

York County DSS
Child Welfare Services Review
August 2008

During the week of August 25-29, 2008 a team of DSS staff from state office and surrounding counties conducted an onsite review of child welfare services in York County. A sample of open and closed foster care and treatment cases were reviewed. Also reviewed were screened out intakes, foster home licensing records, and unfounded investigations. Stakeholders interviewed for this review included foster parents, York DSS supervisors, representatives from the schools, Foster Care Review Board, Mental Health and Guardian Ad Litem Program.

Period under Review: August 1, 2007 to July 31, 2008

Purpose

The Department of Social Services engages in a review of child welfare services in each county to:

- a) Determine to what degree services are delivered in compliance with federal and state laws and agency policy; and
- b) Assess the outcomes for children and families engaged in the child welfare system.

State law (§43-1-115) states, in part:

The state department shall conduct, at least once every five years, a substantive quality review of the child protective services and foster care programs in each county and each adoption office in the State. The county's performance must be assessed with reference to specific outcome measures published in advance by the department.

The information obtained by the child welfare services review process will:

- a) Give county staff feedback on the effectiveness of their interventions.
- b) Direct state office technical assistance staff to assist county staff with their areas needing improvement.
- c) Inform agency administrators of which systemic factors impair county staff's ability to achieve specific outcomes.
- d) Direct training staff to provide training for county staff specific to their needs.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Sources

The county-specific review of child welfare services is both quantitative and qualitative.

The review is **quantitative** because it begins with an analysis of every child welfare outcome report for that county for the period under review. Agency data reflect the performance of the county in all areas of the child welfare program: Child Protective Services (CPS) Intake, CPS Investigations, CPS In-Home Treatment, Foster Care, Managed Treatment Services (MTS), and Adoptions.

The review is **qualitative** because it assesses the quality of the services rendered and the effectiveness of those services. The review seeks to explain why a county's performance data looks the way it does.

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Ratings

The standard that must be met for all items reviewed onsite is 95%. Each outcome report has its own standard. To be rated an area of **Strength** most items must meet both the qualitative onsite review standard **and** the quantitative outcome report standard.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of two items:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1) Timeliness of initiating investigations | Area Needing Improvement |
| 2) Repeat Maltreatment | Area Needing Improvement |

| Agency Data | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| Performance Measure 1: Initiating CPS Investigations | | | | |
| Objective: 100% in <= 24 hours (state law) | | | | |
| | Number of Investigations | Number of Investigations Initiated Timely | Percent of Investigations Initiated Timely | Number of Investigations Above (Below) Objective |
| State | 18,570 | 18,002 | 96.94 | -568 |
| York | 955 | 935 | 97.9 | -20 |

Explanation of Item 1: Timeliness of Initiating Investigations

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. State law requires that an investigation of all accepted reports of abuse and neglect be initiated within 24 hours. Agency data indicates that for the 12 month period under review, York initiated 935 of its 955 investigations of alleged abuse and neglect within 24 hours. The county missed this objective by 20 cases.

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| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Safety Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 9 | 90 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Treatment | 8 | 89 | 1 | 11 | 1 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 17 | 89 | 2 | 11 | 0 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item measures the occurrence of maltreatment among children under agency supervision. Although 89% of the children in the cases experienced no additional maltreatment, that percentage does not meet the 95% compliance standard. Situations of children experiencing additional maltreatment were identified in CPS treatment and in foster care cases.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of two items:

- 3) Services to family to protect children and prevent removal **Area Needing Improvement**
- 4) Risk of harm **Area Needing Improvement**

| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|--|----------|-----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Safety Item 3: Services to Family to Protect Children in Home and Prevent Removal | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| Treatment | 7 | 70 | 3 | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 10 | 77 | 3 | 23 | 7 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 3: Services to Family to Protect Children and Prevent Removal

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item assesses whether services were adequate to protect children in their home and prevent their removal and placement into foster care. This was an area of strength in every foster care case because, in each instance, the decision to remove the children was correct. In 30% of the treatment cases the agency failed to assess issues posed by paramours and other adults residing in the home with access to the children.

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| Onsite Review Findings | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Safety Item 4: Risk of Harm | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 10 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Treatment | 6 | 60 | 4 | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 16 | 80 | 4 | 20 | 0 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 4: Risk of Harm

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item assesses whether the agency's intervention reduced risk of harm to children. Reviewers found that risk of harm was properly managed in all foster care cases. However, risk of harm was not adequately managed in 40% of the treatment cases. The deficiencies involved a) failure to intervene when a parent's non-compliance posed risks to the child, and b) failure to assess paramours and other adults who were part of the household.

