

# OHIO CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN QUARTERLY REPORT

April 2004

## NARRATIVE

### **SAFETY OUTCOME S1:**

Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect

*Item 1. Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.*

**Goal:** *In two years, improve the timeliness of initiating investigations of non-emergency reports of child abuse and neglect from 77% 2002 DART baseline data to 80%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Provide county specific, focused technical assistance to four (4) PCSAs with the highest percentage of non-emergency reports of child maltreatment where the agency did not respond within the prescribed time frames; and that have the greatest adverse impact on overall statewide performance.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** On January 14, 2004, a 24 month DART report on *24 Hour Investigation Initiation* was produced in order to determine the percentage of cases in CY 2002 and CY 2003 where each of the 88 Ohio public children services agencies (PCSAs) responded to reports of alleged child abuse or neglect within 24 hours of receipt of the report as mandated by Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rule 5101:2-34-32.
- **Benchmark 2-** An analysis of the DART report was conducted to determine: (1) level of compliance with the 24-hour response time frame; and (2) selection of counties for focused technical assistance. However, prior to the final selection of counties, an analysis was conducted on county performance on the national standard measures for recurrence, reentries, reunification, stability of foster care placements, and abuse/neglect in foster care. Based upon this multi-faceted analysis it was determined that county specific focused technical assistance should be limited to two counties rather than four counties and an amendment to the PIP should be requested. The two counties targeted for focused technical assistance would be Cuyahoga and Franklin, which represent the largest child population base

in Ohio. In addition, of the 88 counties in Ohio, current placement data in DART shows that these two counties combined have nearly 40% of the children in substitute care and, in turn, have the greatest impact on overall statewide performance for all the data indicators. By limiting the focused technical assistance to two counties this will allow for the type of specialized county specific intervention strategies envisioned with this approach.

- **Benchmark 3-** The directors of Cuyahoga and Franklin have been contacted. Arrangements are being made to initiate the focused technical assistance with Franklin County. Focused technical assistance for Cuyahoga County was initiated during the CPOE Stage V Entrance Conference that was held on March 19, 2004.
- **Benchmarks 4-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Increase consistency among counties in screening, classification and initiating reports of child maltreatment.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** The review tool to be used during the CPOE Stage 5 case reviews to obtain information on county specific screening procedures was developed and implemented by July 1, 2003. CPOE Stage 5 reviews were conducted in 16 PCSAs between July and December 2003.
- **Benchmark 2-** The first meeting of the work group to develop recommendations for changes to the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) was held on August 11, 2003. After a review of the report from the National Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues and related materials, the work group elected to limit their activities to identifying and addressing agency practice and procedures related to screening. Recommendations for changes to the ORC will be developed by the Advisory Committee on Children, Family and the Court, a subcommittee of the Supreme Court of Ohio. On March 4, 2004, the Supreme Court of Ohio issued a RFP for a vendor to provide expert consultation, research, writing and project management for the development of the recommendations. During the week of March 28 a vendor will be selected.
- **Benchmarks 3 and 4** The data on screening procedures and response times collected through CPOE Stage 5 reviews of 16 counties was analyzed, and a summary report was presented to the Screening Work Group at a meeting held on January 12, 2004.
- **Benchmarks 5-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## **SAFETY OUTCOME S1:**

Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect

**Item 2A.** *Repeat maltreatment.*

**Goal:** *In two years, reduce incidents of repeat maltreatment from 8.2% 2002 NCANDS baseline data to 7.3%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Increase consistency among counties in reporting duplicate report information in order to improve accuracy of statewide data on repeat maltreatment.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Work on this activity began on March 25, 2004. Members of the work group convened to address Item 1, Action Step B will review the draft rule prior to submission into departmental clearance.
- **Benchmark 2- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Reduce incidence of repeat maltreatment by identifying families in need of ongoing services and prioritizing service needs through use of the Family Assessment and Planning Model (FAPM).*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1** -The Family Assessment and Planning Model (FAPM) pilot began in Hancock, Greene and Muskingum counties in July 2003. Lorain County joined the pilot in November 2003.
- **Benchmark 2** -Baseline data on repeat maltreatment, foster care re-entries and average length of placement for all four (4) counties was received on December 17, 2003 and covered CYs 2001, 2002 and 2003. Staff was trained on the DART application on January 26, 2004 and is working on the development of monthly reports.
- **Benchmark 3-** The first round of case reviews to collect data for the process and outcome pilot evaluations was conducted in November 2003. A second round of case reviews was conducted and the worker and supervisor surveys were distributed to the pilot agencies in February 2004. ODJFS is currently on target for compiling the case review and survey data for submission to the project vendor in

March 2004, which should enable the vendor to complete the final pilot evaluation report by the June 2004 due date.

- **Benchmark 4-** *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.*

### **Action Step C:**

*Provide county specific, focused technical assistance on repeat maltreatment to four PCSAs with the highest percentage of repeat maltreatment (recurrence) incidents and that have the greatest adverse impact on overall statewide performance.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1 and 3-** A 24 month DART report on *Recurrence of Maltreatment* was produced on January 14, 2004. The report identified the percentage of cases in CY 2002 and CY 2003 where children (unduplicated count) involved in a substantiated or indicated report of child abuse or neglect had a second substantiated or indicated report within six (6) months of the first report. The data report included 88 Ohio PCSAs. As the outcome requires “looking forward” for a six (6) month period, data through the end of 2003 will not be available until September 2004

An analysis of the DART report was conducted to determine: (1) level of compliance with the national standard for repeat maltreatment; and (2) selection of counties for focused technical assistance. However, prior to the final selection of counties, an analysis was conducted on county performance on the national standard measures for reentries, reunification, stability of foster care placements, and abuse/neglect in foster care. Based upon this multi-faceted analysis it was determined that county specific focused technical assistance should be limited to two counties rather than four counties and an amendment to the PIP should be requested. The two counties targeted for focused technical assistance would be Cuyahoga and Franklin, which represent the largest child population base in Ohio. In addition, of the 88 counties in Ohio, current placement data in DART shows that these two counties combined have nearly 40% of the children in substitute care and, in turn, have the greatest impact on overall statewide performance for all the data indicators. By limiting the focused technical assistance to two counties this will allow for the type of specialized county specific intervention strategies envisioned with this approach.

The directors of Cuyahoga and Franklin have been contacted. Arrangements are being made to initiate the focused technical assistance with Franklin County. For Cuyahoga, the focused technical assistance will commence in April 2004. However, the process was initiated during the CPOE Stage V Entrance Conference that was held on March 19, 2004.

- **Benchmark 2-** The booklet, *Child Maltreatment Recurrence: A Leadership Initiative of the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment*, published by the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment in January 2003, and was reproduced for

distribution to each of the 88 PCSAs. Data on the characteristics of children and families involved in recurrent reports for each county was produced on March 24, 2004. Letters to each PCSA director, providing county specific data on the percentage of recurrent cases as well as the characteristics of children and families involved in recurrent reports is being developed.

- **Benchmarks 4-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## **SAFETY OUTCOME S1:**

Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect

**Item 2B.** *Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care.*

**Goal:** *In two years, Ohio will meet the National Standard of .57% indicated or substantiated abuse and/or neglect by substitute caregivers in substitute care settings.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Provide county specific, focused technical assistance (TA) to the four (4) PCSAs with the highest percentage of children who were abused/neglected in a substitute care setting by a substitute care provider and that have the greatest adverse impact on overall statewide performance in protecting children in substitute care from abuse/neglect.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1 and 2-** For this indicator, two data reports from DART were produced on February 5, 2004. The first report contained data for CY 2003 broken down by quarters. The second report contained five years of data. Discussions with program and data analysis staff, and a review of the literature, supported the decision to utilize the second report, *Five Year Report Of Abuse By The Foster Parent*. Longer periods of time were considered, because the incidence of maltreatment in care is relatively low. Otherwise, problem areas could be identified for corrective action that might be only attributed to random fluctuations. The five-year report identifies the percentages of cases for CY 1999 through CY 2003 where children were abused/neglected in a substitute care setting (foster care, group home and a children's residential treatment facility) by a substitute care provider.

An analysis of the five years of data was conducted to determine: (1) level of compliance with this data indicator and (2) selection of counties for focused technical assistance. However, prior to the final selection of counties, an analysis was conducted on county performance on the national standard measures for recurrence, reentries, reunification, and stability of foster care placements. Based upon this multi-faceted analysis it was determined that county specific focused technical assistance should be limited to two counties rather than four counties and an amendment to the PIP should be requested. The two counties targeted for focused technical assistance would be Cuyahoga and Franklin, which represent the largest child population base in Ohio. In addition, of the 88 counties in Ohio, current placement data in DART shows that these two counties combined have nearly 40% of the children in substitute care and, in turn, have the greatest impact on overall statewide performance for all the data indicators. By limiting the focused technical

assistance to two counties this will allow for the type of specialized county specific intervention strategies envisioned with this approach.

The directors of Cuyahoga and Franklin have been contacted. Arrangements are being made to initiate the focused technical assistance with Franklin County. Focused technical assistance for Cuyahoga county was initiated during the CPOE Stage V Entrance Conference that was held on March 19, 2004.

- **Benchmarks 4-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time***

#### **Action Step B:**

*Monitor PCSAs and PCPA compliance with new Ohio Administrative Code rules, which were effective January 1, 2003, requiring an increase in the mandated training hours and revisions to the mandated topics that included child maltreatment issues as a required topic for all foster caregivers.*

#### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-**Desk review of the required foster home training proposals and policies commenced April 2003 and was completed in January 2004. Eighty-four public children services agencies (PCSAs) were required to submit training proposals and policies. All were submitted and reviewed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office for Children and Families (OCF), Bureau of Accountability and Regulation staff and are on file with ODJFS. Four PCSAs were not required to submit a training proposal since the agencies do not have foster homes. These agencies submitted policies, which were reviewed and are on file with ODJFS.

