

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Final Report: Michigan Child and Family Services Review
March 2010

INTRODUCTION

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

The Michigan CFSR was conducted the week of September 21, 2009. The period under review for the Onsite Review process was from April 1, 2008, through September 25, 2009. The findings were derived from the following documents and data collection procedures:

- The Statewide Assessment, prepared by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Children's Services Administration (CSA)
- The State Data Profile, prepared by the Children's Bureau, which provides the State's child welfare data for the 12-month CFSR target period ending September 30, 2008
- Reviews of 65 cases (40 foster care and 25 in-home services cases) at three sites: 17 cases in Berrien County, 17 cases in Kent County, and 31 cases in Wayne County
- Interviews and focus groups (conducted at all three sites and at the State level) with stakeholders including, but not limited to, children, youth, parents, foster and adoptive parents, all levels of child welfare agency personnel, collaborating agency personnel, service providers, court personnel, child advocates, Tribal representatives, and attorneys

Background Information

The CFSR assesses State performance with regard to its substantial conformity with seven child and family outcomes and seven systemic factors. For the outcome assessments, each outcome incorporates one or more of the 23 items included in the review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on the results of the case reviews. An item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90 percent or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. The evaluation options for these outcomes are "substantially achieved," "partially achieved," or "not achieved." For a State to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. Two outcomes—Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1—also are evaluated based on State performance with regard to six national

data indicators. For a State to be in substantial conformity with these outcomes, both the national standards for each data indicator and the case review requirements must be met.

There are 22 items that are considered in assessing the State’s substantial conformity with the seven systemic factors. Each item reflects a key Federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on whether State performance on the item meets the Federal program requirements. A determination of the rating is based on information provided in the Statewide Assessment and from interviews with stakeholders held during the onsite CFSR. Additional information may come from other Federal reports or assessments.

Overall performance on each systemic factor is based on the ratings for the individual items incorporated in the systemic factor. For any given systemic factor, a State is rated as being either “in substantial conformity” with that factor (a score of 3 or 4) or “not in substantial conformity” with that factor (a score of 1 or 2). Specific requirements for each rating are shown in the table below.

Rating the Systemic Factor

Not in Substantial Conformity		In Substantial Conformity	
1	2	3	4
None of the CFSP or program requirements is in place.	Some or all of the CFSP or program requirements are in place, but more than one of the requirements fail to function as described in each requirement.	All of the CFSP or program requirements are in place, and no more than one of the requirements fails to function as described in each requirement.	All of the CFSP or program requirements are in place and functioning as described in each requirement.

A State that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome or systemic factor must develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan to address the areas of concern associated with that outcome or systemic factor.

Because many changes were made in the CFSR process based on lessons learned during the first round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a State’s performance in the second round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the first round. Key changes in the process that make comparing performance difficult across reviews are the following:

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

The specific findings regarding the State's performance on safety and permanency outcomes are presented in table 1 at the end of this Executive Summary. Findings regarding well-being outcomes are presented in table 2. Table 3 presents the State's performance with regard to the seven systemic factors assessed through the CFSR. In the following sections, key findings are summarized for each outcome and systemic factor. Information also is provided about the State's performance on each outcome and systemic factor during the Federal Year 2009 CFSR.

Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes

Michigan did not achieve substantial conformity with any of the seven CFSR outcomes. The State did achieve overall ratings of Strength for the following individual items:

- Foster care reentries (item 5)
- Proximity of foster care placement (item 11)
- Placement with siblings (item 12)

Additionally, Michigan met the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to placement stability.

Although the State's performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 (Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs) did not meet the required 95-percent level for substantial conformity, performance on this outcome was fairly high; the outcome was substantially achieved in 89.5 percent of the cases. In addition, although the State's performance on the items pertaining to repeat maltreatment, relative placement, and addressing the educational needs of children did not reach the 90-percent level required for an overall rating of Strength, 85 percent, 88 percent, and 89 percent, respectively, of the cases reviewed were rated as a Strength for these items.