Stakeholder's Comments: Considering the volume of cases and the shortage of staff, DSS does a very good job. DSS has a good deal of turnover and this can be a problem with making good assessments of families. I would like to see an improvement in parents learning how to adequately parent. As far as DSS is concerned, the workers and attorney work really hard. I know that many of the problems are out of the agency's control.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of six items:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 5) Foster care re-entries | Strength |
| 6) Stability of foster care placement | Strength |
| 7) Permanency goal for child | Area Needing Improvement |
| 8) Reunification or permanent placement with relatives | Strength |
| 9) Adoption | Area Needing Improvement |
| 10) Permanency goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) | Strength |

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| Agency Data | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Performance Measure 7: Foster Children Who Do Not Re-Enter Care – Of all children discharged from foster care to reunification in the 12 month period prior to the reporting period, the percent that did not re-enter foster care within 12 months of the date of their discharge. | | | | |
| Objective: $\geq 90.1\%$ (federal standard) | | | | |
| | Number Children Reunified During Reporting Period | Number of Children Discharged Who Did Not Re-enter Foster Care | Percent of Children Discharged Who Did Not Re-enter Foster Care | Number of Children Above (Below) Objective |
| State | 2,591 | 2,406 | 92.86 | 71.5 |
| York | 100 | 94 | 94 | 3.9 |

Explanation of Item 5: Foster care re-entries

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item measures the frequency of children re-entering foster care within a year of discharge. The federal standard for this measure is that at least 90.1% of children entering foster care not be re-entries within a year of discharge from care. York County DSS met and exceeded the federal standard with 94% of York children who left foster care and did not re-enter.

| Agency Data | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Performance Measure 6: Stability of Foster Care Placements – Of all children who had been in foster care at least 8 days but less than 12 months from the time of latest removal from home, what percentage had no more than two placement settings? | | | | |
| Objective: $\geq 86\%$ (federal standard) | | | | |
| | FC Services Open > 7 days and < 12 Months | Number With No More than 2 Placements | Percent with No More than 2 Placements | Number of Children Above or below objective |
| State | 3,942 | 2,919 | 74.05 | -262.2 |
| York | 87 | 77 | 88.51 | 2.2 |

Explanation of Item 6: Stability of Foster Care Placement

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item measures the frequency of placement changes for children in foster care, and assesses the reasons for those changes. The standard applied to this item is that at least 86% of children in care experience two or fewer placements during the period under review. Agency data indicates that the county met the objective with 88.5% of children in York having less than 2 placements.

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| Onsite Review Findings | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 7: Permanency Goal for Children | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 6 | 60 | 4 | 40 | 0 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 7: Permanency Goal for Children

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the appropriateness of permanency goals for children in foster care and the timeliness of those permanency decisions. In 40% of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency took too long to change a child's permanent plan when the current plan was not working. In three cases, the agency had a well documented history of the parent's non-compliance with previous treatment plans yet continued with the plan of reunification even when there was evidence that the current plan was not working.

Stakeholder Comments: The agency does not usually recommend terminating a parent's rights at Merits hearings even when parents have a long history of drug abuse and non-compliance with their treatment plans. Also, we have lots of continued hearings on cases, which is a big problem.

| Agency Data | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Performance Measure 8: Time to Achieve Reunification – Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care and had been in care for 8 days or more, what percentage were reunified in less than 12 months from the date of their latest removal from home? | | | | |
| Objective: >= 75.2% (federal standard) | | | | |
| | Number of Children Returned to Parents/Caretakers | Number of Children Returned to Parents/Caretakers after in Care <12 months | Percent of Children Returned to Parents/Caretakers after in Care < 12 months | Number of Children Above (Below) Objective |
| State | 2512 | 1941 | 77.27% | 52.0 |
| York | 61 | 50 | 81.97 | 4.1 |

Explanation of Item 8: Reunification or Permanent Placement with Relatives

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item evaluates the activities and processes necessary to accomplish the goal of reunification of children with caregivers or placement with relatives within 12 months. Agency data shows that 81.97% of the children who entered foster care returned home within a year. York County DSS accomplished this without increasing the number of children re-entering foster care.