One hundred and nine private agencies [Private Child Placing Agencies (PCPA) and Private Non-Custodial Agencies (PNA)] submitted a foster home training proposal and policies. All were reviewed by ODJFS, OCF, Bureau of Accountability and Regulation Staff and are on file with ODJFS. Benchmark 1 was achieved by January 15, 2004.

- **Benchmarks 2 and 3:**

Onsite review of PCSA, PCPA and PNAs foster caregiver training records including a sampling of newly certified and currently certified foster caregiver commenced June 2003 and is ongoing. For the period June 2003 through March 2, 2004, the following PCSAs, PCPAs and PNAs onsite visits were completed by March 2, 2004.

## PCSAs

- 47 onsite foster home record reviews
- 11 of the 47-onsite foster home reviews required corrective action plans (CAP) which were submitted within 10 working days of the exit interview.
- 17 onsite technical assistance visits to discuss new foster home rules

## PCPA and PNAs

- 38 onsite foster home recertification reviews
- 62 onsite (6 month) unannounced reviews
- 59 onsite annual (12 month) reviews
- 27 of the 159 onsite reviews required corrective action plans (CAP) which were submitted within 10 working days of the exit interview
- 44 onsite technical assistance visits to review the new foster home rules

Compliance reports were generated for all of the above listed reviews and are on file with ODJFS. In addition, the required CAPs are on file. Implementation of and compliance with the CAP is monitored at any subsequent onsite visit and by email, phone calls and letters.

Benchmarks 2 and 3 are ongoing activities with no end dates for these activities. Benchmarks 2 and 3 are considered to be achieved through the ongoing and regularly scheduled onsite reviews and technical assistance reviews.

- **Benchmark 4-** The PCSA, PCPA and PNAs written evaluation/assessment of the effectiveness of the training program is not required to be submitted by OAC rule until May 2005. This requirement has been discussed with agencies during onsite reviews.

## Action Step C:

*Support the passage of Ohio HB 117 that would require professional certification of youth care workers employed in residential facilities/ group homes.*

## **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** HB 117 is now HB 237. HB 237 is not scheduled for a hearing by the House as of March 2, 2004. ODJFS, OCF, Bureau of Accountability and Regulation staff have reviewed changes to the legislation and provided comments.
- **Benchmarks 2-3- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step D:**

*Promulgate Ohio Administrative Code rules requiring increased continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts targeting reduction of child maltreatment in residential facilities/group homes operated by PCSAs and private agencies and monitor compliance with the rules.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** In February 2004, staff began to examine other state agencies policies and procedures regarding their continuous quality improvement process. Research continues in examining public and private agency practices. Research findings will assist in the development of OAC rules.
  
- **Benchmarks 2-5-** *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.*

## **SAFETY OUTCOME S2:**

Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

**Item 3.** *Services to family to protect child (ren) in home and prevent removal.*

**Item 4.** *Risk of harm to child (ren).*

**Goal:** *In two years, improve the assessment of risk of harm to children through the use of new assessment tools.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Strengthen workers' skill in the assessment of safety and risk in order to appropriately identify service needs for children and families through the use of the Family Assessment and Planning Model (FAPM).*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** The FAPM pilot began in Hancock, Greene and Muskingum counties in July 2003. Lorain County joined the pilot in November 2003.
- **Benchmark 2-** Baseline data on repeat maltreatment and foster care re-entries for all four (4) counties was received on December 17, 2003. Data on frequency of case plan amendments has not been received. Staff training on the DART application occurred on January 26, 2004, and staff are currently working on development of monthly reports.
- **Benchmark 3-** The first round of case reviews to collect data for the process and outcome pilot evaluations was conducted in November 2003. A second round of case reviews was conducted, and the worker and supervisor surveys were distributed to the pilot agencies in February 2004. ODJFS is currently on target for compiling the case review and survey data for submission to the project vendor in March 2004 which should enable the vendor to complete the final pilot evaluation report by the June 2004 due date.

In addition, the department is working on reviewing and analyzing available risk assessment technology to determine what is best suited for practice in Ohio. To achieve that end the department will: request an independent evaluation of risk assessment technology by Dr. Mark Testa of the Children and Family Research Center; request a formal interpretation from HHS on the requirements for "statewideness" in SACWIS specifically relating to dual functionality of risk assessment tools, and sponsor a Risk Assessment Symposium which will include research and demonstrations of the draft FAPM along with the SDM model being utilized in Cuyahoga County.

- **Benchmark 4- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step B:**

*Increase the frequency of service reviews to ensure that services being provided are addressing the concerns identified in the safety and/or risk assessment through the use of the Family Assessment and Planning Model (FAPM).*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Status Report for Action Step A.***

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME P1:

Children have permanency and stability in their living situation

**Item 5.** *Foster care re-entries.*

**Goal:** *In two years, reduce the number of children re-entering foster care within 12-months from 13.1% 2002 AFCARS baseline data to 11.75%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Reduce incidents of foster care re-entry by identifying and addressing safety concerns and/or service needs prior to/at the time reunification through use of the Reunification Assessment Protocol (a component of the Family Assessment and Planning Model).*

### **Status Report:**

***Refer to Status Report for Items 3 and 4, Action Step A.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Provide county specific, focused technical assistance on foster care re-entries to four PCSAs with the highest percentage of re-entries of children into foster care; and that have the greatest adverse impact on overall statewide performance.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** A 24 month DART report on *Foster Care Re-entries* was produced on January 14, 2004. The report identified the percentage of children (unduplicated count) entering foster care (initial placement) in CY 2002 and CY 2003 who had experienced a prior foster care placement within the year prior to the initial placement. The data report included information on the 88 Ohio PCSAs.
- **Benchmark 2-**An analysis of the DART report was conducted to determine: (1) level of compliance with the national standard for foster care re-entries; and (2) selection of counties for the focused technical assistance. However, prior to the final selection of counties, an analysis was conducted on county performance on the national standard measures for recurrence, reunification, stability of foster care placements, and abuse/neglect in foster care. Based upon this multi-faceted analysis it was determined that county specific focused technical assistance should be limited to two counties rather than four counties and an amendment to the PIP should be requested. The two counties targeted for focused technical assistance would be Cuyahoga and Franklin, which represent the largest child population base in Ohio.

In addition, of the 88 counties in Ohio, current placement data in DART shows that these two counties combined have nearly 40% of the children in substitute care and, in turn, have the greatest impact on overall statewide performance for all the data indicators. By limiting the focused technical assistance to two counties this will allow for the type of specialized county specific intervention strategies envisioned with this approach.

The directors of Cuyahoga and Franklin have been contacted. Arrangements are being made to initiate the focused technical assistance with Franklin County. Focused technical assistance for Cuyahoga county was initiated during the CPOE Stage V Entrance Conference that was held on March 19, 2004.

- **Benchmarks 3-7- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME P1:

Children have permanency and stability in their living situation

**Item 6.**        *Stability of foster care placement.*

**GOAL:**        *In two years, Increase the stability of children in foster care placements from 84.5% 2002 AFCARS baseline data to 86.4%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Provide county specific, focused technical assistance to four (4) PCSAs with the highest percentage of children who have been in foster care less than 12 months who have experienced more than 2 placement moves; and that had the greatest adverse impact on overall statewide performance.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1 and 2-** Following a review of data in DART for CPOE Outcome Indicators 6A and 6C, it was determined that it would be more appropriate to utilize FFY2002 AFCARS data since it was a better measurement of this indicator. An analysis of the AFCARS data was conducted to determine: (1) level of compliance with the national standard for stability of foster care placements; and (2) selection of counties for the focused technical assistance. However, prior to the final selection of counties, an analysis was conducted on county performance on the national standard measures for recurrence, reentries, reunification, and abuse/neglect in foster care. Based upon this multi-faceted analysis it was determined that county specific focused technical assistance should be limited to two counties rather than four counties and an amendment to the PIP should be requested. The two counties targeted for focused technical assistance would be Cuyahoga and Franklin, which represent the largest child population base in Ohio. In addition, of the 88 counties in Ohio, current placement data in DART shows that these two counties combined have nearly 40% of the children in substitute care and, in turn, have the greatest impact on overall statewide performance for all the data indicators. By limiting the focused technical assistance to two counties this will allow for the type of specialized county specific intervention strategies envisioned with this approach.

The directors of Cuyahoga and Franklin have been contacted. Arrangements are being made to initiate the focused technical assistance with Franklin County. Focused technical assistance for Cuyahoga county was initiated during the CPOE Stage V Entrance Conference that was held on March 19, 2004.

- **Benchmarks 3-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Assist counties in determining the most appropriate placement for the child, providing support to maintain the child in that placement until the child can return home or be placed in another permanent setting:*

- *Develop a best practice resource manual and disseminate to PCSAs.*
- *Coordinate a panel of presenters for workshops at PCSAO's annual Child Welfare Conference to showcase best practices.*
- *Coordinate a panel of presenters for workshop at ODJFS' Annual Foster and Adoption Conference to showcase best practices.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** As mentioned under the above Action Step, FFY 2002 AFCARS data will be used rather than information from DART. Identification of counties that meet or exceed the national standard will be completed by March 31, 2004. Counties that significantly impact statewide totals will be surveyed during the month of April to begin collecting information regarding best practices in foster care, which will be a component of a best practice resource manual scheduled for statewide dissemination.
- **Benchmarks 2-7-** *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.*

### **Action Step C:**

*Sponsor resource family attendance at annual conferences to help them gain information on meeting a foster child's needs.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** A contract with the Ohio Family Care Association, a network of resource families including foster parents and respite care providers, was executed in February 2004 in order to sponsor training for resource families. One hundred fifty-eight resource providers participated in the conference held on February 26, 27, and 28, 2004, in Columbus. Subjects covered in the workshops included: mental health treatment, respite, prescription drug abuse, parenting the hurt child, conflict resolution, preventing abuse allegations, stress management, and helping youth achieve self-sufficiency. Overall evaluations were excellent. There are two additional resource family conferences scheduled. The next conference will occur in June 2004 and the last one will occur in August 2004.

