

**Final Report**  
**Hawaii Child and Family Services Review**  
**September 2009**

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Administration for Children and Families**  
**Administration on Children, Youth and Families**  
**Children's Bureau**

## 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 the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to 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 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 data 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

All 65 cases were open child welfare agency cases at some time during the period under review. The key characteristics of the children in the cases reviewed are presented in the table at the end of this section. For all tables in this report, figures displayed may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

The first section of the report (Section A: Outcomes) presents the CFSR findings relevant to the State's performance in achieving specified outcomes for children in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. The second section of the report (Section B: Systemic Factors) provides an assessment and discussion of the systemic factors relevant to the child welfare agency's ability to achieve positive outcomes for children.

### Key Characteristics of Cases Reviewed

Case Characteristics	Foster Care	In-Home Services
<b>Total Number of Cases</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Date case was opened</b>		
Open prior to the period under review	28 (70%)	17 (68%)
Open during the period under review	12 (30%)	8 (32%)
<b>Child entered foster care during the period under review</b>	14 (35%)	N/A
<b>Child's age at start of period under review</b>		
Younger than 10	19 (47.5%)	*
At least 10 but younger than 13	6 (15%)	*
At least 13 but younger than 16	9 (22.5%)	*
16 and older	6 (15%)	*
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
American Indian/Alaskan Native Non-Hispanic	0	*
Asian Non-Hispanic	2 (5%)	*
Black Non-Hispanic	0	*
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic	8 (20%)	*
Hispanic (of any race)	6 (15%)	*
White Non-Hispanic	3 (7.5%)	*
Unknown/Unable to Determine	1 (2.5%)	*
Two or More Races Non-Hispanic**	20 (50%)	*
<b>Primary reason for opening case</b>		
Physical abuse	9 (22.5%)	6 (24%)
Sexual abuse	4 (10%)	3 (12%)
Emotional maltreatment	0	0
Neglect (not including medical neglect)	12 (30%)	4 (16%)
Medical neglect	0	0
Abandonment	2 (5%)	0
Mental/physical health of parent	3 (7.5%)	0
Substance abuse by parent	10 (25%)	5 (20%)
Child's behavior	0	1 (4%)
Domestic violence in child's home	0	6 (24%)
Child in juvenile justice system	0	0

\* Information on in-home services cases is not available for these characteristics.

\*\* 18 of the 20-cases in this category represented children who are part-Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

## SECTION A: OUTCOMES

In the Outcomes Section of the CSFR Final Report, an overall rating of Strength or Area Needing Improvement is assigned to each of the 23 items reviewed. 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 item ratings are used to determine the performance of a State on the seven outcomes, each of which incorporates one or more of the individual items. The evaluation options for these outcomes are "substantially achieved," "partially achieved," and "not achieved." For a State to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent or more of the applicable 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. A State that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome must develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan to address the areas of concern identified for that outcome.

The Children's Bureau has established very high standards of performance for the CSFR. The standards are based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our nation's most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be considered acceptable. The standards are set high to ensure ongoing attention to achieving positive outcomes for children and families with regard to safety, permanency, and well-being. This approach is consistent with the goal of the CSFR to promote continuous improvement in performance on these outcomes.

It should be noted, however, that States are not required to attain the 95 percent standard established for the CSFR Onsite Review or the national standards for the six data indicators by the end of their Program Improvement Plan implementations. The Children's Bureau recognizes that the kinds of systemic and practice changes necessary to bring about improvement in particular outcome areas often take time to implement. Also, improvements are likely to be incremental rather than dramatic. Instead, States work with the Children's Bureau to establish a specified amount of improvement or to determine specified activities for their Program Improvement Plans. That is, for each outcome that is not in substantial conformity or item that is rated as an Area Needing Improvement, each State (working in conjunction with the Children's Bureau) specifies the following: (1) how much improvement the State will demonstrate and/or the activities that it will implement to address the Areas Needing Improvement and (2) the procedures for demonstrating the achievement of these goals. Both the improvements specified and the procedures for demonstrating improvement vary across States. Therefore, a State can meet the requirements of its Program Improvement Plan and still not perform at the 95-percent (for outcomes) or the 90-percent (for items) levels established for the CSFR.

The second round of the CSFRs assesses a State's current level of performance by once more applying the high standards and a consistent, comprehensive, case review methodology. The results of this effort are intended to serve as the basis for continued Program Improvement Plans addressing areas in which a State still needs to improve, even though prior Program Improvement Plan goals may have been achieved. The purpose is to ensure that program improvement is an ongoing process and does not end with the completion of a Program Improvement Plan.