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| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 9: Adoption | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 2 | 50 | 2 | 50 | 5 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 9: Adoption

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the process within the child welfare system to achieve timely adoptions for children in foster care. Agency data indicates that one of the six adoptions completed during the period under review was completed within 24 months of the child entering care. Reviewers found that half of the cases with the plan of Adoption needed improvement because of court delays and failure of the agency to use its history with the family to quickly rule out the plan of Return Home.

| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|--|----------|-----|--------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 10: Permanency Goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 10: Permanency Goal of APPLA

This is area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item evaluates the appropriateness and effectiveness of services provided to children with the permanency plan of APPLA. Reviewers also rate whether the agency attempted to locate and reassess relatives or non-relatives that were willing to commit to the youth's long-term care. In every case there was evidence of agency's efforts to help facilitate such relationships and the provision of independent living services.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of six items:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 11) Proximity of foster care placement | Area Needing Improvement |
| 12) Placement with siblings in foster care | Strength |
| 13) Visiting with parents/siblings in foster care | Area Needing Improvement |
| 14) Preserving connections | Area Needing Improvement |
| 15) Relative placement | Strength |
| 16) Relationship of child in care with parents | Strength |

Agency Data

Performance Measure 13: Foster Children Placed Within County of Origin – Of all children in foster care during the reporting period (excluding MTS and Adoptions children), what percentage are placed within the county of origin?

Objective: $\geq 70\%$ (Agency established objective)

| | Number of Children in Foster Care | Number of Children Placed Within County of Origin | Percent of Children Placed Within County of Origin | Number of Children Above (Below) Objective |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| State | 6,264 | 4,172 | 66.6 | -212.8 |
| York | 163 | 104 | 63.8 | -10.1 |

Explanation of Item 11: Proximity of Foster Care Placement

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to keep children close enough to their families so that essential relationships can be maintained. One measure used to evaluate this item is the percentage of children who are placed within the county. The objective is at that least 70% of the children in care be placed within the county. Agency data shows that 63.8% of York DSS children were placed within the county.

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| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|--|----------|-----|--------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 12: Placement with Siblings | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 6 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 12: Placement with Siblings in Foster Care

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to keep siblings together when it is appropriate to do so. In every foster care case the agency placed siblings together or attempted to keep siblings together. When siblings were not placed together it was due to the therapeutic needs of one or more of the children in a sibling group.

| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 13: Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 4 | 57 | 3 | 43 | 3 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 13: Visiting with Siblings in Foster Care and with Parents

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to ensure that visits occur between children in foster care and their siblings and parents. In 43% of the cases, reviewers found that visits between parents and their children in foster care were not occurring at least twice monthly. Reviewers also found that siblings in separate foster care placements were not visiting each other in any planned or consistent way.

Stakeholder Comments: Once a month is not enough time to visit and keep the relationship with your siblings. Sometimes siblings will act out in placement or school and they are restricted from visiting their siblings. This may cause the visits to be suspended for 3-6 months.

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| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 14: Preserving Connections | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 5 | 83 | 1 | 17 | 4 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 14: Preserving Connections

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to preserve children's connections to the people, places and things that are important to them. This was an area of strength in 83% of the cases; however this fell short of the 95% compliance standard. In one case, the child had a close relationship with a grandmother, yet the agency made no attempt to help the child and grandparent maintain their relationship.

| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----|--------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 15: Relative Placement | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 9 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 15: Relative Placement

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to identify and assess relatives as potential placement resources for children in foster care. In every case the agency assessed the paternal and maternal relatives of the children in foster care and documented why it was not able to place the children with relatives.

| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----|--------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| Permanency Item 16: Relationship of Child in Care with Parents | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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Explanation of Item 16: Relationship of Child in Care with Parents

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to promote a strong emotionally supportive relationship between children in care and their parents, beyond the twice-minimum visitation requirement. In every case reviewers found evidence of the agency's efforts in supporting the parent-child relationships beyond the minimum required twice-a-month visitation.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of four items:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 17) Needs and services of child, parents and caregivers | Area Needing Improvement |
| 18) Child and family involvement in case planning | Area Needing Improvement |
| 19) Worker visits with child | Area Needing Improvement |
| 20) Worker visits with parents | Area Needing Improvement |

Onsite Review Findings

Well Being Item 17: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, Foster Parents

| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
|-------------|----------|-----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 10 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Treatment | 5 | 50 | 5 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 15 | 75 | 5 | 25 | 0 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 17: Needs and Services of Child, Parents and Caregivers

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item asks two questions: 1) Were the needs of the children, parents, and caregivers assessed, and 2) Did the agency take steps to meet the identified needs? This was an area of strength for every foster care case because needs were assessed and indicated services provided. However, half of the treatment cases needed improvement because the agency failed to assess or address the needs of non-custodial fathers and alternate caregivers.