### **Action Step D:**

*Assist counties in the recruitment of resource families.*

## Status Report:

- **Benchmark 1-** The Ohio Department of Administrative Services solicited requests for bids for recruitment materials to distribute to PCSAs. Items, which will be provided to agencies, include tote bags and license plate frames, which will bear the slogan, "Foster a Brighter Tomorrow", Become a Foster Parent. A vendor was selected by the middle of March and printing and distribution should be completed by March 31, 2004 so that agencies will have materials in time for May, which is Foster Care Recruitment Month.
- **Benchmark 2-** ODJFS is in the preliminary stages of working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's executive consultants John and Judith McKenzie for Ohio to be part of the Adopt U.S. Kids initiative. This initiative is designed to help managers prepare for upcoming national campaigns and give states guidance in developing their Title IV -B Plan and working to get local agency staff involved in recruitment efforts. The McKenzies came to Ohio for a two-day strategic planning session on March 17, 2004 and March 18, 2004. This effort is designed to develop a statewide marketing campaign to recruit and retain foster caregivers and adoptive parents.

The first strategic planning session included Ohio's major metropolitan counties, which have the greatest number of children in custody. The Department as well as each county represented developed goals to begin working toward. These goals are congruent with the Department's commitments in its Performance Improvement Plan developed in response to the Child and Family Services Review.

- **Benchmark 3- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME P1:

Children have permanency and stability in their living situation

**Item 8.** *Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives.*

**Goal:** *In two years, increase the percentage of timely reunifications, guardianships or permanent placements with relatives within 12 months of entry into foster care from 73.0% 2002 AFCARS baseline data to 75.4%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Standardize or increase the consistency of the use of concurrent case planning by PCSAs.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1-3- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***
- **Benchmark 4-** A request for technical assistance regarding concurrent case planning was made to the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning. ACF approved ODJFS' request on December 23, 2003. ODJFS will receive 10 days of technical assistance regarding case planning, family case conferencing and family engagement. OFJFS is currently in the process of establishing dates with the resource center.
- **Benchmarks 5-7- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Standardize the process of apprising parents of their rights by provision of a pamphlet to parents on parental rights, inclusive of involvement in case plan process, to be provided by the worker at the time of initial contact. (Refer to PIP Items 17, 18 & 25, and 20.)*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** The Adoption Services Section received samples of pamphlets apprising parents of their parental rights and case plan processes from other states and several Ohio agencies. Work is currently being done on development of the pamphlet.
- **Benchmarks 2 and 3- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step C:**

*Participate in the OCWTP development of competencies for the early identification, assessment and involvement of kinship caregivers in the placement selection and case planning process. Refer to PIP Items 14 and 15.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** The Institute for Human Services (IHS), contractor for Child Welfare curricula development in Ohio, and ODJFS staff worked together in November 2003 to develop a set of standard competencies for kinship caregivers. The curriculum is currently being developed and is based on the collaboration efforts between IHS and ODJFS. In addition, IHS will participate in ODJFS' meetings with the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning in the development of training on concurrent planning.
- **Benchmark 2- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step D:**

*Provide county specific, focused technical assistance (TA) to four (4) PCSAs with the highest percentage of non-compliance in achieving reunification of a child within 12 months of removal from the home; and that have the greatest adverse impact on overall statewide performance.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** On January 14, 2004, 2002 and CY 2003 data reports were produced from DART on CPOE outcome Indicator 13(A): *Length of time to achieve reunification* to determine county level of compliance with the national standard of achieving reunification within 12 months of removal from the home.
- **Benchmark 2-**An analysis of the DART report was conducted to determine: (1) level of compliance with reunification of children; and (2) selection of counties for the focused technical assistance. However, prior to the final selection of counties, an analysis was conducted on county performance on the national standard measures for recurrence, reentries, stability of foster care placements, and abuse/neglect in foster care. Based upon this multi-faceted analysis it was determined that county specific focused technical assistance should be limited to two counties rather than four counties and an amendment to the PIP should be requested. The two counties targeted for focused technical assistance would be Cuyahoga and Franklin, which represent the largest child population base in Ohio. In addition, of the 88 counties in Ohio, current placement data in DART shows that these two counties combined have nearly 40% of the children in substitute care and, in turn, have the greatest impact on overall statewide performance for all the data indicators. By limiting the focused technical assistance to two counties this will allow for the type of specialized

county specific intervention strategies envisioned with this approach.

- **Benchmark 3-** The directors of Cuyahoga and Franklin have been contacted. Arrangements are being made to initiate the focused technical assistance with Franklin County. Focused technical assistance for Cuyahoga county was initiated during the CPOE Stage V Entrance Conference that was held on March 19, 2004.
- **Benchmarks 4-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time***

**Action Step E:**

*Services are accessible to families and children during placement and post-placement.  
Refer to Items 5 and 36.*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Items 5 and 36.***

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME P1:

Children have permanency and stability in their living situation

**Item 9.**      *Adoption.*

**Goal:**      *In two years Ohio will increase the percentage rate of finalized adoptions from 28.2% 2002 AFCARS baseline data to 31.1%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Improve relationship with courts in order to improve case flow through courts and enhance existing policies and procedures to decrease the length of time to achieve permanent custody.*

- \$ Decrease the length of time to filing TPR cases*
- \$ Determine if comments regarding the appellate process are a result of improper judicial practice or unrealistic expectations.*
- \$ Increase communication and nurture positive relationships between county, state and court personnel in an effort to decrease adverse relationships between entities.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Two reports were prepared to analyze the length of time it takes to complete the permanent commitment process. The first report was completed on December 30, 2002, and the second report was completed on June 30, 2003. The outcomes derived from the first report were presented at the November 2003 Statewide Foster and Adoption Conference, which included public and private child welfare agency personnel and adoptive and foster parents.

Both reports examined Ohio's population of children legally free for adoption. The statistical data revealed that 61% of children adopted in FFY 2002 were permanently committed within 18 months.

The report included information on the variances in the largest counties' performances in achieving permanent commitments within 18 months for children adopted in FFY 2002. (by the metro counties.)

County	Variance in Performance
Cuyahoga	52%
Franklin	45%
Hamilton	60%
Lucas	75%
Montgomery	45%
Stark	57%
Summit	85%

The CPOE discussions with Franklin County Children Services (FCCS) indicated that children are maintained in temporary custody for two years before Permanent Court Commitment (PCC) is granted and that most PCC cases are appealed. FCCS uses concurrent case planning, which keeps permanency for the child in the forefront of the case. Cuyahoga CDJFS CPOE discussions identified the court system as a significant barrier that impedes their ability to achieve a higher rate of commitments within 18 months. Summit County Children Services (SCCS) on the other hand, does not view court delays as a problem; however, it does take 15 to 18 months for the appeals court to render a decision on any appeal. SCCS files a concurrent plan at the point of adjudication. The family is made aware of the concurrent plan and the court looks closely at the ten-month review and speaks openly with the family regarding the 12-month custody requirements.

Information regarding the impact of timely permanent commitment has on the CFSR measure of finalizing 32% of children adopted within 24 months was presented to the Judicial College on May 16, 2003. The Judicial College is comprised of Probate and Juvenile judges throughout Ohio.

- **Benchmarks 2-9- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step B:**

*Develop a best practices model for expediting permanency planning for children once an agency files a motion for permanent custody or once the court has granted the agency permanent custody.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** ODJFS developed a Permanency Planning survey that is designed to determine how organizational structures and local practices either enhance or impede the speed with which children are adopted. The survey will be posted on the ODJFS' Inner Web site March 26, 2004. Results of the survey will be analyzed by the ODJFS Quality Assurance vendor. Based on the results ODJFS will produce an adoption permanency planning protocol. The protocol will be distributed to counties by May 30, 2004.

- **Benchmarks 2-6- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step C**

*Prevent delays in finalized adoptions due to lack of preparation of children and families.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1, 2 and 3-** The Subsidy Guide "JFS 01985" was placed in Office Departmental Clearance on December 26, 2003. OCF provided a two-week review period in which counties could provide input regarding the proposed document. The document was revised based upon input from counties and other child welfare stakeholders. At the same time OAC rules were being revised to include a revised definition of special needs and changes to the federal and state subsidy programs. Due to the upcoming revisions to OAC rules the Subsidy Guide was re-drafted to include broader language that would continue to be relevant regardless of changes made to OAC rules. ODJFS, Office of Legal Services is in the process of final review of the Subsidy Guide and it is anticipated that it will be released prior to the next PIP reporting period.
- **Benchmark 4-** All Adoption Assessor trainers affiliated with the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) were invited by both the Institute of Human Services and ODJFS to attend one of the Adoption rule trainings conducted by ODJFS during October 2003.
- **Benchmark 6-** Ohio's Statewide Assessment and findings by the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) team notes that adoption delays may be attributed to a variety of causes including a lack of preparation of children and families involved in the adoption process, resulting in untimely adoption finalizations. One element of child and family preparation involves the provision of an adoption subsidy to assist families in supporting and maintaining the post finalization relationship.

Ohio monitors compliance of both Title IV-E and State adoption assistance programs administered by counties. Title IV-E and its subdivision Nonrecurring Reimbursement of Expenses, is an open-ended entitlement program. Title IV-E adoption subsidy rates made on behalf of individual children are negotiated for each family but may not exceed comparable foster family care rates. Nonrecurring Reimbursement of Expenses although not as complex as the Title IV-E program, provides a one time only reimbursement for expenses incurred by the family in the adoption of a special needs child.