In addition to these positive CFSR findings, HHS acknowledges the efforts being made by Michigan to improve practice and enhance services to children and families served by Michigan DHS and its stakeholders. During the course of the 2009 CFSR, several practices and strategies were identified as contributing to the State's improvement efforts. Improvements included a strong commitment and collaboration of DHS and the courts to address barriers preventing permanency for youth who had either been awaiting adoption or reunification through the initiation of Adoption Forums (now called Permanency Forums). DHS and court collaboration also is demonstrated through implementation of the Absent Parent Protocol. Also noted was DHS's collaboration with the Department of Community Health (DCH) on the 1915(c) Waiver for Children with Serious Emotional Disturbances to enhance efforts for permanency for those youth who have severe emotional needs. The CFSR identified that the use of Families First and Family Reunification services provide a foundation for services to families. Additionally, acknowledging the need to reduce caseloads and taking steps to hire additional staff demonstrates the State's continued commitment to enhance services to Michigan's children and their families.

The CFSR also identified the following key concerns with regard to the State's performance in achieving the desired outcomes for children and families:

- Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) was substantially achieved in 47.5 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Well-Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs) was substantially achieved in 46.2 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Item 10, pertaining to other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA), was rated as a Strength in 40 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 17, pertaining to needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents, was rated as a Strength in 48 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 18, pertaining to child and family involvement in case planning, was rated as a Strength in 46 percent of the applicable cases.
- Item 20, pertaining to caseworker visits with parents, was rated as a Strength in only 31 percent of applicable cases.
- Michigan did not meet the national standard for the data indicators pertaining to the absence of maltreatment recurrence, the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff, timeliness and permanency of reunification, timeliness of adoptions, and permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods.

The State's low performance on the outcomes assessed by the CFSR may be attributed in part to State budget cuts that have had a negative impact on the ability of the State to provide services to children and families who come into contact with the child welfare system, particularly in-home service cases. The cutbacks have affected a wide range of services, including preventive services, flexible funding, and services necessary to promote permanency for children. Despite the presence of the Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative in some parts of the State, adequate services to prepare children for independent living are not provided.

In addition, key services such as mental health and inpatient substance abuse treatment are difficult to access if families do not have private insurance or are not covered by the State's Medicaid system. Engagement of parents and children in planning presents a challenge as Team Decision Making (TDM) has not been fully implemented throughout the life of the case.

Key CFSR Findings Regarding Systemic Factors

With regard to systemic factors, Michigan is in substantial conformity with the systemic factors pertaining to Staff and Provider Training; Agency Responsiveness to the Community; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The State is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factors pertaining to Statewide Information System, Case Review System, Quality Assurance System, and Service Array and Resource Development.

I. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

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

Safety Outcome 1 incorporates two items. One pertains to the timeliness of initiating a response to a child maltreatment report (item 1), and the other relates to the recurrence of substantiated or indicated maltreatment within a 6-month time period (item 2). Safety Outcome 1 also incorporates two national data indicators for which national standards have been established. These data indicators measure the absence of maltreatment recurrence and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 61.5 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 89 percent of applicable Berrien County cases, 60 percent of applicable Kent County cases, and 42 percent of applicable Wayne County cases. In addition, the State did not meet the national standards for the data indicators pertaining to the absence of maltreatment recurrence within 6 months and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews found that the agency was not consistent in initiating a response and completing face-to-face contacts to a maltreatment report within the timeframes established by State policy. Additionally, in 3 of the 20 applicable cases, there were two substantiated maltreatment reports involving similar circumstances within a 6-month time period.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The primary concern identified in the 2002 review was that the State was not effective in responding to maltreatment reports in accordance with State established timeframes, particularly regarding face-to-face contact.

