

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**Final Report: Hawaii Child and Family Services Review**  
**September 2009**

**INTRODUCTION**

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of Hawaii. The CFSR is the Federal Government's program for assessing the performance of State child welfare agencies with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children and families. It is authorized by the Social Security Amendments of 1994 requiring that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) promulgate regulations for reviews of State child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSR is implemented by the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families within HHS.

The Hawaii CFSR was conducted the week of June 1, 2009. The period under review for the onsite case review process was from April 1, 2008, to June 5, 2009. The findings were derived from the following documents and data collection procedures:

- The Statewide Assessment, prepared by the Hawaii Department of Human Services (DHS)
- The State Data Profile, prepared by the Children's Bureau, which provides the State's child welfare data for the 12-month CFSR target period ending March 31, 2008
- Reviews of 65 cases (40 foster care and 25 in-home services cases) at three sites: 17 cases in Kauai County, 17 cases in Maui County, and 31 cases in Oahu County
- Interviews and focus groups (conducted at all three sites and at the State level) with stakeholders including, but not limited to, children, youth, parents, foster and adoptive parents, all levels of child welfare agency personnel, collaborating agency personnel, service providers, court personnel, child advocates, Native Hawaiian representatives, and attorneys

**Background Information**

The CFSR assesses State performance with regard to its substantial conformity with seven child and family outcomes and seven systemic factors. For the outcome assessments, each outcome incorporates one or more of the 23 items included in the review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on the results of the case reviews. An item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90 percent or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. The evaluation options for these outcomes are "substantially achieved," "partially achieved," or "not achieved." For a State to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. Two outcomes—Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1—also are evaluated based on State performance with regard to six national data indicators. For a State to be in substantial conformity with these outcomes, both the national standards for each data indicator and the case review requirements must be met.

There are 22 items that are considered in assessing the State's substantial conformity with the seven systemic factors. Each item reflects a key Federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on whether State performance on the item meets the Federal program requirements. A determination of the rating is based on information provided in the Statewide Assessment and from interviews with stakeholders held during the onsite CFSR. Additional information may come from other Federal reports or assessments.

Overall performance on each systemic factor is based on the ratings for the individual items incorporated in the systemic factor. For any given systemic factor, a State is rated as being either "in substantial-conformity" with that factor (a score of 3 or 4) or "not in substantial conformity" with that factor (a score of 1 or 2). Specific requirements for each rating are shown in the table below.

Rating the Systemic Factor	
Not in Substantial Conformity	In Substantial Conformity
1	2
None of the CFSP or program requirements is in place.	Some or all of the CFSP or program requirements are in place, but more than one of the requirements fail to function as described in each requirement.
	3
	4
	All of the CFSP or program requirements are in place and functioning as described in each requirement.

A State that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome or systemic factor must develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan to address the areas of concern associated with that outcome or systemic factor.

Because many changes were made in the CFSR process based on lessons learned during the first round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a State's performance in the second round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the first round. Key changes in the process that make comparing performance difficult across reviews are the following:

- An increase in the sample size from 50 to 65 cases
- Stratification of the sample to ensure a minimum number of cases in key program areas, resulting in variations in the number of cases relevant for specific outcomes and items
- Changes in criteria for specific items to increase consistency and to ensure an assessment of critical areas such as child welfare agency efforts to involve noncustodial parents

### Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes

The 2009 CFSR identified several areas of high performance with regard to Hawaii's performance in achieving the outcomes assessed during the review. These were the following:

- Item 2 pertaining to repeat maltreatment was rated as a Strength.
- Item 5 pertaining to foster care reentry was rated as a Strength.
- Item 11 pertaining to proximity of foster care placement was rated as a Strength.
- The State met the national standards for the data indicator pertaining to absence of maltreatment recurrence.
- The State met the national standards for the data indicators pertaining to permanency with regard to timeliness of adoptions, achieving permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods, and placement stability.

The effects of the resources that Hawaii dedicated to improving child welfare policy and practice since the first round of CFSRs were evident in the Statewide Assessment and the Onsite Review. Particularly noteworthy and commendable are the State's efforts in implementing differential response and engaging the Native Hawaiian Community and other key stakeholders, including youth and foster/adoptive parents, to strengthen the child welfare system and decrease the disproportionality of Native Hawaiians in foster care.