The ORC authorizes ODJFS to design and implement two subsidy programs that are supportive of pre and post adoptive placement relationships: State Adoption Maintenance (SAMS) and Post Adoption Special Service Subsidy (PASSS).

The article, *Meeting the Challenges to Adoption Assistance for Special Needs Children* (Lakin, 1996) emphasizes the importance of “those guiding the development of policy and those providing leadership in special needs adoption programs and practice to ensure that everyone who influences policy and funding are adequately informed of the issues involved in special needs adoptions.” ODJFS provides monitoring, technical assistance and training to counties to ensure consistency and compliance with federal and state mandates and guidance.

According to the *2002 CPOE Comprehensive Annual Report*, county agencies believe that the current negotiation process for adoption subsidies has been a barrier to timely adoption finalizations. In addition, several focus groups and telephone surveys have been conducted to identify elements of the adoption processes that prevent adoption finalizations from occurring in a timely manner. Between March and July of 2002, 25 groups of adoptive parents, foster parents and children in foster care indicated that the most significant barrier when deciding to move from foster care to adoptive placement status is the lack of adequate financial support and ancillary services.

Between June and December of 2002, 450 parents were involved in a telephone survey that gleaned the following responses and percentages related to the topic of adoption subsidies.

- 75% of the parents interviewed reported being aware of adoption subsidy; however, many parents could not recall the details of their subsidy.
- 50% of the parents indicated they had no input into the amount of subsidy they received.
- 34% percent of the parents felt their subsidy did not adequately provide for the needs of their child.
- 25% felt it was difficult to reach agreement on the amount of the subsidy and services to be provided for their child.
- 41% felt their child would manifest future needs for which they would be unable to provide.

When parents believe their adoption subsidy package is inequitable, Ohio provides a State Hearing mechanism for parents to engage for final resolution. For the purpose of hearings oversight, Ohio is divided into five major regions (districts) - Cleveland, Columbus, Canton, Cincinnati and Toledo. The Hearing Section in each district is responsible for hearing cases related to adoption subsidy for counties located in their geographical location.

In order for Ohio to establish and function under the auspices of a total quality management framework, ODJFS believed that it was necessary to examine initial state hearings to further validate previous findings and assumptions obtained from CPOE and telephone and focus group surveys. The purpose of the state hearing review was to identify patterns that may be occurring within the state regarding adoption subsidy that delay children from having permanency in their living situation.

Upon request of the Adoption Services Section, the Office of Legal Services provided the Disposition Report of initial state hearings that had been requested and those that had been heard in the five regional districts of Ohio. The review period was comprised of dates between October 1, 2003, to December 31, 2003.

The following tables reflect information contained in the Disposition Report which is summarized according to districts, county involvement, issue presented at the initial state hearing and the outcome. In the last two columns the abbreviation "S" stands for Sustained, meaning the hearing decision given was in favor of the person requesting the hearing. The letter "O" equals Overruled, meaning the hearing officer found the appeal by the person requesting the state hearing was not warranted. The numbers in either the "S" or the "O" column represents the number of appeals sustained or overruled related to the content of the hearing summarized in the column labeled issue.

<b>District Office</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>
<b>Cleveland</b>	Cuyahoga	Sibling group of 3, individual cases, parents believed the amount of AA was not sufficient to meet the child's needs.		3
	Cuyahoga	AA terminated at age 18; parents believed child has special needs to warrant continuation of subsidy until age 21.	2	
	Cuyahoga	Parents alleged agency error in determining ADC relatedness at the time of removal from biological parents home.	1	
	Summit	Agency denied Nonrecurring Expenses; parents did not make application and sign agreement prior to finalization of the adoption (international adoption).		1

<b>District Office</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>
<b>Toledo</b>	Wyandot	Sibling group of 2; individual cases, parents believed the amount of AA was not sufficient to meet the child's needs.		2
	Lucas	Sibling group of 2; AA payment terminated by Agency. The parents alleged an error in custody status.	2	

<b>District Office</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>
<b>Canton</b>	Stark	Application for AA made after finalization of the adoption.	1	

<b>District Office</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>
<b>Columbus</b>	Montgomery	Private agency held custody of child; parents felt child should have been eligible for IV-E. Post AA	1	
	Montgomery	Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy, agency denied services requested by the family.	1	
	Franklin	Agency denied Nonrecurring Expenses; parents did not make application and sign agreement prior to finalization of the adoption (international adoption).		1
	Franklin	AA terminated at age 18; parents believed child has special needs that warrant continuation of subsidy until age 21.		1
	Butler	Sibling group of 2, AA terminated at age 18, individual cases, parents believe the children have special needs that warrant continuation of the subsidy until age 21.	1	1
	Fayette	Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy, agency denied services requested by family.	2	
	Greene	Sibling group of 2, individual cases, Agency denied Nonrecurring Expenses; parents did not make application and sign agreement prior to finalization of the adoption (international adoption).		2
	Medina	2 appeals, Private agency held custody, best interest issued beyond 180 days. AA application denied as was Nonrecurring Expenses.		2
	Clark	Private agency adoption, Post AA application denied.		1

<b>District Office</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>
<b>Cincinnati</b>	Butler	Agency denied Nonrecurring Expenses; parents did not make application and sign agreement prior to finalization of the adoption (international adoption).		2
	Butler	Adoptive parents believed ADC relatedness should have been established.		1
	Clermont	Agency terminated AA payments and Medicaid; parents requested that Medicaid eligibility for another program be established prior to termination of the AA.	1	
	Hamilton	Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy, agency denied services requested by family.		1

### **Analysis**

The review revealed that the majority of hearings were related to Title IV-E issues. However, the data did not indicate a pattern of specific issues related to the Title IV-E subsidy program. It appeared the types of issues presented were consistent regionally. All of the Title IV-E cases reviewed, except for three, were finalized adoptions. Consequently, review of the initial state hearings did not permit any conclusions to be drawn on patterns of issues involved in state hearings that are impacting the length of time to adoption related to the hearing process.

The content of each hearing was also reviewed. Although the format of each hearing is consistent, the interpretation of OAC rules related to adoption subsidy varied. It was also noted that one hearing analysis inferred that Title IV-E subsidy payment for the appellant was consistent with the standard subsidy rate for a child with similar needs. Part of the hearing officer's interpretation of OAC rules is not consistent with the intent of the policy or in compliance with federal regulations or guidance. Once a hearing decision is made in error, it cannot be reversed. This observation substantiated the need for training regarding policy clarification.

The review of initial hearings also indicated that some issues presented for hearing could have been resolved at the county conference level. For example, OAC rules require parents to submit documentation indicating the child has a special need that would continue their Title IV-E benefits after they reach the age of 18. If the documentation is sent in a timely manner there is no need to hold a state hearing. The agency with correct documentation can continue the benefits.

It is recommended that:

- ODJFS' OCF, Adoption Services Section develops and provide hearing officers and hearing supervisors with training on the program areas' interpretation of the administrative policy.
- ODJFS, Office of Legal Services and the ODFJS, OCF, Adoption Services Section train county workers on writing appeal summaries.
- ODJFS train county workers to effectively use county conferences to assist in limiting the number of state hearings.
- ODJFS, OCF, Adoption Services Section provide focused technical assistance, via video conference, to counties located in the Cuyahoga and Columbus Hearing Districts.

#### **Action Step D:**

*Components of supplemental case planning (concurrent case planning) processes implemented by counties will consist of viable activities to implement secondary goals of case plans.*

- *Define the advantages of utilizing supplemental case planning (concurrent planning).*
- *Define the advantages of utilizing foster to adopt placements with counties.*
- *Ensure adoption case paperwork is completed expeditiously.*

#### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1 (page 109)** - A request for technical assistance regarding concurrent case planning was made to the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning. ACF approved ODJFS' request on December 23, 2003. ODFS is currently in the process of establishing dates with the resource center.
- **Benchmarks 2-3 (page 110)** - ***These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***
- **Benchmark 1 (page 110)**- The Adoption rules contained in Chapter 5101:2-48 of the OAC went into Departmental Clearance on March 26, 2003. All comments were reviewed and a final document was prepared. The adoption rules became effective September 1, 2003, and statewide training was provided to public and private adoption agencies on the following dates:

September 3, 2003 - September 4, 2003  
September 9, 2003 - September 10, 2003

September 17, 2003 - September 18, 2003  
September 24, 2003 - September 25, 2003  
October 1, 2003 - October 2, 2003  
October 7, 2003 - October 8, 2003

Part of the rule packet contained the following requirements:

- Requires agencies to obtain social and medical information prior to the termination of parental rights in order to expedite the movement of cases toward adoption.
  - Requires agencies to obtain additional information about the child following termination of parental rights and up until the filing of the final version of the JFS 01616 "Social and Medical History." Ohio law has provisions that the JFS 01616 may be revised by birth parents or any other significant party with information after finalization.
  - Requires adoption agencies to develop and complete the Child Study Inventory (CSI) no later than 30 days after permanent custody (PC) or the permanent surrender of a child.
  - Requires Ohio adoption agencies utilize a standardized form to ensure disclosure of information to all prospective adoptive parents. Prior to the adoptive placement the JFS 01667 "Adoption Information Disclosure" must be completed and signed by the adoptive parent(s) and agency representative verifying receipt of and notification of the child's background information, including history of violence and adjudications
- **Benchmark 2 (page 110) - *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME P2:

The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children

**Item 14.** *Preserving connections.*

**Item 15.** *Relative placement.*

### **Goal:**

*Increase worker's skills in working with families whose children are in substitute care placement so they will be able to preserve primary connections of the child while the child is in foster care placement.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Provide training to local children services agencies to encourage workers to:*

- *Explore visitation and placement with non-custodial parents (particularly fathers), unless it is not in the child's best interests.*
- *Consider utilizing family group decision-making to engage parents and others in addressing the needs of children and allow children to remain in their own homes or be safely reunified*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** ODJFS requested and received approval (December 23, 2003) for 10 days of technical assistance from the National Resource Center to conduct workshops and offer a training of trainers session regarding involving fathers in case planning and engaging the family in group decision making. These workshops and training of trainer sessions are not planned until SFY 2005 in July and October 2004 respectively.
- **Benchmark 2-** ***This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Increase knowledge of local agency staff on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).*

- *Present the requirements to seek written verification of a child's heritage and membership with a tribe prior to placement.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** ODJFS sponsored an Adoption and Foster Care Conference in November 2003 for local public and private child welfare staff as well as foster care

providers. This conference included a plenary session and a follow-up breakout session involving compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act. 201 participants attended the plenary session, and 25 participants attended the breakout session. Participants attending the sessions felt that they were useful and expressed an interest in receiving additional training. The plenary session was video taped and is available for viewing for those who were unable to attend.

