

Utah's Division of Child and Family Services

Western Region Report

Qualitative Case Review Findings

Review Conducted

March 21-24, 2016

A Report by

The Office of Services Review

utah department of
human services

I. Introduction

The Western Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR) for FY2015 was held the week of March 21-24, 2016.

Reviewers were selected from the Office of Services Review and the Division of Child and Family Services. Reviewers also included individuals from the following organizations:

- Family Support Center
- The Office of the Guardian ad Litem
- Wendy's Wonderful Kids

There were 30 cases randomly selected for the Western Region review. The case sample included 25 foster care cases and five in-home cases. Cases were selected from the American Fork, Fillmore, Heber, Orem, Provo, Spanish Fork, and Wasatch Mental Health offices. A certified lead reviewer and shadow reviewer were assigned to each case. Information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents or other guardians, foster parents (if child was placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. Additionally, the child's file, including prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

Staff from the Office of Services Review met with region staff on May 12, 2016 in an exit conference to review the results of the region's QCR. Scores and data analysis were reviewed with the region.

II. Stakeholder Observations

The results of the QCR should be considered within a broad context of local and regional interaction with community partners. Each year Office of Services Review representatives interview key community stakeholders such as foster parents, providers, representatives from the legal community, other community agencies, and DCFS staff. As of September, 2015, stakeholder interviews were structured to incorporate elements from the Federal Child and Family Services Review- Stakeholder Interview Guide. The actual guide can be found at [https://training.cfsrportal.org/resources/3105#Stakeholder Interview Guide](https://training.cfsrportal.org/resources/3105#Stakeholder%20Interview%20Guide). On March 15, 2016 OSR staff interviewed individuals and groups of DCFS staff and community partners. DCFS employees who were interviewed included the Regional Director, region administrators, supervisors, and caseworkers. Community partners interviewed included a guardian ad litem focus group, a representative from the office of the assistant attorney general, foster parent focus group and System of Care coordinators. Strengths and opportunities for improvement were identified by the various groups of stakeholders as described below.

Section I- Statewide Information System (SAFE)

No information was requested collected for this section.

Section II- Section II- Case Review System

- Plans are developed jointly with parents primarily in Family Team Meetings. Case Process Review Performance data suggests otherwise but the agency contends the data is indicative of poor documentation rather than poor practice. The development of the UFACET assessment tool has reinforced the practice around family involvement in the planning process. Families seem more engaged in the portions of the UFACET and Child and Family Plan that pertain to visitation but less interested in the discussing the services. Some judges are expecting plans be developed within two weeks. This may contribute to the plan being developed solely by the worker in order to comply with the court.
- Court reviews are occurring every three months on average.
- Some children in high-cost placements are being reviewed by agency administration on a monthly basis. The focus of these agency reviews is permanency-focused and not financially driven.
- Permanency hearings are routinely occurring at the 12-month mark. In most instances, Permanency hearings are scheduled at the time of the removal disposition hearing which causes some families some concern when they hear the case may continue for twelve months. Most families expect the case to be resolved in a few short months. Notice of the permanency hearing is delivered at the 9-month mark. Extensions are occasional granted when parents have demonstrated that reunification is likely to be achieved shortly after the 12-month mark. This tends to be more common in substance abuse cases than any other case situation. Some parental defense attorney's file last minute motions which can prevent the hearing from occurring. It is rare that an extension is granted beyond 18 months.

- Petitions for termination of parental rights are filed in accordance with federal guidelines. Once the goal changes from Reunification, the judges are setting TPR dates within 45 days of the hearing in which the goal was changed.
- Foster parents are notified of court when the worker makes the effort to notify them. This occurs during some Family Team Meetings or if the foster parent is in attendance of the hearing when the next hearing date is set. When foster parents transport children to court, foster parents tend to stay and attend the hearing. If the foster parent is present, some judges will invite the foster parent to address the court other judges do not make the invitation. However no judge will prohibit the foster parent from speaking in the court if the foster parent desires. Some workers consult with foster parents prior to the hearing so that the worker can make sure the foster parent's interests are represented.

Section III- Quality Assurance System

- The region produces and distributes data performance reports. Some in the region feel that some reports are intended to bring shame to under-performing staff. Reports are deficit based and not strength based. In other words, reports focus on areas of poor performance while there is a lack of praise for areas of solid performance.
- The informal QA efforts by supervisors have declined during this past year. This is attributed to the shifting demands on supervisors as so many new workers have been hired since the hiring freeze. Supervisors have been spending more time in mentoring new staff than in QA efforts. When QA is occurring, workers feel the most valuable aspect of the QA process, is the one-on-one feedback the supervisor provides within the QA process. The rate of QA varies from supervisors to supervisor and some supervisors are consistent at doing QA on a monthly basis. In some instances, supervisors increase their QA efforts which seem to coincide with the formally scheduled official Qualitative and Case Process Reviews.
- The region has had a Practice Improvement Plan which has focused on some area of practice or another over the past several years. Staff are aware of the improvement strategies and measures contained in the plan. The PIP is centered on the measures from the Qualitative and the Case Process Reviews. The regional PIP has focused on Child and Family Plans and Long-term View.

Section IV- Staff and Provider Training

- There was a period during the past year when the regional training positions were vacant during the hiring freeze. These positions have since been filled.
- It has been difficult to provide the mentoring/coaching that new employees require because the infusion of new hires was so numerous and sudden that there were not enough veteran staff to assist in the mentoring process at the rate prescribed.
- It would be helpful if new employees were hired a few weeks prior to the start of the training so they could get some field experience before going into the classroom. The classroom experience is helpful in preparing new staff for child welfare but the field

experience is essential to preparing new staff. No classroom training can fully prepare a new employee for the field experience.

- Training for new employees has been streamlined to where it is now only three non-consecutive weeks of training offered through the State Office. The training is good but some of the training contradicts some of the regional expectations and some of the training is a repeat of instruction received in college. The training is designed to provide all new employees a broad practice perspective. Some staff are grateful to be cross trained on the wide array of agency program areas, while other staff felt like training that did not apply to their specific assignment, was a waste of time. Training offered at the state office is not conveniently located for staff coming from Western Region to Salt Lake City.
- The regional training team and administration are helpful in providing in-service training as needs are identified. Much of the in-service training is mandatory. It seems like supervisors are making more concerted efforts to incorporate training in their staff meetings. Non-agency stakeholders feel like they can identify training needs within the agency and the agency is accommodating of these requests.
- Regional Training managers offer training to providers on a quarterly basis. However the training team is all new, therefore they are a little confused as to what this training should look like. Therefore the training team has arranged to attend the Salt Lake Valley Regional provider training which will serve as an example.
- Foster parents receive training through the Utah Foster Care Foundation. Resource Family Consultants inform foster parents about upcoming training offered through the agency or through the community. Veteran foster parents suggest specialized training on the topics of liability, insurance, and use of day care and so forth. For the most part foster parents are extremely satisfied with the training. The training on working with trauma and children was exceptionally beneficial and the annual adoption conference is a great resource.

Section V- Service Array and Resource Development

- There can be delays in developing contracts locally when dealing with the state office contract procedure.
- When a contract is not in place with the agency, the agency relies on the state cooperative contracts with the Division of Juvenile Justice Services.
- Staff are under the impression that the Department of Human Services initiative of System of Care would be developing resources for families who fall into the gaps. However, the agency is now feeling like the System of Care personnel are relying on the agency to develop the service.
- Drug and Alcohol treatment is available but not immediately available. This contributes to waiting lists for families. Families are getting some support and services while on the waiting list for treatment. In some instances individuals are offered “pre-treatment” in the form of education. Some individuals have completed enough of the pre-service education that by the time the treatment becomes available; the service is no longer

relevant either because of rehabilitation or because of individual's resignation. Stakeholders are concerned that the delay in the provision of bona fide service is contributing to delays in reunification and permanency. This also applies when the agency withholds funding.

- There are long waiting lists to access housing.
- Foster parents feel there are adequate resources and services supporting the substitute caregiver in meeting the needs of the children in their care.
- Resources in the rural areas of the region are less specialized and have limited availability.

Section VI- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

- The region has made a concerted effort to improve the coordination and transition of services to children who are in custody and eligible for services through the Division of Services for Person with Disability (DSPD). The region has a newly created position. This position an expert in resources and procedures in serving children and families with special needs.
- There is a regional ICWA specialist who can guide workers through the process when ICWA applies. The state office ICWA specialist is a valuable resource to the region. The working relationship between the region and the tribes in Utah is adequate.
- Services in native languages are not available in many of the communities within the region. This is particularly true when a specialized need is identified.
- It would also be helpful if there were more workers who were fluent in the family's native language. The greatest need is for Spanish speaking workers.
- Many stakeholders participate in a regional Quality Improvement Committee. Although the title of the committee suggests that the primary purpose of the committee is to address performance issues but in fact the committee serves as a forum for identifying gaps in the child welfare experience and to brainstorm solutions for these issues.