Although the State's performance on Safety Outcome 1 and Well-Being Outcome 2 did not meet the required level for substantial conformity, performance on these outcomes was fairly high: 87.0 percent of cases were substantially achieved for Safety Outcome 1, and 89.2 percent were substantially achieved for Well-Being Outcome 2.

The 2009 CFSR also identified the following key concerns with regard to the State's performance in achieving the desired outcomes for children and families:

- The State was not in substantial conformity with any of the Outcomes.
- Well-Being Outcome 1 was rated as substantially achieved in 40.0 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Permanency Outcome 1 was rated as substantially achieved in 47.5 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Item 9 pertaining to adoption was rated as a Strength in 23 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Item 17 pertaining to providing for the needs and services of children, parents, and foster parents was rated as a Strength in 43 percent of the cases reviewed.
- Item 20 pertaining to caseworker visits with parents was rated as a Strength in 44 percent of the cases reviewed.
- The State did not meet the national standards for the data indicator pertaining to absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.
- The State did not meet the national standards for the data indicator pertaining to the timeliness and permanency of reunification (Permanency Composite 1).

The State's low performance with regard to these CFSR outcomes and national data standards may be attributed in part to the following key factors:

- Services for families are not sufficient, particularly in the areas of family support services, visitation support services, substance abuse treatment services, domestic violence treatment services, mental health treatment services, therapy, parenting programs, Independent Living (IL) services, foster and transitional homes for youth, therapeutic foster homes, and transportation services.

- There is a lack of resources to reach families in rural and remote areas of the State.
- There are delays in establishing paternity, and the State does not consistently search for fathers or involve fathers in case planning.
- There are high caseworker caseloads, especially in permanency units.

## Key CFSR Findings Regarding Systemic Factors

With regard to systemic factors, Hawaii is in substantial conformity with the systemic factors of Statewide Information System; Quality Assurance System; Service Array and Resource Development; Agency Responsiveness to the Community; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The State is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factors of Case Review System and Staff and Provider Training.

The specific findings regarding the State's performance on safety and permanency outcomes are presented in table 1 at the end of the Executive Summary. Findings regarding well-being outcomes are presented in table 2. Table 3 presents the State's performance with regard to the seven systemic factors assessed through the CFSR. In the following section, key findings are summarized for each outcome and systemic factor. Information also is provided about the State's performance on each outcome and systemic factor during the Federal fiscal year 2003 CFSR.

## I. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

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

Safety Outcome 1 incorporates two items. One pertains to the timeliness of initiating a response to a child maltreatment report (item 1), and the other relates to the recurrence of substantiated or indicated maltreatment within a 6-month time period (item 2). Safety Outcome 1 also incorporates two national data indicators for which national standards have been established. These data indicators measure the absence of maltreatment recurrence and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 87.0 percent of the applicable cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 100 percent of applicable Maui County cases, 83 percent of applicable Kauai County cases, and 82 percent of applicable Oahu County cases. In addition to case review findings, Hawaii met the national standards for the data indicator pertaining to absence of maltreatment recurrence, but did not meet the national standards for the data indicator pertaining to absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff. Key findings for this outcome in the 2009 CFSR were the following:

- Item 1 was rated as a Strength in 87 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 100 percent of applicable cases reviewed.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2003 CFSR and was required to address this outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSR:

- DHS did not consistently respond to maltreatment reports in accordance with State-established timeframes, especially when the maltreatment report was classified as "high risk."
- The State did not meet the national standards for the percentage of children experiencing more than one substantiated or indicated child maltreatment report within a 6-month period.
- The State did not meet the national standards for the percentage of children maltreated while in foster care.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Implemented standardized intake, safety, and risk/strength assessments
- Piloted Crisis Response Teams to respond within 24 hours to reports requiring immediate face-to-face assessment
- Expanded and enhanced the Differential Response System, including implementation of voluntary case management services
- Improved data collection efforts regarding repeat maltreatment and maltreatment in foster care

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

#### **Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate**

Performance on Safety Outcome 2 is assessed through two items. One item assesses State efforts to prevent children's removal from their homes by providing the family with services to ensure children's safety while they remain in their homes (item 3). The other item assesses efforts to manage safety and reduce risk of harm to children in their own homes and in their foster care placements (item 4).