- **Benchmark 2-** A guidance letter containing background information regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act and a protocol for contacting Tribal representatives was drafted in December 2003 and forwarded internally through channels for comments during a clearance process. Clearance comments were received through February 2004. The draft guidance letter is in the process of being reviewed to determine whether revisions are needed. The guidance letter should be posted on the ODJFS "Inner Web" for review by local agencies by March 31, 2004. In addition, although not originally included as part of the PIP, the Department is planning to hold a video conference to provide local agencies with guidance and respond to questions regarding the guidance letter. The Department is currently requesting NICWA participate in the video conference as a co-presenter. The video conference is tentatively scheduled for April 13, 2004.
  
- **Benchmarks 3-4- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

#### **Action Step C:**

*Include in the best practice resource manual referenced under Item 6, how agencies are effectively working with non-custodial fathers and extended relatives to assure that connections are preserved.*

#### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** FFY 2002 AFCARS data will be used rather than information from DART to identify counties that meet or exceed the national standard by March 31, 2004, which is after the writing of this status report. Counties that significantly impact statewide totals will be surveyed during the month of April to begin collecting information regarding best practices in foster care, which will eventually be part of a best practice resource manual.

#### **Action Step D:**

*Incorporate into CPOE case record review instrument monitoring the preservation of connections and relative placements.*

#### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1 and 2- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOME WB1:

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

**Item 17.** *Needs and services of child, parent, foster parents.*

**Item 18.** *Child and family involvement in case planning.*

**Item 25** *Process for ensuring each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s) that includes the required provisions.*

**GOAL:** *In two years, increase parent, child and caregiver participation in case planning by 3%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Establish baseline for outcomes in order to measure level of improvement.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** More than 30 case record reviews were conducted by February 2004. Staff is on target for completing the 44 reviews indicated in the PIP by June 2004.

### **Action Step B:**

*Strengthen workers' skills in engaging families in the case planning and case plan review processes in order to increase parent, caregiver, and child involvement in case plan development and reassessment.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Technical assistance from the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning was requested and approved (December 23, 2003). Program staff will work with the resource center to draft the guides that will be presented to a work group of PCSA and state staff for review and input prior to publication. The work group will be the same group of individuals convened to revise the case plan and semi-annual administrative review tools (See Action Step D).
- **Benchmarks 2-6-** *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.*

### **Action Step C:**

*Inform parents, children and caregivers of the concerns identified in the assessment and their right to participate in development of case plan activities to address the identified concerns.*

**Status Report:**

**Benchmark 1-5- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step D:**

*Revise case plan and Semiannual Administrative Review documents to be more understandable by families and caregivers (to be completed concurrently with Action Step B).*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Staff is developing the plan for recruiting work group members that will be representative of the various county size strata and all geographic areas of the state. ODJFS, OCF, Bureau of Outcome Management field offices will solicit participation for the work group from county agencies based on the selection criteria and other stakeholders (e.g., representatives from the training program) will also be invited to participate.
  
- **Benchmarks 2-7- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## **CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOME WB1:**

Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their childrens needs.

**Item 20.**     *Worker visits with parent(s).*

**Goal:**       *In two years, increase frequency of worker visits with all parties listed on the case plan by 3%.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Establish baseline for outcomes in order to measure level of improvement.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** CPOE reports for 15 of the 31 completed CPOE Stage 5 reviews were selected to establish a baseline for this item. The sizes of the counties in the sample included: one (1) small; four (4) medium-small; three (3) medium; four (4) large; two (2) metro; and one (1) major metro. All regions of the state were represented. For protective supervision cases, the percentage of cases where the worker made face-to-face contact with the parent or guardian listed on the case plan no less than monthly ranged from 0% to 100% with the average being 58%. For substitute care cases the percentage of cases where the worker made face-to-face contact according to rule requirements ranged from 33% to 89% with an average of 64.34%.

### **Action Step B:**

*Revise case plan rules for voluntary (no court order) cases to provide guidelines on frequency and purpose of workers visits with parent(s) and clarify expectations for visits with absent parent.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** OAC rule 5101:2-39-08 *Requirements for PCSA case plan for in-home supportive services (no court order)* is being revised to specify that the worker will attempt face-to-face contact with each parent, guardian or custodian and child listed on the case plan no less than monthly to monitor progress on case plan objectives.
- **Benchmarks 2-6-** *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.*

### **Action Step C:**

*Develop tools to enhance worker skills in conducting outcome focused worker visits with*

*parents, children and caregivers.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Technical assistance from the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning was requested and approved (December 23, 2003). Program staff will work with the resource center to draft the discussion tools, which will be presented to the work group of PCSA and state staff (see Item 17/18/25, Action Step D) for review and input prior to publication.
  
- **Benchmarks 2-6-** *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.*

## **CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOME WB2:**

Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs

**Item 21.** *Educational needs of the child.*

**Goal:** *Enhance the delivery of services needed to help children achieve academic success that is commensurate with their abilities.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Partner with the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) to assist school districts, which are/would like to be Community Alternative Funding System (CAFS) providers.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Provide information to PCSAs regarding student rights and how to request development of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1 and 2- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step C:**

*Work with Ohio Family and Children First to promote an integrated network of educationally based supportive services.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1 and 2-** The Healthy Youth Steering Committee met on December 9, 2003, to review school-based survey instruments that could be utilized to better identify presenting issues of students. Participants in the meeting included representatives from the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH), the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services (ODADAS), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the ODJFS, and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH); *Partnerships for Success*; and The Ohio State University. Possible assessment tool options identified by the Healthy Youth Steering Committee are currently being reviewed by the Governor's Cabinet Council. The current work of the Healthy Youth

Subcommittee designated to establish an integrated network of school-based supportive services has been incorporated into the *Behavioral Health Care Budget and Policy Initiative* described in Item 36, Action Step A.

**Action Step D:**

*Monitor completion of ODHS 1443, Child Education and Health Information.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** During the CPOE Stage 4 reviews, which ended on June 30, 2003, PCSAs were monitored on completion of the *ODHS 1443, Child Education and Health Information*. Of the 85 counties reviewed (three counties were not reviewed during CPOE Stage 4 because they participated in the CFSR review) it was determined that statewide compliance was at 63%. CPOE Stage 5 commenced on July 1, 2003. As of this date, statewide compliance with this requirement is currently at 80%. Thus far, there has been a 17% level of improvement in completion of the ODHS 1443.

**Action Step E:**

*Support joint initiatives by ODMH and ODE, which address emotional and behavioral problems that compromise student success.*

**Status Report:**

***See Item 36, Action Step D***

## **CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOME WB3:**

Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs

**Item 22.**     *Physical health of child.*

**Goal:**         *Strengthen inter-system collaboration to better meet the physical health needs of children in the child welfare system.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Clarify PCSA and PCPA responsibilities for:*

- *effectively assessing health needs*
- *coordinating the provision of appropriate services to meet health needs*
- *documenting services needed/provided and services needed but unable to be provided and the reasons why.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1- *Not scheduled for completion until the end of the month, which is after the date of internal submission of this report.***
- **Benchmarks 2-3- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step B:**

*Work with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) to provide information to PCSAs regarding utilization of public oral health services.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** A meeting was held with representatives of the ODJFS, OCF and the ODH divisions of: Community Services, Oral Health Care, and School Nursing on February 2, 2004, to initiate discussions regarding inaccessibility of services for children in the child welfare system and options for care.

Discussions were held with a representative of the Ohio Family Care Association on February 11, 2004, regarding various means of increasing foster parent awareness of health care service providers and specialized programming.

- **Benchmark 2- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step C:**

*Increase PCSAs' awareness of available local health care services.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOME WB3:

Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs

**Item 23.**     *Mental health of child.*

**Goal:**        *Enhance the accessibility of mental health services provided to children and families in the child welfare system.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Support Ohio Department of Mental Health's (ODMH) efforts to increase the consistent utilization of assessment tools.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** In September 2003, ODMH implemented OAC rules mandating all certified agencies to participate in a standardized statewide consumer outcomes system. In an effort to ensure effectiveness of services rendered, ODMH developed the *Consumer Outcomes Procedural Manual*. This document features the use of *Ohio Scales or the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS)* to establish baseline data and subsequent indicators of change in client functioning, symptomology, health, safety, and quality of life perceptions.

ODMH presented an overview of *Ohio Scales* at a meeting hosted by PCSAO on September 2, 2003. Meeting attendees included representatives of OCF, PCSAO, the Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies (OACCA), The Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA), PCSAs, and treatment providers.

- **Benchmarks 2-** *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.*
- **Action Step B:**

*Provide training to therapists, caseworkers, adoptive and foster parents regarding the special behavioral healthcare needs of children in out-of-home care and in adoptive placements.*

### **Status Report:**

**Benchmark 1-** ODJFS, OCF sponsored a daylong training for therapists regarding the special needs of children in adoptive and out-of home placements on November 12, 2003. Twenty-six treatment specialists representing the fields of clinical social work, psychology, and counseling attended the seminar.