The following sections provide information on how Hawaii performed on each outcome in the first round of the CFSR as well as the current CFSR. If the outcome was not substantially achieved during the first round, the key concerns observed at that time and the strategies implemented in the Program Improvement Plan to address those concerns are discussed.

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, particularly with regard to comparisons of data indicators or percentages regarding Strength and Area Needing Improvement ratings. Key changes in the CFSR case review process that make it difficult to compare performance across reviews include, but are not limited to, 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 enhance consistency and ensure an assessment of critical areas such as child welfare agency efforts to involve noncustodial parents in planning for their children

For each outcome, there is a table presenting the data for the case review findings and national indicators (when relevant). The table is followed by a discussion of Hawaii's status with regard to substantial conformity with the outcome at the time of the State's first Onsite Review, which was held in fiscal year 2003, the State's status relevant to the current review, and a presentation and discussion of each item (indicator) assessed under the outcome. Differences in findings across the sites included in the Onsite Review are presented in the tables. Variations in outcome and item ratings as a function of type of case (i.e., foster care or in-home services) also are identified when appropriate.

# I. SAFETY

## Safety Outcome 1

Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect						
Number of Cases Reviewed by the Team According to Degree of Outcome Achievement						
Degree of Outcome Achievement	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent	
Substantially Achieved	5	6	9	20	87.0	
Partially Achieved	1	0	1	2	8.7	
Not Achieved	0	0	1	1	4.3	
<b>Total Applicable Cases</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>		
Not Applicable Cases	11	11	20	42		
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>65</b>		
<b>Substantially Achieved by Site</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>82%</b>			

Conformity of Statewide Data Indicators With National Standards			
National Data Indicators	National Standard (%)	State's Percent	Meets Standards?
Absence of maltreatment recurrence	94.6 +	97.8	Yes
Absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff	99.68 +	99.49	No

### Status of Safety Outcome 1

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 87.0 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. In addition to case review findings, although Hawaii met the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to absence of maltreatment recurrence, the State did not meet the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to absence of maltreatment of children in foster care.

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.

### Key Concerns From the 2003 CFSR

- 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 standard 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 standard for the measure pertaining to the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

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

- 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 (DR) system, including implementation of Voluntary Case Management (VCM) 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.

**Key Findings of the 2009 CFSR**

The findings pertaining to the specific items assessed under Safety Outcome 1 are presented and discussed below.

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

Strength                        X   Area Needing Improvement

**Case Review Findings**

The assessment of item 1 was applicable for 23 (35 percent) of the 65 cases. Cases were not applicable when there were no child maltreatment reports during the period under review. In assessing item 1, reviewers were to determine whether the response to a maltreatment report occurring during the period under review had been initiated in accordance with the State child welfare agency policy requirements.

State policy pertaining to the timeframes required for investigating reports of child maltreatment is the following:

- Immediate response: The department shall make face-to-face contact with the victim preferably within 2 hours but no later than 2 business days from the time the intake is accepted for investigation and assigned to a Child Welfare Services (CWS) unit.
- Five-day response: If the report is assigned to a CWS unit, the department shall make face-to-face contact with the victim within 5 business days from the date the intake is accepted and assigned to a CWS unit. If the report is assigned through the DR system to the VCM services program, the responding agency shall contact the family within 5 business days from the date the intake is accepted and shall make face-to-face contact with the victim within 10 business days.

The results of the assessment of item 1 are presented in the table below.

Item 1 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	5	6	9	20	87
Area Needing Improvement	1	0	2	3	13
<b>Total Applicable Cases</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	
Not Applicable	11	11	20	42	
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>65</b>	
<b>Strength by Site</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>82%</b>		

Item 1 was rated as a Strength in 20 cases when the investigation was initiated and face-to-face contact was made within the timeframes required by State policy.

Item 1 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement when reviewers determined the following:

- The report assigned for immediate response was not investigated in a timely manner (two cases). In both cases, although the agency made face-to-face contact with some of the children in the home within the required timeframe, the agency did not make face-to-face contact with all children in the home within the required timeframe.
- The report assigned for investigation within 5 days was not investigated in a timely manner (one case).

**Rating Determination**

Item 1 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement. In 87 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that the agency had initiated an investigation or an assessment of a maltreatment report and made face-to-face contact in accordance with required timeframes. This percentage is less than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 1 also was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in Hawaii's 2003 CFSR.