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 61.5 percent of cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 71 percent of Maui County cases, 59 percent of Kauai County cases, and 58 percent of Oahu County cases. Key findings for this outcome in the 2009 CFSR were the following:

- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 69 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 4 was rated as a Strength in 65 percent of cases reviewed.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2003 CFSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSR:

- There was a lack of appropriate service provision with regard to reducing the risk of harm to the children remaining in their homes.
- There was a lack of adequate attention to potential risk factors in the child's home or during a child's visitation with parents.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Developed and implemented a standardized decision-making process to assess the safety and risk of harm to children and the needs of children and families throughout the life of a case
- Revised assessment tools and processes that link the assessment of safety and risk to the services necessary to strengthen families and address risk factors
- Engaged children and families in case planning through the expansion of Ohana conferencing (family team meetings)

The State met its target goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Six items are incorporated in the assessment of Permanency Outcome 1, although not all of them are relevant for all of the foster care cases reviewed. The items pertain to State efforts to prevent foster care reentry (item 5), ensure placement stability for children in foster care (item 6), and establish appropriate permanency goals for children in foster care in a timely manner as well as seeking termination of parental rights (TPR) in accordance with the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (item 7). Depending on the child's permanency goal, the remaining items focus on an assessment of State efforts to achieve permanency goals (such as reunification, guardianship, adoption, or permanent placement with relatives) in a timely manner (items 8 and 9), or to ensure that children who have a case goal of other planned permanent living arrangement are in stable long-term placements and are adequately prepared for eventual independent living (item 10).

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 47.5 percent of foster care cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 50 percent of Kauai County and Oahu County cases and 40 percent of Maui County cases. Item 5 was rated as a Strength; items 6, 7, 8, and 9 were rated as Areas Needing Improvement. Item 10 was not applicable in Hawaii. In addition to the case review findings, Hawaii met the national standards for the data indicators pertaining to timeliness of adoptions, permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods, and placement stability, but did not meet the national standards for the data indicator pertaining to timeliness and permanency of reunification. Key findings for this outcome in the 2009 CFSR were the following:

- Item 5 was rated as a Strength in 100 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 6 was rated as a Strength in 70 percent of cases reviewed.
- Item 7 was rated as a Strength in 60 percent of cases reviewed.
- Item 8 was rated as a Strength in 61 percent of cases reviewed.
- Item 9 was rated as a Strength in 23 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 10 was not applicable in Hawaii.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2003 CFPSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFPSR:

- DHS was not consistently effective in preventing reentry into foster care.
- DHS was not consistently effective in ensuring children's placement stability while in foster care.
- DHS was not consistently effective in establishing appropriate permanency goals in a timely manner.
- DHS was not consistent in its efforts to achieve permanency goals in a timely manner.
- There were delays in achieving TPR.
- There were high caseworker caseloads and a high rate of turnover in the caseworker position.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Developed a comprehensive case review process, a supervisory review tool, and enhanced CORE Training for staff to ensure consistent statewide application of practice standards with regard to achieving timely permanency
- Improved family engagement through the use of Ohana conferencing and safety planning prior to reunification to prevent reentry into foster care
- Increased transportation, visitation, and intensive home-based supports to prevent reentry into foster care
- Provided training to caseworkers on substance abuse relapse and safety planning to prevent reentry into foster care
- Strengthened teamwork between licensing staff and placement staff to enhance placement stability
- Enhanced resource family recruitment efforts, training, supports, and feedback mechanism to enhance placement stability
- Increased access to therapeutic foster homes to enhance placement stability
- Monitored, identified, and addressed placement disruption factors
- Increased the use of concurrent planning to expedite the achievement of permanency goals
- Increased collaboration with the courts to improve permanency and expedite the TPR process

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Permanency Outcome 2 incorporates six items that assess State performance with regard to placing children in foster care near their parents and close relatives (item 11); placing siblings together (item 12); ensuring frequent visitation between children and their parents and siblings in foster care (item 13); preserving connections of children in foster care with extended family, community, cultural heritage, religion, and schools (item 14); seeking relatives as potential placement resources (item 15); and promoting relationships between children and their parents while the children are in foster care (item 16).

