

**Minnesota Department of Human Services
Child and Family Service Review**

**Scott County
Self Assessment Update
2012**

March 2012

Minnesota Child and Family Service Review Instructions for Conducting the County Self Assessment Update

Purpose of the County Self Assessment Update

The county self assessment is the first phase of the Minnesota Child and Family Service Review (MnCFSR). The self assessment process provides the county an opportunity to evaluate strengths and areas needing improvement across eight systemic factors. These systemic factors provide a framework for the delivery of child welfare services and achievement of safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. The county also examines child welfare data to assess the effectiveness of the child welfare system and evaluates performance on seventeen federal data indicators.

During the first round of MnCFSRs, the self assessment process allowed counties to identify systemic strengths and areas needing improvement, and provided a method to examine data related to safety, permanency and well-being performance. Issues raised in the self assessment were further evaluated through the on-site case reviews or community stakeholder interviews. In addition, information from the county self assessment was shared with other program areas at DHS to inform plans for statewide training, technical assistance, practice guidance and policy development.

In preparation for subsequent reviews, counties will review their most recent Self Assessment and, update their evaluation of core child welfare systems. Counties are also asked to review child welfare data and comment on factors or strategies that impacted the agency's performance.

Process for Conducting the County Self Assessment Update

Department of Human Services (DHS) Quality Assurance regional consultants provide the county Self Assessment Update document at the first coordination meeting held with the county, and offer ongoing technical assistance as the county completes the document. The Self Assessment Update document includes county specific data on national standard performance along with safety and permanency data. The county Self Assessment Update is completed and submitted to the Quality Assurance regional consultant approximately two weeks prior to the onsite review. Completed Self Assessment Updates are classified as public information and are posted on the child welfare supervisor's website.

Counties are strongly encouraged to convene a team of representatives of county agency staff and community stakeholders to complete the Self Assessment Update. Children's Justice Initiative Teams, Child Protection Teams or Citizen Review Panels are examples of community stakeholders who play a role in the county child welfare delivery system. These community stakeholders bring a broad and meaningful perspective to the evaluation of systemic factors and performance related to safety, permanency and well-being. Staff members and community stakeholders who participate in the county Self Assessment Update process also provide a valuable resource to the development of the county's Program Improvement Plan.

The agency may also consider options such as focus groups with community stakeholders or consumer groups, or consumer surveys as ways to gather information for the Self Assessment Update. Connecting the Self Assessment Update process to other county needs assessment or planning requirements, such as CCSA, maximizes the use of time and resources to conduct the Self Assessment Update.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

DHS Quality Assurance staff will identify the period under review. The county is requested to designate a person who will be primarily responsible for completing the self assessment and provide contact information below.

Name of County Agency
Scott County Human Services
Period Under Review
For Onsite Review Case Selection Sample: _____ Period for Part IV Data Tables: <u>2010; 2011</u> Period Under Review (PUR) for Onsite Case Review: June 1, 2011 to July 25, 2012
County Agency Contact Person for the County Self Assessment
Name: Pam Selvig Title: Social Services Director Address: 200 4 th Avenue West Shakopee, MN 55379 Phone: (952) 496-8492 Fax: (952) 496-8430 E-Mail: pselvig@co.scott.mn.us
Key Dates
Month/year of prior MnCFSR(s): April, 2003; April, 2008; April 2010;
Month/year of on-site review: July, 2012

PART II: SYSTEMIC FACTORS

The framework for completing the Self Assessment Update is divided into four sections: updates of systemic factors, review of program improvement plan activities, detailed responses to questions targeting specific practices, and updated ratings of overall systemic factors. Use the following guidance when responding to each of the eight Systemic Factors.

- Section 1: Updates.** Review information the county provided in the most recent self assessment and describe changes in that Systemic Factor since the last MnCFSR, including strengths, promising practices, and ongoing challenges. It is unnecessary to restate information provided in the previous self assessment. If the last self assessment continues to accurately reflect a description of a particular Systemic Factor, note that no significant changes have occurred since the last review.
- Section 2: Target Questions.** Some systemic factors include a set of targeted questions designed to focus agency attention on specific practice areas or activities. Target questions represent areas identified as needing improvement in Minnesota's 2007 federal CFSR. Provide information regarding agency practice, promising approaches or identified barriers in these specific areas.
- Section 3: Ratings.** Quality Assurance regional consultants will provide the agency rating for the overall systemic factor from the initial self assessment. Determine an updated rating for each Systemic Factor according to the following scale:

Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1	2	3	4
None of the practices or requirements are in place.	Some, but not all, of the practices or requirements are in place and some function at a lower than adequate level.	Most, but not all, of the practices or requirements are in place and most function at an adequate or higher level.	All of the practices or requirements are in place and all are functioning at an adequate or higher level.

A. Information System (SSIS)

A1. Review information included in the agency’s last self-assessment. Summarize changes in the agency’s information system since the last MnCF SR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *County developed/modifications to policies or protocols related to the use of SSIS*
- *Resources to support use of SSIS (training for workers, mentors, equipment upgrades, etc.)*
- *Supervisor staff use of SSIS for individual case oversight and/or monitoring overall performance.*

System Changes
Tablet computers were eliminated due to on-going problems so new laptops have been provided to all case managers.

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Information System—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

B. Case Review System

B1. Review information included in the agency’s last self-assessment. Summarize changes in the agency’s case review system since the last MnCF SR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Timing and effectiveness of permanency hearings*
- *How court processes support and/or present barriers to timely achievement of permanency*
- *Functions of the CJI Team.*

System Changes
Scott County continues to implement permanency meetings at four to five months for children under eight and at ten months for older children. These meetings involve the child protection worker and supervisor, concurrent therapists (if applicable), county attorney, Guardian Ad Litem, and others as deemed appropriate, and results in a team decision regarding a permanency recommendation. Cases are reviewed in court a minimum of every 90 days but often cases are reviewed in court every 30-60 days to help monitor progress

towards permanency.

The system will experience an upcoming change in judicial leadership as the current lead CHIPS judge is going to the Court of Appeals. It is anticipated that two Judges will now facilitate our Juvenile Justice committee. The agency's CHIPS attorney retired in January 2012 and a new CHIPS attorney started 2/1/12. The change in attorney has been an adjustment but the agency is confident in the new attorney (Deb Simonson).

