafee youth until age 21 unless the youth is receiving the ETV at age 21, then continue the assessment until age 23. The ND CFCIP Assessment collects outcomes data related to the seven purposes of Chafee Independent Living (economic resources, education/employment, connectedness, safe and stable place to live, avoid high risk behaviors, access to medical, and preventing parenthood). This data is used as a guide to how CFCIP is engaging with youth participants and will continue to be used in a mirrored effort with NYTD data to analyze state successes and challenges.

ND collects outcomes data on all CFCIP youth age 17+ annually. During FFY 14, 223 ND Chafee Foster Care Independence Program state assessments were completed October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014. Outcome results may be viewed on the following graph.



Seven Outcomes of Chafee Independent Living

CFCIP Assessment outcome results indicated that 66% youth felt they have sufficient economic resources available, 92% felt they have a safe and stable place to live, 96% have an achievable education plan in place, 91% have permanent connection in the community, 97% felt they have avoided illegal or high risk behaviors, 96% have postponed parenthood, while 92% felt they have the knowledge and skills to access physical and mental health services. North Dakota will continue to evaluate these outcomes and assist youth in building skills that will enable them to successfully transition to living independently.

Purpose #1: Help youth (who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age) transition to self-sufficiency.

Achieved: Chafee IL Coordinators helped youth (who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age) transition to self-sufficiency.

- Chafee IL Coordinators attended Child and Family Team Meetings and worked collaboratively to support youth in becoming self-sufficient young adults.
- They assisted custodial case managers in completing the foster care youth discharge checklist.
- Assisted youth in developing an Independent Living plan. Engaged with Residential Child Care Facilities and partnered to offer various services and invitation to attend monthly meetings for active Chafee IL youth residents.
- Chafee IL Coordinators worked closely with community partners and made referrals to needed services. Community partners include, but are not limited to: Job Service, Job Corps, Adult Learning Centers, Housing Authorities, Community Action,

Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Salvation Army, Youthworks and many other private organizations who provide resources for young adults.

- The state office collaborated with partners regularly through presentations, trainings and ongoing email communications to assist partnering agencies in understanding the program and eligibility.

Planned:

- The new CFSP will include larger scale opportunities for Chafee IL to collaborate with partners to identify programming and training opportunities for youth. The NYTD data will be a foundation to decision making of topics needing more attention for transition aged youth.
- Hold an IL training for foster parents to assist them in coming up with creative ways to teach IL skills in the foster home.
- Continue contact with counties/DJS to assure that appropriate youth are referred and/or involved in the program.
- Continue coordination with the youth's team by attending Child and Family team meetings, the transition checklist (PL 113-183) will ensure they each have proper documentation to aid in the youth transition into adulthood.

Purpose #2: Help youth receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment.

Achieved: Chafee IL Coordinators helped youth receive the education, training and services to obtain employment:

- Assisted youth in gathering information necessary for gaining employment (i.e. Social Security cards, birth certificates).
- Assisted youth in presenting themselves appropriately when retrieving and submitting job applications.
- Provided youth access to various employment resources, interviewing tips, job fairs, Job Corps contacts, etc.
- Reviewed and updated the education and training IL goal quarterly.
- Have collaborated with and referred youth to services, such as WIA/Job Service and Job Corp.
- Have assisted youth with applying for college or connecting them with the Equal Opportunity Council (EOC). Lori Mattison (EOC) presented to the IL youth group.

Chafee IL Coordinators maintained contact and relationships with representatives of regional Work Investment Act (WIA) programs offered through North Dakota Job Service and the TRIO program availability on college campuses. Chafee IL Coordinators continued to provide awareness of the ND Youth website <http://www.nd.gov/ndyouth/>, which offered direct access to youth interested in employment and education.

Planned:

- Continue to refer youth to resources that can help them with education and job-related services.

Purpose #3: To help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions.