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 75.0 percent of foster care cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially

achieved in 90 percent of Maui County-cases, 80 percent of Kauai County cases, and 65 percent of Oahu County cases. Item 11 was rated as a Strength; items 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 were rated as Areas Needing Improvement. Key findings for this outcome in the 2009 CFPSR were the following:

- Item 11 was rated as a Strength in 100 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 12 was rated as a Strength in 75 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 77 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 83 percent of cases reviewed.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 76 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 65 percent of applicable cases reviewed.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2 during its 2003 CFPSR and was required to address this outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFPSR:

- DHS was not consistent in its efforts to ensure sufficient frequency of visitation with parents or among siblings in foster care to meet the needs of children and families.
- DHS was not consistent in its efforts to preserve connections between children and their extended families and communities.
- DHS was not consistent in its efforts to seek and assess relatives as placement resources.
- DHS was not consistent in its efforts to promote the relationship between parents and children.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Increased visitation and transportation services to provide visits between children and their families for at least 3 hours per week
- Trained supervisors and staff on the importance of visitation and strategies to maximize visitation opportunities between children and their siblings and parents
- Increased the use of Ohana conferencing to seek out relatives who may be potential placement resources and implemented a supervisory review tool to monitor the quality of the relative search
- Trained foster parents in the importance of preserving connections for foster children and involved foster parents in facilitating visits between parents and siblings
- Increased the recruitment of Native Hawaiian foster homes through partnerships with community organizations to preserve connections between children and their communities

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

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

Well-Being Outcome 1 incorporates four items. One item pertains to State efforts to ensure that the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents are assessed and that the necessary services are provided to meet identified needs (item 17). A second item

examines State efforts to actively involve parents and children (when appropriate) in the case planning process (item 18). The two remaining items examine the frequency and quality of caseworker contacts with the children in their caseloads (item 19) and with the children's parents (item 20).

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 40.0 percent of cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 47 percent of Kauai County cases, 41 percent of Maui County cases, and 35 percent of Oahu County cases. The outcome also was substantially achieved in 45 percent of foster care cases and 32 percent of in-home services cases. Items 17, 18, 19, and 20 were rated as Areas Needing Improvement. Key findings for this outcome in the 2009 CFPSR were the following:

- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 43 percent of cases reviewed.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 56 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 19 was rated as a Strength in 58 percent of cases reviewed.
- Item 20 was rated as a Strength in 44 percent of applicable cases reviewed.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1 during its 2003 CFPSR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFPSR:

- DHS was not consistently effective with regard to assessing needs and providing services to children, parents, and foster parents.
- DHS was not consistently effective with regard to involving children and parents in case planning.
- There was a lack of sufficient face-to-face contact between caseworkers and the children in their caseloads.
- There was a lack of sufficient face-to-face contact between caseworkers and parents.
- When visits did occur with sufficient frequency, there were many cases in which contact was brief and cursory and did not address key issues pertaining to the child's safety, permanency, or well-being.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Developed the Service and Treatment Record and Treatment Guide (Family Journal) for all families to ensure that family members, including children, as appropriate, have input into ongoing assessment and service planning
- Decreased caseworker caseload limits by providing Differential Response and comprehensive counseling
- Enhanced CORE Training to improve the quality of caseworker visits with children, parents, and foster parents
- Increased family engagement in case planning through the use of Ohana conferencing
- Implemented the standardized Comprehensive Strengths and Risk Assessment tool
- Expanded the array and availability of services through the expansion of Purchase of Service (POS) and Comprehensive Counseling and Support Services (CCSS) contracts

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

### **Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs**

Only one item is incorporated under Well-Being Outcome 2. It pertains to State efforts to assess and meet the educational needs of children in foster care and, when relevant, children in the in-home services cases (item 21).

