



PARTNERS
FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

Every person has value and should be treated in a manner that is respectful and culturally responsive.

OFFICE OF FAMILIES & CHILDREN

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From OFC Deputy Director Jennifer Justice – 12/5/14

I didn't believe it when I was told that this is the 36th issue of First Friday — surely it hasn't been three years? — so I counted each prior issue, taking me back to January 2012. In that two-page update, OFC simply introduced Partners for Ohio's Families, discussed the initiative's early data collection activities, and described two activities OFC would be undertaking as a result of stakeholders' comments: a pilot for regional teams and a comprehensive review of all OFC-related Ohio Administrative Code rules. Regional teams now are part of daily business, stakeholder commentary is a standard step in OFC's rule-filing process, and we've seen many other significant achievements in the last three years. And, of course, First Friday has grown to be much longer than two pages, no matter how much I try to shorten it. There always seems to be so much important information to cover.

What struck me more than the number of activities or initiatives that have occurred since January 2012 is the shift in voice in that time. The first edition of First Friday explained what OFC hoped to accomplish over the following months. This month's issue describes the work we are taking on together to improve outcomes for Ohio's children and families and identifies multiple individuals, work groups and agencies that are investing in the process. We don't always agree on everything, and

debate may become spirited at times, but I think we all benefit from multiple perspectives. I believe we have learned that our partnership as child welfare stakeholders is built from a commonality in purpose, and positive outcomes are most likely when we work together.

I wish to personally thank the many OFC and stakeholder volunteers who give their time, as well as the agencies that support their participation in work groups, advisory boards and new initiatives. Through these experiences, we get to know each other not just as professional colleagues, but as individuals who we respect and appreciate. I especially would like to thank two of these colleagues who now are tackling new challenges: Bruce Anderson, former children services administrator for Licking County JFS, and Tresa Young, former chief of OFC's Bureau of Automated Systems.

Bruce has been a great partner to OFC. He was a member of the Differential Response Design Team and the Partners for Ohio's Families Advisory Board, and Licking County was a pilot site for both Differential Response and OFC regional teams. As Bruce leaves our child welfare community to follow a dream opportunity — coaching college softball — I am pleased to send him

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off with all of our best wishes.

Tresa's strong management has helped SACWIS evolve to what many consider a national model. I regard her as a friend, as well as a colleague, and we will miss her as she embarks on her new adventure in Washington, D.C. The good news is that I am sure Ohio will continue to benefit from her sophisticated understanding of the SACWIS complexities. Read her farewell note to us on page 6.

The Whys and Hows of the CFSR

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau will be conducting Ohio's third Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in 2017. The Children's Bureau conducts the CFSR to:

- Ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements.
- Determine what is happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services.
- Assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes.

The CFSR examines 14 aspects of a state's child welfare program, including seven "outcome areas" relating to safety, permanency and well-being and seven "systemic factors" relating to the overall capacity of the program to serve children and families. The first two stages of the process determine a state's compliance with Title IV-B and Title IV-E requirements; the final two stages identify and implement any needed improvements to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of children served.

The CFSR is a multi-year, four-stage quality improvement process that examines a wide range of child welfare outcomes. For states to successfully navigate this process, all partners must understand the intent of the review and the purpose of

CFSR: Understanding the Pieces

Every profession has its own language, and child welfare is no different. We love our abbreviations so it's easy to get confused when the CFSRs, CFSPs, CQIs and CPOEs start flying. It's important to know not only what these abbreviations represent, but also how they work together to help us improve outcomes for Ohio's children and families.

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)

This federal review is an ongoing quality improvement process used to evaluate states' child welfare systems.

Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)

This five-year state strategic plan is required for continued federal funding for Title IV-B activities, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Act programming, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program allocations, and Education and Training Vouchers for youth exiting care. Ohio's strategies for 2015 to 2019 were selected to support progress on CFSR measurements (see attached chart).

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

This set of state and local processes addresses progress on CFSP strategies and CFSR measurements.