Section VII- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention

- There has been improvement in the kinship foster parent resource development, especially in the statewide support for kinship caregivers.
- There have been concerted efforts to improve the relationship with the Office of Licensing. Foster parents have noted improved communication with licensors. In the process from recruitment to placement, it used to be that the greatest bottleneck was during the licensing phase. However, due to the efforts of the Office of Licensing, this has been streamlined.
- The foster parent recruitment efforts are producing a great number of new foster parents. The influx of new staff coupled with the addition of new foster parents sometimes combines for an inexperienced tandem working together.
- Despite the active recruiting efforts producing a number of new foster parent resources, there is still a lack of diverse foster parents in the area. However this is probably commensurate with the general population of the community.

- The Utah Foster Care Foundation (UFCF) uses agency data to develop targeted recruitment strategies on a quarterly basis. However the foundation finds much of the data to be unreliable and contributes to a misaligned recruitment strategy. UFCF uses many tools in the recruitment effort including; public service announcements, social media, targeted recruitment and word of mouth. Word of mouth tends to be the most effective method.

In addition to gathering information from stakeholder interviews which focused on Federal Child and Family Services Review Stake Holder Interview Guide, additional information was provided which did not fall under any of the Federal categories. Therefore this information is grouped together as miscellaneous information.

- The region has experienced a fluctuation in the number of children in care over the past several years. It was rather high at one point but was reduced significantly through administrative focuses. More recently, the number of children in care has been creeping back up. Nevertheless, the total number of children in foster care is still 100 less than at any point in the past few years.
- The HomeWorks initiative training of new staff and community partners will be fully implemented in the region by summer. The initiative has been well received by staff and community partners for the most part. One of the most well-received aspects of the initiative has been the implementation of the UFACET assessment tool. Part of the appeal of the tool is that it is an effective engagement and planning tool.
- The hiring freeze imposed during FY15 has had lingering effects in FY16, as the region has reallocated administrative resources and time in the hiring, training, mentoring and coaching of new staff. There has been much effort to get the new staff up to speed as quickly as possible. In some instances, new staff have been assigned to cases earlier than the graduated schedule permits. The hiring freeze contributed to a great deal of turnover which was anticipated but it was disheartening when the some of the most competent and experienced staff left during the hiring freeze. Many of these would have been career child welfare workers and future leaders of the agency.
- There has been a great deal of growth of the population in the Utah County area. There continues to be a lot of construction of new homes and businesses, leading many to believe, growth is likely to continue.
- The regional administrative team works well with all community partners. The leadership team is very approachable and collaborative in problem solving.
- The region has really been striving to improve the work around concurrent permanency planning.
- The region has really been striving to explore kinship resources more thoroughly.
- The Office of the Guardian ad Litem has experienced a reduction in caseloads which has given Guardian's more time to work with children, families and child welfare partners.

III. Status, System Performance, Analysis, and Trends

The QCR findings are presented in graphic form to help quantify the observations of the qualitative review. Graphs show a comparison of scores for past reviews with the current review. The charts of the two broad domains of Child and Family Status and System Performance show the percentage of cases in which the key indicators were judged to be “acceptable.” A six-point rating scale is used to determine whether or not an indicator is judged to be acceptable. Reviewers scored each of the cases reviewed using this rating scale. The range of ratings is as follows:

- 1: Completely Unacceptable
- 2: Substantially Unacceptable
- 3: Partially Unacceptable
- 4: Minimally Acceptable
- 5: Substantially Acceptable
- 6: Optimal Status/Performance

Child and Family Status and System Performance are evaluated using 15 key indicators. Graphs presenting the overall scores for each domain are presented below. They are followed by graphs showing the distribution of scores for each indicator within each of the two domains.

Child and Family Status Indicators

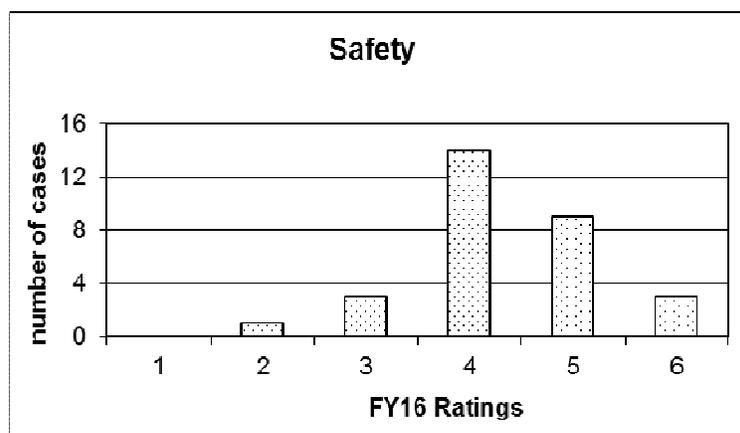
Overall Status

Western Child Status	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators except Safety, which is 85%	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16 current scores
			Standard: Criteria 85% on overall score					
Safety	26	4		92%	92%	96%	97%	87%
<i>Child Safe from Others</i>	29	1		96%	100%	100%	97%	97%
<i>Child Risk to Self</i>	27	3		96%	92%	96%	100%	90%
Stability	25	5		83%	71%	76%	86%	83%
Prospect for Permanence	20	10		67%	46%	68%	55%	67%
Health/Physical Well-being	30	0		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Emot./Behavioral Well-being	27	3		92%	92%	88%	93%	90%
Learning	27	3		88%	88%	88%	93%	90%
Family Connections	17	1		94%	94%	77%	81%	94%
Satisfaction	26	4		96%	92%	84%	79%	87%
Overall Score	25	5		92%	88%	96%	90%	83%
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%					

Safety

Summative Questions: Is the child safe from threats of harm in his/her daily living, learning, working and recreational environments? Are others in the child's daily environments safe from the child? Does the child avoid self-endangerment and refrain from using behaviors that may put self and others at risk of harm?

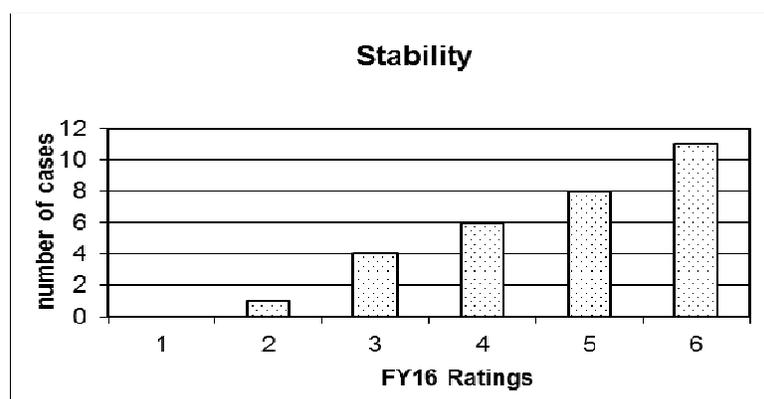
Findings: 87% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is lower than last year's score of 97%. This indicator measures both the Child's Safety from Others and the Child's Risk to Self or Others. Out of the 30 cases reviewed, only one had an unacceptable score on Safety from others. Three cases rated as unacceptable because to the child puts themselves or others at risk.



Stability

Summative Questions: Has the child's placement setting been consistent and stable? Are the child's daily living and learning arrangements stable and free from risk of disruption? If not, are appropriate services being provided to achieve stability and reduce the probability of disruption?

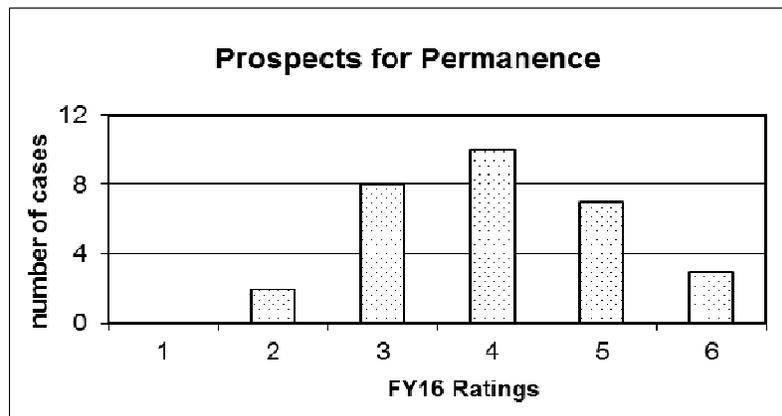
Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a slight decrease from last year's score of 86%.



Prospects for Permanence

Summative Questions: Is the child living with caregivers that the child, caregivers, and other stakeholders believe will endure until the child becomes independent? If not, is a permanency plan presently being implemented on a timely basis that will ensure that the child will live in enduring relationships that provide a sense of family, stability, and belonging?