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 89.2 percent of the applicable cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 100 percent of applicable Oahu County cases, 91 percent of applicable Maui County cases, and 70 percent of applicable Kauai County cases. Also, the outcome was substantially achieved in 94 percent of applicable foster care cases and 50 percent of applicable in-home services cases.

Hawaii was in substantial conformity with this outcome in its 2003 CF SR and was not required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan.

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

This outcome incorporates two items pertaining to State efforts to assess and meet the physical health (item 22) and mental health (item 23) needs of children in foster care and children in the in-home services cases, if relevant.

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. The outcome was substantially achieved in 65.5 percent of the applicable cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. The outcome was substantially achieved in 67 percent of applicable Maui County and Oahu County cases and in 62.5 percent of applicable Kauai County cases. Also, the outcome was substantially achieved in 70 percent of foster care cases and 56 percent of applicable in-home services cases. Item 22 and item 23 were rated as Areas Needing Improvement. Key findings for this outcome in the 2009 CF SR were the following:

- Item 22 was rated as a Strength in 82 percent of applicable cases reviewed.
- Item 23 was rated as a Strength in 65 percent of applicable cases reviewed.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3 during its 2003 CF SR and was required to address the outcome in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CF SR:

- DHS was not consistently effective in meeting either the physical or mental health needs of children in both foster care and in-home services cases.
- There was a lack of consistent attention to ensuring that children receive regular health screenings and routine preventive medical and dental services.
- There was a lack of accessibility to mental health services resulting in an inability to meet the mental health needs of children.

To address the identified concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Established an agreement among three divisions of DHS (Med-Quest; Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division; and Social Services Division) to enable the acceptance of a photocopy or fax of the medical insurance card to avoid unnecessary delays in medical and mental health services to foster children
- Implemented caseworker training to improve health information entered into the Child Protective Services (CPS) system
- Implemented caseworker training to improve referral for Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment
- Developed reminder checklists for Child Welfare Services caseworkers and other providers to ensure that foster parents receive medical information on the children in their care
- In partnership with the Department of Health (DOH) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division, implemented multiple efforts to improve referral, coordination of services, record-keeping, and service delivery for children in therapeutic foster homes

The State met its goals for this outcome by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

## II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

### Statewide Information System

Substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System is determined by whether the State is operating an information system that can provide accurate and timely information pertaining to the status, demographic characteristics, location, and case goals for the placement of every child in foster care. Only one item is incorporated under the systemic factor of Statewide Information System (item 24).

Hawaii is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. Item 24 is rated as a Strength. Hawaii is operating a statewide CPS information system that can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child in foster care.

Hawaii also was in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2003 CFSR and was not required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

### Case Review System

Five items are included in the assessment of State performance for the systemic factor of Case Review System. The items examine development of case plans and parent involvement in that process (item 25), the consistency of 6-month case reviews (item 26) and 12-month permanency hearings (item 27), implementation of procedures to seek TPR in accordance with the timeframes established in

ASFA (item 28), and notification of foster and pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers about case reviews and hearings to be held regarding the children in their care and about their right to be heard in those proceedings (item 29).

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. The 2009 CFSR found the following strength in the State's Case System: Item 26 is rated as a Strength. The State has a process for the periodic review of the status of each child at least every 6 months by the family court. Stakeholders indicated that court hearings are being held for each child in foster care at least every 6 months and address key issues of safety, appropriateness of the case plan, and progress toward meeting the goals outlined in the case plan. However, it should be noted that the State is still expected to address compliance of its statute in its title IV-E Program Improvement Plan.