B2. Target Questions

Target Questions

Describe the county's process for ensuring foster parents receive notice of court hearings and their right to be heard at hearings regarding children in their care.

On a monthly basis Social Services continues to send a list of foster parent addresses to Court Administration. Court Administration is to use the most current list to mail court notices to foster parents. In addition, on every court report workers list foster parents' name and addresses. Lastly, these specific questions were added to the placement evaluations that are given to foster parents and results monitored.

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Case Review System—Current

Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

C. Quality Assurance System

C1. Review information included in the agency’s last self assessment. Summarize changes in the agency’s quality assurance system since the last MnCFSR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Standardized processes for reviewing case records*
- *Processes for reviewing screening decisions, track assignments and maltreatment investigations/assessments*
- *Structure for supervisory consultation with staff*
- *Existence of pre-placement and/or treatment screening team(s).*

System Changes
<p>The agency continues to conduct quarterly internal case reviews. The current structure is for four teams of two to review four cases. Reviewers include three supervisors, front-line staff, GAL supervisor and CHIPS county attorney. The process for the internal feedback session following the case reviews has been changed to be more timely, to include all of the reviewers and to better focus on overall themes.</p> <p>There is a screening team that meets every morning to review reports and determine track assignments. Agency policy/practice is for all cases to be assigned as FA unless it meets substantial endangerment criteria (sexual abuse, serious physical abuse). Supervisors oversee track and case assignment. SSIS and data dashboard are used to monitor track assignments and timeliness to contact.</p> <p>Human Services continues to have a pre-placement screening team which is convened anytime a worker is requesting out-of-home placement beyond 30 days and the court is not involved.</p>

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Quality Assurance System—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

D. Staff and Provider Training

D1. Review information included in the agency's last self assessment. Summarize changes in the agency's staff and provider training system since the last MnCFSR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Providing training for CP workers, development of training plans*
- *Coordination with MN Child Welfare Training System*
- *Pre-service and in-service training for foster and adoptive parents and providers.*

System Changes
<p>Scott County continues to provide consultants to the CP team regarding signs of safety. Consultants meet with the CP team on a monthly basis and case-specific consultation is available as needed basis. The agency recently sent seven CP staff to a SofS-safety planning conference by Andrew Turnell. Staff attend Social Worker Core and other topic specific MN Child Welfare Training System training as needed.</p> <p>Pre-service training continues to be provided 1-2 times per year for foster parents. Coordination for the pre-service is done jointly with Carver County. Licensors recently coordinated internal training on chemical dependency issues for foster parents. There is also an upcoming training on domestic violence which will be held in Scott County for foster parents. Licensing workers have also worked with our IT department to post Signs of Safety and Children's Mental Health training videos on our licensing website. In addition, the SCMHC provided training for foster parents specific to caring for adolescents and interpersonal boundaries. The interpersonal boundaries training was specific to foster parents who are interested in providing mentoring services through Bridging Connections program.</p>

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Staff and Provider Training System—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

E. Service Array and Resource Development

E1. Review information included in the agency's last self assessment. Summarize changes in the agency's service array and resource development system since the last MnCFSR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Availability and accessibility of services to prevent placement, achieve safe and timely reunification or achieve other permanency plans*
- *Use of SDM tools to support decision-making.*

System Changes

The agency is realigning some internal staff to help create access to intensive in-home family therapy for CP cases where a child(ren) may be at high risk for placement. This intensive in-home will be provided up to two times per week for eight weeks. Referrals for on-going services will be made at the end of the eight week program. This position will also provide CP workers with continued access to immediate safety planning support. Family Group Decision Making continues to be used for the purposes of permanency planning and safety network coordination. Scott County also responded to the recent RFP issued by the Department of Human Services for the Parent Support Outreach Program (PSOP). The agency was awarded additional funds and has been able to add staff to increase our capacity to serve families through PSOP.

CP continues to use SDM tools based on agency policy/expectation. SDM tools have not been integrated into decision making. The risk assessment is used to help guide when case management services are provided. CP staff and supervisors will be attending an upcoming SDM training related to the new updated/revised tools.

Bridging is the agency's mentoring program that allows foster parents (who do not have placements) to mentor children/youth/parents/families. In the past two years approximately 13 referrals were made and 10 families have been served in this program. Specialized foster care was also developed as an intervention aimed to help maintain placement stability. Approximately four youth have been served in the program over the past two years but the results are very mixed (50% were successfully maintained in their existing placement). Ensuring placement stability for youth who have been in long-term placement tend to be the most challenging for the agency. This also includes youth, who present with challenging behaviors, legal issues and struggles with chemical health.

A community collaborative called FISH (Families and Individuals Sharing Hope) has been formed to respond to needs for informal supports for individuals and families across the county. It is composed of non-profit agencies, faith communities, and the County.

Children's Mental Health was awarded a respite grant that allows more families to access a variety of respite options to support children living in their home and community. Children's Mental Health has also coordinated with the SC Mental Health Center for intensive in-home as way to prevent placements. CMH has also contracted with NAMI to provide parent support groups and training for parents and professionals.

The agency also participated in permanency roundtables in the fall 2011 and as a result in partnering with DHS to pilot a web-based search engine for the purposes of relative search.