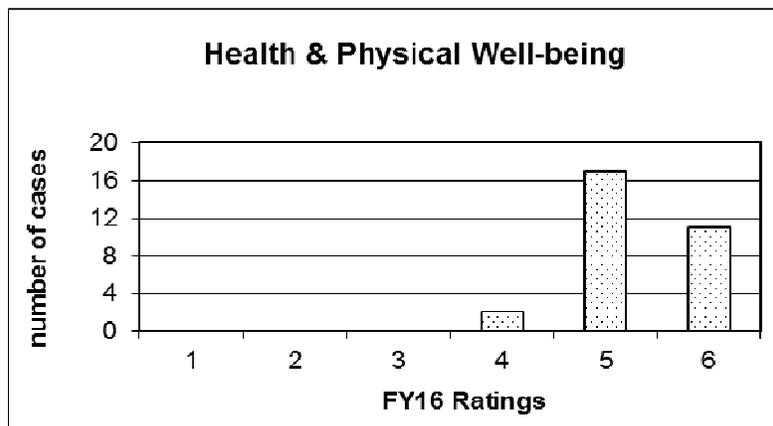
Findings: 67% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 55%.



Health/Physical Well-Being

Summative Questions: Is the child in good health? Are the child's basic physical needs being met? Does the child have health care services, as needed?

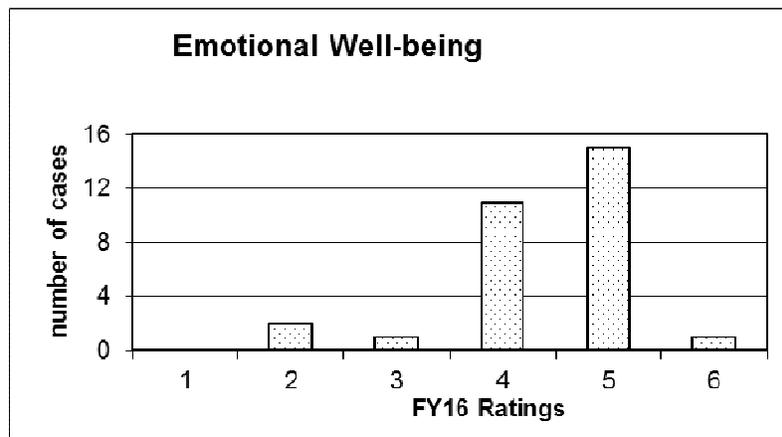
Findings: 100% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This score has been 100% for several consecutive years.



Emotional/Behavioral Well-Being

Summative Questions: Is the child doing well emotionally and behaviorally? If not, is the child making reasonable progress toward stable and adequate functioning, emotionally and behaviorally, at home and school?

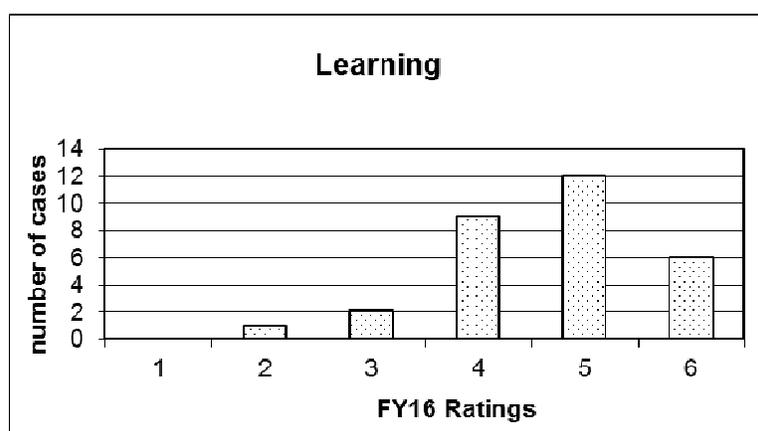
Findings: 90% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a slight decrease from last year's score of 93%.



Learning Progress

Summative Question: (For children age five and older.) Is the child learning, progressing and gaining essential functional capabilities at a rate commensurate with his/her age and ability?
Note: There is a supplementary scale used with children under the age of five that puts greater emphasis on developmental progress. Scores from the two scales are combined for this report.

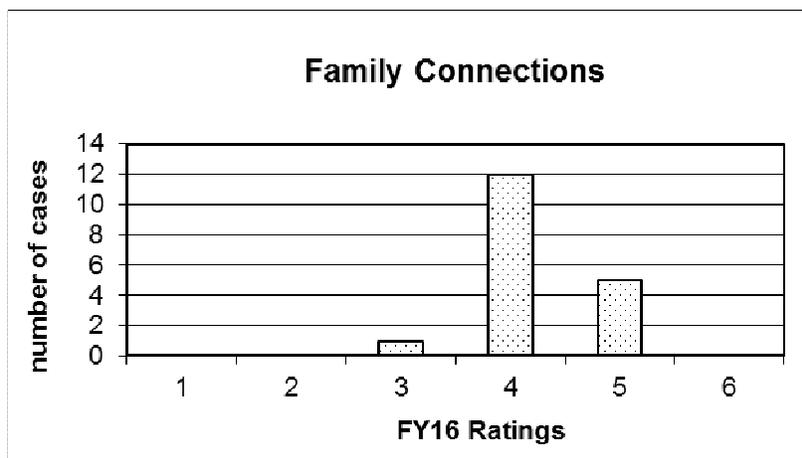
Findings: 90% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a slight decrease from last year's score of 93%.



Family Connections

Summative Question: While the child and family are living apart, are family relationships and connections being maintained through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies, unless compelling reasons exist for keeping them apart. This indicator measures whether or not the relationship between the child and the mother, father, siblings, and other important family members is being maintained while the child is in foster care.

Findings: 94% of the cases scored acceptable on Overall Family Connections. This is an improvement from last year's score of 81%. The scores ranged from 100% for Siblings and Others to 71% for Mothers.

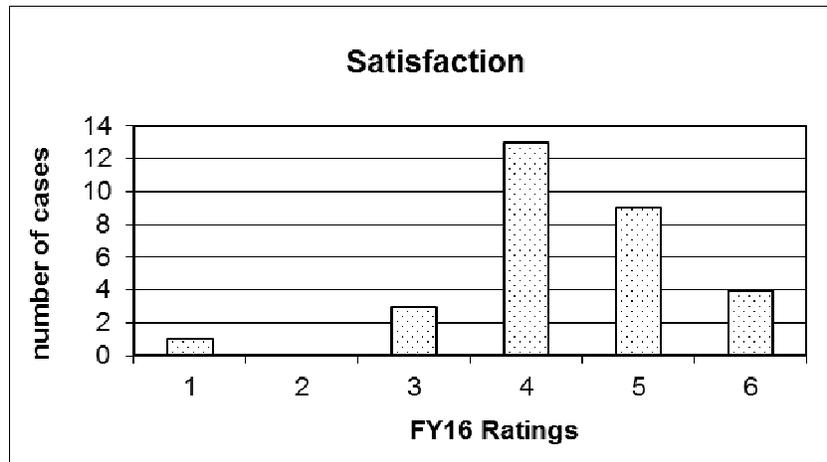


Western Family Connections				
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY15 Scores	FY16 Current Scores
Overall Connections	17	1	81%	94%
Siblings	4	0	67%	100%
Mother	14	1	53%	93%
Father	10	4	78%	71%
Other	2	0	67%	100%

Satisfaction

Summative Question: Are the child, parent/guardian, and substitute caregiver satisfied with the supports and services they are receiving?

Findings: 87% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6) on the overall Satisfaction score. This is an improvement from last year's score of 79%. Reviewers rated the satisfaction of Children, Mothers, Fathers, and Caregivers. Scores for all individual parties ranged from 100% on Others to 47% for Fathers.

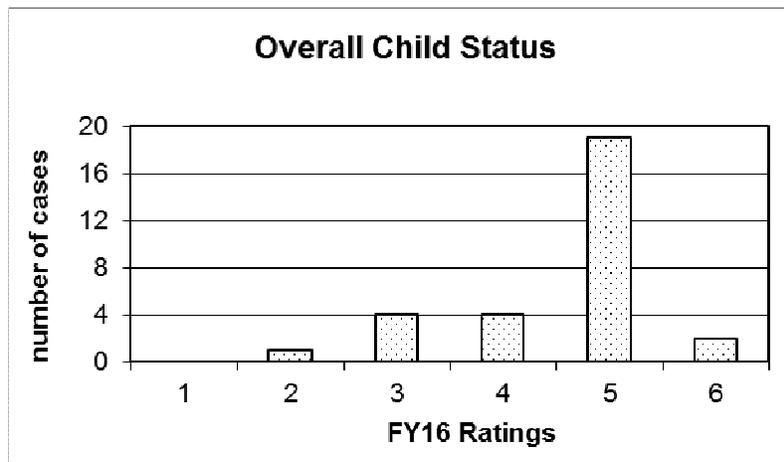


Western Satisfaction				
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY15 Scores	FY16 Current Scores
Satisfaction	26	4	50%	87%
Child	12	1	89%	92%
Mother	12	5	53%	71%
Father	7	8	57%	47%
Caregiver	16	1	100%	94%
Other	2	0	100%	100%

Overall Child and Family Status

Summative Questions: Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for the Child and Family Status indicators, how well are this child and family presently doing? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall Child and Family Status using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the first seven status indicators (minus Satisfaction) must score acceptable in order for the Overall Score to be acceptable. A unique condition affects the rating of Overall Child and Family status in every case: The Safety indicator always acts as a “trump” so that the Overall Child and Family status rating cannot be acceptable unless the Safety indicator is also acceptable.

Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). The overall Child and Family Status score decreased from last year’s score of 90% and dipped below the 85% standard.



System Performance Indicators

Overall System

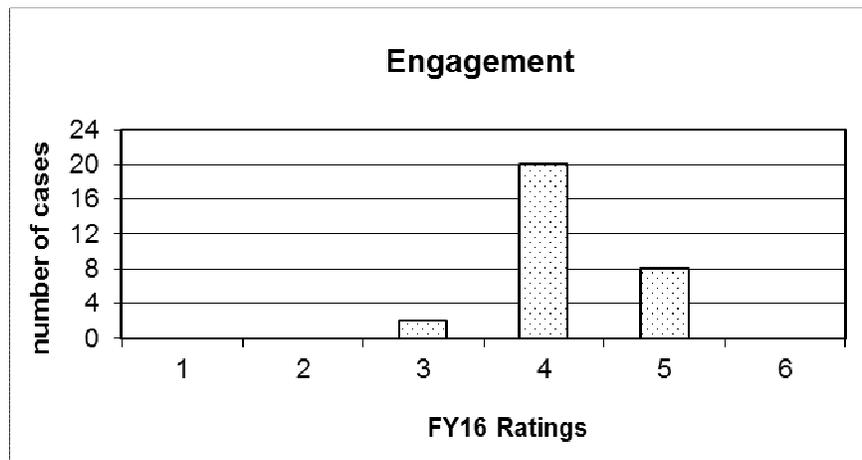
Western System Performance	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators		FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16 current scores
			Standard: 85% on overall score						
Engagement	28	2	93%		88%	79%	88%	83%	93%
Teaming	13	17	43%		67%	29%	80%	79%	43%
Assessment	25	5	83%		71%	71%	76%	72%	83%
Long-term View	21	9	70%		54%	42%	60%	59%	70%
Child & Family Plan	14	16	47%		58%	46%	84%	55%	47%
Intervention Adequacy	25	5	83%		79%	75%	88%	83%	83%
Tracking & Adapting	29	1	97%		92%	75%	88%	83%	97%
Overall Score	26	4	87%		79%	67%	80%	79%	87%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Child and Family Engagement

Summative Questions: Has the agency made concerted efforts to actively involve parents and children in the service process and in making decisions about the child and family? To what extent has the agency used rapport building strategies, including special accommodations, to engage the family?

Findings: 93% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 83% and above standard. Separate scores were given for Child, Mother, Father and Other. An overall score was then selected by the reviewer. Scores for the various groups ranged from a high of 90% for Children to 48% for Fathers.

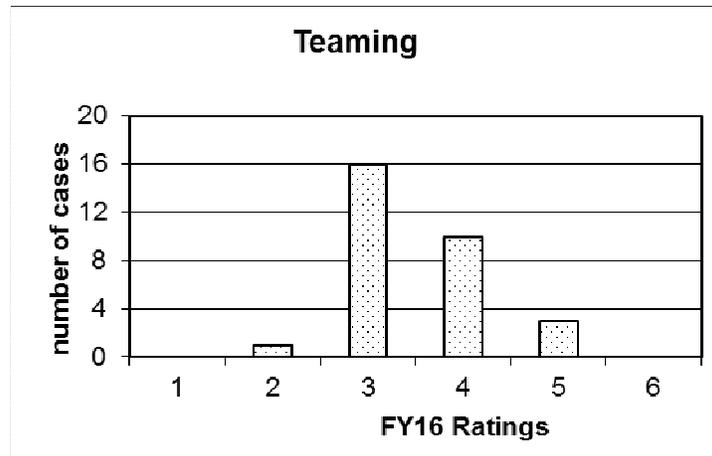


Western Engagement				
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY15 Scores	FY16 Current Scores
Engagement	28	2	83%	93%
Child	18	2	92%	90%
Mother	18	4	83%	82%
Father	10	11	60%	48%
Other	1	1	50%	50%

Child and Family Teaming

Summative Questions: Do the child, family, and service providers function as a team? Do the actions of the team reflect a pattern of effective teamwork and collaboration that benefits the child and family? Is there effective coordination in the provision of services across all providers?

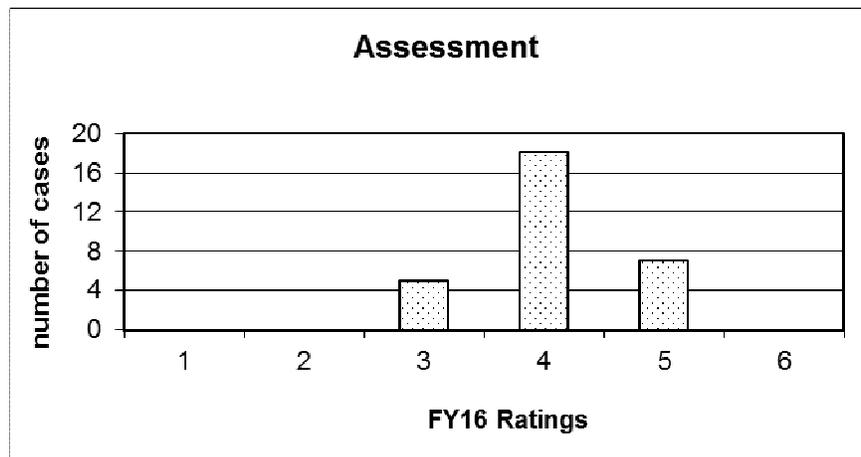
Findings: 43% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 79% and below the standard of 70%.



Child and Family Assessment

Summative Questions: Are the current, obvious and substantial strengths and needs of the child and family identified through existing assessments, both formal and informal, so that all interveners collectively have a “big picture” understanding of the child and family? Do the assessments help the team draw conclusions on how to provide effective services to meet the child’s needs for enduring permanency, safety, and well-being? Are the critical underlying issues identified that must be resolved for the child to live safely with his/her family independent of agency supervision or to obtain an independent and enduring home?

Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year’s score of 72% and is above the 70% standard. Individual scores were given for this indicator. The scores ranged from 100% on Caregivers to 57% for Fathers.

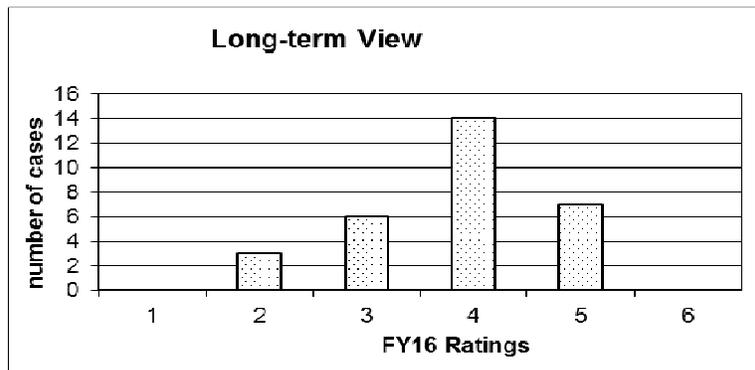


Western Assessment				
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY15 Scores	FY16 Current Scores
Assessment	25	6	50%	83%
Child	27	3	90%	90%
Mother	17	5	71%	74%
Father	13	4	71%	57%
Caregiver	17	0	100%	100%
Other	2	0	100%	67%

Long-Term View

Summative Questions: Is there a path that will lead the family and/or child toward achieving enduring safety and permanency without DCFS interventions? Is it realistic and achievable? Does the team, particularly the child/family, understand the path and destination? Does the path provide steps and address the next major transition(s) toward achieving enduring safety and permanence independent of DCFS interventions?

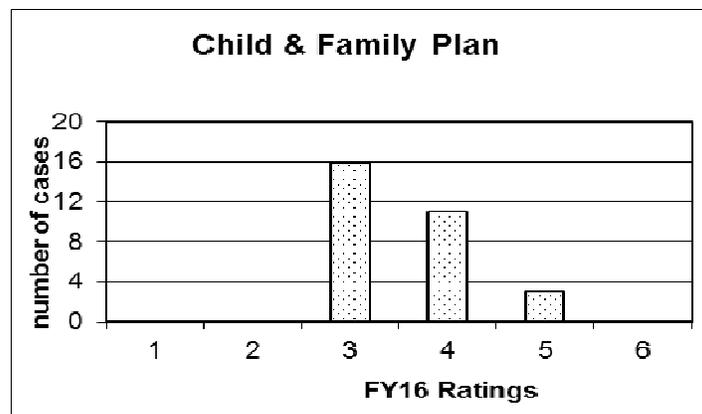
Findings: 70% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 59% and is at the standard of 70%.



Child and Family Plan

Summative Questions: Is the Child and Family Plan individualized and relevant to needs and goals? Are supports, services and interventions assembled into a holistic and coherent service process that provides a mix of elements uniquely matched to the child/family's situation and preferences? Does the combination of supports and services fit the child and family's situation so as to maximize potential results and minimize conflicting strategies and inconveniences?