Child Protection Oversight and Evaluation (CPOE)

This systematic state process monitors PCSA and Title IV-E Court compliance with the Ohio Revised Code and Ohio Administrative Code rules and is one of the data collection tools for CQI. In October 2014, CPOE reviewers began using the CFSR onsite review instrument, which aligns CFSP measures with CFSR measures.

each stage. Beginning a coordinated approach that fully engages a variety of stakeholders early in the process is key to Ohio's successful performance.

Stage 1: Statewide Assessment

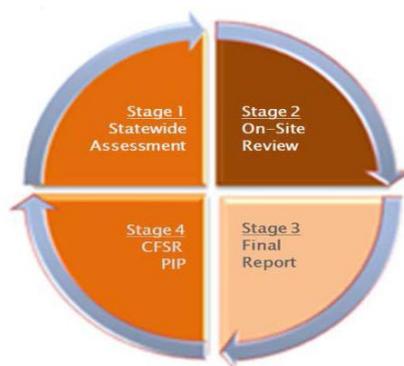
The Statewide Assessment is an analysis that each state conducts of its own child protection, foster care and adoption programs. This self-assessment is based on a data profile provided by the Children's

Bureau. This data profile is based on information that states submit through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). Each state examines its profile, other data sources — such as Child Protection Oversight and Evaluation (CPOE) results — and stakeholders' observations, then evaluates its performance in each of the 14 areas. This self-assessment highlights strengths and weaknesses and is used to note areas needing improvement.

OFC submitted Ohio's initial Statewide Assessment on June 30, 2014, in conjunction with its five-year Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). The Statewide Assessment is updated annually.

Stage 2: Onsite Review

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Ohio's onsite review will occur between April and September 2017. It consists of a *case record review* and *stakeholder interviews*.

Case Record Review: This uses a standard review instrument developed by the Children's Bureau. OFC began using this tool during the CPOE Stage 10 monitoring activities in October 2014 to help familiarize PCSAs and Title IV-E courts with it. The 2017 CFSR requires states to achieve 95 percent compliance for each item contained in the review tool. The Children's Bureau now gives states the option either to conduct their own case record reviews under specific parameters or to continue allowing the federal government to do so. OFC must make its choice before July 15, 2016.

The cases for Ohio's 2017 Onsite Review will be drawn from a pool that is active between April 1 and November 15, 2016. Even though the case record review will occur between April and September 2017, reviewers will assess outcomes from the previous year. This means that Ohio's agencies will have 16 months to improve the results of Ohio's performance. It is critical that OFC and the PCSAs identify activities that support case compliance.

Stakeholder Interviews: Federal reviewers interview a variety of stakeholders about their experiences with the state child welfare system. State and PCSA staff identify stakeholders who have the knowledge and experience needed to effectively respond to questions. Past stakeholders have included:

Child and Family Outcomes	
Safety Outcome 1	Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
Safety Outcome 2	Children are maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.
Permanency Outcome 1	Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
Permanency Outcome 2	The continuity of family relationships is preserved for children.
Well-Being Outcome 1	Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
Well-Being Outcome 2	Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
Well-Being Outcome 3	Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.
Systemic Factors	
Systemic Factor 1	Statewide Information System
Systemic Factor 2	Case Review System
Systemic Factor 3	Quality Assurance System
Systemic Factor 4	Staff and Provider Training
Systemic Factor 5	Service Array and Resource Development.
Systemic Factor 6	Agency Responsiveness to Community
Systemic Factor 7	Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention

- The state child welfare director
- Child welfare administrators
- Foster/adoptive parents
- Youth
- Court improvement program administrators
- Court system representatives
- Law enforcement representatives
- Public and private agency case-workers and supervisors
- Guardians ad litem and court-appointed special advocates
- Agency attorneys
- Major child welfare contractors