Despite this area of strength, the 2009 CFSR found the following concerns:

- Item 25 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Although case plans are developed and updated routinely, data from the Statewide Assessment and from the case reviews indicate that the State does not consistently make concerted efforts to develop the case plan jointly with parents, particularly fathers. During the Onsite Review, case reviewers determined that the agency had made diligent efforts to involve mothers in the case planning process in 75 percent of applicable cases and fathers in the case planning process in 59 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 27 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. The State's process does not ensure that each child in foster care has a permanency hearing no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and at least every 12 months thereafter while in foster care. It should be noted that the State also is expected to address compliance of its statute in its title IV-E Program Improvement Plan.
- Item 28 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Although the State has a process for TPR proceedings in accordance with the provisions of ASFA, it is not implemented consistently. The State does not have a system in place to track the time children have been in foster care to monitor compliance with ASFA. In addition, the State does not have a process to document compelling reasons not to file TPR in accordance with ASFA. During the Onsite Review, case reviewers determined that ASFA requirements with regard to filing for TPR were met in 72 percent of applicable cases.
- Item 29 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Although the State has a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, reviews and hearings held with respect to the child, information from stakeholder interviews and the Statewide Assessment indicate that notification is not occurring consistently.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2003 CFSR and was required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSR:

- DHS was not consistent in individualizing case plans and involving parents in the case planning process.
- DHS was not consistent in ensuring that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers were notified of or provided the opportunity to be heard in court hearings regarding the children in their care.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Increased the use of Ohana conferencing to engage families in the case planning process
- Revised policy to ensure that the needs of children, families, and caregivers are assessed and addressed at regular intervals
- Strengthened initial and ongoing staff training to address family engagement in case planning
- Clarified and enforced caregiver notification requirements

The State met its goals for this systemic factor by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

### **Quality Assurance System**

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Quality Assurance (QA) System is based on whether the State has developed standards that ensure the safety and health of children in foster care (item 30), and whether the State is operating a statewide QA system that evaluates the quality and effectiveness of services and measures program strengths and areas needing improvement (item 31).

Hawaii is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of QA System. The 2009 CFSR found the following strengths in the State's QA System:

- Item 30 is rated as a Strength. The State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children. Supervisors review cases monthly to monitor whether caseworkers are providing quality services to children. In addition, the State has instituted new practices, including standardized safety and risk assessments and rapid assessment instruments, to ensure the safety and health of children.
- Item 31 is rated as a Strength. The State is operating an identifiable QA system that is modeled on the Federal CFSR and that is designed to identify the strengths and needs of the child welfare system, provide reports, and inform policy and practice. Local section offices are reviewed annually and are provided the results of the review. Each section office is responsible for developing, evaluating, and monitoring program improvement measures. However, the monitoring of local section office action plans needs to be strengthened to ensure improvements in practice.

Hawaii was not in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2003 CFSR and was required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSR:

- The rules and standards for health and safety in foster care were not uniformly implemented throughout the State.
- Caseworker caseloads were high.

- There was a lack of consistency with regard to supervisor and/or administrator monitoring of cases and caseworker activities.
- There was no uniform and consistent statewide QA system.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Developed and implemented a continuous quality improvement case review process
- Developed and implemented the supervisory review tool to monitor and report monthly unit compliance with priority practice standards
- Convened a statewide Continuous Quality Improvement Council to establish priorities and guide practice improvements
- Provided clear expectations of work performance standards with regard to ensuring the health and safety of children in foster care and applied them statewide

The State met its goals for this systemic factor by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

### **Staff and Provider Training**

The systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training incorporates an assessment of the State's training provided to new caseworkers (item 32), the ongoing training provided to agency staff (item 33), and both initial and ongoing training provided to foster and adoptive parents (item 34). This systemic factor does not assess the training of service providers other than child welfare agency staff unless the service providers are private agency caseworkers, operating under a contract with the State, who have full case management responsibilities.

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. The 2009 CFSR found the following strength in the State's Staff and Provider Training system: Item 32 is rated as a Strength. The State is operating a training program that provides initial training for all staff who deliver services, including contracted Voluntary Case Management and Family Strengthening Services (FSS) caseworkers, which supports the goals and objectives of the CFSR.

Despite this area of strength, the 2009 CFSR found the following concerns:

- Item 33 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. The State does not have a policy with regard to ongoing training for caseworkers or supervisors. Although there are a variety of training opportunities available in the community, there is no requirement for caseworkers to participate in ongoing training, and stakeholders indicated that caseload responsibilities often prevent caseworkers from participating in available trainings.
- Item 34 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. Although the State provides initial training for foster and adoptive parents, including relative caregivers and staff of child care institutions, the State requires ongoing training only for specialized foster homes; ongoing training is not required for general licensed foster families, relative caregivers, or staff of child care institutions.