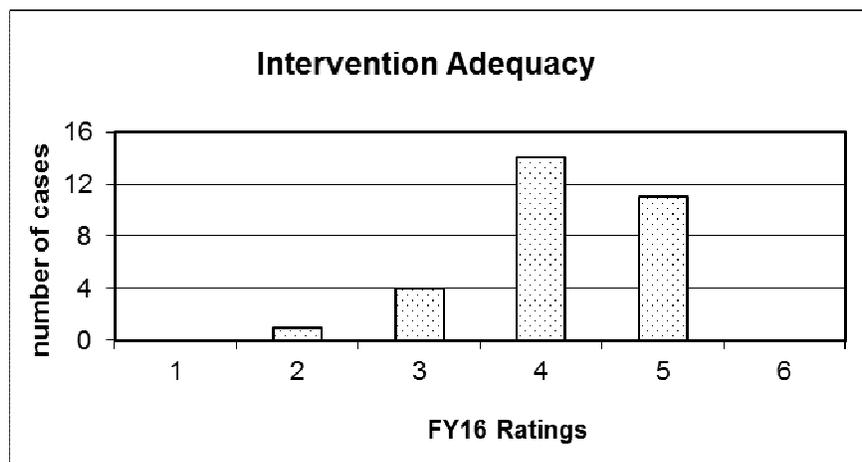
Findings: 47% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 55%. This score is below the standard of 70%.



Intervention Adequacy

Summative Questions: To what degree are the planned interventions, services, and supports being provided to the child and family of sufficient power (precision, intensity, duration, fidelity, and consistency) and beneficial effect to produce results that would enable the child and family to live safely and independent from DCFS?

Findings: 83% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is the same as last year's score of 83%. This indicator was scored separately for Child, Mother, Father, and Caregiver. The scores ranged from 94% for Caregivers to 58% for Fathers.

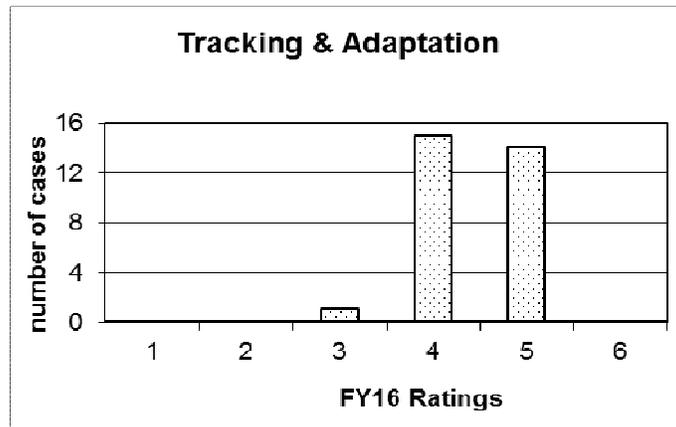


Western Intervention Adequacy				
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY15 Scores	FY16 Current Scores
Intervention Adequacy	25	5	83%	83%
Child	27	3	86%	90%
Mother	10	4	64%	71%
Father	7	5	64%	58%
Caregiver	15	1	94%	94%
Other	0	0	NA	NA

Tracking and Adaptation

Summative Questions: Are the child and family status, service process, and progress routinely monitored and evaluated by the team? Are services modified to respond to the changing needs of the child and family and to apply knowledge gained about service efforts and results to create a self-correcting service process?

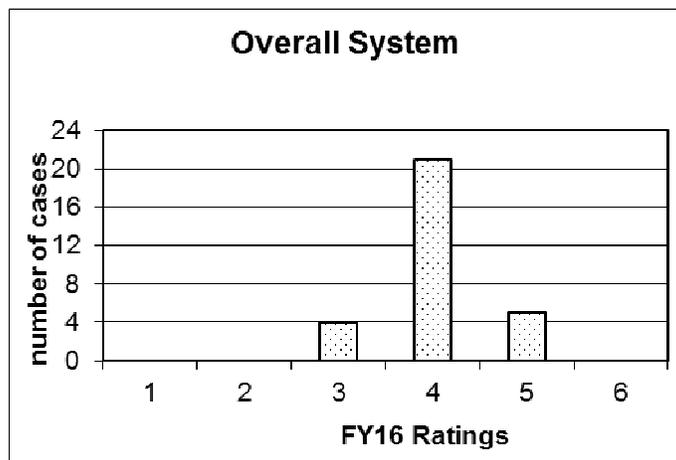
Findings: 97% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 83%. This is well above the standard of 70%.



Overall System Performance

Summative Questions: Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for System Performance indicators, how well is the service system functioning for this child now? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall System Performance using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the seven system performance indicators must score acceptable in order for the overall score to be acceptable.

Findings: 87% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase from last year's score of 79% and is above the System Performance Standard of 85%.



IV. Outcome Matrix

The display below presents a matrix analysis of the service testing results during the current QCR. Each of the cells in the matrix shows the percent of children and families experiencing one of four possible outcomes:

- Outcome 1: child and family status acceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 2: child and family status unacceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 3: child and family status acceptable, system performance unacceptable
- Outcome 4: child and family status unacceptable, system performance unacceptable

The desired result is to have as many children and families in Outcome 1 as possible and as few in Outcome 4 as possible. It is fortunate that some children and families do well in spite of unacceptable system performance (Outcome 3). Experience suggests that these are most often either unusually resilient or resourceful children and families, or children and families who have some “champion” or advocate who protects them from the shortcomings of the system. Unfortunately, there may also be some children and families who, in spite of good system performance, do not do well (these children and families would fall in Outcome 2).

The outcome matrix for children and families reviewed during the Western Region review indicates that 73% of the cases had acceptable ratings on both Child Status and System Performance. There was one case that rated unacceptable on both Child Status and System Performance.

	Favorable Status of Child Outcome 1	Unfavorable Status of Child Outcome 2	
Acceptable System Performance	Good status for the child, agency services presently acceptable. n= 22 73%	Poor status for the child, agency services minimally acceptable but limited in reach or efficacy. n= 4 14%	87%
Unacceptable System Performance	Outcome 3 Good status for the child, agency Mixed or presently unacceptable. n= 3 10%	Outcome 4 Poor status for the child, agency presently unacceptable. n= 1 3%	13%
	83%	17%	100%

V. Analysis of the Data

RESULTS BY CASE TYPE

The following tables compare how the different Case Types performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. Teaming and Child and Family Plan Indicator scores which fall below the indicator performance standard of 70% are highlighted in yellow. There were no Family Preservation (PFP/PFR) or Voluntary cases (PSC) in the sample. There were 25 Foster Care cases and five In-home cases. Foster care cases out performed In-home cases in every Status Indicator including Teaming and Child and Family Plan which were below the standard.

FY16 Case Type	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Foster Care SCF	25	88%	64%	84%	96%	52%	88%	76%	48%	88%	100%	96%
In-Home PSS	5	80%	80%	80%	80%	0%	60%	40%	40%	60%	80%	40%

Collection of demographic information regarding cases included in the case sample includes the question, “Did the child come into services due to delinquency instead of abuse and neglect?” Seven of the 30 cases (23%) in the sample are reported to have entered services due to delinquency rather than abuse or neglect. The following table shows that Non-delinquency cases scored better than Delinquency cases particularly in the Overall Child Status Performance score. Non-delinquency cases were also more likely to be stable and have better prospects for permanence than Delinquency cases.

FY16 Case Type	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performance
Delinquency	7	71%	43%	57%	86%
Non-Delinquency	23	87%	74%	91%	87%

RESULTS BY PERMANENCY GOAL

The following table compares how the different Permanency Goals performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. In most of these goal types the sample is small and therefore each case has more significant impact on the score and may not indicate a pattern of practice. Teaming and Child and Family Plan scored below the standard in every goal type except for Teaming in Guardian with Relative.

FY16 Permanency Goal	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Adoption	6	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	100%	83%	50%	100%	100%	100%
Guardianship (Non-Rel)	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Guardianship (Rel)	3	67%	0%	33%	100%	100%	100%	67%	33%	67%	100%	100%
Individualized Perm.	3	67%	33%	67%	67%	33%	67%	33%	67%	67%	100%	67%
Remain Home	6	83%	83%	83%	83%	0%	67%	50%	50%	67%	83%	50%
Reunification	11	91%	64%	91%	100%	55%	82%	82%	45%	91%	100%	100%

RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

Caseload

The following table compares how caseload affected some key child status and core system performance indicators. Caseloads in the sample were divided into two categories: caseloads of 16 cases or less and caseloads of 17 cases or more. Over the past several years the region has experienced extreme fluctuation in the number of workers carrying 17 or more cases. In FY13, almost half of the caseworkers (46%) had caseloads of 17 cases or more (11 of 24 workers). In FY14, only one of the 25 workers (4%) had a high caseload. In FY15, review slightly less than half (41%) of the workers had a caseload of 17 or more cases (12 of 29). In this year's review, seven (23%) workers had 17 or more cases. Of particular note in this year's review as it relates to caseload, is that cases assigned to workers with 17 or more cases performed better on every system indicator than cases assigned to workers with 16 or fewer cases.