To address the identified concern, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Incorporated CFSR standards for investigative contacts into the Child Protective Services Peer Review Tool
- Revised policy and associated forms addressing process to be followed for exceptions to face-to-face guidelines
- Provided increased supervisory monitoring of face-to-face contacts through a case reading process

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Performance on Safety Outcome 2 is assessed through two items. One item (item 3) assesses State efforts to prevent children's removal from their homes by providing the family with services to ensure children's safety while they remain in their homes. The other item (item 4) assesses efforts to manage safety and reduce risk of harm to children in their own homes and in their foster care placements.

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 64.6 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 65 percent of Berrien County cases, 59 percent of Kent County cases, and 68 percent of Wayne County cases.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews identified the following concerns in many of the cases reviewed:

- Children remaining in their own homes continued to be at risk either because services were not provided, or the services that were provided did not target the key safety concerns.
- There was a lack of initial and ongoing safety and risk assessments.
- There were continued risk concerns in the home that were not addressed and/or monitored by the agency.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The primary concern identified in the 2002 review was that the State was not consistently effective in addressing the risk of harm to children, particularly in situations in which relative placements were occurring without home studies and background checks. Additionally, there were cases in which the family's history with child welfare was not taken into account in the assessment of risk often because the information had not been collected or was not available to the caseworker.

To address the identified concern, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Revised policy and implemented changes to the Child Assessment of Needs and Strengths (CANS) to ensure that the top three needs and strengths identified are addressed in service plans
- Revalidated the Structured Decision Making (SDM) initial risk assessment and reassessment tools and conducted case reads to determine accuracy of tool completion
- Developed and provided training to supervisors on the accurate use and completion of the SDM Safety Assessment to enhance supervisory oversight
- Revised policy to require background checks of relative caregivers prior to or at the time of placement
- Piloted and evaluated the use of a tablet PC for after-hour background checks

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Six items are incorporated in the assessment of Permanency Outcome 1, although not all of them are relevant for all of the foster care cases reviewed. The items pertain to State efforts to prevent foster care reentry (item 5), ensure placement stability for children in foster care (item 6), and establish appropriate permanency goals for children in foster care in a timely manner as well as seeking termination of parental rights (TPR) in accordance with the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (item 7). Depending on the child's permanency goal, the remaining items focus on an assessment of State efforts to achieve permanency goals (such as reunification, guardianship, adoption, or permanent placement with relatives) in a timely manner (items 8 and 9), or to ensure that children who have a case goal of OPPLA are in stable, long-term placements and are adequately prepared for eventual independent living (item 10).

Permanency Outcome 1 also incorporates four national data indicators for which national standards have been established. These data indicators measure the timeliness and permanency of reunification, the timeliness of adoptions, permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods, and placement stability.

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 47.5 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 60 percent of Berrien County cases, 50 percent of Kent County cases, and 40 percent of Wayne County cases. In addition to case review findings, Michigan did not meet the national standard for the data indicators pertaining to timeliness and permanency of reunification, timeliness of adoptions, and permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods. However, the State met the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to placement stability.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews found that foster care reentry was a rare occurrence. However, the 2009 CFSR also identified the following concerns in many of the cases reviewed:

- The State was not consistent with regard to ensuring placement stability for children in foster care.
- The child's permanency goal was either not appropriate or not established in a timely manner.
- The agency had not consistently sought TPR in accordance with the requirements of ASFA.
- The State was not consistent in making diligent efforts to achieve permanency for children through reunification, guardianship, or adoption.
- The State was not consistent with regard to ensuring that children with a case plan goal of OPPLA had a permanent placement and/or were receiving services to ensure a successful transition from foster care to independent living.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following concerns were identified in the 2002 review:

- The State was not consistent with regard to ensuring placement stability for children in foster care.
- The State did not consistently make concerted efforts to achieve reunification or permanent placement with a relative in a timely manner.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Incorporated improvement goals for foster care placement stability into the management annual performance objectives
- Developed and implemented strategies to increase the number of foster homes in order to improve placement stability
- Expanded the Family to Family program, as resources allowed, to a minimum of 30 sites
- Implemented policy to require TDM in Family to Family sites when placement changes were being considered
- Reviewed and revised court rules regarding child protection disposition, permanency planning, and termination hearings
- Developed and distributed a management report identifying relative placements that extend beyond 12 months to address the length of time in foster care

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Permanency Outcome 2 incorporates six items that assess State performance with regard to (1) placing children in foster care near their parents and close relatives (item 11); (2) placing siblings together (item 12); (3) ensuring frequent visitation between children and their parents and siblings in foster care (item 13); (4) preserving connections of children in foster care with extended family, community, cultural heritage, religion, and schools (item 14); (5) seeking relatives as potential placement resources (item 15); and (6) promoting relationships between children and their parents while the children are in foster care (item 16).