Achieved: The Chafee IL Coordinators helped youth prepare for and enter post-secondary education and training:

- Assisted youth in developing their IL educational plan. Plans included communication with secondary educational counselors and support persons, planning for successful completion of secondary education/training, required applications, tests, and financial aid forms, as well as planning for support during post-secondary educational attendance including needs for housing, child care and tutoring.
- Helped youth search for scholarships and grants.
- Offered one-on-one assistance to those who complete their high school diploma and/or GED to become eligible to engage in post-secondary education opportunities.
- Assisted youth in paying and preparing for the ACT/SAT exams
- Assisted youth in applying for college, attending college tours, and applying for the ETV.
- Assisted youth in completing their FAFSA (financial aid), paying for college application fees, and enrolling in TRIO; a college program that motivates and supports students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue a college degree.

The state Chafee IL Administrator and Chafee IL Coordinators:

- Provided awareness about the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program to foster care youth and statewide professionals assisting foster youth three times per year before the deadline to apply expired.
- Continued to work with the CFS UND Training Center who provided information about the ETV Program and CFCIP services into the Child Welfare Certification Training.

Planned:

- Continue to search for appropriate scholarships for foster youth.
- Continue to help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions.

Purpose #4: To provide personal and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults.

Achieved: Chafee IL Coordinators, case managers, foster parents, facility staff and other team members provided individualized support to youth to assist in the transition to self-sufficiency and independent living. Chafee IL Coordinators and custodial case manager's work with youth to ensure emotional supports are in place for young people.

- Maintained professional relationships and supportive services from Chafee IL Coordinators and case management.
- Provided information and training on healthy relationships.
- Offered youth monthly meetings for peer support.
- Encouraged application to the ND Youth Leadership Board

- Have continued to stress to foster youth the importance of adult supporters for when the youth age out of the foster care system.
- Recommend foster placements to teams that will extend past the age of 18 to be able to utilize more IL resources, and get additional support for transition
- Connect youth with resources in the community with dedicated adults.
- i.e. Carrie's Kids, Big Brother, Big Sister, Partnerships.
- Maintain contact with youth and their mentors to ensure it is an appropriate relationship that will benefit them.

The ND Youth Leadership Board meetings provided a supportive environment for youth to share information as well as develop peer mentoring relationships.

Planned:

- Continue to provide personal and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults.
- Continue to research establishing a mentoring program in our region for IL youth. Have youth identify adult supporters as well as relevant support services

Purpose #5: To provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for, and then making the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Achieved: The CFCIP's primary focus is on foster youth age 16 and older identified as "likely to age out of care," as well as those who have aged out of care and become Foster Care Alumni. Based on priority, the Chafee IL Coordinators offered in-depth assistance to the neediest youth. The Chafee IL Coordinators provided information that emphasized where to get emotional, financial, vocational and educational support ongoing with a goal to maintain self-sufficiency and less dependence on community supports and services. Youth were provided:

- The Renting 101 guide book
- Coaching and role playing good communication skills and phone etiquette when working with professionals.
- Access to CFCIP flex funds and various community resources such as bus tickets, drivers test assistance, mentoring services, housing voucher applications, cell phone minutes or calling cards to assist in getting employment calls, etc.
- Invitations to CFCIP local meetings providing education and training opportunities for youth to gain additional knowledge and resources for self-sufficiency.
- A congratulations gift of \$50 gift card to youth who graduate from high school or receive their GED.
- We have provided support necessary for youth who have aged out of foster care, including assisting them in maintaining their living arrangements and continuing with post-secondary education.
- Monthly youth meetings allow these youth to get support from other youth who have been through the same circumstances. Incorporate various pertinent IL

issues/educational opportunities.

- Creative networking to continue to track youth.
- Work with Fargo Housing and provide case management to IL youth who are eligible for the FUP voucher.
- We have an IL closet where we can accept donations of household goods and clothing for youth who are living independently. Youth are able to “shop” in the closet to get items they need.

Planned:

- Continue to provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transitions into adulthood

Purpose #6: To make available vouchers for education and training, including post-secondary training and education, to youth who have aged out of foster care.