FY16 Caseload Size	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
16 cases or less	23	91%	65%	87%	91%	39%	78%	65%	43%	83%	96%	83%
17 cases or more	7	71%	71%	71%	100%	57%	100%	86%	57%	86%	100%	100%

Worker Experience

The following table compares how Length of Employment as a caseworker impacts performance. Little can be inferred from this table since nearly every applicable cohort struggled except the cohort of staff with two to four years of experience and this group did better all other cohorts with both Teaming Child and Family Plans. It is interesting to note, there were no employees in the review with experience between “more than four years” and “less than six years” of experience.

FY16 Length of Employment	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Less than 12 months	8	88%	50%	88%	88%	38%	75%	50%	25%	75%	100%	100%
12 to 24 months	4	75%	50%	75%	100%	75%	75%	50%	25%	50%	100%	100%
24 to 36 months	2	100%	50%	100%	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
36 to 48 months	5	80%	80%	60%	100%	40%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%
48 to 60 months	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
60 to 72 months	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
More than 72 months	11	91%	82%	91%	91%	36%	91%	82%	45%	100%	100%	91%

RESULTS BY OFFICE

The following table compares how offices within the region performed on some key child status and system performance indicators. Cases from seven of the nine offices in the Western Region were selected as part of the sample. No office met the standard for Child and Family Plan. Only Orem and Fillmore scored higher than the standard on Teaming. In fact, Orem was the best performing office in both Child and Family Plan and Teaming with six of 30 cases represented in the review.

FY16 Office	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
American Fork	3	100%	67%	100%	100%	0%	100%	67%	67%	100%	100%	100%
Delta	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fillmore	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%
Heber	2	100%	0%	100%	100%	50%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	50%
Nephi	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Orem	6	83%	33%	67%	83%	83%	83%	67%	67%	83%	100%	83%
Provo	11	91%	91%	91%	91%	27%	73%	82%	55%	91%	91%	82%
Spanish Fork	6	67%	67%	67%	100%	50%	83%	67%	33%	83%	100%	100%
Wasatch MH	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%

VI. Core System Indicators and Trends

Below is data for all system indicators over the last six years showing how the ratings of 1 (completely unacceptable), 2 (substantially unacceptable), 3 (partially unacceptable), 4 (minimally acceptable), 5 (substantially acceptable) and 6 (optimal) are trending within each indicator. The table for each indicator in the section below shows an average and percentage score for that indicator. The line graph represents the percentage of the indicator that scored within the acceptable range. The ideal trend would be to see an increase in the average score of the indicator along with an increase in the percentage score.

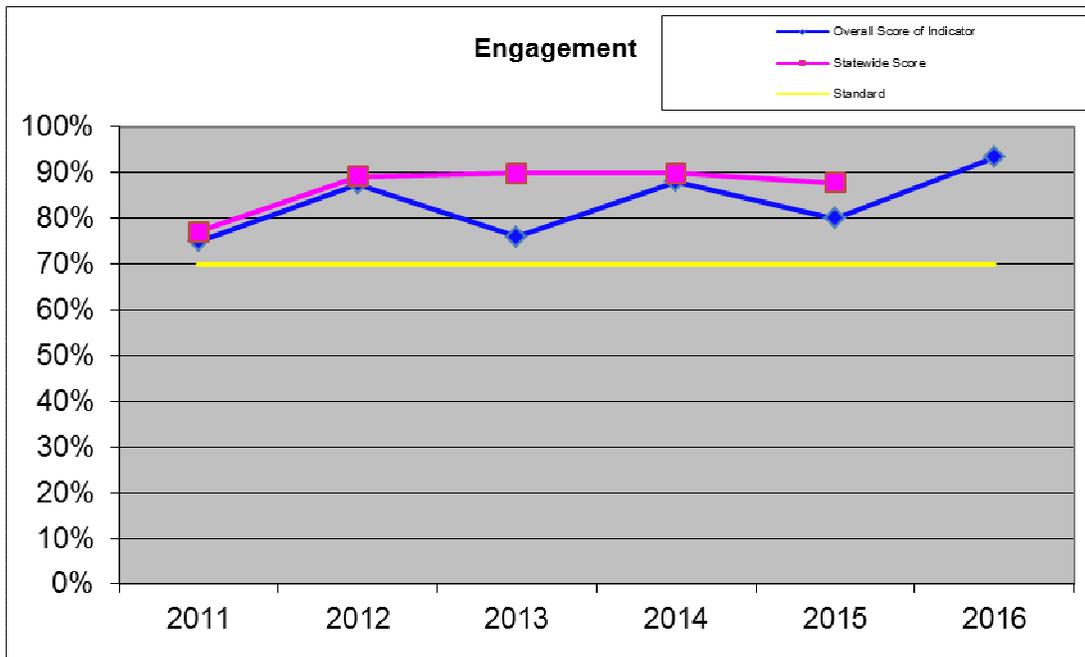
Child and Family Engagement Trends

The average score for the Engagement indicator **decreased** from last year. The average score for the Engagement indicator is in the **lower to mid-range** of all scores over the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the Engagement indicator **increased** from last year. The overall Engagement score is in the **highest** of all score over the previous five years. The Engagement score was **above** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Engagement indicator was **above** the FY15 statewide score for this indicator

Engagement						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	4.08	4.57	4.47	4.70	4.40	4.20
Overall Score of Indicator	75%	88%	76%	88%	80%	93%
Statewide Score	77%	89%	90%	90%	88%	



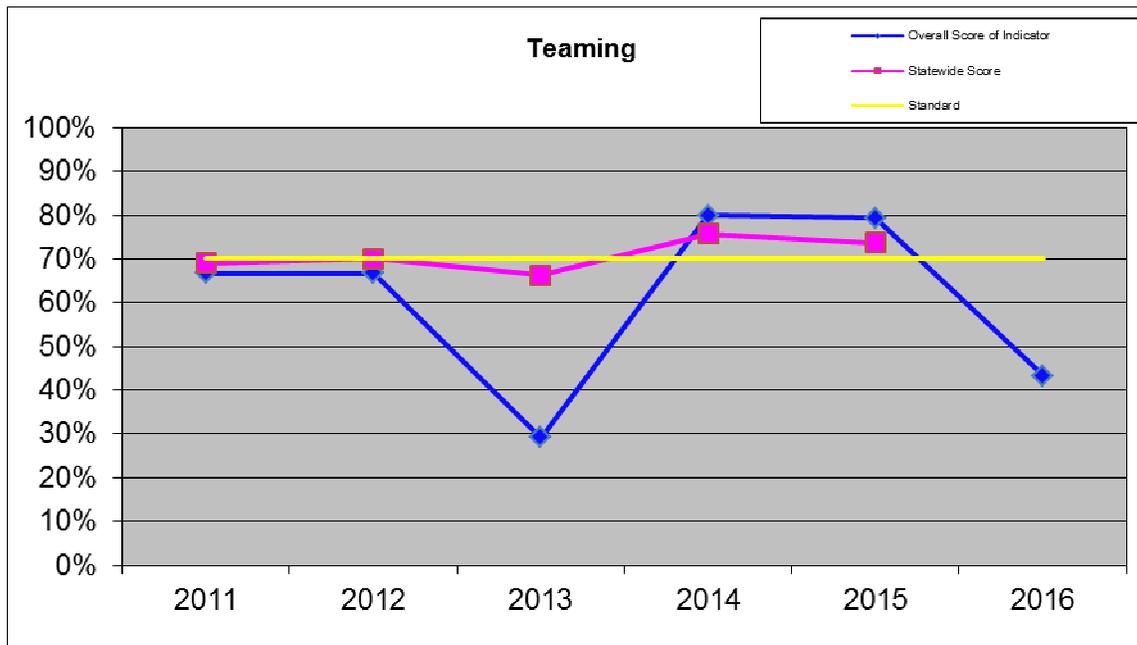
Teaming Trends

The average score for the Teaming indicator **decreased** from last year. The average score for the Teaming indicator is the **second lowest** score compared with the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the Teaming indicator **decreased** from last year. The overall Teaming score was the **second lowest** score compared with the previous five years. The Teaming score was **below** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Teaming indicator was **below** than the FY15 statewide score for this indicator.