Hawaii also was not in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2003 CFJR and was required to address this factor in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFJR:

- The training provided for new caseworkers did not thoroughly prepare caseworkers for their job duties.
- There were delays in providing initial training that resulted in some caseworkers assuming a small caseload before receiving training.
- The State did not have a structured ongoing training program for caseworkers or supervisors designed to enhance their knowledge and strengthen their skills.
- Training for caregivers did not fully prepare general licensed foster parents to parent children with multiple behavioral and emotional problems.
- The State did not provide timely training to child-specific foster homes after the children had been placed.
- The State did not provide or require ongoing training for foster parents.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Developed and provided child welfare supervisor training
- Improved the content and availability of New Hire CORE Training
- Implemented the Training Practice Integration Plan to strengthen the practicality of training and transfer of learning
- Developed a training partnership with the University of Hawaii and other key stakeholders, including foster parent training committees on each island, to develop and sponsor training to meet the needs of foster and adoptive parents
- Improved the timeliness of training provided to child-specific foster families
- Assessed the effectiveness of ongoing training for foster and adoptive parents

The State met its goals for this systemic factor by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

### **Service Array and Resource Development**

The assessment of the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development incorporates answers to three questions: Does the State have in place an array of services that meet the needs of children and families served by the child welfare agency (item 35)? Are the services accessible to families and children throughout the State (item 36)? Can services be individualized to meet the unique needs of the children and family served by the child welfare agency (item 37)?

Hawaii is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. The 2009 CFJR found the following strengths in the State's service array:

- Item 35 is rated as a Strength. The State has an array of services in place to assess and address the needs of children and families. The State provides an extensive service array through child welfare agency caseworkers, the use of POS contracts, coordination with other State departments, and partnerships with community-based agencies.

- Item 37 is rated as a Strength. Although the Onsite Review indicates that, in practice, children and families are not consistently receiving the services that they need, the Statewide Assessment and stakeholder interviews suggest that the State has the capacity to individualize services for families through the use of Ohana conferencing, POS contracts, community-based partnerships, and flexible funding. In addition, the Statewide Assessment and stakeholders reported that the State provides culturally competent services designed and delivered by community partners, including Native Hawaiian service providers.

Despite these areas of strength, the 2009 CFSS found the following concern: Item 36 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement. The State does not provide a sufficient array of services on all of the islands or in rural areas. In particular, there are waiting lists for FSS, parenting classes, and drug courts. There also is an insufficient supply of services in the following areas: family support services, visitation support services, substance abuse treatment services, domestic violence treatment services, mental health treatment services, therapy, parenting programs, IL services, foster and transitional homes for youth, therapeutic foster homes, and transportation services.

Hawaii was not in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2003 CFSS and was required to address this factor in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSS:

- There were significant gaps in key services across the State, particularly therapeutic foster homes and mental health services.
- The accessibility of particular services varied by island.
- The Family Service Plans developed by DHS often did not reflect the family's individualized needs.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Expanded POS and CCSS contracts to expand the array and availability of services
- Expanded the Differential Response System statewide
- Increased the availability of transportation, supervised visitation, in-home support services, IL services, substance abuse treatment services, sexual abuse treatment services, physical health services, and mental health services

The State met its goals for this systemic factor by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

#### **Agency Responsiveness to the Community**

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community incorporates an assessment of the State's consultation with external stakeholders in developing the CFSSP and producing annual reports (items 38 and 39), and the extent to which the State coordinates child welfare services with services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population (item 40).

Hawaii is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. The 2009 CFPSR found the following strengths in the State Agency's Responsiveness to the Community:

- Item 38 is rated as a Strength. The State engages in ongoing consultation with a broad array of key internal and external stakeholders, is effective in soliciting their input with regard to the agency's overall goals and objectives, and is responsive to their recommendations. The State consults with representatives of community-based service providers, current and former foster youth, the Native Hawaiian community, family courts, and local public and private agencies in the development of the goals and objectives of the CFSP.
- Item 39 is rated as a Strength. The State consults with a wide range of key stakeholders in the development of its Annual Progress and Services Reports.
- Item 40 is rated as a Strength. The State effectively coordinates services delivered under the CFSP with services provided by other Federal programs serving the same population. DHS partners with DOH, the Department of Education, and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program to provide comprehensive services and benefits to families.