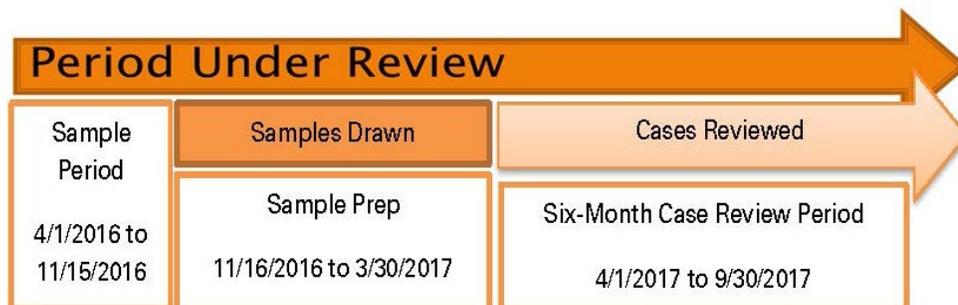
Stage 3: Final Report

The Children's Bureau organizes and assesses the data collected in the first two stages. The Children's Bureau issues a final report, which outlines the federal findings, including any

noncompliance findings. Potential fiscal penalties against Title IV-B and Title IV-E funds are identified for any areas of noncompliance.

Stage 4: Program Improvement Plan

Within 90 days of receiving the final report, each state must create a Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP outlines the actions the state will implement to address each area of noncompliance. The Children's Bureau must review and approve the PIP. After it is approved, the state has two years to achieve the plan's benchmarks and goals; fiscal penalties identified in Stage 3 are withheld during this time. If goals and benchmarks are reached, fiscal penalties are withdrawn. If Ohio is imposed penalties in the upcoming CFSR, those penalties will be greater than in previous CFSRs, as Ohio did not achieve all its goals in the last PIP.



For more documents regarding CFSR measurements and processes, visit our website at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/CFSR-Information-Page.stm>.

New CFSR National Standards

During CFSR Round Three, states will continue to be evaluated for their performance in seven child and family outcomes and seven systemic factors (see “The Whys and Hows of the CFSR, page 2). This time, however, national standards have been revised to allow for a more accurate state-to-state comparison.

This month, we will introduce the new national standards and examine how they differ from those in earlier CFSR rounds. Future First Fridays will examine each standard in detail and suggest ways agencies can use them to improve performance.

What Is a National Standard?

Using AFCARS and NCANDS data, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Children’s Bureau established performance thresholds that states must meet to be considered in compliance. These are referred to as “national standards.” The measures used to evaluate whether the standards are being met are called “data indicators.”

What’s New?

1. There are now only seven data indicators, instead of 17.
2. The new indicators have greater

support among researchers and statisticians.

3. Although the names of the new indicators are similar to the old ones, the methods used to calculate results were improved.
4. Techniques used to determine the national standards were improved.
5. Previously, performances were reported as observed percentages. Now, they are “risk-adjusted.” (See below for an explanation.)
6. Most notably, the new standards are calculated with either “percent measures” or “count measures.” (See below for more details.)

What is Risk Adjustment?

To explain this important change, here is a fictitious example of two counties in which the re-abuse data indicator was calculated with the former observed-percentage method:

- In County A, 6 percent of children were re-abused.
- In County B, 10 percent of children were re-abused.

The following conclusions seem apparent:

- Children in County A are safer than children in County B.
- County A surpassed the national standard.
- Children in County B are more likely to be re-abused than children in County A.
- County B failed to achieve the national standard.

In fact, all of these conclusions may be inaccurate. Calculations based on observed percentages do not consider the many factors that affect performance. For example, research has established that young children are more at risk of abuse than older children. If County B served more young children than County A, and County A served more older children than County B, it is possible that County B is more effective at preventing the re-abuse of children. The observed percentage from each county is not comparable because the children come from two different risk sets.

To get an accurate comparison, scores must be adjusted by the risk factor. In this example, the risk factor is the age of the children being compared. Researchers call these “risk-adjusted scores.”

What are Percent and Count Measures?

The above example is a percent measure. Five of the seven data indicators use percent measures; the remaining two use count measures. Count measures usually are described as rates.

Here are two examples of count measures, using Ohio data from 2012¹:

- One out of every three children had parents who lacked secure employment.
- For every 100 people in the

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New Data Indicator	New National Standard
Recurrence of maltreatment	9 percent
Maltreatment in foster care	8.04 victimizations per 100,000 days in care
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	40.4 percent
Permanency in 12 months for children in care ages 12 to 23 months	43.7 percent
Permanency in 12 months for children in care ages 24 months older	30.3 percent
Re-entry into foster care	8.3 percent
Placement stability	4.12 moves per 1,000 days in care

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civilian labor force, 7.2 were unemployed.