ODFJS, OCF sponsored a three-day conference for parents, children (day 3 only), as

well as public and private service providers on November 13-15, 2003. *Building Permanent Connections* featured 5 institutes, 34 workshops, and 2 plenary sessions addressing such topics as developing independent living skills, placement disruption prevention, skill-building to promote healthy attachment, survival behaviors of children in out-of-home care, and ethical decision-making in adoption and foster care. 384 people attended this event. Analysis of workshop evaluation forms indicate that the majority of participants found these workshops to be useful in applying the information provided to practice (Ratings: 43% excellent; 37 % Very Good; 19% Good; <1 % Fair; <1% Poor).

### **Action Step C:**

*Promote the provision of specialized programming for children of parents who are addicted to alcohol or other drugs*

### **Status Report:**

**Benchmark 1-** ODADAS expanded the program reimbursement of prevention services under funding provided via the HB 484 in the Fall of 2002. Boards were initially notified of this change on October 2, 2002. Since that time, staff of ODADAS has met with providers to discuss related program designs. During this reporting period, technical assistance was provided to 40 providers of the Stark County ADAMHS Board on January 22, 2004, and 50 providers representing the statewide Women's Network on February 13, 2004.

- **Benchmark 2-** *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.*

### **Action Step D:**

*Provide further technical assistance to PCSAs and local treatment providers regarding initiatives, best practice methods and funding resources for behavioral healthcare programming.*

### **Status Report:**

**Benchmark 1-** During the Fall of 2003, representatives of ODADAS and ODJFS, Office of Family Stability (OFS) met to revise a matrix delineating funding reimbursement streams for all billable substance abuse services. Categories include: Medicaid, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), HB 484 funds, and the ODADAS State Block Grant. While completed, ODADAS has not yet released this document due to delays in the completion of an Inter-Agency Agreement between ODADAS and ODJFS associated with the transfer TANF funds. The Inter-Agency Agreement has recently been completed and it is anticipated that the funding matrix will be released to the county ADAS/ADAMHS Boards responsible for administering these funds in April 2004.

Technical Assistance was provided to members of the KIDS Coalition of the Ohio

Association of County Behavioral Health Care Authorities (OACBHCA) on November 4, 2003; the Stark County ADAMHS Board on January 22, 2004; the Women's Network on February 13, 2004; and The Youngstown Neil Kennedy Center on March 4, 2004.

**Action Step E:**

*Identify behavioral healthcare treatment capacity, gaps in services and needs for specialized programming.*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 36, Action Step A.***

**Action Step F:**

*Serve in an advisory capacity on program evaluation projects, conducted by ODADAS and ODMH, to assess the effectiveness of behavioral healthcare treatment services*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 36, Action Step B.***

**Action Step G:**

*Work with ODMH and Ohio Health Plans to expand the continuum of mental healthcare services.*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 36, Action Step C.***

**Action Step H:**

*Support the partnership designed to provide assessment, intervention and treatment services within the school system.*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 36, Action Step D.***

**Action Step I:**

*Provide training to PCSAs and treatment providers regarding issues associated with federal confidentiality laws.*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 36, Action Step E.***

**Action Step J:**

*Work with the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) to improve consistency in purchasing of services among PCSAO (See Item 36, Action Step F).*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 36, Action Step F.***

## **SYSTEMIC FACTOR 2:**

Case review system

**Item 27.** *Provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.*

**Goal I:** *To increase ODJFS' ability to identify the percentage of children who have had timely hearings.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Develop a formal process for identifying courts that consistently exceed prescribed time frames for judicial hearings (Reference Item 9).*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-6- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

## SYSTEMIC FACTOR 2:

Case review system

**Item 27.** *Provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.*

**Goal II:** To examine the efficacy of the state system of juvenile court case processing and identify ameliorative steps for correction.

### Action Steps A:

*Determine if overcrowding of court dockets is contributing to Ohio's timeliness of reviews .*

### Action Step B:

*Determine if comments regarding excessive continuances are a result of improper judicial practice or unrealistic expectations.*

### **Status Report:**

The benchmarks for Action Steps A and B are the same. The intent of these action steps is to establish a collaborative system between ODJFS and the Supreme Court of Ohio (SCO) in order to:

- jointly evaluate court functioning in relation to child welfare issues;
- identify jurisdictions that are functioning effectively and/or experiencing difficulty;
- identify causes of success and/or difficulty; and
- provide on-site assistance to communities in implementing effective practices.

The following represents current status of benchmarks 1- 6.

- **Benchmark 1** - A series of meetings was held with the SCO regarding the CFSR, the purpose and importance of the process, and the need for SCO's active participation in addressing court-related needs identified through the process. ODJFS and SCO staff jointly reviewed the HHS final report and developed a collaborative plan to address issues.

- **Benchmark 2-** SCO agreed to create a position that would be responsible for doing on-site and statistical evaluation of various court processes and working on-site in court jurisdictions to improve the case flow process management of child welfare cases. It was determined that this position's functions would be integrated with SCO's management of the Court Improvement Program, focusing the attention of the Court Improvement Program on achievement of court-related PIP activities. The position was posted in February 2003 and filled in March 2003.
- **Benchmark 3-** SCO and ODJFS staff jointly embarked on a series of informational presentations regarding the process, appearing at a range of professional membership meetings for both judges and public children services agencies. These included presentations at:
  - Executive Leadership Council (with advocates)
  - Public Children Services Association Directors Meeting
  - Ohio Association of Juvenile Judges
  - Ohio Child Welfare Training Program instructors
  - Adoption and Family Law State Managers
  - Statewide Adoption Conference

The Ohio Judicial College sponsored two training sessions for judges who preside over family law matters specifically regarding the findings of the Child and Family Services Review and court-related activities. A power point presentation was developed and disseminated to all judges.

A series of articles, specifically regarding the findings of the Child and Family Services Review and court-related activities, was developed. These included:

- Article in *Heartbeat*. This newsletter is published and widely distributed by the PCSAO.
- Two articles in the Children, Families and the Court Bulletin, the newsletter prepared by the National Center on Juvenile Justice and jointly sponsored by SCO and ODJFS. This document is distributed to all juvenile, domestic relations, and probate judges, magistrates and court administrators; public children services agencies directors; members of family related SCO and ODJFS advisory groups; and a designated mailing list of individuals.
- **Benchmark 4-** SCO and ODJFS determined that the process would be best served by keeping the procedure as simple as possible. The following process was established and conveyed to PCSA staff:
  - Reports are to be made to ODJFS staff
  - The report must:
    - Clearly identify a consistent pattern rather than single or isolated events.

- Be documented over a period of time.
  - Be supported by specific case events.
  - Contain information that permits on-site review of referenced case records.
- It was determined that specific forms or data elements would not be required.

Upon receipt of a report, the ODJFS Justice Services Administrator contacts the SCO Director of Judicial and Court Services to develop a review plan. Preliminary activities include review of the report, collection of relevant statistical data and contact with the local court. Appropriate action is jointly developed between SCO and the local court.

- **Benchmark 5** The first court to request on-site review was Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. Between August 2003 and January 2004, SCO conducted a case management review of dependency hearings. The review consisted of:
  - Interviews with all stakeholders
  - Observation of dependency hearings
  - File review
  - Review of applicable state and local rules, and state statute

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges provided Ohio with new tools for recording and evaluating on-site observations during reviews.

- **Benchmark 6** A written report on the Cuyahoga County findings as measured against best practices set forth in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' "Resource Guidelines," and various guidelines set forth by the American Bar Association and the National Center for State Courts is expected by the close of March 2004.

In response to preliminary observations, Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court has implemented new rules and procedures for emergency custody orders and child removals.

**Action Step C:**

*Determine if comments regarding the appellate process are a result of improper judicial practice or unrealistic expectations.*

## **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 6** In June 2003, SCO recruited legal interns to collect data on all Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) appeals filed in 2002 in each of Ohio's 12 appellate districts. A set of data elements and a data collection system was developed by SCO in collaboration with the Appellate Court Administrators. The data collection process was completed by January 2004. SCO is working with an outside consultant for data analysis functions. Analysis is expected to be completed by the end of July 2004. Results will be shared with the Appellate Courts, including judges and administrators. Effective methodologies with highlighted and technical assistance plans will be developed for districts that are experiencing excessive delays. The process and final report will be highlighted in an issue of *Children, Families and the Court Bulletin*.

## **Action Step D:**

*Identify state trends or system barriers that contribute to extended case processing.*

## **Status Report:**

Progress on this action step is being made as a part of Action Steps A-C. Additionally, the following represents the current status of Benchmark 7 as it relates to the completion of this Action Step.

- **Benchmark 7**- ODJFS staff has requested the following data from the Bureau of Outcomes Management on a state and aggregate basis:
  - Number of Custody Complaints Filed (Event 150)
  - Number of complaints for which an emergency shelter care hearing is held (Event 152)
  - Number (and percentage) of those held within 24 hours (Event 150)
  - Number (and percentage) of those held within 72 hours
  - Number of complaints for which an adjudicatory hearing is held (Event 162)
  - Number (and percentage) of adjudicatory hearings held within 30 days of event
  - Number (and percentage) of adjudicatory hearings held within 60 days.
  - Number of hearings for which a value of 01 is filed.
  - Number of these that have a subsequent (Event 150).
  - Number of hearings with values 2-4 that have a dispositional hearing (Event 164) within 30 days of Event 162
  - Number of dispositional hearings with values 2-8 that were held within 60 days of Event 150

Data was provided in March 2004. At that time, SCO and ODJFS state staff will identify jurisdictions, if any, that are experiencing excessive delays.