Achieved: The North Dakota Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program provided financial assistance to help eligible youth make the transition to self-sufficiency and receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment.

- Chafee IL Coordinators assisted youth in completing necessary ETV paperwork and financial aid requests. The Chafee IL Administrator received all applications and determined eligibility for ETV awards. Each youth awarded an ETV was issued an award letter and the ETV check was sent to their educational institution for the identified semester needs.

Planned:

- Continue to discuss the ETV and offer this to youth who are graduating with their GED or High School diploma.
- Continue to be available to answer questions regarding ETV funds
- Continue to promote the ETV program to eligible youth.
- Continue to assist eligible youth in completing the ETV application.
- Continue to support youth throughout the semester when questions arise regarding funding issues or questions on their student accounts.

Purpose #7: To provide services to youth who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption.

Achieved: CFCIP is designed to serve youth who are current or former foster youth. CFCIP remains available to the former foster youth in a kinship guardianship arrangement or who have been adopted on the same basis. The Chafee IL Administrator collaborates with partnering agencies to ensure they have the eligibility guidelines for youth to receive CFCIP and ETV programming if adopted or in kinship guardianship or is adopted from foster care.

Planned: Maintain contact with youth who have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption. Continue to educate team members on ETV eligibility for the youth entering adoption/kinship guardianship after 16.

Purpose #8: Ensure children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age have regular, ongoing opportunities to engage in age or developmentally-appropriate activities as defined in section 475(11) of the Act.

ND Children and Family Services Division is working to develop policies and procedures as defined in PL 113-183 and section 475(11) of the Act. ND has always been very proactive in appropriately addressing and assessing the requests and access for youth in care to engage in community activities.

Planned: Continue to gain knowledge relating to human trafficking through trainings and seminars. Explore utilizing a trained professional in the area of human trafficking to present to the Independent Living youth group. Continue to ensure children who are likely to maintain in care until age 18 are able to engage in age or developmentally-appropriate activities.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Update

ND began efforts to implement NYTD in October 2010. The process has evolved overtime and enhanced quality of the data collected and reported since the July 2013 federal onsite review. The ND NYTD Handbook is a guide to the field detailing procedures of how the process of both served population data and outcomes data collection can work to better our ND child welfare system.

The ND Chafee IL Administrator is the ND NYTD Lead. The efforts for NYTD have offered great excitement and the energy as ND reflects on transitioned age youth needs and services. High quality data collection is the key to identifying areas we need to focus our time and talents to better the overall outcomes of our ND youth transitioning to adulthood. The NYTD Work Group is made up of the NYTD Lead from Children & Family Services, Information and Technology Development, Information and Technology (ITS) Services, Decision Support Services (DSS), and Fiscal Administration. This workgroup reviewed the comments from the NYTD Review conducted in July 2013 and efforts continue to apply all the required changes. Efforts this past year have been stalled due to efforts being conducted on the AFCARS and NYTD reports. During FFY 16, plans will include addressing the remaining issues. In partnership to expand Continuous Quality Improvement efforts in ND, information from NYTD has assisted the division in its assessment of performance efforts. It is anticipated that additional reports and usage of the NYTD information will be made available in other forms of data distribution overtime.

Every six months, ND submits the federal NYTD report to the NYTD Portal. After submission of the federal report, ND provides a summary of the report to the field with NYTD highlights. The state report is similar to the report provided by the NYTD Portal indicating which independent living service categories were most utilized, how many youth were engaged in

the process, as well as which agency provided the services. NYTD survey / outcomes data is reported to the field as well. ND Youth Leadership Board is instrumental in the data process providing feedback on what information is being sent as well as any additional information ND should consider analyzing. At this time, Cohort 1 baseline surveys (age 17) and follow up data (age 19) are completed, and only half of the age 21 data is done to date. ND did evaluate all NYTD survey data collected thus far and compared outcome based on age, gender, and agency. See chart below:

ND NYTD Survey Results	Total NYTD Surveys Completed	Youth Receiving Education	Youth Employed FT or PT	Youth Homeless	Youth with Criminal Activity	Youth Who Became a Parent
Age 17 (FFY 2011)	87	91%	1% FT 17% PT	21%	52%	3%
Age 19 (FFY 14)	55	16%	35% FT 20% PT	25%	25%	15%
Age 21 (FFY 2015)	31 (collected 10/1/14 - 5/31/15)	26%	45% FT 19% PT	29%	29%	29%

The NYTD survey outcome statistics that are represented in the chart above are responses from ND NYTD Cohort 1 (age 17 going through age 21). This survey data was presented to youth by foster care case managers at age 17. Follow up surveys were presented to youth in partnership with the case managers, Chafee IL Coordinators, and the state office. ND NYTD Cohort 1 had 87 NYTD survey youth make it into the follow-up population for age 19 surveys. At age 19, 55 youth responded to the survey. The ND NYTD age 21 youth survey collection is underway; ND has received 31 youth responses thus far.

ND did provide survey incentives to youth participants; age 17 youth received \$10 gift card, at age 19 they received a \$20 gift card and at age 21 youth received a \$50 gift card for their time when completing the NYTD Survey. The age 21 surveys are not complete; ND will continue to locate NYTD youth to complete the surveys by September 30, 2015. The data thus far indicates that 9 youth who are 21 year olds responded that in the last two years they were homeless, engaged in criminal activity and became a parent. The next phase to data analysis will compare if the 9 youth are the same 21 year olds. Tracking young people throughout the duration of the five year cohort has been challenging; however the largest challenge for North Dakota continues to be when follow-up youth “decline” to participate. States are subject to a fiscal penalty when follow-up youth are asked to complete the survey and they respectfully decline at age 19 and 21.

North Dakota will start collecting data for ND NYTD Cohort 2, age 19 surveys October 1, 2015. Cohort 2 was better organized; ND had a great response from eligible young people. The process of informing youth of what the survey is and how outcomes data will be

retrieved long term has assisted in making sure youth are vested in data outcomes, the NYTD process, and state communication until the age of 21.

One final update regarding NYTD for FFY 16 involves NYTD policy directing professional staff (county, Division of Juvenile Services, Tribal IV-E, Partnerships, and Chafee IL) on how to collect and enter independent living services for youth ages 14 to 23 in FRAME. As of June 2015 Partnerships staff is no longer required to enter data into FRAME. Going forward human service center cases managed outside of FRAME will not be included in our NYTD IL services report.

Reporting Activities Performed

ND Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) continued to demonstrate substantial and ongoing collaboration with local community providers offering meaningful service delivery to current foster youth and Foster Care Alumni. At the state level, the ND Chafee IL Administrator participated on the state Transition to Independence Advisory Council, the state Transition Community of Practice Coalition assisted in planning the annual Youth Leadership Conference facilitated by the ND Federations of Families Children's Mental Health nonprofit agency. In addition, the state Chafee IL Administrator collaborated with state agencies, local authorities and providers, the UND Children & Family Services Training Center, Division of Juvenile Services, County Social Services, and Tribes to educate on the CFCIP programming and create dialogue about referrals and needed service for young people in and out of the system. ND CFCIP works closely with community partners. Community partners include, but are not limited to: Job Service, Job Corps, Adult Learning Centers, Housing Authorities, Community Action, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Salvation Army, Youthworks, transitional housing shelters, and many other private organizations that provide resources for young adults. In addition, the ND Youth Website is a reference point for not only young people, but providers needing access to local services. <http://www.nd.gov/ndyouth/>. No formal awareness campaigns have addressed youth needs at this time.