The placement stability data indicator shows how count measures are applied to the national standards. CFSR Rounds One and Two simply counted the number of placement moves a child experienced, regardless of the length of time the child was in care. In Round Three, the standard will be calculated as a count measure by dividing the aggregate number of days that children were in care by the aggregate number of moves those children experienced. From this, a rate of moves per 100,000 days can be established. This provides a much more accurate picture of placement stability.

Be sure to check the January First Friday for a more in-depth look at this national standard.

¹ <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>

Did You Know? Federal Data Now Available

“Child Welfare Outcomes 2009-2012: Report to Congress,” the 13th in a series of reports from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, shows national and state performance in several measures that evaluate the safety, permanency and well-being of children and focus on widely accepted performance objectives for child welfare practice. The full report, along with a 12-page executive summary brochure, is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/cwo-09-12>. Report data also can be found on the [Child Welfare Outcomes data site](#).

Thank You to OFC's Partners

The [August 2014 edition of First Friday](#) discussed Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and the federal government's encouragement of states to implement their own CQI systems. Ohio made significant progress toward this on Nov. 25, with the inaugural meeting of the CQI Advisory Team. The team is made up of both state and county staff. It began its work by examining new CFSR measurements, federal CQI guidance, and CQI approaches already in place in our state and local areas. When it reconvenes in January, the team plans to begin developing a CQI work plan.

“It was great to have so much enthusiasm for the process in the room,” said Carla Carpenter, Chief of the OFC Bureau of Federal and State Child Welfare Initiatives. “Having so many invested partners at the table lets us build a meaningful CQI framework together, one that is responsive to the diversity across our state and supports each partner in ongoing improvement.”

The CQI Advisory Team is one of many new child welfare stakeholder groups poised to begin work in Ohio. In anticipation of the upcoming CFSR, more than 100 public and private agency staff and other stakeholders from across the state are participating in various workgroups and subcommittees.

Next month, the Screening and Pathway Assignment, Family Search and Engagement, Family Visits and Caseworker Visits, Engaging Fathers, and Adoption committees will begin their work. An additional workgroup will begin meeting later in 2015 to examine child abuse and neglect in foster care; email Joan.VanHull@jfs.ohio.gov if you are interested in volunteering. Opportunities to participate in CQI Advisory Team subcommittees also may be available; email Carla.Carpenter@jfs.ohio.gov for more information.

Thank you to the many stakeholders and their agencies across Ohio who are investing their time and expertise in OFC's workgroups. For a full list of participants, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/PFOF/PDF/CQI-Volunteers.stm>.



Above: CQI Advisory Team members attend November's inaugural meeting.

A Farewell Message from Tresa Young

While I am excited to begin a new position in the Division of State Systems at the Administration for Children and Families in Washington, D.C., I view the opportunity as an extension of collective work begun in Ohio.

It has been my privilege to work with diverse, talented and committed individuals who embrace challenges and continually strive to make a difference. Implementing a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System in a county-administered state has been a humbling experience. I am so pleased to know and work with many gifted people at every level within Ohio's child welfare and information technology community.

I was asked to reflect on milestones achieved since assuming responsibility as OFC's Automated Systems bureau chief in 2008. It is not difficult to provide a laundry list of important team accomplishments that resulted in the availability of real-time, statewide information to guide and monitor child welfare practice. While I have many memories to draw from, some of the more meaningful ones involve simple acknowledgments from

transitioning foster youth, caseworkers, child welfare directors, prosecutors, courts, private child placing agencies, universities, researchers, sister state agencies, legislators, service providers, federal partners and child welfare advocates who use SACWIS information.

I appreciate my many "lessons learned" and hope to be a benefit to other tribes and states as they move forward with technology solutions to support child welfare services.



Tresa Young

Field Notes: Collaborative Performance Improvement

This month, Field Notes highlights two counties that are finding success with collaborative approaches to improving performance on national standards. Congratulations to these communities on their efforts to engage with partners to improve outcomes for families and children.