## SYSTEMIC FACTOR 2:

Case review system

**Item 27.** *Provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.*

**Goal III:** *To address systemic barriers that impedes effective interface of the child welfare and legal system*

### Action Step A:

*To establish “best practice” guidelines for courts’ handling of dependency cases.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** In December 2003, SCO and ODJFS established a planning group (Group) consisting of staff from SCO Judicial and Court Services, Ohio Judicial College, and ODJFS to design and schedule a symposia. The Group expanded the concept from a one-time series of events to on-going events. The process for working with the local jurisdiction includes:
  - Holding a Statewide meeting of Judiciary on May 7, 2004 to focus on “*The Judge as a Leader,*” developing judicial leadership, the judge as a trier of fact; case law and judicial discretion; and , issues for state examination.
  - Holding Regional Symposia May – November 2004.
  - Holding County Symposia – November 2004 – 2005.
  - Conducting meetings with judicial organizations to establish a judicial planning committee.
- **Benchmark 2-** “Best practice” guidelines from symposia outcomes will be established by October 2005.
- **Benchmark 3-** Lucas County Juvenile Court (Toledo) was established as a National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges “Model Court” in September 2003. Lucas County Juvenile Court staff and SCO staff attended the all-sites Model Court meeting sponsored by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in October 2003. The Lucas County Juvenile Court has completed its initial assessment by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and has begun consultations.

Other Ohio courts, including Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, have expressed

interest in becoming a Model Court. SCO is beginning exploration of adding another National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges site in Ohio.

Resource Guidelines are being promoted through symposia and trainings over the next 18 months.

- **Benchmark 4-** ODJFS confirmed its commitment to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges to serve as the national site. ODJFS staff will participate in a planning meeting convened by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in July 2004.

### **Action Step B:**

*To utilize SCO Advisory Committee to implement initiatives that impact on judicial systems.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1 – Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Standards** are being reviewed by a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Courts. Several standards have been recommended for final approval but a limited number remain in the discussion phase. Rule and statutory changes will be required. A subset of the subcommittee has been meeting to establish content of required training mandated in the proposed standards.

SCO and ODJFS are jointly developing a Request for Proposal for curriculum development consistent with the requirements and SCO and ODJFS are exploring short and long-term training plans.

### **Action Step C:**

*To increase judicial opportunities for family law education.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** ODJFS confirmed its commitment to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges to serve as the national site. ODJFS staff will participate in a planning meeting convened by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in July 2004.

## SYSTEMIC FACTOR 5:

Service array

**Item 36.** *The services in item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the state's Child and Family Services Plan.*

**Goal:** *Enhance accessibility of local supportive services throughout the state.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Identify behavioral healthcare treatment capacity, gaps in services and needs for specialized programming*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** In the Fall of 2003, PCSAO established the *Behavioral Health Care Policy and Budget Initiative*, a project designed to develop collaborative strategies for addressing gaps in mental health and substance abuse programming for Ohio's children and their families. With the goal of determining service needs and funding issues across multiple systems, workgroup members include the Directors of ODJFS, ODMH, ODADAS, the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ODMRDD), the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS), and ODE; the County Commissioners Association of Ohio; PCSAO; the OACBHA; Ohio Children and Families First; the Center for Innovative Practice; and the Governor's Office. To date, this group has completed the following activities:
  - Representatives of each discipline presented an overview of the ideal statewide BHC system from their perspectives (October 2003).
  - Representatives of each system provided a needs assessment based on 41 identified services for varying population groups (i.e., children in custody; children in secure, residential treatment; children not in custody, but with identified needs; children exhibiting early signs of illness; and those of risk) (December 2003).
  - Participants analyzed placement trends and expenditures for services across levels of care (January 2004).
  - Staff developed an inter-system glossary to improve communication across disciplines (February 2004).

In February 2004, Ohio's First Lady Hope Taft, and the Directors of ODH, ODADAS, and ODMRDD met with members of the Governor's Cabinet Council to inaugurate Ohio's Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Project. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control this multi-system initiative will address issues associated with pre-natal substance exposure and launch prevention strategies. OCF is currently working with staff of Ohio Health Plans to analyze Ohio's Medicaid expenditures related to Fetal

Alcohol Syndrome.

- **Benchmark 2- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step B:**

*Serve in an advisory capacity on program evaluation projects, conducted by ODADAS and ODMH, to assess the effectiveness of behavioral healthcare treatment services.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** At the recommendation of the Shareholder's Group and the directive of the Governor's Office, the ODADAS Outcomes Initiatives Task Force was merged with the ODADAS Advisory Council. The Council is now comprised of three subcommittees: Planning and Outcomes; Medicaid and Finance; Rules and Policy. Currently, the statutorily ODJFS participant represents the finance division. ODADAS has been contacted regarding the need to include OCF to maintain compliance with PIP objectives.

The ODADAS Fall Director's Meeting, held on October 22, 2003, featured presentations highlighting current statewide evaluation projects from the perspectives of the ADAMHS/ADAS Boards, treatment and criminal justice professionals, preventionists, and State level policy makers. One hundred seventy-one participants attended these workshops. These sessions received an average rating of 3.33 on a 5.0 scale.

The ODMH sponsored *Research Results Briefing 2003: Knowledge to Enhance Quality in Challenging Times* on November 12-13, 2003. Over 190 participants attended both days of this event. The conference featured two plenary sessions and 16 workshops. Overall ratings for the conference averaged 4.0 on a 5.0 scale for both days. One particular session addressed a recent study conducted in Cuyahoga County that explored the mental health needs of biological mothers of foster children. This workshop received an average rating of 4.5 on a 5.0 scale.

On January 22, 2004, ODMH announced its intent to initiate a study to determine distinctive mental health treatment needs of foster children as contrasted to children in the general population. At this point in time, there have been no guidelines established for completion of this project.

- **Benchmark 2- *This benchmark is not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step C:**

*Work with ODMH and Ohio Health Plans to expand the continuum of mental healthcare services.*

## Status Report:

- **Benchmark 1** - ODMH has been working with ODJFS to establish Medicaid-funded Intensive Home and Community-Based Services. Recent activities on this project include:
  - Holding monthly workgroup meetings, comprised of State level personnel, private providers, county ADAMHS/MH Boards, and client advocates, to design the services, standards of practice and reimbursement structures.
  - Convening meetings with constituents (e.g., private providers, Association representatives, client advocates) to obtain feedback on proposed design and programming recommendations on August 6, 2003, and October 8, 2003.
  - Submitting a “White Paper” proposal to Ohio Health Plan (OHP) by ODMH on February 6, 2004.
  - Conducting an ODMH formal presentation of the proposal for expanded Medicaid services to OHP on March 11, 2004.
- **Benchmarks 2 and 3**- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.*

## Action Step D:

*Support the Ohio Department of Mental Health – Ohio Department of Education partnership designed to provide assessment, intervention and treatment services within the school system.*

## Status Report:

- **Benchmark 1** - ODMH and ODE are jointly implementing *Shared Agenda*, a project designed to increase school-based mental health programming and improve awareness of mental health issues by students and school personnel. ODJFS, OCF staff serve in an advisory capacity on this project. Recent *Shared Agenda* activities include:
  - Holding a legislative forum on October 9, 2003. This event was co-chaired by two members of Ohio’s General Assembly (one senator, one representative) and provided an opportunity for testimony by The Director of ODMH and Chair of the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, the Associate Superintendent of ODE, students, parents, educators, and mental health professionals throughout the State.
  - Establishing Multi-Disciplinary workgroups representing state departments and local providers to develop action plans stemming from findings and recommendations derived from the legislative forum. These groups met on: November 4, 2003, January 8, 2004, and March 18, 2004.

- Distributing a newsletter describing the efforts of both the state level programming initiatives and the work of regional Ohio Mental Health Networks for School Success in February 2004.

### **Action Step E:**

*Provide training to local PCSAs and treatment providers regarding issues associated with federal confidentiality laws .*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** During the Summer of 2003, an inter-system training addressing confidentiality issues was presented in Allen County. Approximately 30 representatives of human services (child welfare and financial assistance) criminal justice and the courts attended this session. Upcoming sessions have been scheduled for the Marion-Crawford ADAMHS Board area on March 24, 2004 and in Putnam County on April 22, 2004.

### **Action Step F:**

*Work with the Public Children's Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) to improve consistency in purchasing services among PCSAs.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** The PCSAO Purchase of Service/Care Subcommittee continues to meet. Participants of this group include representatives of: PCSAO, OCF, ODADAS, ODMH, PCSAs, private treatment providers, OACBHA, and OACCA.

To date the following activities are being completed:

- A research study is being designed to validate a Level of Care Placement Tool currently being used by the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services:
- An analysis of placement disruptions is currently undertaken by staff of Cuyahoga County Children and Family Services.
- OCF has obtained additional technical assistance from ODJFS' Office for Research Assessment and Accountability to further develop components of the study.
- Funding has been allocated to Cuyahoga County Family and Children Services to design training manuals and workshops needed for consistent application of the tool and improve inter-rater reliability factors.
- Funding has been allocated to Cuyahoga County Family and Children Services to convert the tool to a more robust computer program capable of meeting the needs of additional counties.

- A presentation of the Cuyahoga County tool was made at the PCSAO Directors' Meeting on December 4, 2003. Thereafter, PCSAO provided PCSAs with copies of the tool for further review.

- **Benchmarks 3 and 4- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

### **Action Step G:**

*Encourage the establishment of multi-disciplinary teams and other collaborative models for assessments, case planning, and the monitoring of service provision to address issues that require involvement of multiple agencies (e.g. domestic violence, mental health, substance abuse, mental retardation/developmental disabilities).*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** The following training occurred:

#### Forensic Interviewing

A five-day forensic interviewing by the Children's Trust was held for counties of the northeast training region of the OCWTP. The training was given an average rating of 4.8 out of 5 by participants.