Other federal/state programs: As part of collaboration at the regional level; PATH ND continued to provide quality services to eligible CFCIP youth ages 14 to 21 and eligible ETV youth until age 23. Chafee IL Coordinators communicated regularly with County Social Services, Division of Juvenile Services and Tribal case managers to provide needed services to eligible youth. Other services and partnerships include:

- Chafee IL Coordinators were members of their local community homeless coalition monthly meetings.
- Chafee IL Coordinators were members of their local Transition to Independence subcommittee quarterly meetings.
- Chafee IL Administrator was a member of the TIP Advisory Council as a state administrative representative. Meetings were held quarterly.
- Chafee IL Administrator was a member of the Department of Public Instruction Community of Practice on Transition. Meetings were held quarterly.
- CFCIP has ongoing contact with Residential Child Care Facilities statewide to best meet the needs of eligible youth in North Dakota. Monthly youth group invitations were extended to youth in group homes and facilities.

- CFCIP participated in roundtable discussions with ND Housing and Finance to plan for Supervised Independent Living options in ND.
- CFCIP participated in planning of the summer youth trades program in partnership with the Bismarck School District, Youthworks Shelter, and Adult Learning Center. Funded was not secured and this Summer program has been put on hold.

Human Trafficking

PL 113-183 has driven much of the conversation, planning, and ND policy development in our state. CFCIP is actively involved in the planning efforts as well as soliciting feedback from the ND Youth Leadership Board members. Late spring 2015, CFCIP conducted a formal training for the Chafee IL Coordinators providing resources to best educate young people on how to avoid risky behaviors, identify signs of human trafficking, etc. Community awareness, statewide policy, procedures, and training continue to be developed to best meet full compliance before September 29, 2015.

CFCIP Training

North Dakota continues to gain insight on needs from the CFCIP provider and ND Youth Leadership Board regarding training needs. North Dakota requires that all Chafee IL Coordinators receive the Wrap Around Certification Training held in conjunction with child welfare workers statewide. Chafee IL Coordinators are also encouraged to attend state conference relevant to their work with culture, transition, education, employment, etc. ND Youth Leadership Board members are encouraged to attend the ND Youth Transition Conference each July. In addition, North Dakota supports the costs of two CFCIP representatives to attend national conferences annually. The CFS Training Center provides Child Welfare Certification training to social workers; one segment of this training is Chafee Independent Living and the importance of youth transitioning to independence. Foster parents are provided PRIDE training including information about preparing youth for transition and how to build independent living skills while the youth is in the foster home or facility.

CFCIP engages in quarterly CFCIP meetings in Bismarck for Chafee IL Coordinators and ND Youth Leadership Board members. Each quarter, training topics are organized by the Chafee IL Administrator and UND Training Center representative. FFY 14 training topics included Medicaid policy, human trafficking 101, ICWA and tribal youth, CFCIP policy updates, LGBTQ, and other topics requested by the field.

Youth Involvement

Children & Family Services administers the operations of the ND Youth Leadership Board. The board involves participation from current foster youth as well as Foster Care Alumni. This group of young people work to build leadership skills, engage in conference panels, and facilitate local and state efforts to enhance the child welfare system. Children & Family Services will look to the ND Youth Leadership Board members when an opportunity presents itself for planning, organizing, or brainstorming child welfare improvements. The board, made up of five youth, meets quarterly face-to-face in conjunction with the Chafee IL Coordinators. During quarterly meetings, youth board members are asked to provide

feedback on policy (PL 113-183 youth rights, transition checklist, and normalcy topics at this time), NYTD incentives/efforts, website information, state forms, etc.

The ND Youth Leadership Board assisted statewide youth in building leadership skills, engaging in mentoring, participating in conference panels, etc. These youth update the ND Foster Youth Handbook and further assist in the upgrades to functionality of the National Youth in Transitions Database efforts. Most recently, Kayla Weston, ND Foster Care Alumni, went to Washington, D.C. as a ND youth representative to attend the Congressional Foster Youth Shadow Day. She was given the great opportunity to work alongside Congressman Kevin Cramer on “the Hill”, go to the White House, and plan for/discuss national change regarding transitioned aged youth exiting foster care.