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 72.5 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 70 percent of applicable Berrien County cases, 60 percent of applicable Kent County cases, and 80 percent of applicable Wayne County cases.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews found that the State was effective with regard to placing children in close proximity to their parents and placing siblings together in foster care. Additionally, although not rated a Strength, in 29 of the 33 cases reviewed, the State made concerted efforts to seek and assess relatives as placement resources. However, the 2009 CFSR also identified the following concerns in many of the cases reviewed:

- The frequency and quality of visitation between children in foster care and their parents and siblings were insufficient to meet the needs of the children and families.
- The State was not consistent with regard to concerted efforts to preserve connections of children in foster care to extended families and to their culture and community.
- The State had not made concerted efforts to support the child's relationship with the mother or father while the child was in foster care.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2 during its 2002 CFSR and was required to address this outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following concerns were identified in the 2002 review:

- The State did not consistently place siblings together in foster care.
- The State did not consistently promote sufficient visitation between children and their parents and siblings in foster care.
- The State did not consistently seek and assess relatives as placement resources, particularly in instances when one relative was deemed unsuitable for placement.
- The State did not consistently make concerted efforts to support or strengthen the parent-child relationship.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Developed and implemented strategies to increase the number of foster/relative placement resources
- Provided guidance to staff on licensing variances to facilitate placement of large sibling groups
- Provided increased supervisory monitoring of sibling placements and parent and sibling visitation to facilitate a decrease in the number of siblings placed apart and increase parent and sibling visitation
- Collaborated with the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) in developing and implementing the Absent Parent Protocol to search for and engage parents early in the case, as well as identify relative resources
- Developed and disseminated a relative resource guide and corresponding instructions to staff geared to increase identification of and placement with relatives
- Developed and implemented a training to address parent/child visitation and how to strengthen the parent/child relationship

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Well-Being Outcome 1 incorporates four items. One item pertains to State efforts to ensure that the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents are assessed and that the necessary services are provided to meet identified needs (item 17). A second item examines State efforts to actively involve parents and children (when appropriate) in the case planning process (item 18). The two remaining items examine the frequency and quality of caseworker contacts with the children in their caseloads (item 19) and with the children's parents (item 20).

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 46.2 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 53 percent of Berrien County cases, 47 percent of Kent County cases, and 42 percent of Wayne County cases. In addition, the outcome was substantially achieved in 67.5 percent of the 40 foster care cases and 12 percent of the 25 in-home services cases.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews found that, in general, the agency was effective in assessing and meeting the service needs of children in foster care. However, the 2009 CFSR also identified the following concerns in many of the cases reviewed:

- The State was not consistent in assessing and meeting the needs of children receiving in-home services, foster parents, mothers, and fathers.
- The State did not make concerted efforts to involve children, mothers, and fathers in case planning in both the foster care and in-home services cases, although children in the foster care cases were more likely to be involved than children in the in-home services cases.
- The frequency and quality of caseworker visits with children, particularly children in the in-home services cases, were not sufficient to ensure the child's safety and well-being.
- The frequency and quality of caseworker visits with parents were not sufficient to monitor the safety and well-being of the child or promote attainment of case goals.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1 during its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following concerns were identified in the 2002 review:

- The State was not consistent in assessing and addressing the service needs of children, parents, or foster parents.
- The State was not consistent in involving parents and children in the case planning process.
- The frequency and quality of caseworker contacts with children and parents was not of sufficient quality or quantity to ensure the children's safety or well-being.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Incorporated SDM tools into Michigan's automated child welfare information system, the Service Worker Support System (SWSS), and provided training to staff
- Revised the SDM CANS tools to include the developmental stages of children and provided training to staff
- Revised treatment plans to include foster parents' needs in relation to caring for the children placed in their homes
- Collaborated with SCAO in developing and implementing the Absent Parent Protocol to search for and engage parents early in the case

- Revised policy and provided training on the frequency and quality of caseworker contact
- Expanded the Family to Family program, as resources allowed, to a minimum of 30 sites

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Only one item is incorporated under Well-Being Outcome 2. It pertains to State efforts to assess and meet the educational needs of children in foster care and, when relevant, children in the in-home services cases (item 21).

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 89.5 percent of the 38 applicable cases. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 73 percent of applicable Berrien County cases, 89 percent of applicable Kent County cases, and 100 percent of applicable Wayne County cases. In addition, the outcome was substantially achieved in 97 percent of the 34 applicable foster care cases and 25 percent of the 4 applicable in-home services cases.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews found that, in general, the educational needs of children in foster care were being appropriately and adequately assessed and addressed. However, in several of the applicable in-home services cases and one applicable foster care case, educational needs were not assessed or addressed, although education-related concerns were apparent.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2 during its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The key concern identified in the 2002 CFSR was that the State did not consistently make concerted efforts to ensure that educational needs were assessed and appropriate services provided.

To address the identified concern, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Modified SDM CANS and provided training to staff on how to use the tools to identify educational needs
- Expanded the Family to Family program, as resources allowed, to a minimum of 30 sites

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

This outcome incorporates two items pertaining to State efforts to assess and meet the physical health (item 22) and mental health (item 23) needs of children in foster care and children in the in-home services cases, if relevant.

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. The outcome was substantially achieved in 72.4 percent of the 58 applicable cases. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 60 percent of applicable Berrien County cases, 86 percent of applicable Kent County cases, and 72 percent of applicable Wayne County cases. In addition, the outcome was substantially achieved in 85 percent of the 40 foster care cases and 44 percent of the 18 applicable in-home services cases.

The 2009 CFSR case reviews found that, in general, the physical and dental needs of children in foster care were appropriately assessed and adequately addressed. However, the 2009 CFSR also found that for several children in the in-home services cases, the physical and dental needs were not adequately assessed and/or addressed. Additionally, the State was not consistently effective in meeting children's mental health needs, and was more likely to meet the mental health needs of children in foster care than those receiving in-home services.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3 during its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The key concern identified in the 2002 review was that the State was not consistently effective in meeting children's mental health needs.

To address the identified concern, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Revised SDM CANS to address children's mental health needs
- Convened a Medicaid workgroup to develop recommendations addressing assessment and access to mental health services
- Collaborated with DCH to improve mental health services

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Statewide Information System

Substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System is determined by whether the State is operating an information system that can provide accurate and timely information pertaining to the status, demographic characteristics, location, and case goals for the placement of every child in foster care.

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System in the 2009 CFSR. The 2009 CFSR determined that the State cannot use its information system, the SWSS, to identify the placement location of every child in foster care because information about placement changes is not always entered into the system in a timely manner.

Michigan was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

Case Review System

Five items are included in the assessment of State performance for the systemic factor of Case Review System. The items examine development of case plans and parent involvement in that process (item 25), the consistency of 6-month case reviews (item 26) and 12-month permanency hearings (item 27), implementation of procedures to seek TPR in accordance with the timeframes established in ASFA (item 28), and notification of foster and pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers about case reviews and hearings to be held regarding the children in their care and about their right to be heard in those proceedings (item 29).

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. The 2009 CFSR determined that the State is conducting case reviews and holding permanency hearings in a timely manner. However, the CFSR also identified the following concerns:

- The State is not consistently involving parents in case plan development.
- TPR is not consistently being filed in a timely manner.
- The State is not consistent in providing notification of hearings to caregivers.