#### Team Investigation Techniques

This training is to be hosted by the OCWTP, Northeast Regional Training Center, located at Summit County Children Services Board. Agency staff recently has returned from a protracted strike. While it is expected that the training will be completed by June 2004, the disruption caused by the strike may be a barrier that will prevent achievement of this benchmark. If so, alternative training will be identified.

#### Domestic Violence

A two day training, entitled "*Combating Domestic Violence: Investigation and Intervention*" was presented by (retired) Lieutenant Mark Wynn (Nashville Metro). Training was held for counties of the northwest region of the OCWTP. The session was held March 25 and 26, 2004 and sponsored by a coalition of community organizations.

- **Benchmark 2-** *The Ohio Network of Child Advocacy Centers achieved the following deliverables:*
  - Developed and maintained a website at [oncac.org](http://oncac.org) that provides access to informational materials.

- The National Children's Alliance Director of Member Services provided a one-day training session on standards for membership and the application process.
  - Distributed quarterly newsletters (Fall & Winter).
  - Developed an informational package to respond to community inquiries.
  - Co-sponsored the annual child abuse conference, hosted by Tri-County CAC in Youngstown.
  - Summit County (Akron), Wayne County (Wooster) and the Southeast Children's Advocacy Center serving Athens, Meigs and Gallia Counties achieved Associate Member status with the National Children's Alliance.
  - Two visits were made to Logan County to meet with community representatives to assist with forming a multidisciplinary team.
  - A visit was made to Allen County to provide consultation to a community work group initiating efforts to form a multidisciplinary team.
  - A visit was made to Hancock County to attend case review activities and meet with community leaders.
  - A visit was made to Guernsey County to meet with the task force that is planning for the development of a children's advocacy center.
  - Portage County (Ravenna) and Jefferson County (Wintersville/Steubenville) received full membership (completed October 2003).
- **Benchmark 3-** A series of four videos were marked and distributed throughout the state. A letter from Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer and an informational brochure were disseminated to all juvenile judges. Information regarding the videos was also provided to all PCSAs and alcohol and drug addiction county boards.

A staff position specific to the development of Family Drug Courts throughout Ohio was created and filled at the SCO. The staff person has contacted each of Ohio's juvenile judges to identify the state's willingness to provide technical assistance in the development of family drug courts.

- **Benchmark 4-** Three additional Family Drug Courts located in Erie (Sandusky), Franklin (Columbus), and Sandusky (Fremont) counties have become operational since the findings of the CFSR were provided to Ohio and the initial performance improvement plan activities were developed.

**Action Step H:**

*Through partnership with MR/DD, provide assistance to school districts desiring to become Community Alternative Funding System providers .*

**Status Report:**

***See Item 21, Action Step A.***

**Action Step I:**

*Work with the ODH to provide information to PCSAs regarding the utilization of public dental health services .*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 22, Action Step B.***

**Action Step J:**

*Provide further training to therapists, caseworkers, adoptive and foster parents regarding the special behavioral healthcare needs of children in out-of-home care and in adoptive settings .*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 23, Action Step B.***

**Action Step K:**

*Promote the provision of specialized programming for children of parents who are addicted to alcohol or other drugs.*

**Status Report:**

***Refer to Item 23, Action Step C.***

## **SYSTEMIC FACTOR 7:**

Foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention

**Item 44.** *The state has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.*

**Goal:** *Increase the number of African-American families applying and being approved for adoption by 5% once the FACSIS data has been determined to be accurate.*

### **Action Step A:**

*Implement procedures to better assure FACSIS information regarding resource families is accurate and up-to-date.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** On January 14, 2004, a report was developed and distributed to PCSAs and private child placing agencies (PCPA) which contained a listing of all open adoptive family resources in FACSIS. PCSAs were instructed to enter the FACSIS Event 760: Close Adoptive Home to remove families who were no longer active with the agency. A report, scheduled to run on March 19, 2004, will allow ODJFS staff to analyze the progress in updating FACSIS resource data for PCSAs. This report will be distributed to PCSAs with the expectation that the agency will continue to update its data as needed.

PCPAs were instructed to submit all FACSIS changes to the ODJFS Licensing Section on the JFS 01648 form, "MicroFACSIS Private Agency Form (PCPA and PNA) Own Agency Adoptive Home-Resource 40". ODJFS staff will be working over the next several months to enter data and remove families. After all of the data is entered on PCPAs a report will be generated with the expectation that the agency will continue to update its data as needed.

Numerous help desk calls were made to both the FACSIS Help Desk and the OCF Help Desk for technical assistance regarding entering the FACSIS Event 760. The most common issue was whether closing the adoptive family resource would effect the families' receipt of their monthly subsidy check.

Assuring the accuracy of adoptive family data will increase ODJFS' ability to accurately compare the demographics of the approved adoptive family population and the children awaiting adoption. Future reports will assist ODJFS in determining which counties will be provided with technical assistance.

- **Benchmarks 2-8- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step B:**

*Provide market analysis to county agencies to be used to drive agency efforts to recruit minority applicants.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1-5- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step C:**

*Require each adoption agency to implement a Comprehensive Recruitment plan that includes community partnership efforts, use of market analysis information, and cultural competence training for staff.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmarks 1-3- *These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.***

**Action Step D:**

*Assist counties to create self-sustaining recruitment and retention activities.*

**Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Ohio was awarded \$1.5 million in Adoption Incentive monies during FFY 2003. Over two-thirds of the available money was used to fund the AdoptOHIO Kids program. The AdoptOHIO Kids is a statewide program in which all 88 counties received allocations to work towards a total quality management program that enhances the recruitment and retention of adoptive resources. AdoptOHIO Kids goals included increasing the overall number of children adopted each year with a special emphasis on:
  - Finalization of children who meet the CFSR measure of 32% of the children's finalizations being within 24 months from their initial custody, and
  - Finalization of children who are both ages ten or older and who have been in the custody of the agency for 24 months or longer.

ODJFS implemented a Faith Based Initiative that awarded \$300,000 to agencies to assist in their local efforts. Thirty-one agencies responded to ODJFS' December 9, 2003, invitation for agencies to apply for funds to develop or strengthen new initiatives with faith-based entities for the purpose of recruitment and retention of adoptive foster and resource families. On March 28, 2003, 31 agencies received

notice of their allocation amounts. Agencies must spend these funds by August 30, 2004. A meeting will be held prior to June 30, 2004, for agencies to share progress on their faith-based initiatives.

### **Action Step E:**

*Identify and promote best practices; examine policies and requirements; and identify ways of removing barriers for African Americans completing the home study process.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** ODJFS reconvened the "peer based" recruitment committee on February 25, 2004. This meeting was held in conjunction with the AdoptUSKids Website information and training session regarding recruitment of older children (agencies will register the children who are age 10 or older and who are part of a sibling group of three or more). One component of the national campaign, "Answering the Call" is the AdoptUSKids Photo Listing website, which is intended to serve as a recruitment tool for agencies to assist them in matching adoptive parents and waiting children. During the campaign each adoption social worker will have the ability to manage web pages specifically designed to interact with families interested in adopting children from their county.

In attendance were eight counties, comprised of recruitment specialists. These counties agreed to pilot the initial AdoptUSKids program in their counties. Other attendees included Ohio Adoption Photo Listing (OAPL) coordinators, adoptive and foster parents and the ODJFS, OCF Adoption Services Section marketing vendor.

- **Benchmarks 2-5- These benchmarks are not scheduled to occur at this time.**

### **Action Step F:**

*Develop the capacity of mental health providers that will understand adoption issues and provide support to finalized adoptive families, which will encourage African American adoptive families to refer others to become foster/adoptive families.*

### **Status Report:**

- **Benchmark 1-** Suzanne Harvey of the Spaulding Institute of Dearborn, Michigan was the trainer for the Mental Health Institute held in Columbus Ohio in November 2003. The Institute was a six-hour educational training venue for therapists involved with treating persons touched by adoption. Covered were many of the diagnoses and traditional or newer treatments including cognitive/behavioral, EMRD, and many others. Also covered was the problem that research shows that the traditional, average therapist has not been helpful for the children and families, even those listed. Adoption specific treatment is absolutely necessary at getting at the underlying issues rather than the behaviors that are often focused on by therapists.

Unfortunately, there is limited research based adoptive treatments which is currently being work on. What is known is that work with adoption specific therapists has been more successful, as reported by families. That is, if a family is satisfied and feels more confident about parenting their child, then treatment is validated.

There was also discussion about the fact that in a world of managed care and brief, solution focused treatment, there is a need to focus on what will get the extensive and difficult work done with families. Individualized treatment and traditional forms have not been successful and require long-term on-going treatment that shows little results.

The Institute was filled to capacity at 40 therapists, with backgrounds ranging from Social Work, Counseling to Psychology. Overall feedback from this year's Institute is consistent with the 2002 Mental Health Institute. Attendees favorably rated the training venue. Based on feedback from both Institutes, ODJFS has opted to convene a regional institute on an annual basis.

Plans were being made to have Jefferson County Children Services take the lead on providing the first regional Mental Health Institute. The first regional Mental Health Institute was to be held in May 2004, in conjunction with national foster care month. Jefferson County Children Services was selected because of their location as well as their ten years of experience in organizing an annual tri-state attachment and bonding conference. They had the experience in working with adoption-related mental health issues, and developing a local sponsoring base where the community business and organizations help cover the expenses of the conferences. They were willing to consider using Suzanne Harvey, who conducted the two previous trainings in Columbus, as a means of maintaining statewide consistency in the training. Jefferson County Children Services was willing to take on this task until their local levy failed and resulted in a "massive" layoff with subsequent restructuring and reallocation of agency resources that prohibited taking on this training.

As an alternative, ODJFS is working with a consortium in northeast Ohio who has expressed interest in planning the next Mental Health Institute. Tentative date to complete the next Mental Health training is August 2004.