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| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Well Being Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 3 | 50 | 3 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Treatment | 5 | 50 | 5 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 8 | 50 | 5 | 50 | 0 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's efforts to involve parents and children in the case planning process. In 50% of the foster care cases and 50% of the treatment cases reviewers found that parents and age-appropriate children were not actively involved in developing their case plans. Among the cases needing improvement, the workers would generally dictate what the parents were required to do. Reviewers found that this issue was worker-specific. In other words, some caseworkers involved their clients in case planning, and some did not.

| Agency Data | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| Performance Measure 14: Face-to-Face Visits | | | | |
| Of all children under agency supervision one full calendar month during the reporting period, the percentage with a documented face-to-face visit every full month that they were under agency supervision | | | | |
| Objective: >= 100% (State Law for foster care) | | | | |
| | Total number of children with full months under agency supervision | Number of Children Visited Every Month | Percentage of Children Visited Every Month | Number of Children Not Visited Every Month |
| Foster Care | 134 | 116 | 86.51 | 18 |
| Treatment | 1,170 | 811 | 69.32 | 359 |

Explanation of Item 19: Worker Visits with Child

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item measures the frequency of caseworker visits with children under agency supervision, and evaluates the quality of those visits. The agency's policy is for contacts with children to be made every month. Agency data indicates that 86.51% of children in foster care and 69.32% of children in treatment cases were seen by their caseworker every month. Reviewers found that in 30% of the treatment cases the content of the visits with children failed to address relevant issues.

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| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Well Being Item 20: Worker Visits with Parent(s) | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 4 | 80 | 1 | 20 | 5 | 0 |
| Treatment | 4 | 40 | 6 | 60 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 8 | 53 | 7 | 47 | 5 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 20: Worker Visits with Parents

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item measures the frequency of caseworker visits with parents, and evaluates the quality of those visits. To meet the standard for this item, contacts must be made every month. This was an area of strength for 80% of foster care cases and 40% of treatment cases. Even when fathers were identified, there were often no attempts to visit or engage them in any way.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of one item:

- 21) Educational needs of the child **Area Needing Improvement**

| <u>Onsite Review Findings</u> | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| Well Being Item 21: Educational Needs of the Child | | | | | | |
| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 8 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Treatment | 7 | 70 | 3 | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 15 | 83 | 3 | 17 | 2 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 21: Educational Needs of the Child

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and address the educational needs of children under agency supervision. This was an area of strength for all of the foster care cases. However, 30% of the treatment cases needed improvement because workers did not substantiate their assessment through some form of communication with or from the school.

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

The county's performance on this outcome is based on the rating of two items:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 22) Physical health of the child | Area Needing Improvement |
| 23) Mental health of the child | Area Needing Improvement |

Onsite Review Findings

Well Being Item 22: Physical Health of the Child

| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
|-------------|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 8 | 80 | 2 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Treatment | 6 | 60 | 4 | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 14 | 70 | 6 | 30 | 0 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 22: Physical Health of the Child

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and attend to the physical and dental health needs of children under agency supervision. Reviewers determined that 20% of the foster care cases and 40% of the treatment cases needed improvement because there was no evidence that the medical and dental health needs of those children were assessed and addressed.

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Well Being Item 23: Mental Health of the Child

| | Strength | | Area Needing Improvement | | Not Applicable | |
|-------------|----------|-----|--------------------------|----|----------------|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Foster Care | 7 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Treatment | 6 | 60 | 4 | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Cases | 13 | 76 | 4 | 30 | 3 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 23: Mental Health of the Child

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's ability to assess and attend to the mental health needs of children under agency supervision. Reviewers found that the mental health needs of every child in foster care were being met. However, 40%

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of the treatment cases needed improvement because there were children who were not receiving needed mental health services. In some instances this was because of conflicts with the parents' work schedule and the availability of mental health services. In at least one instance a child's mental health needs were not being met because of the parents' refusal to cooperate with the agency.

| |
|---------------------------------|
| Unfounded Investigations |
|---------------------------------|

| | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|
| Investigation initiated timely? | 5 | 0 |
| Was assessment adequate? | 3 | 2 |
| Was decision appropriate? | 5 | 0 |

Explanation of Item 24: Unfounded Investigations

This is an area of **Strength** for York DSS. This item evaluates the agency's investigative process and determines if decisions were supported by the facts of the cases. The decision to unfound the case was appropriate in every case reviewed. However, some of the assessments revealed issues that required follow up from other service providers. Those contacts were not made.