Michigan also was not in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan. The following concerns were identified in the 2002 review:

- Parents were not consistently involved in the case planning process.
- Case plans were generic and not individualized to meet the needs of the family.
- Permanency hearings were not consistently held in a timely manner and did not consistently focus on advancing permanency.
- Notifications to foster parents about hearings and reviews were not consistent, and foster parents were not consistently provided opportunities to have input into court hearings.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies:

- Developed and implemented the Absent Parent Protocol to locate absent parents
- Amended policy to require contacts with the noncustodial parent to ensure the involvement of both parents in case planning
- Provided increased supervisory monitoring of case plan development through the case reading process to ensure involvement by parents and children
- Amended Updated Service Plans to include a place for parents' comments on their progress in achieving mutually agreed upon goals
- Ensured court compliance with statutory requirements for permanency planning hearings (PPH) through an administrative order issued by the SCAO

- Established policy requiring supervising agencies to advise the court of the requirement for the PPH at the conclusion of the review hearing required to generate a Notice of Court Hearing to caregivers
- Used technical assistance to determine which State policies and procedures could be streamlined to facilitate improvements

The State met its goals for this systemic factor by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

Quality Assurance System

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

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of QA System. The 2009 CFSR determined that the State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided with quality services that protect their health and safety. However, the 2009 CFSR also determined that although there are some State and local QA efforts, subsequent to the end of the Round I CFSR Program Improvement Plan period, the State no longer was implementing a comprehensive QA process. Since then, the State has developed a comprehensive process, but has not fully implemented a centralized comprehensive QA system to monitor outcomes across all DHS programs.

Michigan was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

Staff and Provider Training

The systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training incorporates an assessment of the State's training provided to new caseworkers (item 32), the ongoing training provided to agency staff (item 33), and both initial and ongoing training provided to foster and adoptive parents (item 34). This systemic factor does not assess the training of service providers other than child welfare agency staff unless the service providers are private agency caseworkers, operating under a contract with the State, who have full case management responsibilities.

Michigan is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. Key findings for this systemic factor in the 2009 CFSR were the following:

- The State has implemented a competency-based child welfare training for new DHS and private child placing agency (CPA) caseworkers, which ensures that caseworkers are trained on relevant issues, and requires caseworkers to pass a competency-based

performance evaluation as of April 2009 and complete initial training before assuming more than a three-case training caseload as of August 2009.

- The State requires ongoing training for all DHS and private agency caseworkers and supervisors.
- The State provides initial and ongoing training for foster and adoptive parents and has training requirements for private CPA foster homes and child caring institution staff.

Michigan also was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

Service Array and Resource Development

The assessment of the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development incorporates answers to three questions: Does the State have in place an array of services that meets the needs of children and families served by the child welfare agency (item 35)? Are the services accessible to families and children throughout the State (item 36)? Can services be individualized to meet the unique needs of the children and family served by the child welfare agency (item 37)?

Michigan is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. The 2009 CFSR determined that the State has an appropriate array of key services to meet the needs of children and families. However, the 2009 CFSR also identified the following concerns:

- There are many key services that are not accessible to families and children in all jurisdictions.
- There is a scarcity of key services, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment services, which results in waiting lists for these services.
- The services and supports to families that are available in the State cannot always be tailored to meet the unique needs of children and families.

Michigan was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was not required to address this factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community incorporates an assessment of the State's consultation with external stakeholders in developing the CFSP and producing Annual Progress and Service Reports (APSR) (items 38 and 39), and the extent to which the State coordinates child welfare services with services or benefits of other Federal or Federally-assisted programs serving the same population (item 40).

Michigan is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. The 2009 CFSR determined the following:

- The State's CFSP is developed in consultation with DHS stakeholders and child welfare partners.
- The APSR is completed with input from various stakeholders.
- The State coordinates services with other Federal and Federally-assisted programs.