North Dakota continues to replicate the Federal CFSR Process. Youth Stakeholder meetings were conducted during full CFSR Reviews in ND; two locations per year. Youth Stakeholder meetings were held in Dickinson and Fargo where youth participants had the opportunity to share with state staff their perspective of what has gone well in foster care and what areas could be improved. Lastly, The North Dakota Federation of Families Mental Health Transitions Conference requests Youth Leaders help organize and run the two day summer conference; a great partnership and opportunity for young people.

18+ Continued Care & Chafee

18+ Continued Care went into effect January 1, 2012. State law NDCC 27-20 changes are consistent with the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-351). ND 18+ Continued Care is available to eligible current and former foster care children up to the age of 21. The youth must have “aged out” of foster care while in the custody of a North Dakota public agency including; county social services, tribal social services, and the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS). Tribal Social Services foster care youth must have been Title IV-E eligible prior to discharge in order to qualify for ND 18+ Continued Care. The length of time that a youth is in foster care does not determine their eligibility for 18+ Continued Care. The 18+ Continued Care program philosophy encourages youth to stay in family foster care while they continue to pursue independence. Participation in CFCIP is not required for 18+ Continued Care program youth, but is highly encouraged. There is a joint effort by case management, the youth, and Chafee IL Coordinators to set goals and accomplish tasks to best benefit the youth case plan and youth outcomes.

North Dakota fully supports youth remaining in or returning to foster care through the 18+ Continued Care program and works collaboratively with CFCIP to ensure youth needs are met in the program if the youth agrees to participate. 18+ Continued Care youth meet monthly (more if needed) with their foster care case manager in addition to their CFCIP participation to ensure they are meeting and maintaining eligibility for the 18+ program. Monthly updates on employment hour’s, school grades, scholarship/financial aid and ETV application deadlines, as well as daily living needs are addressed.

In an effort to address PL 113-183, ND is writing policy to enhance our already established “discharge checklist” to meet the needs of required documentation for youth aging out of

foster care. It has been ND practice for many years to ensure that young people have important identifying information in hand upon discharge. However, the state felt a need to enhance our policy and upgrade to a “transition checklist”, which combines transition planning with various items. CFCIP Coordinators, case managers, youth and other child & Family Team members will assist in accomplishing this task to best prepare youth with transition into adulthood. 18+ youth will have this “transition checklist” completed within the 90 days prior to their 18th birthday and it will be updated ongoing while participating in ND 18+.

18+ Tend Data by Calendar Year

ND 18+ Continued Care Program

CY	18+ Episodes	Clients
2012	45	42
2013	49	48
2014	57	57

Consultations with Tribes

The ND Chafee IL Administrator works with statewide Chafee IL Coordinators to ensure that CFCIP and ETV benefits are made available to Native American youth (Title IV-E or 638) on the same basis as non-native foster care youth in North Dakota. North Dakota provided information both electronically and paper form to ensure Native American youth had fair and equitable access to all CFCIP services across the state. North Dakota partnered with Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (Fort Yates), Spirit Lake (Devils Lake) Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa (Belcourt), and Three Affiliated Tribes (New Town) to encourage CFCIP participation. Region III (Belcourt and Devils Lake) had the most involvement with Tribal Social Services and has done a nice job of merging a successful partnership to offer services to all eligible youth.

Chafee IL Coordinators worked with Native American youth to ensure that enrollment in their designated Tribe was complete, and assisted youth with enrollment number applications, receive a tribal enrollment card and Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB). Native American youth were also provided contact information for their Tribal office, local social service offices, as well as the Higher Education office. Chafee IL Coordinators have offered culturally sensitive Independent Living programming to all participants.

At this time, there has not been interest expressed by a tribal partner to develop an agreement to administer, supervise, or oversee CFCIP. No concerns have been raised by the tribes on accessing Chafee services.

Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Program

The ETV Program continues to be administered by ND Department of Human Services Child and Family Services directly supervised by the Chafee Independent Living Administrator. The IL Administrator continues to review ETV applications assuring recipients are in compliance with Chafee ETV Federal law and determines the amount of the

ETV awards. The ETV award amounts are determined through final review and audit of the application including the youth's Federal financial aid resources, the educational institution's Cost of Attendance, along with other documents required for complete application submission. The State IL Administrator ensures that the Federal assistance does not exceed the total cost of attendance as well as avoids duplication of Federal benefits. Youth are notified through a written letter from the state Chafee IL Administrator of their ETV award and the ETV voucher amount is sent directly to their educational institution.

North Dakota received an increase in applications. It appears as though we have students reapplying for the ETV award year after year so this is increasing the number of applications but not necessarily the number of students receiving the award. IL coordinators are working closely with their youth about the benefits of furthering their education which is a reason for the increase in continued ETV awards.

Attachment H (aka Attachment E) represents the unduplicated number of ETVs awarded each school year July 1 to June 30th and does not include the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor youth awards. The academic school year is defined as fall, spring, and summer semesters in that order meaning all ETV awards for this summer have been awarded and is included in our annual total.

XIII. UPDATES TO TARGETED PLANS WITHIN THE 2015-2019 CFSP
A. Diligent Recruitment of Potential Foster and Adoptive Parents

Please refer to [ATTACHMENT B](#).

B. Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan

Please refer to [ATTACHMENT C](#).

C. Disaster Plan

Please refer to [ATTACHMENT D](#).

D. Training Plan

Please refer to [ATTACHMENT E](#).

XIV. STATISTICAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

A. CAPTA – see CAPTA plan

1. **Juvenile Justice Transfers** – see CAPTA plan
2. **Sources of Data on Maltreatment** – see CAPTA

B. ETV – see [Attachment H](#)

C. Inter-Country Adoptions

No children met the reporting criteria for this section as there were no internationally adopted children who entered foster care in FFY14 whose adoptive parents' rights have been terminated or who came into care during the due to a disrupted adoptive placement (prior to finalization). There was one youth who entered care in FFY 14 who had been adopted from Romania through the Village Family Service Center. His

parental rights have not been terminated however. He entered care due to his behaviors. The plan is for him to return to his home. Two additional children were identified who were adopted from other counties who are in foster care, but the foster care period had been initiated prior to FFY 14.

D. Monthly Caseworker Visit Data

This data will be submitted to the Children's Bureau by December 15, 2015.

XV. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Please refer to the CFS-101 documents found in [ATTACHMENT F](#).

In reference to the CFS-101, Part I, during FFY 2005 and FFY 14 North Dakota did not spend any Title IV-B, Subpart 1 funds in child care, foster care maintenance, or adoption assistance payments.

In reference to the CFS-101, Part I, no state funds expended for foster care maintenance payments in FFY 2005 or FFY 14 were used to match for title IV-B subpart 1 programs.

In reference to the CFS-101, Part II, for FFY 2015 it is projected North Dakota will spend a minimum of 20% of the Title IV-B, Subpart 2 PSSF grant funds in each of the four service categories: prevention and support services (family support), crisis intervention (family preservation), time limited family reunification services, and adoption promotion and support services.

Although the state budgeted 23% for Time Limited Family Reunification services in FFY 13, these services were funded with federal TANF dollars and state general funds. Funds were shifted to the Family Preservation Services category, along with funds from the remaining categories. The shifting of expenditures as a result of the realignment referenced in the 2015 APSR is expected to be realized in FFY 14. The state plans to review how funds are budgeted and expended in the coming year.

State and local expenditure amounts for the title IV-B, Subpart 2 for comparison with the State's base year amount can be found in the Maintenance of Efforts report located in [ATTACHMENT F](#).

XVI. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Organizational Chart
- B. Diligent Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Plan
- C. Health Care Oversight Plan
- D. Disaster Plan
- E. Training Plan
- F. Financial Information
 - CFS-101, Part I
 - CFS-101, Parts II
 - CFS-101, Part III
 - Maintenance of Effort

G. CAPTA Annual Report

H. Annual Reporting of Education and Training Vouchers Awarded