E2. Target Question

Target Questions
<p>If applicable, describe how changes in service availability or accessibility have impacted agency efforts to prevent entry or re-entry and achievement of timely permanency since the last review.</p> <p>Signs of Safety has promoted intensive up front efforts to secure child safety and prevent entry into care. The agency continues to contract with a consulting agency to help develop a solution focused practice approach. Foster care re-entry continues to be an agency struggle. Supervisors analyzed 2011 data and presented findings at the Juvenile Justice meeting in May 2012. POP (prevention of placement) was developed and implemented on 1/23/12 with the Shakopee Police Department as a way to divert child welfare holds. A brochure was developed and provided to Shakopee Police Department. Officers who respond to calls related to parent-child conflict, child behaviors (not due to child safety concerns) will provide the brochure and instruct family to come to Human Services the next business day for safety planning and/or referrals for other services and, if needed short term case management. As of 5/1/12, there have been nine POP referrals.</p>

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Service Array and Resource Development System—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

F. Agency Responsiveness to the Community

F1. Review information included in the agency’s last self assessment. Summarize changes in the agency’s responsiveness to the community since the last MnCFSR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Consulting with external partners/stakeholders to achieve organizational or systemic improvements*
- *Procedures for seeking consumer input*
- *Child Protection Team, Child Abuse Prevention Council, and/or Citizen Review Panels functions*
- *Compliance with ICWA.*

System Changes
<p>The interagency teams in the schools continue to meet and provide a valuable outlet for sharing information and responding to community needs. The agency has included the GAL supervisor and CHIPS county attorney in our internal case reviews in order to gain an outside perspective feedback. Mandated reporter training is provided upon request by any entity. The child abuse team (CAT) is in place but is infrequently used. The agency recently met with school representatives from all school districts in Scott County as a way to help build relationship, provide education on the various roles and promote better integration of supports for students and their families. In addition, CP supervisors recently met with Tribal Social Services staff and Tribal attorney and requested a follow up meeting to further build relationships.</p>

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Agency Responsiveness to the Community—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

G. Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Approval and Recruitment

G1. Review information included in the agency's last self assessment. Summarize changes in the agency's foster and adoptive home licensing system since the last MnCFSR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Adequacy of foster and adoptive home resources*
- *Whether foster and adoptive home resources reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in care.*

System Changes
The agency makes efforts to identify culturally appropriate placement resources through relative care and placement with private agencies to meet cultural needs of children/youth.

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing System—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

H. Supervisor and Social Worker Resources

H1. Review information included in the agency’s last self-assessment. Summarize changes in the agency’s supervisor and social worker resources since the last MnCFSR. Consider the following when responding to this question:

- *Organizational structure*
- *Supervisor to staff ratios*
- *Caseload/workload sizes*
- *Agency’s experience with staff turnover.*

System Changes
<p>The CP unit has experienced some recent changes in staffing. A CP supervisor retired October 31, 2011 and Beth Mahoney was hired as her replacement as of 11/28/11. A new CP worker position was created as of 12/1/11 and an internal person was promoted into this position. The supervisor to staff ratio is relatively high, approximately 11 to one. The agency experienced a significant growth in the number of CP assessment in 2010. The addition of a child protection worker in 2011 will allow for manageable workload/caseload sizes. Our part-time screener/FGDM person transferred into CP assessments/case management. A long-time assessment/case manager is now a full-time screener. Our second intake screener (36 hrs per week) provides .50 screening as well as other duties which includes our new “prevention of placement” (POP) program, oversight of foster care candidacy and requests for records. The agency continues to provide PSOP services with this position increasing from a .5 to 1 FTE effective 1/1/12. A social work case manager that was assigned to assist CP workers in safety planning and also provided .5 FTE in FGDM was reassigned to the SC Mental Health Center where she will now provide intensive in-home family therapy for 2-4 cases where placement is determined to be at high risk. The agency has hired a new FGDM staff person (30 hrs per week) who started May 18, 2012.</p> <p>There has been no significant staff or program changes in children’s mental health or adoption/guardianship. CMH caseloads are consistently above the state recommendation of 15. Complexity of cases coming in adds to workload demands.</p> <p>Other than a retirement agency turnover has been low.</p>

Overall Systemic Factor Rating for Supervisor and Social Worker Resources—Current			
Area Needing Improvement		Strength	
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Community Issues

Review the information the agency provided in the initial Self Assessment. Discuss changes or community issues that have emerged since the last MnCFSR that could impact planning and delivery of services to children and families and achievement of safety, permanency and well-being outcomes.

Scott County is becoming an increasingly diverse community, in particular the child population in the County.

PART III: ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY, PERMANENCY AND WELL-BEING PERFORMANCE

Use the data tables provided in Section IV, SSIS reports DHS data releases or other data sources to examine the agency's performance and respond to the following safety, permanency and well-being questions.

A. Safety
Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
<p>1. Safety Indicator 1: Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence (Table1). If the county met the national standard, identify factors that contribute to strong performance. If the county did not meet the national standard, identify and discuss barriers.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">No data</p>
<p>2. Safety Indicator 2: Absence of Child Abuse/Neglect in Foster Care (Table 1). If the county met the national standard, identify factors that contribute to strong performance. If the county did not meet the national standard, identify and discuss barriers.</p> <p>The national standard in this area is 99.68% and Scott County fell just under this standard at 97.6%, which reflects three children (sibling group of 3) who experienced child maltreatment while in relative foster care. While the performance does not meet national standards, the agency believes that there are strong licensing and placing practices that help to support and promote child safety in placement. Licensors have a thorough understanding of the licensing process and are well versed in the legal requirements for licensing. Placing workers will explore with possible relative placement issues that may impact their ability to be licensed. Placements do not typically occur until a home visit is made to the relative residence.</p>
<p>3. Trends in Child Maltreatment (Tables 2-3). Examine the data on reports of child maltreatment. Identify trends and factors that may have contributed to an increase or decrease in the number of maltreatment reports.</p> <p>Screening criteria has not changed but from 2009 to 2010 the number of cases assigned for assessment increased from 353 to 390. Agency data reflects 387 assessments were completed in 2011.</p> <p>The agency continues to implement Signs of Safety. This practice philosophy is focused on family engagement for purposes of identifying harm/danger as well as protective factors that reduce/mitigate the risks. This work has helped workers gain clarity for the reasons for agency involvement and increased up-front efforts to engage a safety network in assuring child safety. This may result in increased safety planning and coordination of services within an investigation as a way to address a family's individual needs and prevent need for further case management services.</p>

4. **Family Assessment (Table 3).** Describe protocols or criteria that guide the assignment of child maltreatment reports for a Family Assessment or investigation. Describe the process the agency uses to determine when track changes may be necessary.

Family Assessments continues to be the agency's preferred response to child maltreatment reports. The past five year trend supports a continual increase in the percentage of cases assigned for Family Assessment, except a 11% decline in 2010 where 271/390 (68.4%) were FA. It is unclear the reasons for the drop in FA cases in 2010. The percent of Family Assessments increased to 75% (291/387) in 2011.