| |
|-----------------------------|
| Screened Out Intakes |
|-----------------------------|

| | Yes | No | Cannot Determine |
|--|-----|----|------------------|
| Was Intake Appropriately Screened Out? | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| | Yes | No | Not Applicable |
| Were Necessary Collaterals Contacted? | 3 | 6 | 1 |
| Were Appropriate Referrals Made? | 2 | 2 | 6 |

Explanation of Item 25: Screened Out Intakes

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the process by which the agency screens out reports of incidents of abuse and/or neglect to determine if the intakes were appropriately screened out. The decision to screen out 7 of the 10 intakes reviewed was appropriate. In two cases, reviewers were unable to determine if the decision to screen out the intake was appropriate because there was insufficient documentation to support the agency's decision. In six cases collaterals, such as the schools or police, should have been contacted as part of the decision making process. In two cases, referrals to mental health or to other providers could have been provided.

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Foster Home Licenses

Explanation of Item 26: Foster Home Licenses

This is an **Area Needing Improvement** for York DSS. This item evaluates the process by which the agency ensures that all foster homes comply with licensing requirements. Reviewers did not find any expired licenses. However, reviewers found foster homes with overdue background checks (Sex Offender and/or Central Registry). In another foster home the foster parent's mother moved into the home during the review period and there was no evidence of background checks being conducted on this new adult.

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| York County DSS Summary Sheet | | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------|----|
| Performance Item or Outcome | | Performance Item Ratings | | | |
| | | Strength | Area Needing Improvement | N/A* | |
| Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect. | | | | | |
| Item 1: | *ANI | Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment | 6/6= 100% | 0 | 14 |
| Item 2: | ANI | Repeat maltreatment | 17/19 = 89% | 2/19 = 11% | 1 |
| Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate. | | | | | |
| Item 3: | ANI | Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal | 10/13 = 77% | 3/13 = 23% | 7 |
| Item 4: | ANI | Risk of harm to child(ren) | 16/20 = 80% | 4/20 = 20% | 0 |
| Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. | | | | | |
| Item 5: | Str | Foster care re-entries | 2/2= 100% | 0 | 8 |
| Item 6: | *Str | Stability of foster care placement | 8/10 = 80% | 2/10 = 20% | 0 |
| Item 7: | ANI | Permanency goal for child | 6/10 = 60% | 4/10 = 40% | 0 |
| Item 8: | *Str | Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives | 1/3 = 33% | 2/3= 67% | 7 |
| Item 9: | ANI | Adoption | 2/4 = 50% | 2/4 = 50% | 6 |
| Item 10: | Str | Permanency goal of Alternate Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) | 3/3 = 100% | 0 | 7 |
| Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children. | | | | | |
| Item 11: | *ANI | Proximity of foster care placement | 8/9 = 89% | 1/9 = 11% | 1 |
| Item 12: | Str | Placement with siblings | 6/6 = 100% | 0 | 4 |
| Item 13: | ANI | Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care | 4/7= 57% | 3/7 = 43% | 3 |
| Item 14: | ANI | Preserving connections | 5/6 = 83% | 1/6 = 17% | 4 |
| Item 15: | Str | Relative placement | 9/9 = 100% | 0 | 1 |
| Item 16: | Str | Relationship of child in care with parents | 3/3 = 100% | 0 | 7 |
| Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs. | | | | | |
| Item 17: | ANI | Needs and services of child, parents, caregiver | 15/20 = 75% | 5/20 = 25% | 0 |
| Item 18: | ANI | Child and family involvement in case planning | 8/16 = 50% | 8/16 = 50% | 4 |
| Item 19: | ANI | Worker visits with child | 17/20 = 85% | 3/20 = 15% | 0 |
| Item 20: | ANI | Worker visits with parent(s) | 8/15 = 53% | 7/15 = 47% | 5 |
| Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs. | | | | | |
| Item 21: | ANI | Educational needs of the child | 13/18 = 72% | 5/18 = 28% | 2 |
| Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs. | | | | | |
| Item 22: | ANI | Physical health of the child | 14/20 = 70% | 6/20 = 30% | 0 |
| Item 23: | ANI | Mental health of the child | 13/17 = 76% | 4/17 = 24% | 3 |

The objective is that 95% of cases be rated "strength."

Str = Area of Strength

ANI = Area Needing Improvement

* = Rating based on outcome report, not onsite review findings