Michigan was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

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

Michigan is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The 2009 CFSR determined that the State has standards for foster family homes, group homes, and child care institutions and that the State applies the same standards to all licensed residential facilities and foster homes. Additionally, the State provides for background checks and fingerprinting as a component for all licensed foster and adoptive placements, including relatives, and effectively uses cross-jurisdictional adoption exchanges to support permanent placements for children. However, the 2009 CFSR also identified concern that recruitment is left up to the local counties and CPAs, and that there is no statewide directive to recruit foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in foster care.

Michigan also was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2002 CFSR and was not required to address this factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

Table 1. Michigan 2009 CFSR Ratings for Safety and Permanency Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings			Item Ratings	
	In Substantial Conformity?	Percent Substantially Achieved*	Met National Standards?	Rating**	Percent Strength
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	No	61.5	2 No		
Item 1. Timeliness of investigations				69	ANI
Item 2. Repeat maltreatment				85	ANI
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	No	64.6			
Item 3. Services to protect children in home				69	ANI
Item 4. Risk of harm				65	ANI
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	No	47.5	1 Yes, 3 No		
Item 5. Foster care reentry				100	Strength
Item 6. Stability of foster care placements				75	ANI
Item 7. Permanency goal for child				75	ANI
Item 8. Reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives				68	ANI
Item 9. Adoption				50	ANI
Item 10. Other planned living arrangement				40	ANI
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	No	72.5			
Item 11. Proximity of placement				96	Strength
Item 12. Placement with siblings				92	Strength
Item 13. Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care				66	ANI
Item 14. Preserving connections				82	ANI
Item 15. Relative placement				88	ANI
Item 16. Relationship of child in care with parents				54	ANI

* 95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

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

Table 2. Michigan 2009 CFSR Ratings for Child and Family Well-Being Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings		Item Ratings	
	In Substantial Conformity?	Percent Substantially Achieved	Rating**	Percent Strength
Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children’s needs	No	46.2		
Item 17. Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents			48	ANI
Item 18. Child/family involvement in case planning			46	ANI
Item 19. Caseworker visits with child			66	ANI
Item 20. Caseworker visits with parents			31	ANI
Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive services to meet their educational needs	No	89.5		
Item 21. Educational needs of child			89	ANI
Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs	No	72.4		
Item 22. Physical health of child			82	ANI
Item 23. Mental/behavioral health of child			71	ANI

* 95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

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

Table 3. Michigan 2009 CFSR Ratings for Systemic Factors and Items

Systemic Factors and Items	Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Statewide Information System	No	2	
Item 24. The State is operating a statewide information system that, at a minimum, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care			ANI
Case Review System	No	2	
Item 25. The State provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child’s parent(s) that includes the required provisions			ANI
Item 26. The State provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review			Strength
Item 27. The State provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the			

Systemic Factors and Items	Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
supervision of the State has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter			Strength
Item 28. The State provides a process for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act			ANI
Item 29. The State provides a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child			ANI
Quality Assurance System	No	2	
Item 30. The State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children			Strength
Item 31. The State is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented			ANI
Staff and Provider Training	Yes	3	
Item 32. The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services			Strength
Item 33. The State provides for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP			Strength
Item 34. The State provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children			Strength

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

** Items may be rated as Strengths or as Areas Needing Improvement (ANI).

Systemic Factors and Items	Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
Service Array and Resource Development	No	2	
Item 35. The State has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency			Strength
Item 36. The services in item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP			ANI
Item 37. The services in item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency			ANI
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Yes	4	
Item 38. In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the State engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP			Strength
Item 39. The agency develops, in consultation with these representatives, Annual Progress and Services Reports delivered pursuant to the CFSP			Strength
Item 40. The State's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other Federal or Federally-assisted programs serving the same population			Strength
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Yes	3	
Item 41. The State has implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions that are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards			Strength
Item 42. The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds			Strength
Item 43. The State complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children			Strength
Item 44. The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed			ANI
Item 45. The State has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children			Strength

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

** Items may be rated as Strengths or as Areas Needing Improvement (ANI).