The restructuring within the department in 2009 has resulted in all of the Child Protection Workers being trained to do Family Assessments which continues to allow for increased capacity. In addition, due to the increase in the overall number of child maltreatment assessments an additional child protection position was created.

The criterion that guides the assignment of child protection reports is Substantial Child Endangerment. If the allegation meets this threshold the assessment will be completed through a traditional investigation. The process for determining track changes involves supervisory approval. If the Child Protection Worker believes the track of the assessment should be changed, they will provide the additional information and supporting data to the Supervisor for consideration.

5. **Timeliness of Initial Contact in Assessments or Investigations (Tables 4).** Examine the data on timeliness of initial contacts. Identify factors that contribute to timely face-to-face contacts with children, and factors that contribute to delays.

2011 third quarter data supports that the agency had timely contact on FA 85.4% and 4th quarter data supports 90% timely contact. These percentages are well above the statewide average of 74.4% and 75.7% respectively.

For Family Investigations (non-substantial endangerment) the agency had timely contact 92.9% and 91.7% for 3rd and 4th quarters in 2011. This again is above the statewide average of 86.4% and 83.2% for 3rd and 4th quarters in 2011.

For Family Investigations-Substantial Endangerment, the agency had a timely response of 61.1% for 3rd quarter 2011 and a timely response for 4th quarter 2011 of 83.3%. The statewide average for 3rd quarter 2011 65.8% which indicates that Scott County is slightly below the statewide average. Scott County was well above the statewide average of 66.6% for 4th quarter 2011. Issues that contribute to delay in response times may be related to delays in response from law enforcement, in ability to find/locate the victim and/or the requirement for sexually abused children to be interviewed by MCRC.

Factors that support timely contacts in any assessment include timely screening of reports, workers first attempt to contact parents/child occur on first day of case assignment and if parent is not able to be located or willing to meet within timeframes workers will see children at school.

6. **Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Issues (Tables 6-7).** Describe agency practices for addressing the needs of children and families experiencing difficulties with alcohol or other drugs. Examine worker competencies and training needs related to addiction, treatment, and relapse planning. Identify promising approaches or current barriers to addressing substance use issues.

Workers explore alcohol and drug use and abuse factors with each family they assess. If a need is identified for further assessment, families are assisted in accessing chemical health services through their insurance. Additionally, there are Rule 25 assessors on the same floor as child protection and they are consulted a necessary. These assessors will do Rule 25 assessment for child protection families at no charge and assist in making referrals as needed. Joint visits occur with the child protection and chemical health workers on reports of pregnant moms that are using. Drug testing is also available as a way to monitor and support sobriety.

Child Protection workers work with families to plan for possible relapse by developing safety networks that focus on child safety. Safety plans help to identify triggers to use and behaviors that are indicative of use. The plan also outlines who needs to respond and how child safety will be assured.

7. **Short-term Placements (Tables 5 and 5a).** Examine the agency's use of short-term placements. Identify factors that contribute to short-term placements. Discuss efforts to prevent entry or re-entry into foster care.

Over half (57.9%) of all child placements are considered short-term placements. A juvenile shelter facility is located within Scott County and the proximity of the facility may result in overuse of the facility.

The majority of 72 hour-holds (55%) were related to child protection which results in an assessment and safety planning. Forty-two percent of 72 hour-holds were considered child welfare holds which typically involve parent-child conflicts and/or child behavioral issues. The agency completes an informal assessment but typically agency is minimally involved.

The agency had 23 children who experienced foster care re-entry in 2011. Eleven of these re-entry cases were child welfare cases. In addition, analysis of our re-entry data shows that one law enforcement jurisdiction places 2x more than other departments. So, the agency has initiated a pilot program with this local police department. The program, POP (prevention of placement) provides officers, who are responding to parent-child conflict (not child safety concerns), a brochure to give to parents and parents the opportunity to meet with a social worker the next business day to help develop safety plans and/or make appropriate referrals. This program was initiated 1/23/12.

8. **Other Safety Issues.** Discuss any other concerns, not covered above, that affect safety outcomes for children and families served by the agency.

B. Permanency

Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

1. Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification (Table 1).

Identify and comment on overall strengths and barriers to the county's performance on the four measures included in Permanency Composite 1.

Scott County continues to demonstrate strong performance in this area. The agency is in compliance with 3 out of 4 of the measures. 2011 Measure C1.1: Reunification in less than 12 months shows that 93.5% (43/46) were reunified within 12 months. This is well above the national standard of 75.2%. Child protection's practice framework is the Signs of Safety approach. This has helped to the agency to be clearer about the specific safety concerns and what parents need to do to assure child safety. There is continued focus on concurrent planning, Family Group Decision Making and/or development of Safety Networks which also help to support reunification/permanency.

The median stay in foster care in 2010 was 2.8 months which is below the national standard of 5.4. Pre-placement meetings continue to be convened for any placement extending beyond 30 days that does not have court oversight. There is a separate policy regarding the process of Rule 5 placements for children/youth needing residential treatment. As stated above, the use of FGDM and/or Safety Networks and the implementation of the Signs of Safety framework have helped to minimize the length of placement.

In measure C1.3: Entry Cohort of children who reunify in less than 12 months, the agency is well above the National and State Standard at 70.6% (12/17).

The one measure where the agency is not in compliance is measure C1.4: Children who exit and re-enter foster care in less than 12 months, the 2011 data shows that Scott County performed at 32.4% which represents a 11% increase from 2010. The agency is not in compliance with the national standard of 9.9%. A variable that continues to have an impact on our re-entry rate is repeat holds, more specifically repeat child welfare holds or placements unrelated to child protection.

The agency continues to track 72-hour hold data, which identifies one law enforcement jurisdiction that places at a significantly higher rate when compared to the other jurisdictions in Scott County and a pilot program (POP) was initiated in January 2012 (For additional information please refer to section on item 7-short-term placements).

2. Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of Adoptions (Table 1). Identify and comment on overall strengths and barriers to the county's performance on the five measures included in Permanency Composite 2.