Licking County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS): Assessing and Linking to Services

Licking County has experienced a dramatic upswing in the number of children coming to the attention of child protection as a result of their parents' heroin abuse. A lack of timely access to assessment and intervention services created real barriers to complying with national standards. Licking CDJFS addressed this challenge by partnering with Mental Health and Recovery of Licking and Knox Counties and the Behavioral Healthcare Partners of Central Ohio to contract a full-time case manager whose office is located at Licking CDJFS.

The case manager completes

substance abuse assessments to determine the need for services and to identify the appropriate services. The case manager also guides substance abuse treatment plans and provides outreach to families at their homes and other locations. Medicaid pays for services for eligible participants, and Licking CDJFS covers the initial non-Medicaid outreach service cost. This model provides a balance of service availability, accountability and support. It also allows families to receive services much more quickly, which may support a reduction in maltreatment recurrence, the number of children entering or re-entering substitute care, and the length of time a child remains in substitute care.

For additional information about this innovative collaboration, email Licking CDJFS Supervisor Betsy Cobb at Betsy.Cobb@jfs.ohio.gov.

Marion County Children Services (MCCS): Extra Efforts Equal Placement Stability

MCCS consistently meets or exceeds the national standard for placement

stability. Staff attribute this success to the following factors:

- Diligent and multi-faceted foster and adoptive home recruitment efforts.
 - » Social media efforts, including weekly Facebook posts emphasizing the community's continued need for foster and adoptive families.
 - » Sustained efforts to establish ongoing relationships among partners, including media outlets, through active participation in community events. One successful example: Pinwheel Play Day was cohosted with Clear Channel Radio, which awards a Disney vacation during the event.
 - » Bonuses paid to foster and adoptive parents and agency staff who recruit families (after preservice training and home study approval).
- Effective matching of children

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(continued from previous page) with families upon initial placement, which results in fewer subsequent placement moves.

- » Staff receive effective match training to support a successful initial placement.
- » Additional time is spent when completing foster and adoptive home studies to accurately understand which placement characteristics will be most successful in the family's home.
- Support services to foster and adoptive families while children are in care.
 - » Placement workers ensure that children's needs are met when they are first placed in the home.

This includes making sure they have such things as diapers, formula, medicine and clothing.

- » The placement worker and the ongoing caseworker both provide continued support. Together, they complete at least one home visit each month to coordinate services and provide consistent information regarding the child's and case plan's progress. The placement worker also is required to have at least one additional monthly contact with the family to assess and meet any identified needs.

For more information about this successful approach, email Marion County Placement Supervisor Cheryl Bowers at Cheryl.Bowers@jfs.ohio.gov.

NCALP Name Change

The National Center for Adoption Law and Policy (NCALP) at Capital University Law School is getting a new name in 2015: the Family and Youth Law Center (FYLaw). OFC collaborates with NCALP on a number of important initiatives, including Safe and Together™ and several projects with the Supreme Court of Ohio's Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency. Adoption-related initiatives continue to be a priority though the organization has expanded its scope beyond its initial focus on adoption.

Selecting the right name was not an easy task, and NCALP was guided by survey and focus group responses from hundreds of its constituents. Stay tuned: NCALP is planning a series of events aimed at re-introducing its many services, initiatives and projects early next year.

Principle of the Month

Every person has value and should be treated in a manner that is respectful and culturally responsive.

Funding Opportunity

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is accepting [applications](#) for the state fiscal year 2015 Specialized Transportation Grants Program. The program provides federal funds for the purchase of equipment to support transportation services for the elderly and people with disabilities. Funding can be used to purchase vehicles, computer hardware and software, communications equipment, capitalized maintenance equipment, and mobility management equipment. ODOT is accepting applications only for projects in small urban and rural areas. Applications must be submitted by Feb. 6, 2015. For more information or to request an application, contact Macie Legge at (614) 728-9609 or macie.legge@dot.state.oh.us.

Rule Review Update

Currently, no rules are posted on the Ohio's Families and Children Rule Review website, www.ohiorulereview.org. Please continue to visit the site periodically for new postings. We welcome your input and hope you use this opportunity to share your experiences. The website received 1,600 hits during October 2014.



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