Hawaii also was in substantial conformity with this systemic factor in its 2003 CFPSR and was not required to address the factor in its Program Improvement Plan.

#### **Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention**

The assessment of this systemic factor focuses on the State's standards for foster homes and child care institutions (items 41 and 42), the State's compliance with Federal requirements for criminal background checks for foster and adoptive parents (item 43), the State's efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of foster children (item 44), and the State's activities with regard to using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate permanent placements for waiting children (item 45).

Hawaii is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The 2009 CFPSR found the following strengths in the State's Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention system:

- Item 41 is rated as a Strength. The State has implemented clearly articulated standards to address the safety and well-being of children in foster care.
- Item 42 is rated as a Strength. The State applies standards equally to all general licensed and child-specific foster homes and child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds. Although the State does issue waivers for some requirements when placing a child in the home of a relative, waivers are not provided for safety-related requirements.
- Item 43 is rated as a Strength. The State obtains criminal background clearances for foster and adoptive families prior to placement and obtains fingerprint clearances prior to licensure.
- Item 44 is rated as a Strength. Although there are not enough foster family homes, especially for teens, the State has a process in place to recruit potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State. The State has partnered with Native Hawaiian community-based organizations to conduct recruitment.

- Item 45 is rated as a Strength. The State has a process in place to use cross-jurisdictional resources such as the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, the Heart Gallery, **AdoptUsKids**, and Hope, Inc., to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.

Hawaii was not in substantial conformity with this factor in its 2003 CFSR and was required to address this factor in its Program Improvement Plan. The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSR:

- Licensing standards were not applied equally to general licensed foster homes and child-specific foster homes.
- There were problems in recruiting and retaining an adequate number of foster homes that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

To address these concerns, the State implemented the following strategies in its Program Improvement Plan:

- Applied standards equally by improving training (initial and refresher) of licensing staff and improving timeliness of delivering training to child-specific homes
- Improved foster home retention by improving training and support for all foster parents
- Developed a targeted comprehensive recruitment plan
- Established a data baseline of the ethnic and racial diversity of children in foster care to monitor improvement in recruitment of foster homes to reflect that diversity
- Increased Ohana conferencing to ensure that recruitment of foster families reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children in foster care

The State met its goals for this systemic factor by the end of its Program Improvement Plan implementation period.

Table 1. Hawaii CFSR Ratings for Safety and Permanency Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings			Item Ratings	
	In Substantial Conformity?	Percent Substantially Achieved*	Met National Standards?	Rating**	Percent Strength
<b>Safety Outcome 1:</b> Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	No	87.0	Met 1 of 2		
Item 1. Timeliness of investigations				ANI	87
Item 2. Repeat maltreatment				Strength	100
<b>Safety Outcome 2:</b> Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	No	61.5			
Item 3. Services to protect children in home				ANI	69
Item 4. Risk of harm				ANI	65
<b>Permanency Outcome 1:</b> Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	No	47.5	Met 3 of 4		
Item 5. Foster care reentry				Strength	100
Item 6. Stability of foster care placements				ANI	70
Item 7. Permanency goal for child				ANI	60
Item 8. Reunification, guardianship, and placement with relatives				ANI	61
Item 9. Adoption				ANI	23
Item 10. Other planned living arrangement				N/A	N/A
<b>Permanency Outcome 2:</b> The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	No	75.0			
Item 11. Proximity of placement				Strength	100
Item 12. Placement with siblings				ANI	75
Item 13. Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care				ANI	77
Item 14. Preserving connections				ANI	83
Item 15. Relative placement				ANI	76
Item 16. Relationship of child in foster care with parents				ANI	65

\*95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

\*\*Items may be rated as Strengths or as Areas Needing Improvement (ANI). For an overall rating of Strength, 90 percent of the cases must be rated as a Strength.