It is difficult to make generalizations or develop themes due to the small data pool. On measure C2:1: Adoption in less than 24 months for children exiting to adoption, Scott County performed above the state and national performance standard at 100% (1/1). Scott County only has nine children/youth awaiting adoption so small caseload helps to promote timely adoptions. The median length of stay to adoption (measure C2:2) is below the national and state standard at 20 months (1/1). There is continued emphasis on making permanency recommendations within the required timeframes, if not before, which enables the adoption process to begin at an earlier point.

Scott County uses a variety of recruitment strategies to identify pre-adoptive/adoptive

placements for children. These strategies include placement on the national registry, Thursday's child, Homecoming Project, etc. Throughout the duration of a case, an adoption case manager continues to recruit/identify potential adoptive resources. This includes those children who have been in long-term placement (17+ months). Scott County is below the national standard in this area (measure C2.3) with 0% (0/8) discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption. Overall small numbers makes overall comparisons a challenge.

Scott County performed above the national and state performance indicators at 50% compared to 10.9% and 2.2% respectively on the number of children in foster care 17+ months achieving legal freedom within six months. This presents improved performance but again small numbers skew the results. On measure C2.5: Legally free children adopted in less than 12 months, Scott County performed below the state standard (40.8%) and below the national standard (53.7%) at 0% (0/1). Again, overall small numbers make generalizations difficult.

3. Permanency Composite 3: Permanency for Children and Youth in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time (Table 1). Identify and comment on overall strengths and barriers to the county's performance on the three measures included in Permanency Composite 3.

As stated above, small numbers make it difficult to make generalizations. Scott County falls below the national standard on all three measures (C3.1, C3.2, and C3.3). Current performance on measure C3.1-Exits to permanency prior to 18 for children in care for 24+ months is 0% (0/7). Performance on measure C3.2-Exits to permanency for children with TPR was 25% (1/4). Barriers to achieving permanency for older youth often involve the complex parent-child relational dynamics and the child's behaviors, which often include delinquency/criminal issues. It remains a challenge to facilitate reunification or identify an adoptive resource for older youth when delinquency issues and/or mental health issues are present. Extended foster care benefits for youth has become a complicating factor when trying to promote and achieve permanency as youth and providers due to the availability of foster care payments to youth. Some youth are choosing extended foster to gain the foster payment instead of opting for a viable permanency solution. A strength area is the agency's continued efforts to secure permanency even after long term foster care is ordered.

4. Permanency Composite 4: Placement Stability (Table 1). Identify and comment on overall strengths and barriers to the county's performance on the three measures included in Permanency Composite 4.

Data from Table 1 is not available at this time.

5. Race/ethnicity of children in out-of-home placement (Table 9). Identify and discuss issues raised by data regarding the composition of the county's foster care population.

The data indicates a higher rate of placement for African American, Native American, and Asian children/youth as compared to overall percent of the population.

6. Relative foster care (Tables 10 and 10a). Describe agency efforts to promote timely relative searches, emergency licenses and relative foster care placements. Include a description of agency efforts to consider both maternal and paternal family members, and outline strategies for supporting stable relative placements.

Scott County continues to broadly define relative/kin in order to keep children tied to their family and community. At the earliest point possible, workers talk with parents regarding possible relative/kin resources. Workers engage parents in identifying any relative/kin that may be a support to them; not just focusing on the placement need. This has helped to

expand the names of relatives/kin that parents provide as possible resources. In 2010, Scott County had 11.5% of children placed with relatives. This percentage represents a drop from 2009 of 3.4%. In reviewing the agency's placement data, the number of younger children in out of home placement has dropped. The overall placement numbers reflect a greater percentage of older youth who tend to be placed for short periods of time in facilities such as JAF.

In reviewing the Data Dashboard for 4th quarter 2011 46.2% were placed in relative care. It is believed that the difference in the rate of relative placement is related to a worker's ongoing involvement with a child/family and their efforts to identify a relative placement when the placement continues beyond 30 days.

Scott County works hard to support relative placements. This is done via a number of different strategies ranging from therapeutic support, helping to pay for mandated trainings, paying relative providers in advance or twice per month as a means to help with expenses incurred early on in the placement, and in some cases providing paid respite. Mileage to non-medical appointments will also be reimbursed.

Scott County's policy regarding engagement of the non-resident parent also supports the thorough exploration of maternal and paternal relatives. Family Group Decision Making is strategy aimed at identify relative resources. The Signs of Safety framework encompasses the idea of "safety networks". Safety networks are groups of individuals identified by the parent(s) that can provide safety, and support to the children. Safety networks may be facilitated by the worker, FGDM staff and/or other internal staff and is another strategy aimed at early identification and involvement of relatives.

7. **Long-term foster care.** Describe the agency's current practices related to the use of long-term foster care as a permanency option for children. Include information regarding the process for identifying and ruling out other, more permanent options, and the process for reassessing the ongoing appropriateness of the long-term foster care goal.

Scott County continues to approach long-term foster care as the least preferable permanency option. As stated in #3, the agency continues to review a child's permanency status even after long-term foster care is ordered. Reunification efforts continue throughout the life of the case. In the fall 2011, the agency participated in permanency roundtable meetings on youth in longer term placements. The training related to the permanency roundtables provided some renewed energy around the need for permanency for older youth and how to better engage youth in these conversations. Long-term foster care cases are reviewed in court a minimum of one time per year but in some cases the court has ordered more frequent reviews. In addition, the agency holds administrative reviews to help assess the child's current placement status and to explore avenues for permanency.

8. **Other Permanency Issues.** Discuss any other issues of concern, not covered above, that affect permanency outcomes for children and families served by the agency.

There are some current concerns about youth ages 16-17 that have been in placement less than 12 months opting for long-term foster care despite there being a possible permanency option. The youth are aware of the extended foster care benefits and it makes engaging in permanency discussions with them and their caregivers more challenging.

C. Well-being

Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

1. **Parent involvement.** Discuss strategies the agency has implemented since the last MnCF SR to improve performance in the following areas:

- **Engaging fathers/non-resident parents in needs assessment, service delivery and case planning. Identify promising approaches or current barriers to involving fathers/non-resident parents.**

The agency continues to focus on the early identification and engagement of non-resident parents. The policy regarding non-resident parent continues to help clarify expectations and drive practice. Case review data seems to suggest strong/stronger performance in the early identification of non-resident parents and even the assessment of the non-resident. The continued focus is on increased consistency in sustaining efforts with non-resident parents throughout the life of the case.