Teaming						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	4.00	4.00	3.29	4.16	4.17	3.50
Overall Score of Indicator	67%	67%	29%	80%	79%	43%
Statewide Score	69%	70%	66%	76%	74%	



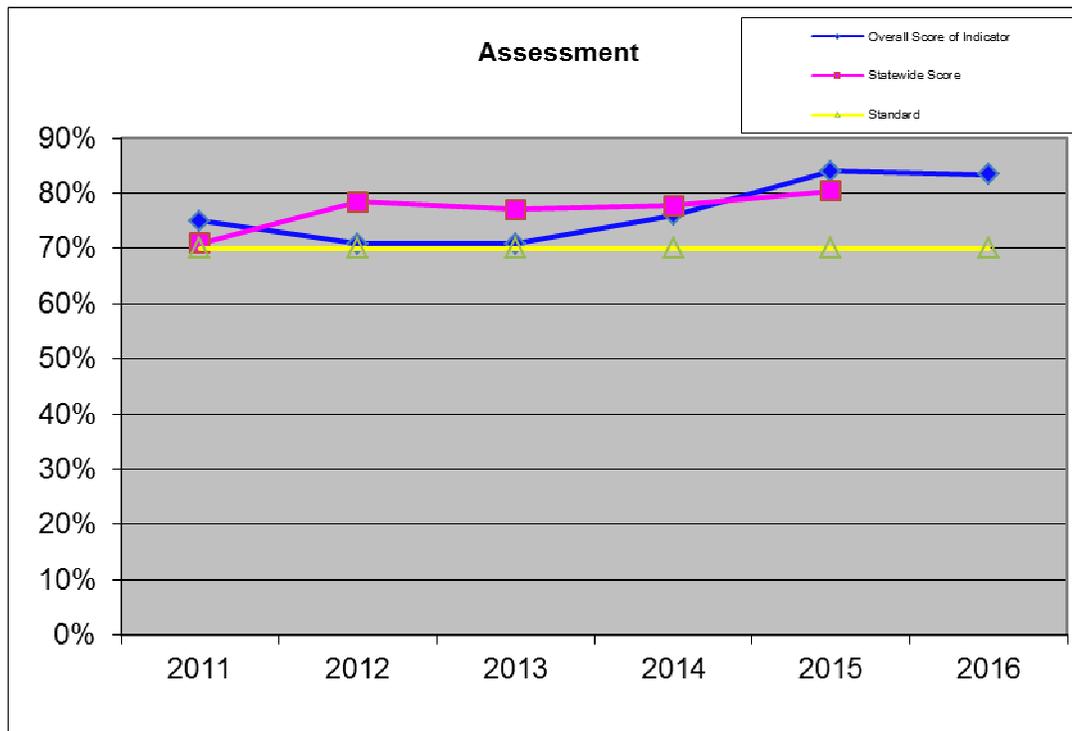
Child and Family Assessment Trends

The average score for the Assessment indicator **increased** from last year. The average score for the Assessment indicator is in the **highest** of all scores over the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the Assessment indicator **decreased** from last year. The overall Assessment score is the **second highest** of all scores over the previous five years. The Assessment score was **above** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Assessment indicator was **above** the FY15 statewide score for this indicator.

Assessment						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	4.04	3.83	3.92	4.08	4.60	4.88
Overall Score of Indicator	75%	71%	71%	76%	84%	83%
Statewide Score	71%	78%	77%	78%	80%	



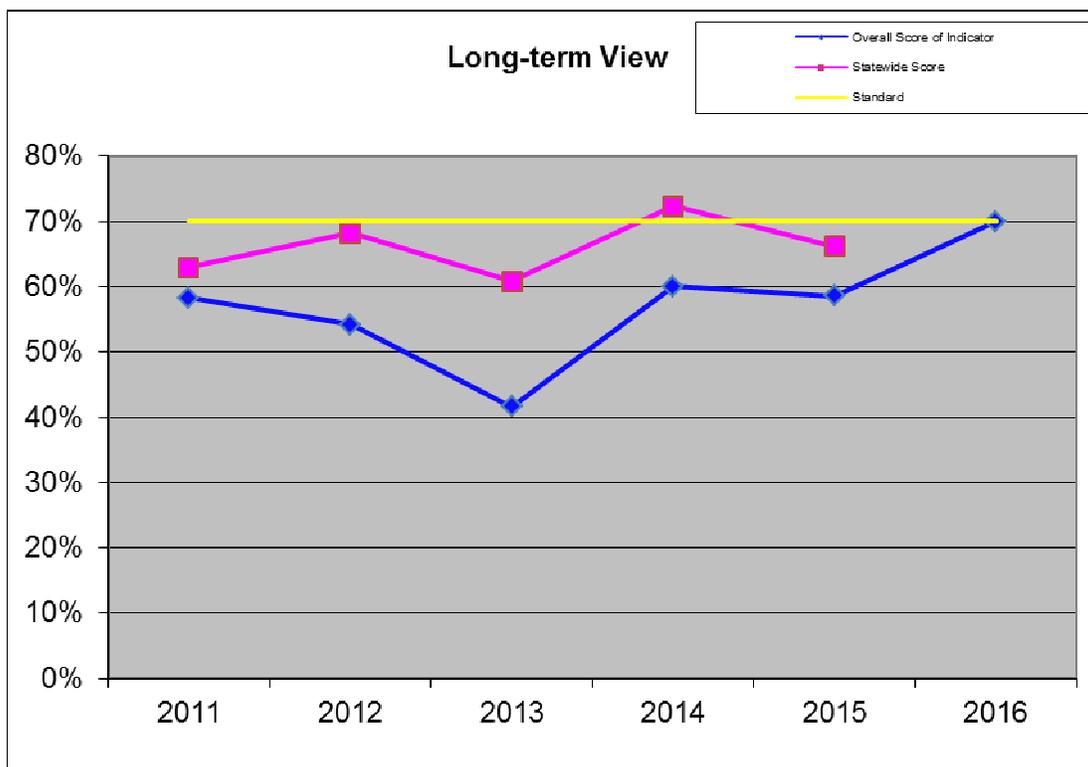
Long-Term View Trends

The average score for the Long-term View indicator **increased** from last year. The average score for the Long-term View indicator is the **second highest** score of all scores over the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the Long-term View indicator **increased** from last year. The overall Long-term View score is the **high score** over the previous five years. The Long-term View score was **at** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Long-term View indicator was **above** the FY15 statewide score for this indicator.

Long-Term View						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	3.63	3.67	3.54	3.84	3.72	3.83
Overall Score of Indicator	58%	54%	42%	60%	59%	70%
Statewide Score	63%	68%	61%	72%	66%	



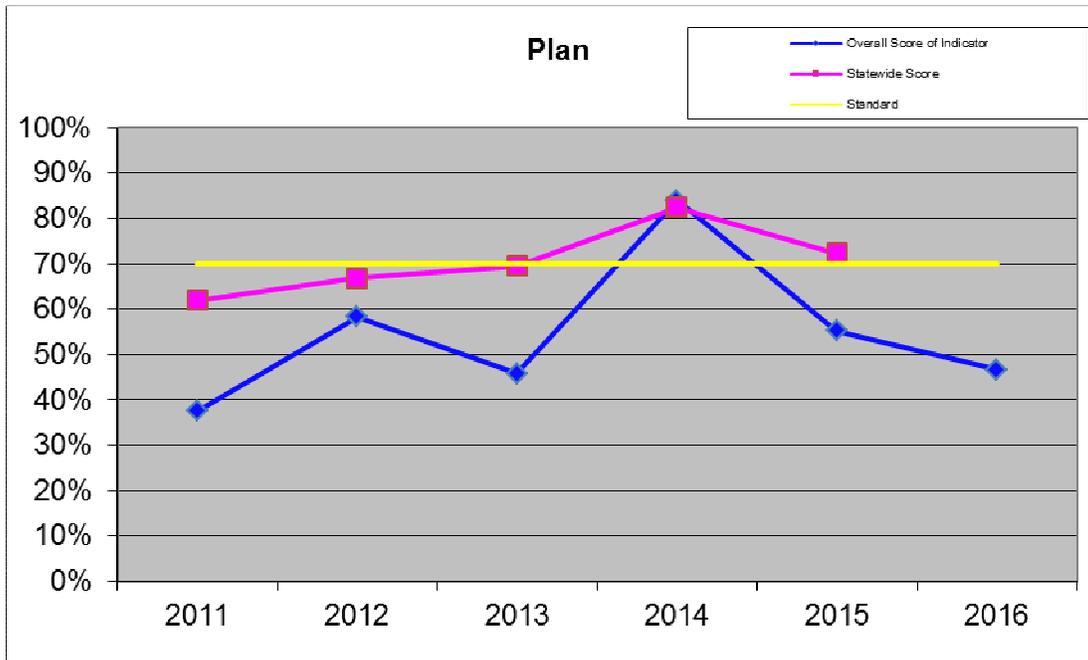
Child and Family Plan Trends

The average score for the Plan indicator **increased** from last year. The average score for the Plan indicator is the **mid-range** of all scores over the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the plan indicator **decreased** from last year. The overall Plan score is in the **mid-range** of all scores over the previous five years. The Plan score was **below** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Plan indicator was **below** the FY15 statewide score for this indicator.

Child and Family Plan						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	3.33	3.75	3.50	3.88	3.52	3.57
Overall Score of Indicator	38%	58%	46%	84%	55%	47%
Statewide Score	62%	67%	70%	82%	72%	



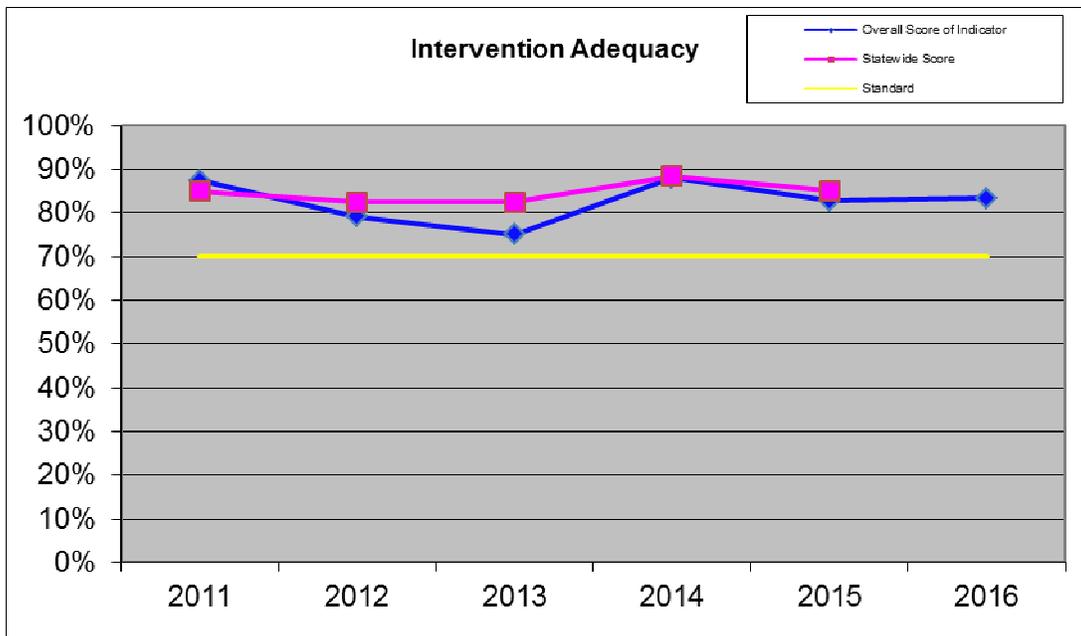
Intervention Adequacy Trends

The average score for the Intervention Adequacy indicator **decreased slightly** from last year. The average score for the Intervention Adequacy indicator is in the **lower** range of all scores over the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the Intervention Adequacy indicator **remained the same** as last year's score. The overall Intervention Adequacy score is in the **mid-range** of all scores over the previous five years. The Intervention Adequacy score was **above** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Intervention Adequacy indicator was **below** the FY15 statewide score for this indicator.

Intervention Adequacy						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	4.38	4.17	3.96	4.44	4.24	4.17
Overall Score of Indicator	88%	79%	75%	88%	83%	83%
Statewide Score	85%	82%	82%	89%	85%	



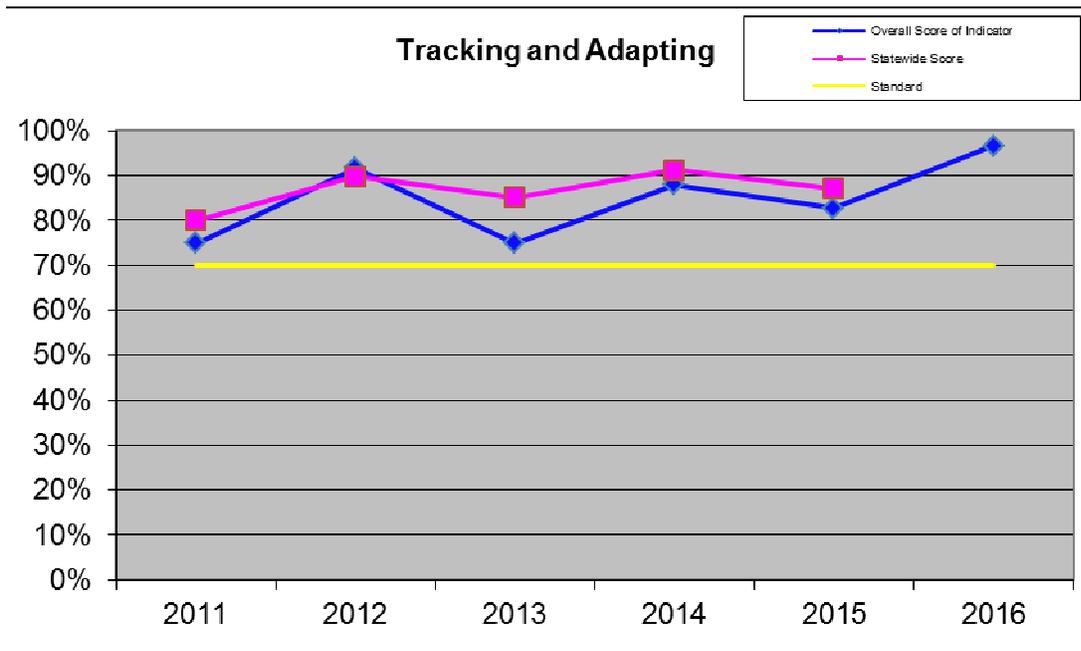
Tracking and Adapting Trends

The average score for the Tracking and Adaptation indicator **increased** from last year. The average score for the Tracking and Adaptation indicator is in the **mid-range** of all scores over the previous five years.

The overall percentage score for the Tracking and Adaption indicator **increased** from last year's score. The overall Tracking and Adaptation score is the **highest** of all scores over the previous five years. Tracking and Adaptation was **above** the standard this year.

The regional overall score for the Tracking and Adaptation indicator was **above** the FY15 statewide score for this indicator

Tracking and Adaptation						
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Average Score of Indicator	4.17	4.38	4.00	4.60	4.31	4.43
Overall Score of Indicator	75%	92%	75%	88%	83%	97%
Statewide Score	80%	90%	85%	91%	87%	



VII. Summary and Recommendations

Summary

During the FY2016 Western Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR) numerous strengths were identified about child welfare practice in the Western Region. It is clear that there is significant commitment and hard work devoted to ensuring the safety and well-being of the children and families. During the QCR review, a few opportunities for practice improvement were also identified that could improve and enhance the services being provided.

The Overall Child Status score decreased from 90% in FY15 to a score of 83% which is below the standard of 85%. All Child Status indicators except Prospects for Permanence were above the indicator standard of 70%. However Prospects for Permanence increased from 55% to 67% in FY16. The rating for Health/Physical Well-being scored 100% for the fifth consecutive year. Three Child Status Indicators improved from last year including; Prospects for Permanence, Family Connections, and Satisfaction. Although Safety, Stability, Emotional/Behavioral Well-being, Learning, all declined from last year, the scores were well above standard.

The Overall System score of 87% improved from FY15 and is above the standard of 85%. Five of the seven system indicators were above the standard of 70% and had remained the same or improved from FY15; including Engagement, Assessment, Long-term View, Intervention Adequacy, and Tracking & Adapting. Of these five indicators, all but Intervention Adequacy achieved the highest score in five years. Long-term View met the standard in FY16, which has been an area the region has targeted in past years' Practice Improvement Plans. The scores for Teaming (43%) and Child & Family Plan (47%) declined and were below standard.

Recommendations

When looking at specific case characteristics contributing to the scores in Teaming and Child & Family Plan there are few features which stand out for developing practice improvement strategies. Correlational comparison of data by Case Type, Goal Type, Office, and Workload does not reveal any significant differential between strengths in practice or gaps in practice but rather that Teaming and Child and Family Plan is problematic by all of these comparisons.

However, there are some areas which may provide some insight when developing targeted strategies for improvement in Teaming and Child & Family Plan. These recommendations are derived from a content analysis taken from the narratives of the 17 cases where Teaming rated unacceptable and the 16 cases where Child and Family Plan rated as unacceptable. The narratives described conditions which contributed to the unacceptable rating and the themes were compiled.

Teaming:

The two main areas of teaming which contributed to an unacceptable rating of the indicator were Participation and Effectiveness. The lack of Participation by key case stakeholders was a contributing factor in 12 of the 17 cases. The lack of Effectiveness of the team was a contributing factor in 12 of the 17 cases. Membership, Meetings occurring at critical times, Common View, Ownership were also factors but Participation or Effectiveness were more than twice as likely to be the factor than any of these other factors.

Child and Family Plan:

The most significant factor which contributed to the Child and Family Plan rating unacceptable was Relevance. Relevance was a factor in 12 of the 16 cases. The Mix and Fit of Services (8 of 16) and Connection (9 of 16) “between the assessment of needs and provision of services to produce desired results” were also problematic but one-third less frequently than Relevance. It was noted in several cases that there was a time when the Child and Family Plan was relevant, such as the beginning of the case. In other instances the plan had only recently become relevant because it has been updated within 45 days of the review but because the plan was not relevant during the vast majority of the period under review, the rating was unacceptable. These observations suggest that plans can be relevant but that they become irrelevant when the plan is renewed without being updated to reflect the changing circumstances of the case during each Child and Family Plan cycle.

The Western Region Program Improvement Plan (PIP) that addresses Teaming and Child and Family Plan can be found at: <http://dcfs.utah.gov/reports/> Western Region is not required to address Prospects for Permanence in the regional PIP. Prospects for Permanence is a statewide concern and therefore efforts to improve the practice pertaining to permanency are being addressed through other broader strategies.