**Statewide Assessment Information**

According to the Statewide Assessment, CWS are provided by the Child Welfare Services Branch (CWSB), under the Social Services Division (SSD) of DHS to children and their families when children are reported to have been abused/neglected or are at risk of abuse/neglect.

The Statewide Assessment notes that maltreatment reports can be made to CWS, the county police department, or centralized statewide CWS Intake Units through a toll-free reporting hotline at any time. However, the Statewide Assessment acknowledges that investigation caseworkers are not available to provide face-to-face response to all reports after normal working hours, on weekends, or on holidays. The Statewide Assessment indicates that after-hours calls are referred to the police who can provide an immediate response. The Statewide Assessment reports that Immediate Response Teams have been piloted to provide an immediate response within 24 hours to include evenings, weekends, and holidays. For example, the Kauai and Maui section offices respond immediately at all times including evenings, weekends, and holidays.

The Statewide Assessment reports that CWS uses standardized intake, safety assessment, and comprehensive strength and risk assessment screening tools to determine the level of risk present and the most appropriate, most effective, and least intrusive response.

The Statewide Assessment also notes that the State has implemented a DR system, which has resulted in fewer cases referred for CWS investigation. The DR system categorizes child abuse and neglect referrals in the following way:

- Reports assessed as high risk or having a safety issue present are assigned for an investigation by a CWS Child Protective Services (CPS) specialist.
- Reports assessed as moderate risk with no safety issues are assigned to the VCM services program.
- Reports assessed as low risk with no safety issues may be either screened out with no further action or assigned for Family Strengthening Services (FSS).

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in addition to conducting investigations to evaluate risk and safety, CWS forwards all reports received to the county police department and the police determine whether they will conduct a criminal investigation. The county police may investigate with the CWS CPS specialist or conduct their own investigation. The Statewide Assessment notes that law enforcement officers are the only officials with the legal authority to remove a child from his or her parents. The Statewide Assessment notes that the CPS system (CPSS) captures responses to the report by DHS staff only, although other staff such as police or hospital personnel could be first responders.

The Statewide Assessment reports that the State reviews 100 cases every year to assess the quality and effectiveness of practice, following the CFSR model for case review. As indicated in the Statewide Assessment, in State fiscal year (SFY) 2008, 99 cases were reviewed, and reviewers determined that 87.10 percent of the cases were investigated in a timely manner.

The Statewide Assessment indicates that in some cases an investigative caseworker cannot locate the family despite concerted efforts. In such instances, the cases are kept open for 60 days to provide investigative caseworkers with the opportunity to locate the family.

The Statewide Assessment notes that a review of the DR system conducted in 2006 found that there is a need to reinforce procedures that have been established for cases to be returned to CWS if safety factors are discovered during the DR assessment. In addition, the Statewide Assessment reports that CWS and the family court developed a Protocol and Referral Form for Information Exchange Between the Family Court and CWS to facilitate reports of suspected child abuse or neglect to CWS from the family court.

#### **Stakeholder Interview Information**

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed the opinion that the State generally is effective in responding to reports of abuse and neglect in a timely manner. Several stakeholders noted that the CWS Intake hotline is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. On Oahu, investigative caseworkers are on call at all times, and on neighbor islands (i.e., all islands

other than Oahu) there are informal arrangements that involve caseworkers volunteering to be on call after normal working hours to ensure that reports are investigated in a timely manner.

Despite the positive opinions expressed by most stakeholders, others identified the following concerns about the process of responding to reports of abuse and neglect:

- On neighbor islands, the centralized intake process has increased the time it takes for a caseworker to be dispatched to the scene.
- There are cases in which law enforcement personnel remove a child without the presence of a CWS caseworker.
- Cases with similar circumstances are not consistently referred for investigation to CWS or to VCM for an assessment. For example, a case presenting with domestic violence is sometimes referred to VCM and sometimes to CWS.
- There is confusion among reporters, including law enforcement agencies, as to the criteria required to accept a report of abuse or neglect.
- Courts are ordering CWS to investigate cases in which a temporary restraining order is issued rather than use the protocol to refer cases to the centralized intake process to determine whether the case demonstrates a level of risk or harm that would require an investigation.

**Item 2. Repeat maltreatment**

**Strength**       **Area Needing Improvement**

**Case Review Findings**

The assessment of item 2 was applicable for 12 (18 percent) of the 65 cases. Cases were not applicable for this item if there was no substantiated or indicated maltreatment report during the period under review. For all applicable cases, reviewers were to determine if there had been a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report on the family during the period under review and, if so, whether another substantiated or indicated report involving similar circumstances had occurred within a 6-month period before or after that identified report. The results of the assessment of item 2 are presented in the table below.