2. **Caseworker visits with children (Table 11 and SSIS General Report "Caseworker Visits with Children in Foster Care").** Describe the agency's process for determining the frequency of face-to-face worker visits with children. Identify promising approaches or current barriers to frequent worker contact. Describe caseworker practices that contribute to quality visits with children.

This continues to be a strong performance area for agency staff. 2011 data indicates that 91.9% of children in care had monthly contact with the case worker. There is a strong culture that supports a minimum of monthly contact with children in care as well as any child/family open for case management services in child protection and children's mental health. Supervisors use SSIS general report-Caseworker visits with Children in Foster Care as a way to monitor performance and identify data entry errors. At minimum the SSIS report is reviewed at the end of each quarter so as to allow time for corrections to data.

3. **Other Well-being Issues.** Discuss any other issues of concern, not covered above, that affect well-being outcomes for children and families served by the agency.

Part IV: Safety and Permanency Data

A. Federal Data Indicators

Beginning with the first round of the CFSR, single data measures were used for establishing national standards. This provided information to states and counties about their performance; however, did not always reflect the broader, more complex factors that contribute to performance.

In 2007 the Administration of Children and Families revised the national standard indicators. Safety data indicators continue to be single data elements. Permanency data was expanded to allow for a closer examination of what particular practices drive the outcomes for children in foster care. Permanency data is now reflected in components, composites and measures as defined below:

- **Composites:** Refers to a data indicator that incorporates county performance on multiple permanency-related individual measures. There are four permanency composites.
- **Component:** Refers to the primary parts of a composite. Components may incorporate only one individual measure or may have two or more individual measures that are closely related to one another. There are seven permanency related components.
- **Measures:** Refers to the specific measures that are included in each composite. There are 15 individual permanency measures.

Table 1 includes county performance on the two safety data indicators and 15 permanency measures.

B. Safety Data Tables

Tables 2-7 include child welfare data related to the agency's practices in addressing safety. These tables contain information about the agency's use of track assignments, report dispositions, timeliness of initial face-to-face contacts with children who are the subject of a maltreatment report, length of placement episodes and reasons for out-of-home placements.

C. Permanency Data Tables

Tables 8-10 provide demographic information about the children in out-of-home placement (gender and age) and the type of settings in which children are placed.

D. Child Well-being Data Tables

Table 11 provides information regarding the frequency of caseworkers' monthly face-to-face contact with children in foster care.

A. Federal Data Indicators

Table 1

Data Indicator	National Standard	County Performance**					MN 2010
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
Safety Indicator 1: Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence. Of all children who were victims of determined maltreatment during the first six months of the reporting period, what percent were not victims of another determined maltreatment allegation within a 6-month period.	94.6% ↑	Not available					
Safety Indicator 2: Absence of Child Abuse/Neglect in Foster Care. Of all children in foster care during the reporting period, what percent were not victims of determined maltreatment by a foster parent or facility staff member.	99.68% ↑	100.0%* (181/181)	100.0%* (171/171)	99.3% (139/140)	100.0%* (128/128)	97.6% (123/126)	99.65%

Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification.							
Component A: Timeliness of Reunification							
Measure C1.1: Exits to reunification in less than 12 months. Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification in the year shown, who had been in foster care for 8 days or longer, what percent was reunified in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from the home?	75.2% ↑	98.1%* (53/54)	98.3%* (59/60)	86.2%* (25/29)	96.9%* (31/32)	93.5%* (43/46)	84.5%*
Measure C1.2: Median stay in foster care to reunification. Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification in the year shown, who had been in foster care for 8 days or longer, what was the median length of stay (in months) from the date of the latest removal from home until the date of discharge to reunification?	5.4 ↓	2.8*	4.4*	3.5*	0.7*	2.8*	3.9*
Measure C1.3: Entry cohort of children who reunify in less than 12 months. Of all children entering foster care for the first time in the 6 month period just prior to the year shown, and who remained in foster care for 8 days or longer, what percent was discharged from foster care to reunification in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home?	48.4% ↑	64.7%* (11/17)	66.7%* (24/36)	85.0%* (17/20)	90.9%* (10/11)	70.6%* (12/17)	57.9%*
Component B: Permanency of Reunification							
Measure C1.4: Children who exit and re-enter foster care in less than 12 months. Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification in the 12-month period prior the year shown, what percent re-entered foster care in less than 12 months from the date of discharge?	9.9% ↓	33.8% (25/74)	26.0% (27/104)	25.0% (24/96)	21.6% (19/88)	32.4% (23/71)	24.4%

Data Indicator	National Standard	County Performance**					MN 2010
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
Permanency Composite 2: Timeliness of Adoptions							
<i>Component A: Timeliness of Adoptions of children Discharged From Foster Care</i>							
Measure C2.1: Adoption in less than 24 months for children exiting to adoption. Of all children who were discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in the year shown, what percent was discharged in less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal from home?	36.6% ↑	50.0%* (2/4)	28.6% (4/14)	100.0%* (8/8)	NA	100.0%* (1/1)	48.2%*
Measure C2.2: Median length of stay to adoption. Of all children who were discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in the year shown, what was the median length of stay in foster care (in months) from the date of latest removal from home to the date of discharge to adoption?	27.3 ↓	30.2	29.4	17.0*	NA	20.0*	25.1*
<i>Component B: Adoption for Children Meeting ASFA Time-In-Care Requirements</i>							
Measure C2.3: Children in foster care 17+ months, adopted by the end of the year. Of all children in foster care on the first day of the year shown who were in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer (and who, by the last day of the year shown, were not discharged from foster care with a discharge reason of live with relative, reunify, or guardianship), what percent was discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption by the last day of the year shown?	22.7% ↑	100.0%* (2/2)	66.7%* (10/15)	25.0%* (2/8)	0.0% (0/9)	0.0% (0/8)	19.6%
Measure C2.4: Children in foster care 17+ months achieving legal freedom within 6 months. Of all children in foster care on the first day of the year shown who were in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer, and were not legally free for adoption prior to that day, what percent became legally free for adoption during the first 6 months of the year shown?	10.9% ↑	0.0% (0/7)	0.0% (0/6)	0.0% (0/5)	0.0% (0/5)	50.0%* (1/2)	2.2%
<i>Component C: Progress Toward Adoption of Children who are Legally Free for Adoption</i>							
Measure C2.5: Children, legally free, adoption in less than 12 months. Of all children who became legally free for adoption in the 12 month period prior to the year shown, what percent was discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in less than 12 months of becoming legally free?	53.7% ↑	50.0% (2/4)	66.7%* (4/6)	85.7%* (6/7)	50.0% (1/2)	0.0% (0/1)	40.8%

