

**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.