Item 2 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	3	5	4	12	100
Area Needing Improvement	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Applicable Cases</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	
Not Applicable	14	12	27	53	
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>65</b>	
<b>Strength by Site</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Item 2 was rated as a Strength in all 12 applicable cases because there was only one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report on the family within a 6-month period.

In addition to the recurrence of substantiated maltreatment reports, reviewers reported the following findings with regard to the number of maltreatment reports on the family during the life of the case ("life of the case" refers to the time from the date of the first allegation of abuse or neglect to the time of the Onsite Review):

- In 22 cases, there was one report.
- In 36 cases, there were between two and five reports.
- In four cases, there were between six and nine reports.
- In three cases, there were 10 or more reports.

#### Rating Determination

Item 2 was assigned an overall rating of a Strength. In 100 percent of the applicable cases, there was no recurrence of substantiated or indicated maltreatment within a 6-month period. This percentage is greater than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 2 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in Hawaii's 2003 CFSR.

#### Statewide Assessment Information

According to the Statewide Assessment, all new reports on cases open for services, both active in-home cases and foster care cases, must be directed to the CWS Intake Unit for initial review and assessment.

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in the SFY 2008 case review, 96.67 percent of the cases did not indicate repeat maltreatment within a 6-month period.

#### Stakeholder Interview Information

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed the opinion that the State generally is effective in preventing repeat maltreatment. Some stakeholders noted that, when a risk for repeat maltreatment is evident, the DR system includes a process to facilitate the transfer of cases from VCM to CWS. A few stakeholders noted that a special intake unit investigates all reports of maltreatment of children in foster care.

#### Safety Outcome 2

Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate					
Number of Cases Reviewed by the Team According to Degree of Outcome Achievement					
Degree of Outcome Achievement	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Substantially Achieved	10	12	18	40	61.5
Partially Achieved	1	3	4	8	12.3
Not Achieved	6	2	9	17	26.2
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>65</b>	
<b>Substantially Achieved by Site</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>58%</b>		

## Status of Safety Outcome 2

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. The outcome was substantially achieved in 61.5 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. 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.

### Key Concerns From the 2003 CFSR

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

### Key Findings of the 2009 CFSR

The findings pertaining to the specific items assessed under Safety Outcome 2 are presented and discussed below.

**Item 3. Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or reentry into foster care**

     Strength        X   Area Needing Improvement

#### Case Review Findings

An assessment of item 3 was applicable in 45 (69 percent) of the 65 cases. Cases were excluded if the children entered foster care prior to the period under review and there were no other children in the home, or if there was no substantiated or indicated maltreatment report or identified risk of harm to the children in the home during the period under review. For applicable cases, reviewers assessed whether, in responding to a substantiated maltreatment report or risk of harm, the agency made diligent efforts to provide services to families that would prevent placement of children in foster care and at the same time ensure their safety. The results of the assessment of item 3 are presented in the table that follows.

Item 3 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	9	9	13	31	69
Area Needing Improvement	4	2	8	14	31
<b>Total Applicable Cases</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>45</b>	
Not Applicable	4	6	10	20	
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>65</b>	
<b>Strength by Site</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>62%</b>		

Item 3 was rated as a Strength when reviewers determined the following:

- Although no services were provided when the child was removed from the home, the removal was necessary to ensure the safety of the child (five cases).
- Services were provided to the family to ensure the safety of the child and prevent removal (18 cases).
- Services were provided to the family to ensure the safety of the child post-reunification and prevent reentry into foster care (eight cases).

Case review information indicates that a range of services was offered or provided to families. This range included, but was not limited to, the following: VCM services, domestic violence counseling, parenting services, family therapy and counseling, sexual abuse counseling, psychological evaluation and therapy, anger management, substance abuse treatment, Ohana conferencing, post-reunification services, drug court oversight, and Healthy Start.

Item 3 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement when reviewers determined the following:

- Services were not provided to the family, and the children remained at risk in the home (four cases).
- Services were provided, but they did not target the key safety concern in the family, leaving the children at risk in the home (three cases).
- No services were provided to prevent the children's removal from the home, although the removal was not immediately necessary to ensure the children's safety (four cases).
- No services were provided at the time of reunification, and the children were at risk in the home (three cases).

**Rating Determination**

Item 3 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement. In 69 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that the agency had made concerted efforts to maintain children safely in their own homes. This percentage is less than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 3 was rated as a Strength in Hawaii's 2003 CFSR.

### **Statewide Assessment Information**

According to the Statewide Assessment, caseworkers conduct safety assessments to determine whether the home can be made safe with the support of an In-home Safety Plan. The Statewide Assessment reports that, in SFY 2008, the DR system resulted in 1,627 families statewide being assessed as low risk and referred to FSS providers, and 1,141 families statewide being assessed as moderate risk and referred to VCM providers. The Statewide Assessment notes that a Child Safety Assessment must be completed for every family referred to VCM within 2 business days of the first face-to-face contact with the family to determine whether risk and safety can be managed in the home. The Statewide Assessment also notes that FSS may be provided for up to 6 months, and VCM may be provided for up to 12 months.

As indicated in the Statewide Assessment, when a law enforcement officer has removed a child from a home, CWS has 3 working days to assess the safety of the home. CWS may ask the family to sign a voluntary foster custody agreement (VFCA) to allow the child to stay in foster care while CWS works with the family to identify the services that are needed to make the family home safe for the child. In the absence of a VFCA, CWS determines whether it is safe to return the child home or whether to petition the court for foster care custody.

The Statewide Assessment notes that the State often prevents out-of-home placements by using flexible wraparound funds to address immediate needs such as paying rent and/or utility bills, house cleaning, and transportation. Despite this creative use of resources, the Statewide Assessment indicates that there is a need for additional programs that allow families to stay together, such as residential treatment programs where mothers can reside with their children while receiving substance abuse treatment.

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in the SFY 2008 case review, services were provided to the family to protect children in the home and prevent removal into foster care in 91.23 percent of the cases.

### **Stakeholder Interview Information**

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFRS expressed the opinion that the State's DR system, and especially the VCM program, generally are effective in protecting children in their home and preventing removal or reentry into foster care.

### **Item 4. Risk assessment and safety management**

Strength       Area Needing Improvement

### **Case Review Findings**

An assessment of item 4 was applicable for all 65 cases. In assessing item 4, reviewers were to determine whether the agency had made, or was making, diligent efforts to address the risk of harm to the children involved in each case. The results of the assessment of item 4 are presented in the table that follows.

Item 4 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	10	12	20	42	65
Area Needing Improvement	7	5	11	23	35
<b>Total Cases</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>65</b>	
<b>Strength by Site</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>65%</b>		

Item 4 was rated as a Strength in 42 cases when reviewers determined that the risk of harm to children was addressed appropriately by the agency through the following: conducting initial and ongoing assessments of risk and safety either in the children's home or in the children's foster home and addressing all safety-related concerns identified through the assessment.

Item 4 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in 23 cases when reviewers determined one or more of the following:

- There was no initial safety or risk assessment (five cases).
- There was no ongoing safety and risk assessment in the child's home during the period under review (11 cases).
- There was no ongoing safety and risk assessment in the foster home during the period under review (nine cases).
- There were continued risk concerns in the child's home that were not addressed and/or monitored by the agency, and the children were at risk in the home (11 cases).
- The case was closed without any safety and risk assessment (four cases).
- Safety and risk were not assessed for all children in the home (three cases).

#### Rating Determination

Item 4 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement. In 65 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency had made diligent efforts to assess and address the risk of harm to the child. This percentage is less than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 4 also was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in Hawaii's 2003 CFR.

#### Statewide Assessment Information

According to the Statewide Assessment, CWS, VCM, and FSS caseworkers are expected to complete the Child Safety Assessment during the initial investigation or assessment. The Child Safety Assessment can be used prior to reunification, at case closure, or at other times during the life of the case. The Comprehensive Strengths and Risk Assessment is expected to be completed within 60 days of CWS case opening (within 45 days for VCM cases), for reassessments whenever evidence or case circumstances suggest a change in risk levels, and prior to closing the case at investigation to determine whether a case should be kept open with CWS, referred to VCM or FSS, or closed. The Statewide Assessment notes that if a safety issue is assessed as present in a family situation by VCM or FSS, there is a process to return the case immediately to CWS for action.

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in the SFY 2008 case review, risk and safety were appropriately assessed and managed in 82.83 percent of the cases.

### Stakeholder Interview Information

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed the opinion that the State generally is effective in assessing risk and managing safety. Various stakeholders identified Ohana conferencing and the Comprehensive Strengths and Risk Assessment as facilitating factors in the agency's effectiveness with regard to assessing risk and managing safety for families.

## II. PERMANENCY

### Permanency Outcome 1

Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations						
Number of Cases Reviewed by the Team According to Degree of Outcome Achievement						
Degree of Outcome Achievement	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent	
Substantially Achieved	5	4	10	19	47.5	
Partially Achieved	4	5	7	16	40.0	
Not Achieved	1	1	3	5	12.5	
Total Foster Care Cases	10	10	20	40		
Substantially Achieved by Site	50%	40%	50%			

Conformity of Statewide Data Indicators With National Standards						
National Data Indicators	National Standard (Scaled Score)	State Score (Scaled Score)	Meets Standards?			
Composite 1: Timeliness and permanency of reunification	122.6 +	120.4	No			
Composite 2: Timeliness of adoptions	106.4 +	112.5	Yes			
Composite 3: Permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods	121.7 +	123.5	Yes			
Composite 4: Placement stability	101.5 +	102.4	Yes			

### Status of Permanency Outcome 1

Hawaii is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. The outcome was substantially achieved in 47.5 percent of the cases reviewed. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. In addition to case review findings, although 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, the State did not meet the national standard for the data indicator pertaining to timeliness and permanency of reunification.

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.

## Key Concerns From the 2003 CFSR

The following key concerns were identified in the 2003 CFSR:

- 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 termination of parental rights (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 and 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 permanency planning (CPP) 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.

## Key Findings of the 2009 CFSR

The findings pertaining to the items assessed under Permanency Outcome 1 are presented and discussed below.

### Item 5. Foster care reentries

  X   Strength                             Area Needing Improvement

### Case Review Findings

An assessment of item 5 was applicable for 14 (35 percent) of the 40 foster care cases. Cases were not applicable if the child did not enter foster care during the period under review. In assessing this item, reviewers determined whether the entry into foster care during the period under review occurred within 12 months of discharge from a prior foster care episode. The results of the assessment of item 5 are presented in the table below.

Item 5 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	4	4	6	14	100
Area Needing Improvement	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Applicable Foster Care Cases</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	
Not Applicable Foster Care Cases	6	6	14	26	
<b>Total Foster Care Cases</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	
<b>Strength by Site</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Item 5 was rated as a Strength in all 14 applicable cases when reviewers determined the following:

- The child's entry into foster care during the period under review did not take place within 12 months of discharge from a prior episode (12 cases).
- Although the child reentered foster care within 12 months, there was evidence that concerted efforts were made to prevent reentry (two cases).

### Rating Determination

Item 5 was assigned an overall rating of Strength. The item was rated as a Strength in 100 percent of the applicable cases reviewed. This percentage is greater than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 5 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in Hawaii's 2003 CFSR.

### Performance on the Composite 1 Measure Relevant to the Permanency of Reunification

The data below are presented to provide additional information about foster care reentry. There is no national standard for the measure of foster care reentry. National standards with regard to permanency have been established only for the scaled composite scores. The measure of foster care reentry is part of Composite 1: Timeliness and permanency of reunification. The State's performance on Composite 1 is shown in the table for Permanency Outcome 1.

Hawaii's performance on the individual measure of foster care reentry (measure C1.4) included in Composite 1: Timeliness and permanency of reunification was as follows: In the 12 months prior to the CFSR 12-month target period for the data indicators, 15.1 percent of children exiting foster care to reunification reentered foster care in less than 12 months from the time of discharge. This percentage is greater than the national median of 15.0 percent. (For this measure, lower percentages reflect higher levels of performance.)

**Statewide Assessment Information**

According to the Statewide Assessment, the Comprehensive Strengths and Risk Assessment is completed within 60 days of case opening to determine whether a case should be kept open or closed and the Child Safety Assessment can be completed prior to reunification to determine whether to close an ongoing case. The Statewide Assessment notes that the State is conducting a pilot (including Kauai, Maui, and Oahu) to test the use of six rapid assessment instruments (RAI) to rate the level of family readiness with regard to reunification and resolution of CPS risk factors, case service plans, legal issues, and caregiver understanding of child treatment needs. In addition, the Statewide Assessment notes that DHS uses the multidisciplinary team on a consultative basis prior to reunification.

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in the SFY 2008 case review, children did not experience reentry into foster care in 100 percent of the cases.

**Stakeholder Interview Information**

Most stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed the opinion that the State generally is effective in preventing foster care reentries. Some stakeholders noted that there are cases in which children reenter foster care due to substance abuse relapse by parents.

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

\_\_\_ Strength     X  Area Needing Improvement

**Case Review Findings**

All 40 foster care cases were applicable for an assessment of item 6. In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether the child experienced multiple placement settings during the period under review and, if so, whether the changes in placement settings were necessary to achieve the child's permanency goal or meet the child's service needs. Reviewers also assessed the stability of the child's most recent placement setting. The results of the assessment of item 6 are presented in the table below.

Item 6 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	9	7	12	28	70
Area Needing Improvement	1	3	8	12	30
Total Foster Care Cases	10	10	20	40	
Strength by Site	90%	70%	60%		

Item 6 was rated as a Strength when reviewers determined the following:

- The child's current placement was stable and the child did not experience a placement change during the period under review (24 cases).

- The child's current placement was stable and placement changes experienced were in the child's best interests, i.e., they were intended to further achievement of the child's permanency goal or to provide specialized services for the child (four cases).

Item 6 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in 12 cases when reviewers determined one or both of the following:

- The child was in multiple placement settings during the period under review, and at least one placement change was not planned by the agency to attain the child's permanency goal (10 cases).
- The child's placement setting at the time of the onsite CFSR was not stable (five cases).

Additional findings of the case review were the following:

- Children in 26 cases (65 percent) experienced only one placement during the period under review.
- Children in five cases (12.5 percent) experienced two placements during the period under review.
- Children in nine cases (22.5 percent) experienced three or four placements during the period under review.

#### **Rating Determination**

Item 6 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement. In 70 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that children experienced placement stability. This percentage is less than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 6 also was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in Hawaii's 2003 CFSR.

#### **Performance on the Individual Measures Included in Composite 4: Placement stability**

The data below are presented to provide additional information about placement stability. There are no national standards for performance on these measures individually. National standards have been established only for the scaled composite score. The State's performance on Composite 4 is shown in the table for Permanency Outcome 1.

For the target 12-month CFSR period established for the data indicators, Hawaii's performance on the individual measures included in Composite 4: Placement stability was as follows:

- C4.1: 86.0 percent of the children in foster care for at least 8 days but less than 12 months experienced two or fewer placement settings. This percentage is equal to the national 75th percentile of 86.0 percent.
- C4.2: 68.7 percent of the children in foster care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months experienced two or fewer placement settings. This percentage is greater than the national 75th percentile of 65.4 percent.
- C4.3: 40.2 percent of the children in foster care for at least 24 months experienced two or fewer placement settings. This percentage is greater than the national median of 33.9 percent but less than the national 75th percentile of 41.8 percent.

#### **Statewide Assessment Information**

According to the Statewide Assessment, DHS has a contract with the Partners in Development Foundation (PIDF) to provide a comprehensive approach to recruitment, home study, training, and support of foster homes. PIDF is responsible for providing an adequate number of resource foster families to increase the ability to make appropriate placements, provides sufficient training to help

prepare families to meet the needs of the child, and provides a support network for resource foster families following placement. The Statewide Assessment notes that Purchase of Services (POS) contracted services support children in out-of-home placements by providing counseling, visitation, transportation, and therapy. In addition, the Statewide Assessment notes that the decrease in the number of children in foster care provides caseworkers with a decreased caseload and more time for each foster family.

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in the SFY 2008 case review, children were in stable placements and did not experience placement changes that were not in their best interests in 85.94 percent of the cases.

The Statewide Assessment notes that, although significant resources have been put in place to identify relative resources early in the case, delays in identifying family resources can mean that an appropriate relative placement is not identified for some time and that children experience placement changes.

#### **Stakeholder Interview Information**

Stakeholders commenting on this item during the onsite CFSR expressed different opinions regarding the State's effectiveness in providing stable placements for children in foster care. Some stakeholders noted that caseworkers conduct a search for relatives early in the case to improve placement stability because relative placements tend to be more stable than placements with non-relative foster parents. However, various stakeholders identified the following barriers to the agency's effectiveness with regard to providing stable foster care placements for children:

- There is frequent use of shelter care, both congregate care settings and short-term foster home settings.
- The focus on relative caregivers leads to a reliance on shelter care as a first placement in some cases and, in other cases, to an initial placement with a non-relative that would be stable but for the intention to move the child to the home of a relative.
- The lack of sufficient supportive services, such as mental health services, substance abuse services, and services for adolescents, leads to frequent placement changes due to the behavior of the child.

#### **Item 7. Permanency goal for child**

       Strength        X   Area Needing Improvement

#### **Case Review Findings**

All 40 foster care cases were applicable for an assessment of item 7. In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether the agency had established a permanency goal for the child in a timely manner and whether the most current permanency goal was appropriate. Reviewers also were to determine whether the agency had sought TPR in accordance with the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). The results of the assessment of item 7 are presented in the table that follows.

Item 7 Ratings	Kauai County	Maui County	Oahu County	Total	Percent
Strength	7	5	12	24	60
Area Needing Improvement	3	5	8	16	40
Total Foster Care Cases	10	10	20	40	
Strength by Site	70%	50%	60%		

Item 7 was rated as a Strength in 24 cases when reviewers determined that the child's permanency goal was appropriate and had been established in a timely manner and, if relevant, that the agency had filed for TPR in accordance with the requirements of ASFA.

Item 7 was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in 16 cases when reviewers determined one or more of the following:

- The child's permanency goal at the time of the onsite CFSR was not appropriate given the case situation and the needs of the child (four cases).
- The child's permanency goal was not established in a timely manner (13 cases).
- The agency had not filed for TPR in accordance with the requirements of ASFA (five cases).

ASFA requirements with regard to filing for TPR were met in 72 percent (13 cases) of 18 applicable cases.

The following case goals were identified for the 40 foster care cases:

- Reunification only (including reunification with relatives) (22 cases)
- Guardianship only (four cases)
- Adoption only (nine cases)
- Concurrent goals of adoption and guardianship (four cases)
- Concurrent goals of reunification and guardianship (one case)

#### Rating Determination

Item 7 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement. In 60 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency had established an appropriate permanency goal for the child in a timely manner and had met ASFA requirements when relevant. This percentage is less than the 90 percent required for a rating of Strength. Item 7 also was rated as an Area Needing Improvement in Hawaii's 2003 CFSR.

#### Performance on the Individual Measures Included in Composite 3: Permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods

The data below are presented to provide additional information about permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods. There are no national standards for performance on these measures individually. National standards were established only for the scaled composite score. The State's performance on Composite 3 is shown in the table for Permanency Outcome 1.

For the target 12-month CFSR period established for the data indicators, Hawaii's performance on the individual measures included in Composite 3: Permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods was the following:

- C3.1: 34.5 percent of the children in foster care for 24 months or longer at the start of the 12-month CFSR target period were discharged from foster care to a permanent home (adoption, reunification with parents or other relatives, or guardianship) by the end of the target period. This percentage is greater than the national 75th percentile of 29.1 percent.
- C3.2: 85.8 percent of the children exiting foster care during the target period who were legally free for adoption at the time of exit were discharged to a permanent home. This percentage is less than the national median of 96.8 percent.
- C3.3: 44.0 percent of the children who were discharged from foster care during the 12-month target period with a discharge reason of emancipation had been in foster care for 3 years or longer at the time of discharge. This percentage is less than the national median of 47.8 but greater than the national 25th percentile of 37.5 percent. (For this measure, lower percentages reflect higher levels of performance.)

#### **Statewide Assessment Information**

According to the Statewide Assessment, DHS policy stipulates that, if a child cannot be returned home to a safe family, the goals for a permanent family are either adoption or legal guardianship. When reunification is not likely, DHS policy provides for an initiation of proceedings to TPR in compliance with Federal guidelines. The Statewide Assessment indicates that a recent change in State statute clarified that TPR is not required before legal guardianship proceedings.

The Statewide Assessment identifies the following types of custody arrangements:

- Foster Custody transfers temporary custody of the child to DHS because the family is presently unwilling or unable to provide the child with a safe home.
- Permanent Custody (PC) terminates parental rights and transfers custody of the child to DHS for timely permanent placement.

The Statewide Assessment also identifies the following practices that facilitate permanency:

- The requirement that caseworkers must apply CPP as a means of achieving permanency for children more promptly
- The use of Ohana conferencing as a tool to engage family members in the identification and support of the permanency goals for children in foster care
- The requirement for a written service plan to be developed within 60 days of intake
- The development and monthly review of the PC List including all children in PC for whom there is no identified permanent legal home

The Statewide Assessment indicates that perceptions by family members regarding the sanctity of the relationship between parents and children result in a tendency on the part of the agency to designate guardianship as a more feasible alternative than adoption.

The Statewide Assessment reports that, in the SFY 2008 case review, children were assigned an appropriate permanency goal in a timely manner in 84.38 percent of the cases.