Data Indicator	National Standard	County Performance**					MN 2010
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
Permanency Composite 3: Achieving Permanency for Children in Foster Care							
<i>Component A: Achieving Permanency for Children in Care for Extended Periods of Time</i>							
Measure C3.1: Exits to permanency prior to 18th birthday for children in care for 24+ months. Of all children in foster care for 24 months or longer on the first day of the year shown, what percent was discharged to a permanency home prior to their 18 th birthday and by the end of the fiscal year? A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification (including living with a relative).	29.1% ↑	17.6% (3/17)	50.0%* (11/22)	0.0% (0/11)	0.0% (0/9)	0.0% (0/7)	19.1%
Measure C3.2: Exits to permanency for children with TPR. Of all children who were discharged from foster care in the year shown, and who were legally free for adoption at the time of discharge, what percent was discharged to a permanent home prior to their 18 th birthday? A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification (including living with a relative).	98.0% ↑	100.0%* (4/4)	87.5% (14/16)	88.9% (8/9)	NA	25.0% (1/4)	96.4%
<i>Component B: Children Emancipated Who Were in Foster Care for Extended Period of Time</i>							
Measure C3.3: Children emancipated who were in foster care for 3 years or more. Of all children who, during the year shown, either (1) were discharged from foster care prior to age 18 with a discharge reason of emancipation, or (2) reached their 18 th birthday while in foster care, what percent were in foster care for 3 years or longer?	37.5% ↓	0.0%* (0/3)	100.0% (4/4)	42.9% (3/7)	33.3%* (3/9)	100.0% (2/2)	45.1%

Data Indicator	National Standard	County Performance**					MN 2010
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
Permanency Composite 4: Placement Stability							
Measure C4.1: Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for less than 12 months. Of all children served in foster care during the 12 month target period who were in foster care for at least 8 days but less than 12 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings?	86.0% ↑	Not available					
Measure C4.2: Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for 12 to 24 months. Of all children served in foster care during the 12 months target period who were in foster care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings?	65.4% ↑	Not available					
Measure C4.3: Two or fewer placement settings for children in care for 24+ months. Of all children served in foster care during the 12 months target period who were in foster care for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings?	41.8% ↑	Not available					

*The county met the performance standard.

**Data on county performance on Federal Data Indicators was pulled from Charting and Analysis on 04/20/12.

B. Safety Data

Child Maltreatment Reports (Investigation):

Alleged, Determined and Need for Service, 5 Year History

Table 2

Year	Reports Investigated	Reports with Maltreatment Determined (Number of cases determined/ as % of reports assessed)	Reports with Child Protection Services Needed Determined (Number of cases determined/ as % of reports assessed)
2006	196	114 / 58.2%	59 / 30.1%
2007	201	109 / 54.2%	68 / 33.8%
2008	110	57 / 51.8%	39 / 35.5%
2009	72 (FI) 1 (Fac)	42 / 57.5%	24 / 33.3%
2010	119 (FI) 6 (Fac)	58 / 46.4%	34 / 28.6%

DHS Research, Planning and Evaluation

Statewide rate of reports with maltreatment determined in 2010: 55.0%

Statewide rate of reports with child protection services needed determined in 2010: 49.7%

Child Maltreatment Reports (Family Assessment):

History as Available/Applicable

Table 3

Year	Number of Family Assessments / as percent of total maltreatment assessments	Number of Family Assessments with need for Child Protective Services / as a percent of total Family Assessments
2006	110 / 35.9%	16 / 14.5%
2007	138 / 40.7%	36 / 26.1%
2008	171 / 60.9%	33 / 19.3%
2009	281 / 79.6%	41 / 14.6%
2010	271 / 68.4%	58 / 21.4%

DHS Research, Planning and Evaluation

Statewide rate of reports assessed with Family Assessments in 2010: 67.5%

Statewide rate of Family Assessments with need for Child Protection Services in 2010: 17.3%

Completed Face-to-Face Contact with Alleged Child Victims

Table 4

	Reporting Period	Statewide Rate of Timely Contact	County % and # With Timely Contact*
Investigations – Alleged Substantial Child Endangerment	July-Sept 2011	65.8%	61.1% (11/18)
	Oct-Dec 2011	66.6%	83.3% (10/12)
Investigations – Not Substantial Child Endangerment	July-Sept 2011	86.4%	92.9% (13/14)
	Oct-Dec 2011	83.2%	91.7% (11/12)
Family Assessments	July-Sept 2011	74.8%	85.4% (76/89)
	Oct-Dec 2011	75.7%	90.0% (90/100)

DHS Child Welfare Data Dashboard

*Timely contact is defined as:

- Family Assessments and Investigations – Not Substantial Child Endangerment: Within 5 calendar days of receipt of report
- Investigation – Alleged Substantial Child Endangerment: Immediately/within 24 hours of receipt of report

Length of Placement Episodes Ending in 2010

Table 5

Length of Placement Episodes	State %	County #	County %
1 – 7 days (<i>5 year history below</i>)	24.2%	66	57.9%
8 – 30 days	11.0%	20	17.5%
31 – 90 days	13.4%	6	5.3%
91 – 180 days	10.2%	4	3.5%
181 – 365 days	15.8%	6	5.3%
366+ days	25.4%	12	10.5%
Total Episodes	6,564	114	--

DHS Research, Planning and Evaluation

Length of Placement Episodes – 5 year history

Table 5a

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1-7 days	Not available	Not available	42.0% (58/135)	60.0% (69/115)	57.9% (66/114)

Reasons for Entering Out-of-Home-Care, Related to Protection-2010**Table 6**

Reason	State %	County #	County %
Alleged Physical Abuse	7.6%	14	6.8%
Alleged Sexual Abuse	3.4%	6	2.9%
Alleged Neglect	18.2%	38	18.5%
Parent Alcohol Abuse	5.5%	4	1.9%
Parent Drug Abuse	10.1%	4	1.9%
Abandonment	3.1%	11	5.4%
TPR	0.7%	1	0.5%
Parent Incarceration	3.4%	5	2.4%
Total Reasons Reported for All Placements	18,266	205	--
Total Placements	11,239	126	--
Total Reasons Related to Protection	9,509 / 52.1%	83	40.5%

2010 Child Welfare Report

Reasons for Entering Out-of-Home-Care, Other than Protection-2010**Table 7**

Reason	State %	County #	County %
Child Alcohol Abuse	2.1%	0	0.0%
Child Drug Abuse	2.7%	4	1.9%
Child Behavior	24.4%	78	38.0%
Child Disability	4.9%	8	3.9%
Parent Death	0.4%	2	1.0%
Caretaker Inability to Cope	10.3%	24	11.7%
Inadequate Housing	3.0%	6	2.9%
Total Reasons Reported for All Placements	18,266	205	--
Total Placements	11,239	126	--
Total Reasons Other than Protection	8,757 / 47.9%	122	59.4%

2010 Child Welfare Report

C. Permanency Data

Age Group of Children in Care – 2010

Table 8

Age Group	State %	County #	County %
0-7 Years	32.7%	25	19.8%
8-12 Years	15.6%	19	15.1%
13+ Years	51.7%	82	65.1%
Total Children in Care	11,239	126	--

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Race of Children in Care - 2010

Table 9

Race	State % of Placements	County # of Children in Placement**	County % of Placements	% of Racial Group in County's General Population***
African American/Black	21.5%	26	20.6%	2.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	14.0%	10	7.9%	0.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander/Other	2.2%	*	--	5.7%
White	51.2%	75	59.5%	86.4%
Two or More Races	10.6%	11	8.7%	2.3%
Unable to Determine	0.4%	*	--	--
Total Children in Care	11,239	126	--	--
Hispanic Ethnicity*	9.3%	12	9.5%	4.4%

*Hispanic may be of any race

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** The number of children is less than seven and is not shown to prevent identification of individuals

***Source: U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts

Children in Out-of-Home Care by Placement Setting-2010
(Children may be counted in more than one placement setting)

Table 10

Placement Setting	State %	County #	County %
Foster Family Non-Relative	39.8%	81	38.9%
Foster Family Relative (<i>5 year history below</i>)	12.1%	24	11.5%
Foster Home – Corporate/Shift Staff	1.8%	1	0.5%
Group Home	12.7%	3	1.4%
Juvenile Correctional Facility (locked)	4.2%	1	0.5%
Juvenile Correctional Facility (non-secure)	5%	82	39.4%
Pre-Adoptive Non-Relative	4.7%	4	1.9%
Pre-Adoptive Relative (<i>5 year history below</i>)	2.1%	2	1.0%
Residential Treatment Center	16.8%	8	3.8%
Other*	0.8%	2	1.0%
Total Placement Settings	18,592	208	99.90%

Other includes ICF/DD and Supervised Independent Living settings

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Relative Placement – 5 year history

Table 10a

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Foster Family Relative	22.7% (56/247)	12.8% (36/281)	18.2% (46/253)	14.9% (30/201)	11.5% (24/208)
Pre-adopt Relative	3.2% (8/247)	0.4% (1/281)	2.4% (6/253)	3.0% (6/201)	1.0% (2/208)

D. Child Well-being Data

Monthly Caseworker Visits with Children in Foster Care

Table 11

	State %	County % and #
Jan. 1, 2011 – Dec. 31, 2011	57.2%	91.9% (57/62)
Oct. 1, 2010 – Sept. 30, 2011	55.8%	89.7% (52/58)
Oct. 1, 2009 – Sept. 30, 2010	55.2%	93.9% (46/49)
Oct 1, 2008 – Sept 30, 2009	46.9%	79.5% (62/78)
Oct. 1, 2007 – Sept. 30, 2008	38.7%	80.8% (80/99)

DHS Child Welfare Data Release Reports & Child Welfare Data Dashboard

PART V: SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

Based on examination of data and narrative responses provided in early sections of this report, summarize the information in response to the following questions.

1. What specific strengths of the agency's programs have been identified?

Low placement rate
SSIS coordinator
Family Group Decision Making
Signs of Safety, Safety Network
Juvenile Justice Committee
Relationship with County Attorney and Court System
Increased attention to non-resident parents
Consistent staff
Administrative support for work in CP-added position due to steady increase in number of CP assessments
Relative search by Social Worker I's
Development of mentor program: foster parent to parent
Development of specialized foster care for older youth
Holistic family assessment in Children's Mental Health
Partnership between Children's Mental Health and SC Mental Health Center.
Implemented POP program to try and address FC re-entry

2. What specific needs have been identified that warrant further examination in the onsite review? Note which of these needs are the most critical to the outcomes under safety, permanency and well-being for children and families in the county.

Foster care re-entry remains the agency's highest priority as re-entry impacts outcomes related to permanency and well-being. In addition, placement stability and securing permanency for older youth is also a focus for the agency.

Issues related to racial disproportionality were a surprise and this may warrant further review by the agency.

3. Please describe additional practices/needs related to achievement of safety, permanency and well-being outcomes that the agency is interested in examining during the onsite review.
4. Please complete the following evaluation of the county self assessment process in terms of its usefulness to the county and recommendations for revision.
 - a) Were you allowed adequate time to complete the county self assessment process?
Yes No

Comments:

- b) Did you find the data provided helpful to your evaluation of safety, permanency and well-being performance? Yes No

Comments:

- c) Did you engage county child welfare staff and/or community stakeholders in the county self- assessment process? Yes No

Comments:

- d) Did you find the county self assessment an effective process for evaluating your county's child welfare system? Yes No

Comments:

- e) Will you use findings from the county self assessment to plan for systemic and/or organizational improvements in your county's child welfare system? Yes No

Comments:

- f) Any additional comments or recommendations for improving the self assessment process: